

Acid Test Series 7 of 8 - Waiting on God

by Al Whittinghill

The sermon emphasizes the critical importance of waiting on God as a means of spiritual dependence and transformation.

Duration: 55:10

Scripture: Psalm 34:4, Psalm 106:11, Isaiah 49:3, Isaiah 49:23, Lamentations 3:25, Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 3:18

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of translating truth into living reality. He encourages listeners to make room in their lives for the Word of God and draw near to Him. The speaker highlights the need for solitude and getting to know God on a deeper level, just as Paul did when he spent three years alone with God. He also emphasizes the concept of waiting on the Lord consciously, unlike the animal kingdom, and encourages listeners to wait before God and seek His guidance. The speaker concludes by emphasizing that the Church of Jesus is most powerful when it humbles itself and relies solely on God, and encourages listeners to take time to be holy and spend time with Him.

Transcript

Secretary of Hebrews. We're going to need to move right along this morning. As I have been seeking the Lord about what to share, I've really been surprised because, you know, He always speaks to us where our needs are, not just according to the series.

And I believe that He has told me to kind of move off the track a little bit of the blood this morning and talk where our needs are. And so in Hebrews chapter 10, although it is along the lines of the blood, we want to look at verse 19. It says, Hebrews 10, 19, Having therefore brethren, sisters, boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his own flesh, and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. The reason we can do it is because he is faithful that promised. There are three havings in those verses.

Having therefore boldness, having a high priest, and having our hearts sprinkled. Back in chapter 9, verse 14, we know that our hearts are sprinkled with the blood. It's all the approach to God based upon the

blood, and we've seen that.

And our attitude in these verses, first of all, is a true heart. We've got to be honest with God, having a true heart, coming to God honestly. Second, with a full assurance of faith.

In what? Well, in that precious testimonial of the efficacy of his blood, having a heart full of assurance of faith, the fact that God's invited us. And then also, not only a true heart and full assurance of faith, but a cleansed heart, having our hearts sprinkled from guilt and an evil conscience because we've been honest. And then a body that is washed in pure water, a lifestyle that is being changed and washed and cleansed by the word.

And then we can come without any doubt and be before God. Well, I just felt the Lord would have me share this morning some thoughts on a much needed subject, especially for missionaries, especially for men and women of God who are leaders that I can't think of anything more important than what I'm going to share with you this morning. Have you ever sensed a deep futility in your own Christian life? Or either you've counseled somebody else, and they have all the facts, and they've been to seminars, and they've got bookworms, tapeworms, bookmoggled seminar-soaked, tape-traumatized.

They're just full. And you can't help them. And you don't know why.

And there's some reason. Well, truth is seen, it's admired, it's desired, but there seems to be an invisible barrier, kind of a wall there that you just can't get through, and you even may bump your head. Well, I want to talk about translating truth into living reality.

In your life, all the stuff you're getting, and this is my next to last shot at you, and I'm asking the Lord to make this session one that would make the whole two weeks worth it, because it'll affect you from now on in translating truth to living reality, making room in our lives for the Word of God so that we can draw near. That's God's goal for us. So, it's a great secret to bring transformation into our life.

This secret, though, is little known, and those that know it even often do not really emphasize it. I think we live in a day of instant everything. Even in other societies, they're becoming instant everything.

It's instant tea, instant coffee, instant gasoline, instant everything. And we think that there's instant Christianity, sensual satisfaction, psychedelic delight, mountains of unbelief all around us, but there's got to be the return to what I'm going to talk to you about. If you look in the Bible and you look in history, you'll find that every single life that God has ever used has known this secret.

This had impact on the society in which it lives. Isaiah, chapter 64, is where we'll begin from. And I would say to you this morning, if you'll let your heart listen and don't really concern yourself with trying to get down every word, because you will never do it, but let the heart, let the ear taste the words and the heart deposit it, and then let the Holy Spirit bring the reality of it.

Isaiah 64, verse 1, the cry of every heart that really knows and wants God. Isaiah 64, verse 1, O that thou would swim the heavens and that thou would come down and that the mountains might flow down at your presence. Mountains of sin, mountains of unbelief, mountains of fear.

Just thinking of what the mountains might be in your life. As when, in the same way, as when the melting fire burns, the fire causes waters to boil. To make your name known to your adversaries that the nations might tremble at your presence.

When you did awesome, terrible things which we looked not for, you came down. Mountains flowed down at your presence. For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, nor hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for them who waits for him.

Now that verse is quoted in 1 Corinthians, chapter 2. It's a New Testament scripture, and it really says something like this. It's obscure in Hebrew. It says, For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, neither hath the eye seen of God besides thee, who worketh for him, who waits for him.

That's what it literally says. Nobody has ever seen a God like you who works, who undertakes for him, who waits for him. What's it saying? Well, it's saying that God reveals to us by his Spirit certain things, and it happens when we are involved in a certain activity.

