

(Grace Baptist) Wait on the Lord

by Bill McLeod

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing and following God's will, and the consequences of not doing so.

Duration: 48:00

Scripture: 2 Samuel 5:23, Psalm 143:8, Psalm 143:10, Acts 16:9, 1 Corinthians 6:17, 1 Peter 2:21, 1 Peter 2:23

Topics: "Waiting"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of David and his battle with the Philistines. Instead of repeating the same strategy as before, God instructs David to stand by the mulberry trees and attack when he hears the wind rustling through them. David obeys and they are victorious. The speaker emphasizes the importance of seeking God's guidance and not relying on past methods. He also mentions how David's choice of five stones to face Goliath was strategic, as Goliath had four sons. The sermon concludes with a reminder that the will of God is good, acceptable, and perfect, encouraging listeners to trust in God's plan.

Transcript

Good morning. It's good to be here, because God is here. In Psalm 143, there's two prayers.

There's more than two, but there's two that are very important. One is this, "Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee." The other prayer is, verse 10, I believe, "Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Your Spirit is good.

Lead me into the land of uprightness." So the prayers are put together, "Cause me to know,' teach me to do. "Cause me to know the will of God. When I know the will of God, teach me to do it, because I may know the will of God and not be doing that at all." That, of course, would be a tragedy if that were true.

Romans 12 tells us that the will of God is three things. It's good, it's acceptable, and it's perfect. If it's good, that means it's good for us.

If it's acceptable, it means God will never ask you to do something you can't do. Keep that in mind. Very important.

Then it's perfect, so you can't really improve on it. The will of God. "Teach me to do thy will." In Psalm 32, God said, "I will instruct you and teach you.

My eye will be on you. Don't be a mule or a horse." You know what that means. Don't be stubborn.

I'm instructing, I'm teaching, I'm leading, I'm showing you my will. "Now don't be a mule or a horse, whose mouth must be held in with bitten bridle, lest he come near unto you." You know, God speaks in plain terms, terms sometimes quite easy to understand, and always so when we're looking to God Himself. Now, in John 7, there's a verse that says, "If any man will do his will, he shall know the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.

So if I am willing to do the will of God, whatever it is, then God will make me know what His will is. Why should He show me His will when He knows I'm not going to do it?' So you can pray a lot to know the will of God. Then the idea is this, after I know the will of God, then I can consider whether I do it or not do it.

You can't play games with God that way. If you are willing to do the will of God, He will show you what His will is, and it will be good and acceptable and perfect always." Now, there are some people who missed it. Hezekiah got a message from God through Isaiah that he was to set his house in order because it was time to die.

So what did he do? He cried. No, no, it says, the Hebrew says, he wept abundantly. He cried and screamed to God for mercy.

He wanted to live longer. So God obliged him, and he had 15 more years to live. But during those 15 years, he had a son born whose name was Manasseh.

He was one of the worst kings that Israel ever had. There are 14 things said about Manasseh, all of them evil. He was deeply involved in witchcraft.

He was a fornicator, a whoremonger. He was everything you can think of. And he would never have been born had Hezekiah gone home to heaven when he was asked to go.

You see, it's given to us as an example. Oh yeah, one of the other things he did, it says, he filled Jerusalem with blood. He apparently killed hundreds and hundreds of people, Manasseh.

His father was godly. He was not. And his father made a bad choice in asking God for more time.

Balaam, he prayed. You know, he prayed a lot, and he had meetings with God. Sometimes he saw trance, and he was in a trance, and saw visions of God, and God spoke with him.

When he first talked with God, God said, you're not to go with these men, and you're not to curse Israel. Does that sound definite? How else could God put it? You're not to go with these men, and you're not to curse Israel. But these guys came back with a bigger promise of money, if he'd do what they wanted him to do, which was to curse Israel.

So here's what he said, I will go to the Lord to see what the Lord will say more. He was going to try and angle things so God would change his mind. This is the whole idea.

I'll see what God will say more. So God obliged in a rather subtle way. He said, if the men come to call you, go.

Well, they didn't come to call him, so he went anyhow. Now he's playing games with God, large and clear. And we know how he finally, you know, he prayed once.

