

**WHEN GOD SAYS,
“WAIT”**



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*Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture
references are taken from the New King
James Version of the Bible.*



It seems like everybody is waiting for something. If you're a young teenager, you're waiting to be able to drive...legally. If you're a senior in high school, you're waiting to graduate and go to college. If you're in college, you're waiting to get a job. If you've got a job, you're probably waiting to get married. If you're already married, you may be waiting to have children. If you already have children, you're waiting on them to grow up and stop spending all of your money!! The point is clear. Everybody is waiting for something.

Some are waiting on test results from their doctors. Others are waiting to hear back from a job interview. Some who just picked up this booklet are waiting to get out of prison. Others are waiting on God to answer a specific prayer request. All of us who are saved are waiting for Jesus to come back. Everybody is waiting!!

You may have never thought about it, but we're not the first people to wait. The Bible is filled with examples of people who spent much of their lives waiting. Noah waited many years for it to rain. Abraham and Sarah waited twenty-five years for their promised son, Isaac, to be born. Joseph waited thirteen years before his dream became a reality. Moses waited forty years in the desert before returning to Egypt to lead God's people out of bondage. David waited many years to actually become the king of Israel. Jonah waited three days to get out of that big fish. The disciples waited in Jerusalem to receive the Holy Spirit. Waiting is simply a part of life.

And to tell you the truth, I've never met anybody who likes to wait. I have a friend who thought he was having a heart attack so he drove himself to the emergency room and was admitted. They hooked him up to the monitors and told him that a doctor would be in shortly. My friend just laid there and waited on the doctor. He waited. And he waited. And he waited some more. He finally got so tired of waiting to see a doctor that he actually called "911" from the emergency room. He said to the person who answered the call, "I think I'm having a heart attack." The person on the other end of the line said, "Where are you?" To

which my friend responded, “I’m in the emergency room, and I think I’m going to die waiting.”

I think all of us have felt that way at times. We have felt like we were going to die waiting. Well, the good news is that my friend didn’t die waiting in the emergency room. He is still alive today!! And you’re not going to die waiting either!!

The purpose of this booklet is to help you through those waiting seasons of life. In these pages, we will think about **why** we have to wait. We will then examine the lives of some Bible characters and learn **how** to wait. And then we will think about **what we can expect** if we wait patiently on God to intervene in our situation.

Why We Sometimes Have to Wait

The Bible teaches that God is absolutely in control of our circumstances. And that includes the **timing** of our circumstances. Remember this: **To God, timing is more important than time.** God lives outside the realm of time. God lives in eternity. There are no clocks or calendars in heaven. But God is

very much aware of the importance of timing here on earth. And there are instances, plenty of them, when God orchestrates our circumstances in such a way that we are forced to wait on His timing...which is usually different than ours.

We pray about a situation and nothing seems to happen. Our prayers appear to be unanswered. Our situation seems as though it will never change. We find ourselves in “**God’s Waiting Room**” wondering why He doesn’t do something right away.

While I certainly don’t know all of the reasons for God’s delays, I do know some of them. The Bible is not silent as to why God often chooses to operate on His timetable instead of ours. I want to mention four reasons why God often forces us to wait before He acts.

1. When we wait, our faith is strengthened.

Your faith may not be all that important to you, but it is very important to God. The Bible says “that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of

Jesus Christ” (I Peter 1:7). Your faith is of greater value than gold. And just as the refiner uses a process to purify gold, God uses a process to purify our faith. And sometimes that process involves waiting.

When we pray about something and nothing seems to happen, we have to wait. As we wait, our faith kicks in. If we always got our prayers answered immediately, we wouldn’t need any faith. Why would we? The answer would be before our very eyes. But the Bible says that “we walk by faith, not by sight” (II Corinthians 5:7). There are times when God forces us to wait so we will trust Him with what we cannot yet see.

At the time of this writing, I am waiting on something. I am waiting for my voice to be healed. For almost two months my voice has been very hoarse. The drought we have experienced combined with a little too much talking caused a polyp to develop on one of my vocal cords. The doctor has placed me on voice rest. In a few weeks, I will go back to him and see if it has healed or if surgery will be necessary. But for now, I am just waiting. Waiting to see if it heals. Waiting to see if surgery will be needed. Waiting to see when I

can talk again. Waiting to see how I will sound. I am waiting, but I am not worried!!

