

What It Means to Wait Upon the Lord

by Al Whittinghill

Waiting upon the Lord means to have a conscious dependence on Him, trusting in His power and provision to meet our needs.

Duration: 1:03:14

Scripture: Psalm 25:3, Psalm 27:14, Psalm 106:11, Isaiah 30:15, Isaiah 64:1, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Waiting On The Lord"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of becoming mighty in spirit and building a fortification in our hearts and lives against worldly pressures. The speaker emphasizes the need for daily choices and commitment to change our hearts and prepare ourselves for blessings from God. The sermon also highlights the significance of waiting upon God and being blown away by His deliverance from enemies. Additionally, the speaker mentions the importance of being watchmen and coming into God's presence to receive His guidance and make our lives a riverbed of light. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the value of truth in our hearts and lives, rather than just in our heads or notebooks, and the transformative power it can have if acted upon.

Transcript

Well, last night we talked about becoming mighty in spirit, how to become a man of iron. And we saw the secret that God has, that's not really a secret, but it has appeared to be a secret because of our busyness, I suppose, of giving and fasting and praying to build a fortification in our heart and life against the pressures of the world and the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. And God has us in an inner school of faith.

Our senses, Hebrews 5 says, are being exercised to discern between good and evil. God wants us to choose every day. And all spiritual growth really begins as a response to God, it's a commitment of our will.

You think back to the real growth in your life and it's a commitment of your spiritually energized will. Not man's will, but man's will with God inside of that. So, just as the enemy can build a stronghold of unrighteousness in our life, and he has over the past, so can God build a stronghold of righteousness.

The devil, unrighteousness, the Lord, righteousness. Brick by brick we can take down those strongholds of unrighteousness and as we choose properly, daily, crying unto the Lord and choosing to give and fast and

pray and to obey and to seek his face and prepare our hearts, he will build a fortress of faith in our life, in our families. And we can sow in the Spirit.

If we sow sparingly, we will tend to reap sparingly. But if we sow abundantly, we will have an abundant harvest. And so this morning I want to talk about another truth that we can take home, because that's where the real battle will be won or lost.

Not how wonderful you leave here, but when you get home and the onslaught of the enemy happens and you be able to stand firm. How can you be strong and how can you enter into this life of victory and abide in his grace? How can we be rid of this deep futility that has characterized so many lives in our day, where we feel that truth just seems to be known by us, but it's out of reach. You ever felt like that? I have.

Boy, when I know many things, but I just can't seem to lay hold of it. And it kind of seems like we said the other night, like window shopping, where you're admiring it and you're hearing it and you see it in others, but you just can't seem to get it for yourself. How does truth translate into a living reality, into my everyday experience? There's a great foundational key and it's part of prayer.

But prayer is as big as God, brother. There's no great frontier as big and as unexplored as prayer. The church has not even begun in our day to really learn about prayer.

No Christian profession deserves to be called genuine that is not backed by the practical reality and life experience. Jesus said, by their fruits you know them. And we've got to become doers of the word of God.

Our wives, our dogs should see a difference when we get home. Our pets, our neighbors, they should see a difference. And so this is a rather shattering truth that truth possessed in our heads or in our notebook is really of no value at all.

If it's just in our heads or just in our notebooks. In fact, it is harmful because you see, if it's not in our heart and life, it becomes hypocrisy, which is drawing near to him with our lips, but our hearts being far from him. It becomes deception when we think we know something, but we're not doers of the word and we're deceiving our own selves.

And it becomes pride because knowledge alone puffs up. But when God makes it real, it will break you down and you'll leave humbled and sobered in your heart and spirit. So this morning we're going to share a great secret in the life of the Christians.

That is, if it's acted upon, if our wills lay hold of it in the ongoing days, it will transform our very lives. It's how to be free from this idea that we have to have instant everything. Instant breakfast, instant tea, instant TV dinners, instant Christianity.

Brother, God's going to keep you growing and going until the very day you lay your cross down in your open grave. And then the cross you carried toward heaven will carry you to heaven as you lay it down. And he says, enter thou into the joy that your father has prepared.

Mountains of unbelief will just crumble before you if you walk in this truth. And you will be able to apply those things we talked about last night in real power. It's going to be a Bible study this morning.

I look in the Bible based upon a survey of church history that will show us that this practice we're going to look at was a part of every single life in the history of the church or in the Bible that was ever used by God

in power. You'll never be used by God if you don't learn this truth this morning. Now, God, at least like he wants to use you, he may use you.

He can use Balaam's donkey if he wants to. But he'll never use you like he wants to. Look at Isaiah chapter 64.

And we want to read. We're going to take many, many scriptures this morning. But I'm just asking, could it be that the neglecting of this great truth that we're going to cover this morning is the reason why there's so little power in the church? God says it's vital.

And as you hear this, you may not think it's vital. Well, that will gauge where we are in our day. Isaiah chapter 64, verse one, the cry for revival of the prophet.

He's looking around. He's seeing mountains of unbelief, mountains of sin, mountains of heartache. Oh, that you would come.

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and that you would come down, that the mountains might flow down at your presence, like when the melting fire burned and the fire caused the waters to boil, to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations may tremble at your presence. When you did awesome things which we weren't expecting, you came down. The mountains flowed down at your presence.

For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor have they perceived by their ear, neither has the eye seen, O God, beside thee what he has prepared for them who wait for thee. Now, what that says literally in the Hebrew there is, neither has the eye seen a God who besides thee works for him who waits for him. That's what it says.