Look at verse 5. Thou meetest him that rejoices and works righteousness, those that remember you in thy ways. Behold, thou art angry. We have sinned in those your ways is continuous, will continue, and we shall be saved in them.

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have blown us away, taken us away. Neither is there none, there is none that calls upon your name, that stirs up himself to take hold of thee, for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us because of our iniquity. Iniquity is lawlessness.

It's being out of control of God. And this passage is a plea for dependence, for coming under God, and for taking time to seek him, and to wait for him, and to be in his presence. And it says, But now, O Lord, thou art our Father.

We are the clay, and you are our potter. We're all the work of your hand. You see, it's talking about waiting on God.

There's never been a God who's like you, Lord, who works in the life of the one who waits on you. Let me just give you some scriptures. Just jot these down as we go through.

I'll give you several, and you can look them up later. Lamentations 3.25 says, The Lord is good to those who wait for him. Now, when you and I think of wait, we think about waiting for a bus, or waiting for the phone to ring, or something.

But this is a different kind of waiting. There's a lot of different kinds of waiting in the Bible. The Bible says, O Lord, how great is thy goodness that you have laid up for those who fear thee, for those who reverence thee.

So what we're talking about is waiting on God. What do you think about when I say waiting on God? When I say waiting on God, what do you really think about? Like, you know, he's giving you a promise, and you're saying, Hurry up, Lord, hurry up. Well, that's not what I'm talking about.

Most people have the concept that they mean waiting on God to answer a prayer, or waiting on God to do something. That's not what I'm talking about. We write a letter, and we wait for a reply.

But you see, this waiting is more on the line of two lovers. And one's gone, and the other one says, I'll wait for him. I'll wait for him.

That's more of a waiting along that line. And it's only a fraction, though, of what waiting really means. Now, I want to take this morning, and our remaining time, and see what the Bible says waiting is.

And I think you're going to discover that there's a big hole in your life. There's a big hole in all of our lives when it comes to this. Psalm 104, verse 27.

Let me just read it to you. Psalm 104, verse 27. Listen to this.

As we look at, actually, two verses there. Verse 27 and 28, it says, talking about all that's described before, These wait all upon thee, that thou mayst give us them their meat in due season. That thou givest, they gather.

What you give, they gather. You open your hand, and they are filled with good. You see, all of creation, the animal kingdom, the creation of God, waits on God.

Not only did he create, but he maintains. They wait, he gives. If they're hungry, they wait on God.

See, this is an unconscious waiting. They're not waiting on God consciously. They're not consciously doing that.

But man is different. In Psalm 145, we see that man is to wait, yes, but he is to do it consciously. It's much different from the animals.

Psalm 145, verse 14, it says, The Lord upholds all that fall, and he raises up all of those that are bowed down. Verse 15, the eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Verse 16, you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Verse 17, the Lord is righteous in all his ways, holy in all his works. The Lord is near to all that call upon him. All that call upon him in truth or in reality.

He will fulfill the desire of those who revere or fear him. He will hear their cry, and he will save him. What is this really describing? It's describing a faith look.

See, is it really possible that all lack in the Christian life is due to the lack of waiting on God? Is it really true? I believe it really is. You see, when man was created, it was to be a vessel in which God could show himself in glory and in power. And mankind was designed not to attain, but to contain.

To live his life out as a demonstration of the character of God and live out of that divine supply. He was never designed to live apart from God, but to be utterly dependent in thought, word, and deed, in action and activity on the fullness of God. Every moment was receiving out of his fullness, and God was to be the atmosphere in which Adam lived.

Well, Adam, you know, believed a lie, and he fell. He thought, I can be a man without God. I can run my own business.

I can preach without the Holy Spirit, or maybe something like that. But his state became desperate, and he became darkened in deed. And apart from God, there was not the slightest hope of recovery out of death.

Man was helpless. And so God initiated what we've been talking about these days, redemption. He brought man back.

He turned man back. He let him go away and turned him back. He says, return to me.

Because he wanted man to love him. He wanted a family. And so men have no power at all to help themselves.

Whether they're lost or whether they are saved, they are helpless. You see, there's two lessons. We are guilty sinners.

Awesome, horrible, ugly lesson. We hate to come to that revelation. But even worse, I think, is not only am I a guilty sinner, but once I come to Jesus, unless I abide in him and receive from him, that even I am now a helpless saint.

You see, guilty sinner, helpless saint. That helpless saint is a hard pill to swallow. Our pride was to go out and win the world for Jesus in our own planning.

And we take the initiative to do things for God instead of doing the work of God, we're doing the work for God. And you see, waiting on God is so needed. We've got to come before God.

When we wait on him, we ascribe to him something. Waiting is ascribing to God all the majesty, all the glory, and all the power. Just like the end of the Lord's Prayer.

Thine is the kingdom, thine is the glory, thine is the power forever. It's only you, Lord. And we come before God, when we wait on him, and just be quiet.