He said, let my last end be like his. He'd been talking about the nation of Israel, the blessings God had for them. And he said, let my last end be like his.

What was his last end? He died on the end of a sword in the hand of a Jew. That's how Balaam died. So when God makes something clear to you, don't try and get him to change it.

God is not a man that he should lie or the son of man that he should repent, we're told that. So be satisfied when God speaks to listen. Now Jehoshaphat, before he died, he made Jehoram his son, the king, when he was gone.

Now he had a number of sons, and it distinctly says that these other sons were better than Jehoram, his son. But he made Jehoram the king because he was the firstborn, not because he was a godly person. A major mistake.

So what happened? Jehoshaphat dies. Jehoram becomes king. What was the first thing he did? Well, he murdered all his brothers, every one of them.

That's what he did. This would not have happened had Jehoshaphat considered which of his sons was really spiritual and fit to be a king. He didn't go that way.

He decided because he was the firstborn, he would make him king, Jehoshaphat. 2 Kings 18.1, he went to join with Ahab. Ahab was a very, very evil, wicked king whose wife was worse than him, and she constantly stirred him up to do evil things.

And Jehoshaphat goes down to help him in a war, to help him. When he came back, the prophet of God met him and said, should you help the ungodly and love those that hate the Lord? There's wrath on you from God for what you've done. Now Jehoshaphat was a godly king, but he made some ungodly mistakes, really three of them all together.

In 2 Kings 20, he got together with King Ahaziah from the northern kingdom, and Ahaziah was a wicked person. And he joined up with him and they made a navy of ships to make a big trip to come back with silver and gold and ivory and all this kind of stuff. You know what the Lord did? He sent a big storm and it smashed all their ships.

And Jehoshaphat, I hope, got the message. But see, three times he was a man of God, and yet he was a weak man of God. And because he was weak, others suffered, in some cases, cruelly as witnessed his own sons.

You know, Jezebel, I don't know whether she was a beautiful woman or not. History, not history, but philosophy, they feel for certain reasons of things that happened in her life. She probably was.

But she was a very godless person, deeply involved in witchcraft, engineering murders and stuff, you know, bad news. Then she heard one day that Jehu had taken over and was killing some people. So what did she do? Why, she painted her face and she fixed up her hair.

This had always worked before with men, you know. And so she looks at a window and she said, are you bringing peace? She was kind of, I think, mocking him. And I suppose she thought that he'd fall for her lie.

But he didn't. He paid no attention to her, but he cried because there were people looking out the windows of the castle. And he said, who is on the Lord's side? And some eunuchs looked out and he said, throw

her down.

And they ran in his room. Now, Jezebel, I'm sure she didn't know that morning when she got up and the birds were singing and the sun was shining, that this would be her last day on earth. She didn't know that.

And they threw her down and her blood was sprinkled on the wall. And then Jehu trampled her under the horses. And later on they came to bury her body and all they could find was the palms of her hands and her skull.

That's how she died. But she printed her face and made herself look good. It had always worked before, but this time it did not work.

God had had enough of her. Then Athali, when her son, who was king, died, she took over immediately and she murdered all the possible heirs to the throne that she could find. Now she happened to miss one.

She didn't know that, but she murdered them all. And then some years later when they brought out this king, he's only I think eight years old, and they had a meeting in the temple. They hadn't consulted her at all.

She was the big boss, the queen. They paid no attention to her. They had other plans.

And she heard the noise and the temple went to investigate. And when she saw this young man being crowned as king, do you remember what she said? She said, treason, treason, treason. And she'd murdered all the others.

She was a murderer. What's she talking about treason for? And they took her down by the horse gate and took her life. And she died that day, like Jezebel had.

They're very similar characters. And they both died in the same way. Then even, you know, even King Solomon.

Wise? Nobody as wise as he. But his wives turned his heart away. In Deuteronomy 17, we have four things kings of Israel were to do.

As far as we know, he disobeyed them all. They were not to multiply horses, not to multiply silver and gold. And, you know, it just was amazing.

At one point, he was a very godly person. When he first started off, he was very humble, godly, but that's not how he ended. Because the kings were told you were not to multiply wives.

And he had a thousand of them. And it says his wives turned his heart away. That's what happened.