God works for those who wait for him. And it's saying that natural revelation, our slide rules, our intellectual apprehension, our emotional laying hold has never even come close to laying hold of the goodness of God of what he really has. This verse is quoted over in 1 Corinthians chapter 2. I'll just read it from there.

Listen to what it says in 1 Corinthians chapter 2 as the New Testament gives light on that verse, verse 9 of chapter 2, 1 Corinthians. As it is written, eye has not seen, ear has never heard, it's never entered into the heart of man, the good things that God has prepared for them that love him. So here we see loving God and waiting upon God equated by the Holy Spirit.

So this is a discipline of love, what we're going to talk about this morning. But then the next verse says, but God has revealed these things to us by his Spirit. For the Spirit searches the deep things of God.

Then it says that God's things are revealed to us through the Spirit. It's implying that as we wait upon the Lord, God will reveal to us the other realm. Now look, let's look at some scriptures in a moment.

I'm going to read you several scriptures in the book of Lamentations, a little tiny little book after Jeremiah chapter 3, verse 25. And I jot these down and look at them later, these scriptures. Listen to this verse, Lamentations 3:25.

The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. So here waiting on God is equated with seeking God. What does it mean to wait upon the Lord? What does that mean? I mean, it's Lamentations 3:25, brother.

We hardly hear about waiting upon God. When was the last time you heard a sermon about waiting upon the Lord? But yet this is so central in the Word of God that it's amazing to me that we don't hear about what it really means to wait upon the Lord. Perhaps that's because our society is in such a hurry.

And we need to learn what this means. The Bible says, O Lord God, how great is your goodness that is laid up for those who reverence you. So loving God, reverencing God is the equivalent of waiting on God.

What do you think when you hear those words, wait upon the Lord? Most people have the concept that waiting upon the Lord has the idea like we pray and then we just sit around waiting for him to answer. Is that kind of what you think? We wait upon God like we throw a rock up in the air and we wait for it to hit the ground. That's kind of, are you sitting waiting for a bus that's late? Well, that's not what it really means to wait upon the Lord.

Lord, why haven't you heard me? I'm waiting. It doesn't mean that. Waiting upon the Lord is more along the line of two lovers, like Chip and his wife, and like Benson and his wife, who apart for the first time this conference newly wins.

And they're waiting, just waiting to get back together, longing, expecting. At least I hope it's that way, brother. But you see, but this, even this is only a fraction of what waiting really means.

Let's just see what the Bible says about waiting. And I'm praying that if you get this down in your spirit, you'll go home and you'll see, you know, those boring silences in your prayer closet sometime can be turned into absolute, awesome, breathless wonder. I mean, it'll blow your mind when you see what waiting really means.

Psalm 104. Look at that. Psalm 104.

And we'll look at what, first of all, a practical teaching from the Psalms here about the animal kingdom waiting upon God. Look at Psalm 104, verse 27. It says, talking about the animal kingdom, specifically, 104, verse 27.

These wait all upon thee, so that you may give them their food in due season. Talking about how God feeds the animals and the creatures of the world. You ever thought how much money it would take for one man to try to even feed the birds on this earth? I mean, all the Central Pacific Railroads and everybody else have to take birdseed and the guys out there shoveling, getting it there, and they couldn't even do it.

But God just does it. And it says that those little birds wait upon thee and you may give them their food in due season. What you give to them, they gather and you open your hand and they are filled with good.

You hide your face and they're troubled. You take away their breath. They die.

They return to the dust. You see, it's talking about the animal kingdom there. Not only did he create them, but he maintains them and what he gives, they take.

But they're waiting on him. Now, what does this mean? Have you ever seen a horse out waiting in a field for God to provide the grass? No, it's an unconscious thing for the animal kingdom. It's a dependency on the Lord, but it's not a conscious thing.

But with man, it is different. Look at Psalm 145. And you see in those verses very close to where we read earlier this morning, Psalm 145, verse 14, 15, and 16, it almost sounds the same as the animal kingdom,

but it says in verse 14, the Lord upholds all of those that fall.

He raises up all those who be bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon thee and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

And then it talks about, you see, waiting about how the Lord is righteous and he's holy and he will hear those hearts who call upon him in reality. Our eyes are on him. What does it mean for men to wait upon the Lord? It's this.

It's a conscious dependence. It's a faith. Look, as God designed our lives to look to him and be enlightened and to be saved and to expectantly watch toward him and for our whole resource for living.

So I would pose to you the question, is it possible that the great lack in every Christian life is due to a lack of waiting upon God? What does it mean to wait upon God? Well, let's just think back for a moment of when God made man. He made man so that we could be a vessel, a riverbed of light, a glove for his hand, a light bulb to emanate his radiance and a conductor to emanate his heat to others. And God would show forth his love and his power and his praise.

So man was to live his life by divine supply. He would be like a deep sea diver in the world, but not of it. And he would be connected by a vital source called the Holy Spirit to Heavenly Father.

And he was never meant to live without the life of God. He was to be utterly and totally dependent morally and lovingly upon the person of God. Everything he did was to live and move and have his being in the fullness of God.

God was to be his breath, his atmosphere. But you see, when man fell, mankind became totally desperate. And so he died in that moment of sin, and he was totally dead in trespasses and sin.

He was unable to salvage himself. And out of this state, being helpless, he couldn't do anything at all to help himself. So God initiated redemption to come and recover man from, you might say, the dump, the trash heap.

Now, man has no power at all to recover himself. It's like a man in the bottom of the ocean trying to get to the surface. He can't get up.