That's what waiting on God is. Just coming before God and being quiet. There's other things that are involved in that.

But you see, it's just to realize who he is when we pray. When we're just before him. It's deeper than prayer, waiting on God.

Just coming before him and seeking to know him, seeking to adore him, resting in his presence, just loving him back and turning all your attention on him. And it's being what we are designed to be, a receiver. A receiver.

You see, the law of the universe is not activity, it's reception. We must live by receiving, not by attaining. So, waiting on God is dependence in action.

It's coming before him. And it expresses my commitment to him as my ultimate totality of being. My resource.

My Lord Jesus. And waiting on him affirms our basic decision to depend upon him only. That's what it affirms.

He's my source. There's nothing in me. But you see, even unconsciously, so often we think that we can do it on our own, don't we? You hear a teaching, and you say, one, two, three.

One, two, three. And we trust programs. We trust plans.

We trust methods. We trust men. Or we trust our own dedication to a truth to carry us through into something that will be.

And we try to live for Jesus in our own power. And without that conscious dependence, we're busy for God. And the needs are so great, we've got to get busy.

We've got to be about the Lord's work. And so we don't bother to wait upon God. We're so busy, we have no time for holiness.

You see. And we try to conquer and obey in our own strength. I like the question that was asked to the Korean minister who came to the United States after he saw the big edifice buildings and all the programs and nickels and noses.

He asked, what impresses you most about American Christianity? You know what his answer was? I think he must have gotten stoned after he said this. But he says, I'm amazed at how very much the church can do without God. And I think it's a word to hear.

Why don't we have this sense? Because you see, we don't have a sense of our absolute poverty. We're not poor in spirit. And we don't know our helplessness.

Only those who see their entire helplessness and their poverty will bother to wait upon God when they see their helplessness to work out that which is really good. And the starting point of waiting on God is our utter impotence. That's the starting point.

Seeing that I'm a helpless saint. I'm not only a hopeless sinner before I'm saved, but now I'm a helpless saint. Even though I know what to do, and I can principle you to death, I am powerless apart from his presence.

You see, there are three unchanging facts this morning. What we do for the Lord is entirely dependent on what we are in the Lord. Is that not true? What we do for the Lord is entirely dependent on who we are in the Lord.

But then building on that, who we are in the Lord depends totally on what we receive from the Lord. Is that not true? What we are in the Lord, or who we are, depends totally on what we receive from Him. And then the logical conclusion is, what we receive from the Lord is entirely dependent upon the time we spend waiting on God.

You see, and that's a stair step, but most of us, as I said, are so busy, because we think we know what He wants, doing things for God that we have no time for Him. And we don't give Him the time. We're busy saving the world in our own mind, in our own strength.

So we can give God no other glory than to really yield to Him. We can't do a thing for Him. And this is what He wants us to do, to give Him the glory of this being He had created.

I'll never forget when I heard Stephen Olford say, as a young man, he asked a dear friend of mine, old Vance Havner, he said, Dr. Havner, what is the secret to a godly life? And old Dr. Havner says, Solitude, young man, solitude. Solitude. That's one of the major goals of my life for next year.

Solitude. Solitude. Getting to know God.

Opening up the field of my heart, letting Him plow it, just plow it and plant it afresh, and getting along with God. You see, but waiting on God, when we're in such a high-strung society, and such a needy environment, it seems like such a waste of time, doesn't it? To wait upon God. When we're so used to

talking, I mean, now we never say that, but haven't we thought it? It seems like a waste of time to wait upon God.

But that's precisely why we're so impotent as a church. It's precisely why we have so clouded vision as a body. And you see, there are so little of the reality, of the living word.

We're full of knowledge and principles, but the power is there. It's like the businessman who knows everything, but he's short of wind and weak of heart and can't even go to work. But he could be a corporate giant if he had just the power in his own self, you see.

Waiting on God is the one great remedy for our needs. It's an act of soul surrender. It fills the soul with the awareness of God's presence.

And in our waiting, we soak the fabric of our being with who God is. It's like Moses in the mount. And God's presence actually takes us as its sounding board.

It takes denial and discipline to wait on God. And those are two strangers of words in a society like today. And in the wineskins in which our church today is placed, it cuts against the grain of society and self.

And so we place confidence in ourselves, in empty things, while we neglect the real power source. It's like having a lamp in your room and not bothering to plug it in. And messing with the switch and wondering why it's not working.

And calling the electric man and getting new bulbs and adjusting the shade and the height. Plug it in. Praying isn't necessarily waiting on God.

You see, in waiting on God, the soul must get still before God. Be still, my soul, and wait thou only on Him. Waiting on God requires all of our being.

It's not just idle passivity. We think that. It's not just coming and twiddling our thumbs in His presence.

But it's an exercise in keen attention. It's coming before God and we silence every noise to our soul. And there are plenty.

And every hangover of activity. We ban every flitting thought and we corral our mind and we turn everything away that would distract us from Him. And every faculty, every thought is toward Him and looking toward Him in expectancy and in worship.