I am not worried because I have learned something in life. I have learned that God can always be trusted. Had I gone through this ten years ago, I would have been a basket case. After all, for a preacher to have voice problems can be a little unnerving. But my nerves are holding up just fine. And the reason is that in the last ten years of my life, I have learned that God is in control. I'm not saying that my faith never wavers, but I am saying that it doesn't waver like it used to. And as I stay on the trail with God, I know that He is leading me to a place where it won't waver at all. The Bible says, "Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope **without wavering**, for He who promised *is* faithful" (Hebrews 10:23, emphasis mine).

How about you? Does your faith ever waver? It probably does from time to time. We're still growing!! And that is one of the reasons God often tells us to wait. Because when we wait, we are forced to use our faith. And as we use our faith, it grows stronger. Faith is like a muscle. If you exercise it, it will grow. We often exercise our faith best during those waiting times of life.

So, if you're waiting on something, be encouraged. You're in a season of life where you can really develop your faith. And the more faith you have, the more peace you will have. So wait in faith, and wait in peace!! The answer is on the way!!

2. When we wait, our character is developed.

Waiting on God not only strengthens our faith, but it also develops our character. St. Augustine said, "Character is what a person is in the dark." In other words, your character is what you are when no one else is looking. Your reputation is what other people **think** about you. Your character is what God **knows** about you. And interestingly enough, God has chosen to develop our character during the waiting seasons of life.

One of my favorite passages of Scripture is found in the book of James. Listen to these insightful words:

"Dear brothers, is your life full of difficulties and temptations? Then be happy, for when the way is rough, your patience has a chance to grow. So let it

grow, and don't try to squirm out of your problems. For when your patience is finally in full bloom, then you will be ready for anything, **strong in character, full and complete**" (James 1:2-4, Living Bible, emphasis mine).

It is during the waiting times of life that our character begins to develop. As we wait on God to act, He begins to reveal areas in our lives that need to be addressed. We then begin to grow in the areas of honesty, integrity, and purity. The waiting process becomes the catalyst for our own personal growth and development.

I heard a story that beautifully illustrates this truth. One day a man was walking down the street when he noticed the cocoon of a butterfly. He took the cocoon home and decided to observe it over the next few weeks with the hope of getting to watch the butterfly emerge. One day a small opening appeared in the cocoon. The man sat and watched the cocoon for several hours as the butterfly struggled to force its body through that little hole. After a while, the man decided to help the butterfly in its struggle. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon, and the butterfly easily emerged.

But when the butterfly came out of the cocoon, it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. It couldn't fly. What the man didn't know was that the struggle the butterfly was going through in the cocoon was necessary in order for the butterfly to be able to fly. As the butterfly was pushing against the cocoon, it was releasing fluids from its body into its wings. But the well-intentioned man had short circuited that process. As a result, the butterfly never flew. It spent its sad life crawling around on the ground.

Do you feel like you're trapped in a cocoon of difficult circumstances? Do you keep asking God to get you out? Have you been asking God what's taking so long? If so, don't try to squirm out early. Keep waiting. Give your character a chance to develop.

3. When we wait, we give God time to work on the other end of things.

Remember, waiting is not all about you. Yes, when you wait your faith is strengthened and your character is developed, but waiting is not all about what's happening to you.

Sometimes you have to wait because God is working in the life of someone else. Sometimes you have to wait because God is getting the circumstances right for you.

In 1991, our church bought forty-nine and a half acres of land on the corner of Fairmont and Red Bluff in Pasadena. At that time, we were still worshipping God at our downtown location and growing week by week. But the opportunity presented itself to buy the new land, and the church voted to do so.

In 1994, we began having services at the new location while continuing to have services at the old location. That continued for several years. Many of us wondered if we would always have two locations. No one knew the answer to that question. No one but God.