And only God can reach down and pull him up. Well, when we wait upon the Lord, we are ascribing to him the glory of being all. That's the creature coming before God and saying, Lord, you are everything, and we have an utter need of you.

What does it mean to wait upon the Lord? It means this, and this is so rare. It's when we come before God and just be quiet. We come before God and we just be quiet, just me and the Lord Jesus alone.

Some of you experienced a little bit of that as you read Psalm 84 to 86. But you see, we're so used to noise in our society. I'm telling you, Christians can't stand to be quiet.

We get in our car and right away it's popping it in and these great crescendoing songs, and I love them. But I'm telling you what, we always have to have noise around us. You know what noise does? I'll never forget a retreat we went on, and this teenage boy who was having problems, we sent him out to be alone with God.

And about 10 minutes later, he came back and said, oh, I don't like to be quiet like that. It makes me nervous. I want some noise.

I can't stand to be alone. You know why, brother? Because when you're alone with God, the stillness of eternity begins to soak down into the fabric of your soul, and noise grounds out reality. But when we get quiet before God, his voice seems to lilt out through the ages into our hearts.

And when we come and we just get before him and realize who he is. There's a brother in this room whose daddy died rather unexpectedly for man, not unexpectedly for God. And it really blessed me once when he told me how this all happened and what happened to him.

It didn't bless me that his dad was found dead, but his dad was found at his business back in his chair like this, just he died suddenly. And my dear brother wasn't expecting this emotionally. And he went in before God and he was asking God, I guess he was frustrated and he was talking to the Lord.

He was looking for a word and he was needing comfort and nothing was coming and he was concerned. And one little word came to his heart as I remember him telling me, may not be exactly the way it happened exactly, but it was something like worship me. And he just got quiet and began to worship God.

And in that worship comfort came. God gave him what he lacked and ministered to him in his great need. It wasn't a matter of him working up the answer in the scripture or getting his thoughts right.

It was just silence before God. See, that's what the Bible says. Be still and know that I am God, just me and the Lord coming in to seek him, to know him, to sit in his presence, to let his fire catch my robes on fire, to let his water soak down into the fabric of my soul, to receive from him and to give to him what is his worthy due.

It's his dependence and worship. You see, waiting on God is dependence in action. Even though you're doing nothing, it's dependence in action.

And it expresses utter commitment to the Lord Jesus, it's conscious faith, waiting on God. We affirm our basic decision to depend totally on him. And we're saying there is nothing in me.

This is what the Bible says, I believe, when it says poverty of spirit, blessed are the poor in spirit. The word is potokos in the Greek, and it means like a beggar, destitute, and it almost implies leprosy. But he's out there and he's got his head in his hands down like this and he's got his hands out like this and he's just he's looking for help.

He's destitute. He can't help himself. Anyone that comes by, he's looking for something because he's totally needy.

And Jesus said, blessed is the leprous, helpless beggar who can't help himself because to him comes the kingdom of God, the broken in heart, the one who has nothing but Jesus. Brother, you'll never know that Jesus is all you need until he's all you have. Well, how can you be all I have? Because unless you forsake everything in your heart, then you can't really be his disciple.

We've got to become poor in spirit. And there is one who makes himself rich but has nothing, the Bible says. He sendeth the rich away empty-handed, it says, but they're those who are poor in spirit, belong to the kingdom of heaven.

So often, you see, we think we can do it. There's this inherent pride. Sometimes when you pray for brothers and you're praying with them and we pray for one another, we pray for the other brother's pride, if we're trying to deal with our pride, we're reluctant to really talk about it.

You know, like we're really trying, so we don't even want to recognize it's there. But brother, there's a creature pride in us, not a kind that says, I'm so great. There's a pride that's like grain in the wood of those chairs you're sitting on.

It's still there. It's a centrality of being that God has to continually decentralize us. And we try to live for Jesus unconsciously in our own powers.

And when we don't wait upon the Lord, you see, we unconsciously begin to try to live the Christian life without the supply that can live it. You can't live the Christian life, I can't live the Christian life. We tend to trust all those things we've been talking about all weekend or even our own sincerity.

And as we wait before God for a moment, we get nervous because we hear people saying the needs are so great around us. We must be about the Lord's work. Don't waste so much time being quiet.

And so we don't wait upon the Lord and we go out and conquer in our own flesh. In the Psalms, whenever they didn't seek counsel of God, they acted on past life. They acted on what they thought God would always act like.

They presupposed how he would respond in a situation and they didn't seek counsel of God and they got in trouble every time. God let them get in trouble every time. So why do we not wait upon the Lord? You know why? Because we don't have a sense of our poverty and our helplessness.

And we need this sense of brokenness. We need this morning to say, Lord, break me. In fact, God is busy breaking his people.

Only the one who senses his total need and desperation in themselves to work what's good will bother to wait upon the Lord. It's the starting point of receiving. When I come before him broken and waiting in utter impotence.

Now there's three unchanging facts then that usher us into this topic on waiting. Number one, and I want you to see if you think this is true, what we do for the Lord is entirely dependent on who we are in the Lord. Is that true? What we do for the Lord is entirely dependent on who we are in the Lord.

That's true, wouldn't you say? Some of you aren't sure. It's true. You can do a lot on your own, but it's not for the Lord.

It's not. There's a lot of work for the Lord. It's not the work of the Lord.

What we do in the Lord and through the Lord is entirely dependent on who we are in him. Secondly, though, who we are in the Lord depends totally upon what we receive from the Lord. Would you say that's true? What we receive from him, because a man can receive nothing except it comes down from the Father.