So disobeying the will of God brought problems, great problems to him personally. Why is it in the Bible? It's a warning to us. Make sure you're walking in the will of God as outlined so clearly in the Bible.

Otherwise, you may be walking in things, doing things, thinking things, planning things. That are totally contrary to what God has in mind. Now, Lot and Abraham had a problem at one point because they both were being blessed.

They both had monstrous herds of cattle and sheep and everything else. And it came to a point where they could no longer exist together. So Abraham took the lead.

And he says to Lot, now Lot, you choose whatever you want. You go this way, I'll go that way. You go that way, I'll go this way.

Whatever you want, it should have been the other way around. But that's not how it was. So what did Lot do? It says he lift up his eyes and he looked and the plain of Sodom was well watered everywhere.

And he had a lot of cattle. Naturally, that's where he went. Although he knew that the people in Sodom and Gomorrah, Adam and Zoboam were Sodomites.

He knew that. He winds up in the city of Sodom finally. In the New Testament, we're told he was a righteous man, but something like Jehoshaphat in that he didn't walk clearly in God's ways.

First of all, it says he picked the plain of Sodom. Then he pitched his tent towards Sodom. Then he dwelt in Sodom.

Then he became a judge in Sodom. It says he was a righteous man, but he vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds. The sodomy going on.

In the place. He saw it everywhere. So Lot, a believer, but walking in the flesh.

A warning to us also. Lot, choosing a well-watered plain instead of saying, hey God, where do you want me to go? What should I do? No prayer at all. He just figured it out on a natural basis.

And many times as Christians, we make that tragic mistake, a major mistake. Figuring it out, not taking God into the picture at all. It always results in well, punishment from God.

Yes. David had a secret plan. He had 400 men.

Saul was the king. They were hiding in the wilderness, getting by as best they could. And then he heard about the Philistines.

They had an army and they were going to fight with Saul and his army. And David had a plan. And so he pretended to be against Israel and the friend of the Philistines.

And finally, a certain Philistine king took him in. And so when they were going to battle, David with his 400 men showed up. I'm sure David's plan was in the battle.

We'll turn on these Philistines and we'll destroy them. And I'll be back in favor with Saul. But it wasn't God's plan.

It was one of the very few times when David never asked for guidance from God. One of the great things about David normally was he inquired of the Lord. He inquired of the Lord.

He inquired of the Lord. He did it all his life. In this particular case, he didn't.

And the lords of Philistines said, get rid of these guys. In the battle, they may turn against us, which I think was exactly what they had in mind. We aren't told this, but it seems to me that's how it was.

So they had to go home. And I suppose they were mumbling and grumbling all the way home until they got to Ziklag, where they left their wives and children. When they got to Ziklag, the place had been raided.

Everything had been burned. The women and children were all gone. And they sat down, he and his 400 men, and they wept.

His guys began talking about stoning David. They began blaming him. He'd taken them off in this wild goose chase with the Philistines.

But it says, David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. And then he inquired of God. The Lord, should I go after these guys? Yes, you'll get them.

So he follows after. He finds these guys that raided the city, didn't kill anybody. They got their wives and children back and an immense amount of spoil from their place and from other towns that this group of marauders had been.

But he inquired of God, and God said yes, and he went. If God had said no, he wouldn't have gone. He learned that lesson, I'm sure.

Then when he sinned with Bathsheba, there's a little note that says, at the time when kings go forth to battle, David tarried still in Jerusalem. See, when he should have been on the battlefield, for his army was on the field, they were battling. He should have been with them.

He wasn't. That left him open to what happened finally with Bathsheba. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time and paid a very big price.

Four sons of his died, three of them violently because of his sin and what he had done with Bathsheba, even David. Adonijah was one of the four sons that died. He was one that died violently.

He wanted Abishag, the Shunammite, to be his wife, and so he sent a message to Solomon, and Solomon had him killed because Adonijah had already fomented a rebellion and had all kinds of people, including Joab, the captain of the army. He had them all accept him as the king, and then David heard about it and knocked him off by sending Solomon to be the king, and Solomon knew that. So Adonijah sent him this message.