In 1997, a Hispanic pastor named Roberto Villarreal came and asked if his church could buy our downtown facilities. He had learned that he would be losing his church facilities to the school district following a school bond election. A few months after he made his request, our church voted to sell our downtown facilities to his church. For two years, the two churches shared those facilities. It was a special time. In 1999, we completely relocated

our church. We became one church at one location again instead of one church at two locations. Since that time, thousands of people have been reached for Christ at First Baptist Pasadena, and thousands more have been reached for Christ at La Iglesia Del Pueblo under Pastor Villarreal's fine leadership.

But back in 1991, no one could imagine all of that. In the mid-1990s, no one knew if we would always have two locations. Looking back on it, we were waiting, and we didn't even know we were waiting. We were waiting for God to work all of those details out. And, as best as we knew how, we were following God's will as He revealed it to us...one small step at a time.

The Bible says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6). That word "**direct**" means "to make smooth or straight." It is the picture of a lumberjack clearing a path in the woods. That is what God is doing while we are waiting on Him. Not only is He strengthening our faith and developing our character, but He is also working on the other end of things. He is lining up the people and the circumstances so

that when we emerge from our cocoons, we will have a clear path of flight!! The obstructions will be removed!!

4. When we wait, God often does something better than we had hoped for.

You will never be sorry for waiting on God. The old saying is true: “Good things come to those who wait.” It is also biblical. The Bible says that God “acts for the one who waits for Him” (Isaiah 64:4). I cannot imagine anything better than for God to act on my behalf.

In John 11, we read a fascinating story about Jesus’ friend, Lazarus. Lazarus had become very sick and was even at the point of death. His sisters, Mary and Martha, sent some friends to tell Jesus what was happening. They knew that Jesus could heal Lazarus. But when Jesus found out about His friend’s illness, the Bible says, “He stayed two more days in the place where He was” (John 11:6). Isn’t that odd? You would have thought that Jesus would have gone to help His friend immediately. But He didn’t, and Lazarus died. Since He hadn’t been there, Mary and Martha assumed that Jesus didn’t care.

When He finally showed up, Martha said, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died” (John 11:21). And she was right. If Jesus had been there, He would have healed Lazarus. That’s why He wasn’t there. He wasn’t there because He had something better in mind. Instead of healing a sick man, Jesus wanted to raise a dead man. And that’s exactly what He did.

Remember this: **When God tells you to wait, He always has something special planned for you at the end of the waiting.** In fact, did you know that as you are waiting on God that God is also waiting on you? You say, “What is God waiting on?” The Bible says that He is waiting to bless you. Listen to these words: “The LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you” (Isaiah 30:18). Think about that. God is waiting to bless you. At just the right time and in just the right way, God is going to do something that will make all of your waiting worthwhile.

I have seen this happen so many times in my own life. One time I was going to buy a big screen television for my den, and God impressed on my heart to wait. I waited, and He supernaturally provided one for me. Another time I was going to buy a car, and God

once again impressed on my heart to wait. I waited, and He supernaturally provided one for me. I have never regretted waiting on God. And neither will you.

When you wait on God, you put yourself in a position to receive His very best. Remember what the Bible says about God. He “acts for the one who waits for Him” (Isaiah 64:4).

And when He acts, He always acts in the right way. The Bible says, “The LORD is good to those who wait for Him” (Lamentations 3:25).

God wants to bless you. God wants to be good to you. All He is asking you to do is to wait on His perfect timing to meet your need. And as you wait, your faith is being strengthened. Your character is being developed. God is working to make the way clear for you. And He is preparing to bless you when everything is just right. Knowing all of that, who wouldn't want to wait on God? The question is not, “Should I wait on God?” The question is, “How should I wait on God?”

How Do We Wait on God?

The Bible is filled with examples of people who were forced to wait on God's timing in their lives. Some waited wisely, and some didn't. We can learn from their wisdom, and we can learn from their mistakes.

I want us to think about four Bible characters whom I consider to be the greatest examples in Scripture of people who waited on God. We will learn some lessons from Abraham, Joseph, David, and Job. Abraham waited on a promise to be fulfilled. Joseph waited on a dream to become a reality. David waited on circumstances to be right. And Job waited for God to restore what he had lost. By examining their situations, we learn four important principles which we can apply to our own lives.