But thirdly, what we receive from the Lord, this is the key point, is dependent upon the time we spend waiting upon God. Brother, what we are in the Lord, who we are, is dependent upon time we spend waiting upon God. It's not the reward of works, but it's like God having time with us.

You know, if you work, you know, I have a friend in Statesville, North Carolina, who has a chicken house, and he was down here, you know, he sent \$80 to our ministry not long ago, and I was chuckling as he was telling me that they took out 200, get this now, brother, this is a lot of trouble, 240 tons of chicken manure he took out of this big house, I mean, out of this big chicken barn. I said, man, that's almost a half a million pounds of chicken manure. And I said, man, and he said, I said, can you get anything for that stuff? And he says, well, let's see, we get about, there's 12 tons of truck load, and we get about \$34.

And I started tabulating up in my mind, and I said, what a sacrifice you've made, brother. \$80, let's see, that's about 27 tons of chicken manure. And I really began to appreciate that offering that he had sent.

I don't know why I said all that, but except to say that I was going to make this statement. Chicken manure is a very, very disgusting thing. If you work around chicken manure, you'll become like chicken manure.

I mean, you can't, it's in your pores. You can't get it out. You smell like chicken manure.

If you go into water, you'll become like water. You'll have wrinkly skin. If you go out in the sun, you'll become, it'll become obvious because you've been in that sunlight.

You'll be red or brown. If you go and are in the desert, and you spend time there, your skin will dry out. You see, what I'm saying is that we tend to become like our environment.

And the Bible wants us to make God our environment. So many of us are so busy for God, busy for the Lord, we have no time to give to him. Busyness crowding out holiness.

But we can give God no other glory than to yield to him. Stephen Offord once asked as a young man, old Dr. Havner, Dr. Havner, what's the secret of a godly life? And old Dr. Havner, who was old even then, looked at him and said one word, solitude, young man, solitude. One word, solitude.

The most important time of your life is the time you spend alone with God. Bar nine, that's the most important time of your entire life. But waiting on God seems like such a waste of time, Al.

It's so unproductive. Haven't we said that? Haven't we? Well, brother, that's precisely why we're so impotent. Because we haven't spent time in our life waiting upon God, and we have that psychology in our mind.

Waiting on God is the one great remedy for all our needs. It's the act of soul surrender. It fills our heart with the awareness of God's presence, and it takes denial, and it takes discipline.

And these are two words that are strange in the church in our day. Self-denial and discipline. It cuts against the grain of thought.

We place confidence in empty things, and you know, even praying is not necessarily waiting upon the Lord. The soul must get still before God. It requires all of our being, and waiting is not just idle passivity.

Don't get me wrong. It's not just coming in there and just kind of getting down and making your hands like this and doing your thumbs, waiting upon God. It's an exercise in keen attention.

It's the most difficult thing to be silent, but yet turn every faculty of your spirit, soul, and body toward Him. It's like the soul waiting for Him. It's the creature, totally yielded.

We silence every noise. I tell you, that's hard. You come alone and get before God and try to quieten your heart, and all of a sudden, I mean, I can, the devil will make my list of what I got to do tomorrow.

He'll come, and I start thinking about, did I turn the bathtub off? And all these crazy things like that. We've got to ban every flitting thought and drive away everything that would distract us from Him. Be still and know that I'm God.

It's much, much more than listening, waiting on God, but it is also involving listening. It's kind of like love without language. It's kind of like silent surrender.

Be silent, O all flesh, in God's presence. It's adoring abandonment. It's worship without words.

Well, you've got to give time to God to get to know Him. Intimacy takes time. Some of us are just really discovering that intimacy takes more time than years.

You grow more and more intimate with your wife and with your friends over a period of time. Words are inadequate to express love. You know, think about those times if you're married when you were courting, and if maybe this didn't happen to you, but you can say, I love you, and it doesn't have half the impact as when sometimes you're just sitting there on a bench holding hands, saying nothing, just communing, just in each other's presence.

Don't rush when you come into the presence of the Lord. Lord, what will you have me do, says the baby Paul, and the Lord says, nothing. Go to Arabia and spend three years there soaking in my presence.

Moses, I'm going to take the people of God out of Egypt. No, go to the desert. Forty years.

Get alone. Unlearn everything you've ever been taught in the world. It's helpful, but it's not essential.

He has to look at the back side of a sheep for forty years before he can leave the front side of a sheep, God's sheep, out of Egypt and go back. So, God's answer is solitude, and the word comes as it did to Martha in the New Testament. Martha's busy in the kitchen preparing potluck dinner for the disciples, and she's saying, don't you care, Jesus, that my sister has left me to do all this work by myself? That's what she's saying is essential.

I'm busy doing what you want me to do, and he says, Martha, Martha, you're distracted and bothered by many, many things. One thing is essential. She's sitting at my feet.

She's receiving. She's listening, and it's going to profit her. The things she's chosen will never be taken away from her.

Jesus has Mary at his feet all the time. All the time you see her through the gospel, she's always at his feet, and you know what? I believe that's a signal from the Holy Spirit that that's why she is the first person to see him resurrection power. She was there, and she saw him, and she was the one to preach to his non-waiting disciples, doubting disciples, doubting Thomas, and doubting all the eleven, not just doubting Thomas.

She came and said, he's risen, and they were like idle words, fairy tales. Oh, Mary, bless you. Well, there are 18 words in the Hebrew language for wait.

Did you know that? It's such a big word. There's 18 Hebrew words for wait, but we don't have time to look at all of them, but I want to look at a few of them, and I want to just show what they mean. Let's just quickly look at several of them.