Psalm 46.10 Be still and know that I am God. Be still and know that I am God. It's more than listening.

Although listening is a part. You may hear nothing. But it's the attitude of a soul expectantly, helplessly knowing God, you are God.

And it's just waiting before God. It is love without language. That's what waiting on God is.

It's when you come in silent surrender. Like it says in Zechariah 2.13 Be silent. Oh, all flesh before God in God's presence.

Be silent. Wait in Him. Wait on Him.

But you see, we fail to make the parallel that we say we have to spend time with someone to get to love them on earth. You have to spend time with God to get to know Him and love Him. Intimacy takes time.

I'll never forget the day I was in my study and I was really having to be under a burden of preparing. I was down to the wire. My son came in and I thought he wanted to talk.

And you know how it is. I said, son, what do you want? Usually I'll let him come in now since God's dealt with me on that and just talk to him no matter how busy I am. But you see, he came in and he says, Daddy, I don't want to talk.

I just want to be with you. And he just sat there. I couldn't even concentrate because I just was so blessed by the fact that he didn't want to say anything.

He didn't want to ask for anything. He didn't want to tell me anything. He just wanted to sit by me while I was working.

It just amazed me, you see. A child understood it. Words are inadequate to express love.

And when is our soul going to do this before God? Don't rush in the presence and out of the presence of the Lord. Go in, take the time. What will you have me do, Lord? And wait on him.

Wait. God's answer is immediately. As soon as Paul said to God, What will you have me do? He sent him out to solitude.

Three years. There's a world to save here. The early church is rolling.

And what church do you want me to pastor? Get alone. Hide yourself. You see, hide yourself.

You've got to get to know me. One thing is needful. Martha, Martha, you're troubled and distracted over many things, but one thing is needful.

Mary's chosen it. She's sitting at my feet. Every time you see Mary in the gospel, she's sitting at Jesus' feet.

I wonder if that's the reason she was the first person to see the resurrection. I wonder if that's the reason that she became the first preacher. And even the disciples didn't really understand.

You see, well, there are 18 words in the Hebrew for wait. 18 different words for waiting. And each one has a different flair or taste, but they're really just several words that sum it up and really give us a good idea.

Let's first take a word called chakal. C-H-A-K-A-L What does that mean? Chakal. This word for wait.

What it means to tarry. One thing is what it means. Or to adhere to.

Like paper sticking by glue to another piece of paper. Or to long for. Or to desire.

Confidently. Or to hook. You see, all that is in chakal.

And the scriptures, I'll just read them to you. Or you can turn if you're quick. Isaiah 30, verse 18.

Listen to this one. This is a blessing. And therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious to you.

And therefore will he be exalted that he may have mercy upon you. For the Lord is a God of method, not judgment. In the Hebrew, it's method.

God is a God who works by a method. And blessed are all those who wait for Him. That word for wait.

God is waiting. He is waiting for you to wait on Him. And when you wait on Him, He's gracious.

He's exalted. And His method is that He then comes and does those things when we wait on Him. He waits on us to be gracious.

It says, verse 18, Therefore will the Lord wait that He may be gracious unto you. What is humbling our soul before God that He may give grace to the humble in due time? It's coming before Him independence and poverty of spirit. He waits on us to be gracious.

He wants to bless us. The Father's heart yearns to do it. Happy are all of those who wait on Him.

But few there are that do it. There are two kinds of people in this room. I'm not thinking of anybody.

But there are those who wait on God. And those who keep God waiting. Which are you? Which are you? You're either one or the other.

You see, that same word, chakal, to hook, to tarry, to adhere to, to long for, is in Psalm 33, verse 18. Look at this one. Look at the importance placed upon waiting.

Psalm 33, verse 18. It says, Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon those that hope in His mercy to deliver their soul from death, to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the Lord.

Hook, adhere to, wait upon Him. Tarry. Because it says, He is our help and shield.

For our hearts shall rejoice in Him because we've trusted. See, it's the same thing as waiting. Trusted in His holy name.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us according as we hope in Thee. Well, how do you express hope in God? Waiting on God. Getting alone.

Looking to Him. Let Thy mercy be upon us according as we wait upon Thee. That's what it says.

Let Thy mercy be upon us according as we wait upon Thee. Verse 20 and 22, it's talking about there. Nothing is so sure of the fact as that waiting on God will bring untold blessings to a life that has yet not experienced them.

You see, He seeks to draw us into waiting on Him by every assurance He gives us that it won't be in vain. You know, He doesn't always want us to go to our friends first. He wants us to go to Him first.

God gives us a burden. It's like shaking up a Coke. And if you take off the Coke, it goes... You know how it does? But if you kind of loosen it, it goes... And it's nothing.

Then you open it later, and it's just... Like that. You see that? God puts a burden. He stores this up in our spirit.