He just had him killed. But it says about Adonijah that his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, what are you doing? What are you up to? In other words, his father had not been a good dad. He hadn't taught him anything.

I was thinking about that one day, and suddenly the Lord showed me something about that I hadn't thought of before. David had many wives. David had many sons.

He didn't have the time to spend quality time with all his sons, so he just didn't bother, and you could excuse him in a sense for that, but it didn't turn out well for them. So David had never displeased Adonijah. So as a child, he always got his way.

He didn't even want it to do, and it turned out very bad for Adonijah and those close to him. There are some people who did better. Gideon.

It's an amazing story, you know, because he was facing an army of 135,000 soldiers, and God says that in effect, Gideon, I don't want you to have any more than 300. Three hundred against 135,000? This is a mad plan. He didn't say that, but he went with it.

He might have said that and lost out. He would have failed to see the power of God in a given situation. See, God doesn't need a big army to win.

He just needs some people that mean business with him, that are walking his ways. It's always been that way. One person with God is a majority in any situation, right? It's right.

So they went for the plan, and they won, and the enemy army was completely beaten and chased out of the country. But Gideon had to pay a price. I'm sure many of his soldiers were saying, hey man, what's wrong with Gideon? Hey, what are you doing, man? Three hundred? What in the world can we do with 135,000? But he knew God was with him.

God didn't need more than 300. God could have done it with one. The Bible says there's no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.

God can do with a few as well as with a lot. This is a lesson we find in the Bible everywhere. Do you know that Elisha, the Bible says, he poured water on the hands of Elijah.

That is, he was a servant to Elijah for some years before he became a prophet when Elijah was taken home to heaven in a whirlwind. But on one occasion, Elisha disobeyed Elijah four times. Did you know that? They came to a certain place, and Elijah said to Elisha, tarry here, we're going to go further.

And he said, as your soul lives, as God lives, I will not tarry here. And he said that to Elijah three or four times, you know. Why did he do that? He had never disobeyed Elijah before.

Elijah didn't get after him for doing this. He just kept saying, tarry here, Gilgal, Bethel, and Jordan, and so on. But there was a reason for it.

At the very last, Elijah said to Elisha, is there anything you'd like me to do before I go? Yes, he said, I'd like to have a double portion of your spirit. And Elijah said, you've asked a hard thing, but if you see me when I go, it'll be yours. Now, if he'd obeyed Elijah those other times, he would never have seen him when he went, and he wouldn't have had the double portion of God's spirit.

Did he have a double portion? Yes, he did. I once counted the miracles Elijah did, and the miracles that Elisha did and he did twice as many as Elijah did. So he got a double portion of God's spirit.

But he knew he had to stay with Elijah to the very last. He was his servant to the very end, and he didn't dare take his eyes off of him. And if you are seeking the fullness of the Spirit of God in your life, don't ever take your eyes off of Jesus.

He's the one we walk with, and this power comes from him. Do we know that? Yes. In the book of Acts, here's what it says.

After Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, seated at the right hand of God, and it says this, having received of the Father the power of the Holy Spirit, he has shed forth this, which you now see in here. So in other words, what happened on the day of Pentecost was something Jesus Christ did. He received the promise of the Spirit from God the Father, and he poured the Spirit out on the twelve at that time.

So Elisha knew he had to stay close to Elijah to the very end to get the power he needed. He got that, I'm sure, that illumination from God himself. It's a very interesting story with a message for you and I today.

Now, David had a battle with the Philistines. He won, and a year later they were coming back, and so he might have said, we might have said if we were doing it, okay, let's do it the way we did it before. We'll meet him in exactly the same place and do exactly the same things we did before, and God said no.

God said, stand over by the mulberry trees, and when you hear a little wind going through the mulberry trees, then it's time for you to beat into the enemy, and David obeyed, and they won. They would not have won had he tried to do it the way he did it before because the Philistines, knowing how he did it before, would have made sure they didn't come the same way the second time, and God knew that, but David inquired of the Lord as to how he should go, and God showed him. You know, when he went to meet Goliath, he picked up five smooth stones.

It says of some people in Benjamin, some men, hundreds of them, they could shoot with a sling at a hairbreadth and not miss. Well, that's pretty accurate math. Why did he choose five? Was he planning to miss four times? No, not at all, but Goliath had four sons, so he was ready for the whole gang.