The first word, and you need to write these down, is the word chakaw. C-H-A-K-A-W. That's how you pronounce it.

It's not how you spell it, but it's the word chakaw. That's one of the mainly used words in the Old Testament when you read the word wait. In the English, you can't tell which word it is, but this word means to tarry, almost the equivalent of when Jesus said, tarry ye in Jerusalem.

But it's a word for tarry. It means to stick to or to adhere to, but it also means to long for or desire confidently, to hook. It has a diversity of meanings, to hook, to adhere to, with expectancy, to be confident toward, to tarry, and I want to read some scriptures that have this word in it.

Isaiah chapter 30. You're going to have to be fast now. I'm going to go to a lot of scriptures, and we're going to look at, we're going to do a little Bible study on each of these words and see what God promises if you will tarry, if you will adhere to, if you will get in His presence with this attitude.

Isaiah 30, verse 15. This is the chapter that talks about Israel when they're going down for alliance with Egypt instead of reliance on God. It's like trusting in the flesh instead of trusting in the Spirit, and cursed is the man who makes flesh his strength.

And God says to them in verse 15, His plan to bless their nation and their lives, not all their programs and plans and all their outward things, but verse 15, Thus saith the Lord God, Holy One of Israel, in returning and in resting you will be saved. In quietness and in confidence will be your strength. But you didn't want it that way.

In other words, you'll really receive what you need when you return to me and rest in my presence and have quietness in my presence and confidence, this word for waiting there. Verse 18, they wouldn't do it. Look what the Lord says.

Therefore will the Lord wait that He may be gracious unto you. In other words, you're not going to get your supply yet until look here. Therefore will He be exalted that He may have mercy upon you.

The Lord is a God of method is the word in the Hebrew. Blessed are all those who wait for Him. That's that word wait.

Blessed are all of those who wait for Him. God is a God of method. He does it a certain way and they're wanting to do it a different way.

And because they're doing it a different way, they won't do it God's way. God will wait until they do it His way. Until you come and wait before me, you will not receive what you need.

That's what He's saying there. Blessed are all those who wait for Him. He's waiting on us to be gracious.

See, there's two kinds of us in this room. There are those who wait upon the Lord and there are those who keep God waiting. From that verse, He's waiting on you to come and wait in His presence.

And boy, when you do, when you humble yourself and do that in awesome dependence on Him, He will open the windows of heaven and give you great grace. Look at Psalm 33. And I want to look at another word for this same chachol.

Chachol. Psalm 33. I'm going to have to increase my rate, brothers, if I'm going to be through.

Psalm 33, verse 20, talking about preservation in the time of famine and death. Verse 20. Our soul waits for the Lord.

It means coming and adhering to and hooking into Him. He is our help and our shield. Our heart shall rejoice in Him because we've trusted in His holy name.

Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us according as we, the Hebrew word is chachol, not hope, but wait. But it shows, see, confident assurance, waiting. Let your mercy be upon us according to our waiting upon thee.

See what that's saying? The mercy of God comes to us in proportion to our time spent in His presence. We realize it. We experience it in a real powerful way.

Nothing is so sure as the fact that waiting on God will bring us untold and unexpected blessings. He's seeking to draw us to waiting on Him by every assurance that our waiting will not be in vain. He says it'll never be in vain.

You wait upon me. And see, that's what we just read in Isaiah 64, verse 4. It's the word says that we have never seen a God like you who works for the one who waits for Him. It's a word that means intensified work.

It's a it's a word that means that God will do mightily for those who do nothing in His presence but trust Him. So we have to realize that we don't have what it takes. Andrew Murray's got a great book called *Waiting Upon the Lord*.

You should read that book. And in that book, he says this statement. Listen to this.

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

Some of you have never spent an hour really waiting on God. But when you do, you're going to see rivers and high places open up. I mean, you may, I'm not saying you haven't spent an hour praying in His presence or talking to Him or a mixture, but I mean just astonished silence, confident looking to Him and expecting what you need to come, even though you don't even know your need.

Psalm 106 also uses chakal. Psalm 106. Listen, there's so many words for wait, and they're all good.

Each one has a promise to us. Psalm 106 in verse 11, it says, talking about the Israelites, the waters covered their enemies. There was not one of them left.

Then they believed his words and they sang his praise, but they soon forgot his works and they waited not for his counsel. You see, they became confident by blessings and they stopped spending time in broken dependence in God's presence, but they began to lust, like we talked about last night, exceedingly in a wilderness place, and they began to tempt God in the desert. And one of the worst judgments in Scripture, He gave them what they asked for, but sent leanness to their soul.

What a judgment, when we began not to wait upon the Lord, but go out in front of Him, and God says, okay, have it your way, my precious child, but you're going to have to learn. It's a wilderness life if you don't wait upon my counsel. What an amazing thing.

This is our problem today. Things take the place of God, and we follow our own ideas about the Word of God, and I think this about Scripture, and I think that, instead of waiting for the pages to begin to twinkle with revelation and light. Take time to be holy.

Chalk off. Well, the second word for wait is the word kava, Q-A-V-A-H. That's how you say it.

That's not how you spell it, but kava, kava. Now, this is a different word. It means to unify, to collect into one, to bind together as if by a rope.

It's when you take two pieces of wood and bind them tightly together and make them as one as you can make them. It also means expectant and eager, and to wait until it happens, until something happens. That's what this word wait means.

Now, how's this word used? To collect and make us one, and to bind together two things that are distinctly different with an unbreakable bond. Isaiah 40, 31. We sang it this morning.