And we go to our friends and go... And we get in His presence and go... He wants us to run to our closet and go... Pull out our soul before Him. And then go before Him in the strength of all that is. We just read in Isaiah 64.4 those words, God works for those who wait for Him.

God's waiting to be gracious for those who wait on Him. You see, we've got to realize this this morning. You don't.

I don't have what it takes. I'm glad. I'm really glad.

God is beginning to show me that more than ever in this move that I'm making. He is reducing me again to poverty of spirit. He's showing me the poverty of my own spirit, but the riches of His glory in His spirit.

And that's exciting. I'm really glad about that. Andrew Murray said this.

Wait on the Lord until you know you have met with Him. Take time in your chamber to bow and to worship. Wait on Him until He unveils Himself and takes possession of you.

Get quiet before God. Let Him soak down into the fabric of your being. Psalm 106, verse 11 is the word chakal, which is the word to hook, to tarry, to adhere to.

Psalm 106, verse 11. We read these words. The waters covered their enemies.

There was not one of them left. Then believed they His words. They sang His praise.

They soon forgot His works. They waited not for His counsel. After deliverance, after blessing, and after being principled in the things of God, they forgot His words, although academically they knew Him.

Why? Because they didn't have depth in their life. They weren't waiting on God. They forgot His counsel.

But they lusted. When you don't hear His voice, when you're not in His presence, the voice of the flesh gets louder. You see, it's all whose voice you're listening to.

They lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert, and He gave them their request, but sent lameness to their soul, giving them what they thought they wanted. They lost out on God's richest blessing. You see, great experience fills us with confidence in the churches today.

Oh, our church is so great. We've got this big thing here and all the rest, you see. And in the blessings, we forget God.

And we neglect Him. We quit waiting on Him because we think we don't need Him anymore. Unconsciously, we think that things take the place of God.

Programs take the place of the person. And in our ministry for the Lord, we must not neglect our ministry to the Lord, you see. That's our highest calling.

So take time to be holy. Well, the next word is kava. Q-A-V-A-H The Hebrew word is kava.

I should be using the overhead. But this word is different from chakal. Kava means to collect into one.

It's almost like a covenant word. To bring that together and unify or to bind together as if by a cord wrapping around. It's also carrying a word expectant, eager, to wait until it happens.

So it's really saying, bringing two to one, expectantly, eager, waiting until it happens. We all know that verse in Isaiah 40, 31. But it uses the word kava there for waiting.

Listen to this one. And keeping in mind, it means to bind together. And in this verse, it has a figure of a little bitty vine crawling up around a big cedar of Lebanon or an oak tree.

And all of a sudden, the oak tree's strength becomes the vine's strength because it's wrapped around it, you see. It says here, but they are... It says, Even the youth will faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that kava, wait upon the Lord, shall exchange or collect into one, unify their strength.

They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They will run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint, waiting on God.

It doesn't mean waiting on Him to do it with you out there, waiting until He comes through. It means getting in His presence and saying, Lord, I can't. And He entwines Himself in your very being.

They that are joined to the Lord are one spirit. One spirit. 1 Corinthians 6, 17.

It literally would mean here something like exchange. They that wait upon the Lord shall exchange their strength, my impotence for His almightiness, my nothingness for His allness. You see, this is rising up effortlessly on the wind like the eagle and soaring far over all in the strength of another.

And putting my strength around the big tree, bound together in His strength. But you see, this comes out even more in Psalm 25. Looking in Psalm 25, verse 3. You know, I don't know if this is helpful, but I'm praying God will plant this in your heart and that you will be called away, called away from the hustle and bustle to the secret place of the Most High.

Psalm 25, verse 3. Yea, let none that wait on Thee kava, waiting, twining together, expectantly waiting. Let none that wait on Thee be ashamed. Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

Show me Thy ways, O Lord. Teach me Thy paths. When does He do that? When you're waiting on Him.

Lead me in Thy truth and teach me, for Thou art the God of my salvation. On Thee do I wait all of the day. Verse 21.

Let integrity and uprightness preserve me because I wait upon Thee. See, I take time to be holy. I get in God's presence.

I'll tell you something. As I prayed about this, bringing this message, I didn't feel even like I could open my mouth because God has been constraining me more and more. Get in the closet.

Get in the closet. Prayer is the winning blow. Waiting on God is the winning blow.

Service and preaching is just picking up the results. Get with me. Well, God wants to manage our lives and the acknowledgement of His sovereignty and His resource is that beginning of meeting the need in our own life.

Look at Psalm 27. I think you can handle turning to these with me. Psalm 27, verse 14.

Look at that one. Did you know this was in the Bible? This could be the key in your life, sister, brother. Psalm 27, verse 14.

Wait upon the Lord. Actually, let's read 13. I had faded unless I had seen to believe.

No, that's the world's way it would say it. I have faded unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living in the same breath. Describe what believing is really all about.

Looking and seeing what God is about. Wait upon the Lord. Be of good courage and He will strengthen thine heart.