Get the old man, get the four boys. He didn't even have one spare stone. He didn't need that because he knew that God was with him.

These are great lessons in the Bible. It's loaded with this sort of truth when you get into it carefully and ask God to be your leader, your guider, your wisdom. Jonathan was with an armor bearer.

Jonathan had a sword. The armor bearer didn't have one, and they were hiding in a place, and Jonathan said to the armor bearer, you know, up the hill was a bunch of Philistines. He said, let's test something.

Let's stand out where they can see us. If they say, come up to us, we'll know we're supposed to go. If they say, stay where you are, we don't go.

So they showed themselves. The Philistine said, come up, we want to show you something. So he said to his armor bearer, let's go.

Two men, only one with a sword, and a garrison of the Philistine. But it was Jonathan who said, there's no restraint to the same by many or by few. It's the same story told over again, the same message that God is giving us.

Let me say it again. One person with God is the majority in any situation, any situation, whatever. So they started, and Jonathan killed a couple of men.

So then his armor bearer had a sword too. And between the two of them, I think they killed 35. What was Saul doing in the meantime? He was a king.

He was under a tree with 600 men. It says he was shaking. His son took it over.

I think Jonathan just got tired of doing nothing. Why is my dad out there doing something? He didn't know why, but he knew something had to be done. So he did it.

And sometimes we have to do something others will not do, something that should be done. So we do it because we want to please God and see his power. Philip went down to Samaria, had a very powerful, fruitful ministry there.

Many people were saved. Many demon-possessed people were delivered. Great work of God going on.

And in the middle of this thing, God said, I want you to leave this and go down to Gaza. Now he might have said, wait a minute, God, your work isn't finished here. I got to stay longer.

There's more people coming to Christ. I can't leave here. He didn't say that.

He went down to Gaza. The word Gaza means desert. He goes down to this little place called Gaza, and there's a highway, and there's people riding on camels and horses and donkeys and people walking and all kinds of traffic back and forth.

And there Philip stands. I'm sure he had some thoughts. Why did I ever leave? Why didn't I stay where I was? What am I going to do? He's standing there.

Then along comes a chariot, and the Spirit said to Philip, join yourself to this chariot. Wouldn't you call that clear guidance? Very clear guidance. And God gives us clear guidance when we're willing to do his will, but not if we're not willing to do his will.

Well, in that chariot rode this man from Ethiopia, the treasure for the whole country of Ethiopia, a high-ranking man, and he led him to Christ and baptized him. Then he knew why God told him to leave Samaria and go down to Gaza. And God may do that to us sometimes.

I remember reading about a pastor in the States. I forget his name, but he's a very successful pastor with a church that was growing, growing, growing, growing. Then God asked him to be a missionary.

He went to a foreign country. He started a church. It grew very slowly.

I'm sure he sometimes wondered why God took him from this fruitful ministry to this ministry here. But it's not ours to question why. Ours is to do or die as God leads us, because his will, remember, is good, acceptable, and perfect.

You know, Paul, Apollos became a great preacher. As a matter of fact, he seemed to have about the standing that Paul had. I planted Apollos' water, and God gave the increase.

So then, neither is he that plants anything, neither is he that waters, but God gives the increase. Because people at the Church of Corinth, some people were bragging, saying, Hey, I found Christ through Apollos. You only found Christ through Apollos.

He's no great speaker. He doesn't know his Bible as well as Apollos does. Anyway, Paul said something about Apollos.

Now remember, Paul was the senior of all the apostles. He labored, it says, more abundantly than all of them. He said this to the Church of Corinth, I greatly desired Apollos to come with me, but his will was not at all to come at this time.

He'll come when he has convenient time. Paul didn't try to push him into it. He didn't say, Hey, Apollos, you know I am, after all, the senior apostle.

You should be listening to me. He didn't do that. He didn't have the kind of power that maybe a pope can have at times.

He didn't have that. He didn't want that. He was walking with God.

So he simply left him alone, and blessed him too, I'm sure. But it's an important thing, 1 Corinthians 16, 12, if you're thinking of a text in that place. When Paul came and asked chapter 16, he was wondering about going into Asia because it was new territory.