This is how it's used. Isaiah 40, 31. It talks about strength.

It says, they that wait upon the Lord shall, in the Hebrew, exchange their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary.

They shall walk and not faint. The man who comes and kava's, spends time in the presence of God. God will bind himself to your spirit and your soul and exchange your nothingness for his allness.

Rising up effortlessly like an eagle on the crag that waits for that wind and it comes and up he goes, just rising up. No effort, just rising on the wind of God, and that's what he will do. On the strength of a greater than yourself, you rise up above the clouds and above the mountains.

And it's also the picture here of a little vine going around a big tree growing up. And the strength of that vine is the strength of that mighty oak tree because it's wrapped around it. It's unified.

You can't chop a vine down easily. It's hooked around a big oak tree because the oak tree gives it strength. So our weakness is bound together in his strength as we wait upon the Lord.

There's another in Psalm 25. Psalm 25, talking about kava. Keep your minds on this because I'll tell you, it's just going to fill up like a cup in your mind and you're going to see how vital it is to spend time waiting upon the Lord.

And you know what's really exciting to me? So many of you are going to tell me, as some of you already have, well I've never heard anything about that. And I'm telling you, if you'll embrace this, you won't believe the change in your life. Not because you just do something, but because you lay into a presence of God in a new way.

This is a key, brother, why you've been missing the electricity in the wire. Psalm 25, verse 3. It says, Yea, let none that kava upon thee be ashamed. Let them be ashamed which transgress without a reason.

Show me your ways, O Lord. Teach me thy paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation and on thee do I wait all the day.

It's that same word, to come and tarry and be hooked together with expectant, eager unification of heart. As we are brought together, we read this morning, unite my heart to fear thy name. That takes place as we wait upon him.

The acknowledgement of absolute need. Psalm 27, verse 14. Just one psalm over.

It says, Wait upon the Lord. Be of good courage and he will strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, upon the Lord.

See, in that verse is a command and a promise. If you'll spend time in his presence alone, be of good courage and he will strengthen your heart. When your heart is weak, he will strengthen you.

Well, also in Lamentations, chapter 3, that verse I just quoted a while ago. The Lord is good to those who wait for him. See, it's a promise and a command together.

And so persevere and get before God in your helplessness. You're going home and you'll be helpless. Hosea 6, Hosea 12, 6. It says, Wait upon thy God continually.

Continually to during the day, take time to get off alone and just be silent before God. And even without hearing something like rise up and do this, know that God is putting into your spirit that unified heart just from being in his presence. God puts into us what he wants out of us.

We need his supply. So the weapons of our warfare, you see, are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. That's exactly what 2 Corinthians 3, 18 means.

When we talked about taking off our masks and coming into his presence and beholding his beauty as in a mirror, the mirror of God's word, as we're there in his presence, we are changed by the spirit of God from glory to glory. Moses' face began to shine as he was in the presence of God and as he waited in his presence. Psalm 34, verses 4 through 6. Listen to this.

I sought the Lord and he heard me. Psalm 34, 4 to 6. I sought the Lord and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him and they were lightened.

It means became radiant. Their faces weren't ashamed. This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all of his troubles.

And so we leave his presence, you see, with the incense of his presence on our robes. And as we go out, we could say, my soul waits for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning. Third word for wait is the word, I'm not going through 18, don't worry.

I'm going through about five, but the third word is damam, D-A-M-A-M. Now we're getting down to where so many of us are hurting. Damam.

It means silent expectation. And it carries this meaning, astonishment. Astonishment without words because of, implied, an inward wail.

Like an agonizing cry, deep grief on the inside with emotionless as with the silence of death. It's like coming before God as a dead man and you're so wounded and hurt and forlorn that all you can do is groan. You see, look at the promises to that kind of heart that God says, if you know where to come, if you come into me and you wait for me, Psalm 62, verse one, Psalm 62, verse one.

It's easy to read this and not get it in that sense of wailing. But look at this. This is amazing.

Psalm 62, verse one, truly my soul waits upon God. From him cometh my salvation. Verse five, my soul wait only upon God.

My expectation, meaning for deliverance, is from him. When everything else is sinking around us, he's promised to us in the word of God. He says that the Lord is near to them that are of a broken heart and saves, such as be of a contrite spirit, the righteous cry, meaning on the inside, and the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.

And so, Psalm 65, verse one, this will blow your mind. It's talking about inward grief and wailing. But look at what it couples it with right here.

It says, praise waiteth for thee. It's saying here, the sacrifice of praise. I am so down, I'm wailing on the inside, and I come and I fall in his presence as a dead man.

That's praising God. Praise waiteth for thee, O God in Zion, and unto thee shall the vow be performed. Lord, I've promised this.

I don't know what to do. I'm just here. Plop.

You fall down like a corpse. And you know what he promises? He says he will raise you up. Oh, thou that hearest prayer to thee shall all flesh come.

A prayer of the spirit groaning, wailing on the inside. Well, in Lamentations three, verse 26, I'm giving you a lot of scripture. It says about this word for the silence of death on a man.

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. The silence of death. God will allow you to come into situations when you have no answers at all.

Love is never shown more than when you trust God in the dark. You come and you fall in his presence and you have nothing else you can do but trust you. Lord, I guess I can't do anything else but trust you.

He said that's where you should have started. That's where you should have started. It is good to be separated from all things.