Wait, I say, upon the Lord. What a blessing. What a real blessing.

You see, it's a command and a promise. Look back at verse 1 of that same chapter. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? Look at verse 4. One thing have I desired of the Lord and that's what I'm going to seek after. That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to behold, to look at the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple.

Verse 7. Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice. Have mercy upon me. Answer me.

When thou saidst, Seek my face, not hand, not feet. Seek my face, my heart, not mind, not hands, not actions. My heart said to thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

Hide not thy face far from me. Put not thy servant away in anger. You have been my help.

Leave me not. Neither forsake me. You see, this is a command and a promise.

Verse 14. Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage and He will strengthen your heart.

Wait, I say, on the Lord. It's a command and a promise. Get alone with God and let Him speak to you.

Well, Isaiah 49, verse 3, is that same word. Kava. Kava.

Isaiah 49, verse 3. That's not the right scripture, but it's a scripture in that area. You can look it up later. I know it's there, so I just quoted it.

It says, They shall never be ashamed that wait on thee. They shall never be ashamed that wait on thee. And so, that's a promise to us.

Let me just take you to Lamentations 3, 25. Verse 23. Okay, Isaiah 49, verse 23.

Okay, it's the latter portion. They shall never be ashamed that wait on thee. Thank you, sister.

Isaiah 49, 23. Now look at Lamentations, chapter 3, verse 25, where it says the following. Lamentations 3, right after Jeremiah.

Lamentations 3, 25. This precious, precious one short verse. It says, The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him and to the soul that seeks for Him.

Waiting and seeking are equated. So, I would say to you this morning, persevere and get before Him in your helplessness. Look at Hosea 12, 6. Keep going to the right.

First minor prophet, Hosea 12, 6. And you'll see another promise. You know, if you're thinking you're being hard on your Bible, just remember the person whose Bible's coming apart isn't. Hosea 12, 6. Therefore turn thou to thy God.

Keep mercy and justice and wait upon thy God continually. Get before God and wait continually. You see, God will put into you what He wants out of you.

You'll never find it unless you wait for Him. God puts it in when we wait on Him and then brings it out. So, like an army sent out to war, God sends us out.

But you can imagine how an army is going out to fight on the front lines and they have to stop. And someone says, Why are you waiting? What would they answer? We're waiting for supplies. We're waiting for the necessary ingredients to wage a war.

Who can go to war without supplies? Imagine an army going out with sticks and stones against another army. You've got to wait. Well, we need His supply every moment, every day, every moment.

And the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God. To the pulling down of strongholds and taking down every high thing. And those are things in us, not them.

We wait before God and He tears down. He is ready to revenge all disobedience when our obedience is fulfilled, it says. In 2 Corinthians 12, 6, it's talking about us doing the things in God's presence.

And the devil's goal is to cut off your supply lines, friend. If you can cut off the supply lines of an army, you've got them. And that's what he's trying to do to the church.

Busy, but barren. You know, I used to think that being busy made you barren. But I've discovered that busyness covers up barrenness.

God does. It's fig leaves. Fighting a war without supplies.

Rubber bullets, wooden swords, paper helmets, and bows without arrows. Trying to scare the enemy. He's not scared of that stuff.

You see, even in the natural things, we tend to become like our environment, don't we? You know, if you work in the desert, you'll become dry and sandy. If you work in water, you'll become wrinkled and wet and chapped. And if you work in chicken manure, well, that's obvious, isn't it? You become like it.

I've been around farmers who worked in it, and they could never get it off of them. And they were an unsweet-smelling saver of their work. Well, that's exactly what the Scriptures say in 2 Corinthians 3.18. It's exactly what they say.

We become like that to which we are related environmentally the most. And it says in 2 Corinthians 3.18, we all with an unveiled face reflect them as in a glass. It's the glory of the Lord.

We are metamorphosized. We are changed into that same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. Moses was alone with God, and his face shone.

Someone said one time, oh, look, my face is shining, isn't it? It's kind of like Moses, isn't it? And he said, almost, except he didn't know his was shining. He wished not his face was shining. You see, but as we get alone with God, we begin to be changed by the Spirit of God.

And that's what he says. We become like that in which we are. Don't be mistaken.

Evil communications corrupt good manners. If you're going to run with dogs, you're going to become like one. If you're going to spend time with God, you're going to become like Him by the Spirit of God.

You see, Psalm 34, verses 4 to 6. Let me read you that one. The Lord just bind His words to our hearts. I read it again, but I want to read it.

Psalm 34, verse 4. I don't think I have read it. I sought the Lord and He heard me. Hallelujah.

And delivered me from half of my fears. All of my fears. And they looked unto Him and they were radiant.

It says literally. Their faces were not ashamed. This poor man, poverty of spirit, cried.

And the Lord heard him and saved him out of all of his troubles. You see, poverty of spirit, calling on God, waiting in His presence, becoming like Him, face is not ashamed, face becoming radiant. Like in the New Testament, these men have been with Jesus.