Paul was always looking for a place where no missionary had yet gone. He felt that was his calling. That's why he kept moving as he did.

He kept talking about what he called the regions beyond. He was always looking for regions beyond where he could go and be a blessing to God and to people who'd never heard of Jesus. So God said, No, you're not to go into Asia.

So then they tried to go into Bithynia. It's all in Acts 16. And God said, No, you're not to go into Bithynia.

So they didn't figure it out on a human basis. They could have. They could say, Well, look, there's millions of people in Asia.

We got to get in there and establish a church. They didn't argue that way or think that way. They listened to God.

God said, No. God said, No. They obeyed.

And then they waited and fasted and prayed. And one night he had a vision. And in the vision, God said, there was a man who said, as if we were talking to Paul, although Paul wasn't in vision, he just saw the vision.

Come over into Macedonia and help us. So in the morning, he talked it over with the team. And they decided God has spoken.

We're going to Macedonia. There wasn't as great a need in Macedonia as it was in Asia. But they obeyed God.

And that's how we should work in the work of God. Listening to what God says. Remember, good, acceptable and perfect.

Cause me to know the way when I should walk. For I lift up my soul unto thee. Teach me to do your will for you are my God.

Your spirit is good. Lead me into the land of uprightness. That's going back to Psalm 143 verses 8 and 10.

Cause me to know, teach me to do. Is there a game? But how can we be sure about the will of God? When you're praying for something, make sure you're standing on a promise. And you might say, well promise, there's only a couple of dozen of them.

No, no, wait a minute. There's 7,487 promises in the Bible. Find a promise.

It says about Abraham in Romans chapter four, he did not stagger at what? The promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. Stand on a promise. Then you can pray with faith.

That's why, that's why Paul did not stagger, pardon me, Abraham didn't stagger at the promise of God through unbelief because God said it. So he knew it was from God. He had no problem at all.

And he believed God and his faith was righteousness were told in other places. Get a promise. Romans four, 20 and 21.

Then ask yourself this question that the object you want in prayer, is it for the glory of God? Remember it says, first Corinthians six, you're not your own, you're bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. As a Christian believer, people were supposed to glorify God and our body and spirit live to God's glory.

You're asking for something. Well, let's bring glory to God. If it doesn't bring glory to God, don't do it.

Don't touch it. The glory of God, is it for the good of others? The thing you're asking God to do, is it for somebody else's good as well as for your own? Well, think it through, pray intelligently. Is it for your own good? Sometimes we have a lot of wants, a lot of wishes, and very few needs.

God listens to the needs. He's promised to supply all our needs, not our wants, not our wishes. You know, people complain sometimes because they don't have 1200 feet in their house.

Why doesn't God give me a bigger house? All my friends have a bigger house. Well, he didn't do it because the Bible says, having food and clothing, let us be there with content. He never even promised you a house.

Having food and clothing, be content, is what he said. And so, you have to be so careful. Is it for the glory of God, for my good, for someone else's good, the thing I'm praying for? That's how we have to look at it and decide, to some extent, on that basis.

If the will of God is not clear, what do we do? Then you wait, W-A-I-T, and it never says how long. You might wait a long while. George Muller, when he had 2,000 orphans and three or four hundred of his staff, a piece of land came up for sale adjoining the land he already had.

It would have been perfect. So he prayed about it, and God just said, not now. So he kept praying.

God didn't say no. He just said, not now. So he kept praying, and he prayed for two years.

It came up for sale again at a price about half of what it would have cost him had he gone the first time. He gives many examples of this. So it's a matter of waiting.

Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage. He'll strengthen your heart.

Give God time. Don't try and rush God up. God promised Abraham, remember, and Sarah, that they would have a child of their own.

But the years rolled by, and nothing happened. So they decided to help God out, to hurry things up. So she said to him, have sex with Hagar.

Maybe we can have children by her. So they did, and Ishmael was born. And Ishmael, when Isaac was born, he mocked, and of course, Sarah was very upset.

This would not have happened had they not taken the step. It was outside the will of God. They just tried to hurry God up.

Don't do that, dear people. Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage.