We don't enjoy it. And it's easy for us who haven't been separated from all things in a violent or disastrous way to say it's good. But the Bible says it is good for us to patiently hope and wait and to be bankrupt, to be without words, to be prostrate before him.

Listen, brother, when you're like that, don't feel devastated, but rejoice and praise God because God's doing his work in you. Habakkuk two twenty says God is in his holy hill. Let all the earth keep silent before him.

Now, let me quickly add this. Waiting upon God is not a means to an end. How easy it is for us who are so fleshly to hear this truth and say, oh boy, the solution to get to where I want to go.

But you see, waiting upon God is not a way to get to, quote, giant maturity or wherever you want to get. Waiting upon God is an end in itself. And it's waiting in his presence is that of which Jesus is worthy.

He's worthy of such as that to adore him for who he is. You know, that's the highest thing we can do. Come and just adore God.

Breathless awe. Worship. You know, I think in our services, I think A.W. Tozer said it, that we've lost the awe in our worship services, the astonished gasp of wonder and amazement.

There was great amazement upon them, and they wondered when God moved. So we look upon him to put into us all he desires out of us and we acknowledge our impotence. Lord, I just let you down again.

Of course you did. Because you didn't wait upon the Lord. Lord, I'm I'm only human.

Of course you are. That's why he says go and get in his presence and he will put inside of you. You don't have to know how the kingdom of God is like a seed that you put into the ground and you wait upon it and it grows and you don't even know how you say, look at my life a year ago and look at it today.

How did I get here? Praise God, as I spent time in the presence of God. You see, that's what Romans 9:16 says. It's not of man that runneth or that willeth, but it's of God that showeth mercy.

It's out of the Lord's mercies that we're not consumed. These are simple things. We want to have credit for our discipline and our our application of truth.

You see, even that's a trap. How much I applied the truth and how much discipline I was and God was able to really bless me. And down deep, it's because of our intelligent apprehension of truth.

Well, God wants to do something that's so God-like that we don't even get credit to where we just come and get still in his presence. Whether it's a moron or whether it's a mighty intellect, whether it's a black man or a white man or a rich man or a poor man or whatever language, to come and be still in his silence and God will put into us what he wants in us and make our lives a riverbed of light. Last word, and I'll give you one word, is YAHAL.

Y-A-H-A-L. And this means to hope for a long time, to be patient, even in the face of a long delay. That's what that means.

You've been expecting God to move in a certain way for a long, long time, and he hasn't done it. And you say, Lord, I've been waiting. I'll never forget when the Lord spoke to me once when I was 30 years old and I, you know, when your parents start asking your friends in secret if you're all right because you don't seem to be interested in girls.

You know that people are wondering whether you're going to be married or not. I was in seminary and seeking God and all that, and I had to put women entirely out of my life for a season so that I could totally give myself to the Word. My dad was worried about me.

I guess he thought I had some strange inner thing wrong with me or something. He asked a friend of mine, what's wrong with AI? He said, he doesn't like girls, you know. Of course, I love girls.

That's why I stand away from them. And I was making no provision for my flesh to distract. Nothing will distract you from discipleship more as romance without God.

I'm telling you, it'll kill you. It'll make a bowstring go limp in a moment. You will not be able to shoot God's arrows if you walk around, oh, she's so wonderful.

But when God's in it, boy, it'll put fire on the inside. I was saying, Lord, do you want me to be married? I've waited upon you so long for an answer. And the Lord says, Al, you've never waited upon God till you think you've waited long enough.

It changed my life. We always think, Lord, I'm waiting, I'm waiting. As long as I think it's reasonable to wait, I'm not waiting.

I tell you, waiting starts when I think it's not reasonable to wait anymore, like missionary support. Where is it? Lord, I've been patient. I've been praising you, but we're getting close.

He says, now you start waiting. It's just starting. What does your hall mean? Psalm 71, verse 14.

Let's read verse 10 down through 16 and pick out verse 14. Verse 10 says, mine enemies speak against me. They that lay weight for my soul take counsel together.

The traps being set saying God has forsaken that man, persecute him, take him. There's nobody to deliver him. Oh God, don't be far from me.

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

He's talking that he's not going to address the solution on his own. He's not going to deliver himself. Here's his attitude.

But I will hope continually. The word hope there is yahal. It means wait.

I will wait continually when men are pressing me from every side. I'm going to go to the closet and fall down before God, and I'm going to have patient expectancy, even if it takes a long time. I'm going to hope continually, and I will praise you more and more.

Instead of saying, Lord, it's getting hard. It's getting hard. The longer you wait, say glory to God, it's getting better and better because when it comes, it's going to be bigger.

See, desire when it cometh. God lets us wait so that when it comes, we can receive it more. If God gave us everything we asked for just like that, we wouldn't know how to appreciate it.

But he gets us, it's like a baby. Why didn't, you know, God could have had it so a husband and wife could be intimate and then like a slot machine, a baby would come out. Why did he make us wait nine months for a baby? You know why? To change your heart.

And so that with long expectation and waiting, you could get ready for what blessing it was really going to be. He knew that you weren't aware of how great a blessing that might be in your life. And so he lets you get your heart right.

Prepare your heart to receive such a blessing as that. And that's what he does here. The deliverance from enemies is such a great thing that God says you couldn't appreciate it.

You'd miss a lot. So you get in my presence and fall down and just wait upon me. And when it comes, you're going to be blown away.

Well, this morning we won't cover any more words because of the time. But God is looking for watchmen. You know, I believe that's a very similar word to wait in a sense.

God is looking for watchmen who come up upon the walls. Yes, sir. Brother, wait upon the Lord.