You see, they don't know anything, but they've been with Jesus. You see, I don't care if they say, well, he's been to seminary, he's been in India, he's been here and there preaching. You know what I really want them to say? Hey, he has to have been with Jesus.

He has to have been with Jesus because the aroma of His presence is on our robes. Like cologne, but a living presence on us. Psalm 130, verse 5 and 6, My soul waits for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning.

My soul waits for the Lord more than the man who's yearning for the morning to come up. Well, a third word, we've got to hurry, for waiting is the Hebrew word damam, D-A-M-A-M, damam. Oh, this one, this one is really something.

See, all those last words I just read you about waiting, where the word to bind together and expectancy, to exchange strength, this one is different. Damah, damam. It's silent expectation, silent expectation, or to be astonished without words, to have no words, to be astonished.

It's an inward wail. It carries that word with it. It's when you're inwardly wailing or deeply grieving.

Damam, motionless, as with the silence of death. You see, in that, too, we honor God. Psalm 62, verse 1. Truly, my soul waits upon God.

From Him only comes my salvation. At the end of His rope, dashed, cast down, overwhelmed, coming, falling before God as if a dead man. Truly, my soul, damam, upon the Lord.

For Him only comes my salvation. Psalm 62, verse 5. My soul waits thou only upon God. He's my only help when everything else is sinking.

When everything else is sinking. Psalm 34, verse 17 and 18. The righteous cry the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.

The Lord is near unto all of those that are of a broken heart and saves such as be of a contrite spirit waiting on God. Psalm 65, verse 1 and 2. I love this verse. Psalm 65, verse 1 and 2 about waiting, that astonished silence in the presence of God.

Praise, waiteth for thee. In other words, I can't praise you now, Lord. I'm astonished.

I'm in grief. But praise is coming. Praise, praise, waiteth for thee, O God in Zion.

And unto thee shall the vow be performed. I'm going to look to you. O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

Praise waits for thee. And unto thee will the vow be performed. You're worthy, even in this, of my waiting.

And I'm going to look to you no matter what. Well, we've cited Lamentations 3.25. But the word in 3.26 talks about astonished waiting. This word, damam.

You see, because it's a funeral dirge. The whole thing is written in a bump, bump. Bump, bump.

Bump, bump. The whole thing of Lamentations. It's like he's saying, look, you're having a funeral here.

You're having a funeral. But it says in Lamentations 3.26, it says, It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. Silent astonishment.

It's good to be separated from everything. Bankrupt, without words, looking to Him, prostrating our whole being before Him. It's good.

It doesn't seem good. But you see, what it does is, it reduces us to Jesus. How can you say Jesus is all you need until He's all you have? We can't.

He's got to be all we have. Habakkuk 2.20. Another time of trial and crisis. Judgment on a godless society.

God is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silent before Him. That word, wait, is not there, but the attitude is there.

So you see, waiting on God, this is so key. And this will jolt, maybe, your mind. As I've been talking about it, maybe you've seen waiting on God as a means to an end.

But it's not just a means to an end. It is the end. It's what God is after.

Waiting upon God is not a means to an end. Waiting in His presence is that of which He is worthy. I don't wait on Him for this result and that result.

I wait on Him because He's worthy of my time. He's worthy to adore God for just who He is, to look to Him in all that He desires, to acknowledge our own nothingness in His allness. Romans 9.16, that familiar verse, It is not of man that willeth or that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy.

After you've made your best plans, Romans 9.16, after you've done all your best will and dedicated yourself, it's nothing. It's God who shows mercy. Therefore will He wait for those who wait on Him.

He'll work for them. He waits to be gracious to those who wait on Him. Silence is a very rare thing today.

Very rare. In fact, we are packed and bombarded with sound. I went away for three days not long ago to be absolutely quiet and after about the second day I was just yearning to hear an air hammer, or yearning to hear a radio, yearning to hear a human voice because I was soaked with sound.

It gets in you, you know. You get addicted to it. And after I got beyond that hurdle, God began to speak to me.

When every other voice got quiet. You see, it seems awkward to us. We've sent people away on retreats to get along with God and they've come back, ooh, it makes me nervous.

Why do you think people always have to have the radio blaring and everything else? Why do you think that? Well, I'll tell you something, it drowns out reality. It drowns out reality because in the stillness and quietness comes His voice. And so we have the radio when we do this.

Even Christians do this. I'm going to tell you, I love music as much as anybody, but I'll tell you, I get sick of getting in the car and throwing in the Christian music cassette every time. I get tired of it.

I want to ride in silence. I want to just let God soak into my soul and I want to just love Him. You know, we have to always be bouncing.

Listen, what kind of thing are you putting in there all the time? Just get quiet. It may make you nervous. That's because you're trapped in a noisy society, you see.

But I'll tell you something, silence before God is what opens us up to the stillness of the eternal. And God begins to move in. What peace, the riverbed of life, begins to flow in, and that love, and that power, and that truth.