Wait, I say, on the Lord. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles.

They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. So wait.

Is it bad to wait on the Lord? It's fun, really, because you know who you're waiting on. There is a friend that sticks closer than a brother. You can't have a closer friend than God.

Three times it says of Abraham that he was a friend of God, or God was his friend. Three times. James and Isaiah and 1 Chronicles.

A friend. God spoke with Moses face-to-face as a man speaks with his friend, and God would love to have us that way. Not somebody always coming with a bag we want him to fill up.

We're just coming to talk to him, tell him we love him, and talk with him and read his word and give him quality time. Today, especially here in North America, we're so inundated with TV and related things. We don't have time for God.

Let's face it, people. We don't have time for God. We don't really want God.

We don't really need God. We've got all kinds of money and the bank and jobs and stuff, you know. We don't have to worry about our next meal, most people, at least.

This is how it is. It will be a blessing if God took it all away, and he may. What is happening in North America, in the States, down the road, will have a profound effect on us.

There is no doubt. It's already had an effect on us, and it may get worse depending on what eventually takes place. There's no guarantee by any the new president of the United States, president-elect, he's not guaranteeing anything.

He's hoping for better things. They're planning for better things. They're not sure it can happen.

So we have to look to God and trust him. I say again, people, wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he'll strengthen your heart. Now, in closing, Jacob got in a situation where it's a case of God answering or he would die.

He himself, Jacob, would die, and he knew that. His brother Esau, who he had hurt, terribly hurt, years before, was coming to meet him with 400 servants, and they were ready for war, and he knew that. He tried four or five different schemes, none of them worked.

Finally, he ran out of schemes. Then he tried prayer, and he got wrestling with the angel of God, and finally, they wrestled all night, and he ended up with a dislocated hip, apparently, and the angel said, let me go. The day is breaking, and he said, I will not let you go unless until you bless me.

That's when his name was changed from Jacob, which meant supplanter or deceiver, to Israel, which meant a prince of God. So remember Hosea, he talked about that. He gave the example, Jacob's example, of staying in prayer.

That's Genesis 32, by the way, and he said, therefore, wait thou upon thy God. What he's really saying is, take heart from Jacob's example, follow his example, do what he did, and there's times when things get so

bad, we maybe have to spend a night in prayer, spend hours with prayer, crying to God for something good. Now, remember the will of God, good, acceptable, and perfect.

Cause me to know the way where I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Thy spirit is good.

Thinking of marriage, thinking of business, thinking of education, whatever you're thinking about, take God in, and let God have the controlling vote in whatever we're deciding on. He'll lead us, he's promised us. My eye will be on you, I'll teach you, I'll guide you.

We have many references to this besides Psalm 32, where he talked about guiding his children. Alright, in closing, the will of God is what? It's good, it's acceptable, and it's perfect. Go for it.

Go for it. Let's pray. Father above, thank you for sending the Lord Jesus, not just his death on the cross, that was important, the most important thing of all perhaps, not perhaps, I'm sure it is.

But he came to give us an example also, were to follow his steps, it says, in 1 Peter, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, who when he was reviled, did not revile again, but he committed himself, I think the margin reading there, Father, says, he committed his cause unto God. You told us to follow his steps. So there's example, great examples in Christ, in his life, in his teaching, to bring us closer to know the will of God for ourselves.

So Father, we look to you, and as a church, we're looking to you for guidance, Father, we're waiting for clear guidance, for blessing, your blessing. Because Father, we want this church to be a great blessing in the community. When Dallas Billington started that little church in the Reimer School in Akron, Ohio, he only had 14 people.

Father, you know the story better than I do. But the last we heard about him, he had 22,000 members in the church. He had no education, grade five.

Father, again, you're demonstrating to us things you've demonstrated in the Bible again and again, and we thank you. Now, Father, we leave this building shortly, but oh God, we never leave your presence, and we're joined together in the spirit. We read of people joining themselves to the Lord.

He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit, we read. So if every individual Christian, Father, is joined to your spirit, then we're certainly joined to one another. So Lord, bless the church here, glorify your name, and accept our thanks for helping to make your perfect will plain.

Thank you. Thank you in Christ's name. Amen.

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