Take your thoughts captive under the obedience of Christ. Practically speaking, if you're there, what do you do when your mind wanders and you're there? Listen, it's a discipline that takes time to focus in. Nothing is harder than concentration.

I'll tell you a concentration and diligent study is harder than working manually loading bricks. It will wear you out more, exhaust you on the inside more. It'll wring you out more than manual labor.

Real concentration. Most of us don't know how to concentrate. But if we come before God and we just grip our minds, say, in the name of Jesus, and you're focusing in, you're meditating on God, you're looking to Him, God will train you how to meditate on Him.

But you have to take your thoughts prisoner to God's chariot and really focus in on Him. And that's what meditation will do. It'll keep putting you back toward God.

It doesn't mean to blank your mind up. It means just to look to God and maybe scripture will be coming forth, maybe just awe and just silent meditation. But you can't just empty your mind, but God will discipline your mind like a horse under bridle as you allow Him to break you with the revelation of Himself.

God's looking for watchmen who will come up on the walls of the spirit of Jerusalem and our nation and spend time before God just because He's worthy of time and He brings us to a position of intercession. Then we begin to pray. God honors it.

Elijah had spent time with God, time alone with God, waiting upon the Lord. And God's word of promise, if my people have sinned, I'll shut up heaven, it became Elijah's word. So that God's word being Elijah's word, he can go to Ahab and say, it's not going to be for three and a half years according to my word.

Because see, they had been made one. And when we become one with God, we can speak His word with authority because it's spoken out of the spirit. And when we speak His word, having waited upon Him and prayed, it has the same authority of Jesus in the flesh spoken.

Same authority. Because it's His word. If we speak to this mountain, having waited upon Him and don't doubt in our heart, oh, that thou wouldest come down the mountains might flow at your presence in the name of Jesus, you mountain of sin.

Get out of my way. I'm coming through. And then you go toward that mountain like Caleb and take it and God will send you right through it.

And if he doesn't deliver that mountain, then God wants you to go to the top of that mountain and have an offering of your own life. He wanted you to go like Abraham up there and offer that promised son to

become a demonstration of Calvary like Abraham was. So as we wait upon the Lord, the Lord enlightens us.

He reveals things to us. He strengthens us. And you know what you can feel? I'm serious.

It's like a breath of God. I'll tell you, only I can describe it. It's like it's a heavenly calm descending upon the soul.

You can tell this peace, deep peace that passes understanding as you wait upon the Lord. Deep peace have they who meditate in the word of God. Well, Lord, I just don't understand how God can give to us when we're just doing nothing.

That's that's what I want to say. Look, I just don't understand how you can give to us when we're doing nothing. Easy, brother, one word.

Grace. Grace. Let me ask you a question.

How can God refresh you when you sleep? Do you understand that? Some of you didn't get any sleep, but he says in Psalm 127, he says in Psalm 127, he says in verse two, talking about sleep, he says, it is vain for you to rise up early and to sit up late to eat the bread of sorrows. That means to worry for God gives to his beloved in their sleep. That's what it means.

It doesn't say that he gives you a nice sleep at night and makes you like that. It means much more than that. It may mean that as well.

But it's saying it's vain for you. It's self-trusting for you to stay up all night trying to solve your own problems and get up early in the morning trying to work out your own solutions. He's saying, look, God will give to you in your sleep.

See, and you're doing nothing. But as you're there on your bed, you're meditating, you go to sleep, you commit your sleep to the Lord. There's a brother I know in this room that God talks to him in dreams more than anybody I've ever met.

He's not a dreamer either. God talks to him because he's learned how to listen in his sleep. You know, in Korea, Brian and I had intimate fellowship there.

We had to sleep on the floor in the room there, and it really blessed me one night. It ministered to my soul so much when Brian told me one morning that he heard me quoting scriptures in my sleep or something like that. What was it? In our sleep.

Because in our sleep, he was giving to his beloved. And that happens all the time. Charles Spurgeon once preached a sermon in his sleep, and his wife took notes.

And he went to church on Sunday morning and preached that same sermon, and about five people were saved. I'm telling you, God gives to his beloved in their sleep. So, brother, you will never find time for this.

You're going to make time. And if you think it's important to eat, you'll make time. If you think it's important to sleep, you'll make time.

You'll never find time. You must make time. One hour waiting upon God can transform your life.

It really, really can. And time spent alone with God is never, never wasted. So, I believe this morning, even though this doesn't ring bells and blow whistles, this is a truth that God wants us to take home for the long haul.

Because you know what? This isn't just a weekend we're being called to or just a month or a year. It's until we stand in Jesus' presence. It's for the rest of everything.

God is not looking for meteorites, you know, great today and gone tomorrow. They that be righteous shall shine like the stars. It's a place that you can fix your guidance by.

You can say, be imitators of me and follow me. How can I put feet to my faith? Get on my knees and wait upon the Lord. Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving.

And blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching. That's a word for waiting in the Greek. It's a word for expectant desire.

Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. See, this is full of the New Testament. What's the word watch mean? I believe it means waiting upon the Lord.

Watch and pray. Praying will never satisfy what we're talking about here. Watch and pray.

So brother, this will change your life. And if you couple this with last night, giving, fasting, praying, and the expectancy for revival and letting God discipline you on the inside. Let me tell you something.

Your wife's going to rise up and bless the Lord. Your friends are going to bless the Lord and the angels will praise the Lord because your life will be a testimony to the fact that nobody but God could do this. That's what a testimony is anyway.

Not how much you did for me only, but only God could do this.

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