Well, the last word that I'm going to quickly give you, I'm not even going to really go into it, is the word YAHAL. Y-A-H-A-L. This is only 4 of 18.

But it means to hope. To hope. Or to be patient and expectant with a long delay.

It means that you're continually waiting on God. And you're not discouraged because you know His character. And this is a tremendous verse in Psalm 71, verse 10 to 16.

I'll read you. Psalm 71, 10 to 16. Mine enemies are speaking against me, and they lay wait together for my soul.

They've taken counsel. They're saying, God has forsaken him. Persecute.

Take him. There's no one left to deliver him. O God, be not thou far from me.

O my God, make haste for my help. Let them be confounded and consumed that are adversaries to my soul. Let them be covered with reproach and dishonor that seek my hurt.

Therefore I will hope. That's that word for wait. It's translated hope here.

Therefore will I wait on God continually. And I'm going to praise you more and more. My mouth will show forth your righteousness and your salvation all the day.

For I know not the numbers thereof. I will go in the strength of the Lord God. I will make mention of thy righteousness, not mine, yours.

I'm not going to defend myself. I'm not going to try to defend all the things I've been doing. I'm going to wait on God.

Get along with Him. And I'm going to talk about how good He is. My enemies, rise up.

I just pray that we learn to wait before Him. You know, there may be some in this room who've never waited before Him. You have never really seen this key.

But you'll never find a man or woman of God that was used by God that didn't learn to wait on Him. I don't care how much they studied the Bible. They're theorists.

God takes the Word of God in our head and drops it with a flaming holiness to our heart when we wait on Him. You see, the Word of God in the head, that's knowledge, becomes the fire of God in the heart when we have reality, when we wait upon Him. And when we wait on Him, He endues us.

He enlightens us. He reveals to us. He strengthens us.

And a heavenly, eternal calm descends on and remains in our soul. You can be around people and you just feel authority and confidence and peace. I'll never forget going into a bar one night to witness.

And I was talking to a table of black people. I walked over and sat down and began to talk to them about the Lord. I was frightened to pieces.

And my outer man, once I opened my mouth, God's power and peace came forth. I mean, I just exploded on them, just talking, talking, just consistently. And one of them said, Hey man, stop, stop.

I don't know what you're saying. And I don't know whether I believe it or not, but I know one thing. You got peace.

And I don't have peace. Where'd you get that peace? I said, the Prince of Peace, man. The Prince of Peace.

You see, quiet, waiting on God. Well, how can I, how can God give to me when I'm not doing anything? Grace. You see, grace, that shows our mindset.

How can God give to me when I'm not doing anything? Oh, get off of that. And get back to grace. Come boldly, as we read first, into the throne room by the precious blood of Jesus.

That's the way we come. And we wait before Him. And He is waiting to be gracious.

You think that He can't give you something when you're not doing anything? Listen to this verse in Psalm 127. And I've got to quit. But Psalm 127, just listen to this verse.

It says in verse 2, It is vain for you to rise up early and to sit up late. Oh God, that convicts me. To eat the bread of sorrows, for He giveth His beloved sleep.

It says literally, in their sleep He gives to the beloved. While you're sleeping. God gives you things.

Job tells us that He withdraws men from their purpose and keeps us from pride. While we're sleeping. Well, how can He do that while you're sleeping, grace? He can do it while you're waking.

So, you know, it doesn't matter whether you wake or sleep. We live together with Him. And He is the God of our salvation.

And you'll never find time to wait on God. So, let your concerns drive you to Him. Not to worry.

Not to your friends. One hour waiting on God can change your whole life. I'll tell you something.

It's the secret of God that He wants to make known. He wants to make it known. How can I get out of this slump? How can the Word of God become a reality? How can I put faith to my faith? Get on your knees.

And wait before God. The Church of Jesus is the only arm in the world that marches on its knees. Never stands taller than when it's lowest.

Never has more power than when it's impotent. Never is richer than when it's bankrupt. See, it's a heavenly paradox.

God must be the explanation for our lives. And He wants to be the only explanation. They scratch their head and say, what happened? It must have been God.

So, wait upon the Lord. And He will put in you what He requires out of you. He will.

He will. He'll put into you what He requires out of you. Instead of trying to work it up by dedication, your own understanding, take time.

Oh, bless that hymn writer, Lord. He's being blessed. He's with the Lord today.

Take time to be holy. Get along with Him. Prune.

Let Him prune you. Well, let's have prayer. Father, I pray You'll bind these words to our hearts.

And that these simple little lesson that is just telling us what we know we ought to by the Spirit. We know these things. But this driving it home.

May it be driven home to the very heart. May our resistance perish today. And may we become men and women who wait upon the Lord continually all the day.

Experiencing Your goodness. Receiving Your grace. Seeing You work for those who are waiting for You.

May we be those who see God move as we behold the salvation of our God. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

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