1. Wait patiently...refuse to take matters into your own hands.

The problem with waiting is that we often become impatient. But as a general rule, acting on the impulses of impatience creates a lot more problems than it solves. The Bible says, "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for

Him” (Psalm 37:7). Most of the time, though, we don’t wait patiently. We wait impatiently.

God had made Abraham and Sarah a promise that they would have a son in their old age. When God made the promise, they were well past childbearing years. But when the promise was made, Abraham believed it lock, stock, and barrel. As the years passed, though, nothing happened. This elderly couple began to analyze God’s promise. “Maybe we misunderstood,” they thought. “Maybe God meant something a little different than what we thought He said,” they wondered. And since Sarah couldn’t conceive, she came up with a little plan that would certainly help God out. She suggested to Abraham that he go in and sleep with her Egyptian maidservant, Hagar. The plan sounded like a good idea to Abraham. He had relations with Hagar, and a son was born from that union. They named the little fellow Ishmael.

From the moment Hagar became pregnant until the day in which we now live, difficulties have emerged from what Abraham did. There was obvious tension between Sarah and Hagar. Sarah was Abraham’s wife, but Hagar was the mother of Abraham’s son. Then there was tension between Ishmael and Isaac, the

promised son Abraham and Sarah had together years later. Today there is tension in the Middle East and all around the world between the descendants of Ishmael and the descendants of Isaac. And it all started because Abraham refused to wait on God.

What happened here? Well, Abraham believed God's promise, he just didn't understand God's timing. God made the promise to Abraham when he was seventy-five years old. The promise didn't come to pass, though, until he was one hundred years old. It was in the middle of those twenty-five years of waiting that Abraham took the situation into his own hands. That was when he decided to father a child by another woman instead of by his wife.

When we take matters into our own hands, we usually end up with a mess. How much wiser we would be if we would let God handle things in His own time and in His own way. This is especially true when we find ourselves at a crossroads in life.

Are you in college and trying to figure out what to major in? Don't just choose a field because it seems easy. Ask God what He

wants you to do in life. And wait for His answer.

Are you single and trusting God to bring the right person into your life? Don't settle for the first person who shows interest in you. Wait for the person God has chosen and wait for the time He has appointed.

When it comes to major life decisions, we need to **respond** to the leadership of God and **wait** for His perfect timing. If we take matters into our own hands, we will live to regret it. If we wait on God, though, we will always be glad. So wait patiently. You don't have to receive everything today!!

2. Wait confidently...God's plan will eventually come to pass.

Perhaps you are familiar with the Old Testament story of Joseph. The eleventh of twelve sons, Joseph had a dream as a teenager that he would one day rise to a position of power and greatness. When he shared this dream with his brothers, they were filled with jealousy. In their anger, they threw him into a pit. Then they pulled him out and sold him to a group of Ishmaelites headed to Egypt. In

Egypt, he became an assistant to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officers. But just when it looked like things were taking a turn for the better, Potiphar's wife falsely accused Joseph of rape. That charge landed him in prison.

What in the world was happening? What about Joseph's dream? He had gone from the **pit** to the **prison**. He had no way of knowing, though, that those stops must be made before he could reach the **palace**.

Eventually, Joseph's dream came true. He was released from the prison after Pharaoh heard how he had so effectively interpreted the dreams of some of the other prisoners. Upon his release, Joseph then interpreted some of Pharaoh's dreams. Pharaoh was so impressed with Joseph's ability to interpret dreams that he appointed him as the second most powerful person in Egypt. Joseph was second only to Pharaoh himself. The **pit** and the **prison** were merely preparation for the **palace**.

The amazing thing to me, though, about Joseph's story, is that all along the way we read the phrase, "The LORD was with Joseph" (Genesis 39:2, 21). No matter where he was or what he was facing, Joseph knew that God had a plan for his life and that one day God's plan

would come to pass. He may not have understood what was happening, but he never stopped trusting God.

At the end of his life, when his brothers came to apologize for their mistreatment of him, Joseph graciously responded by saying, “You meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good” (Genesis 50:20). Looking back on the whole experience, Joseph could clearly see the providential hand of God. Had he never been sold to the Ishmaelites, he never would have gone to Egypt. Had he never gone to Egypt, he never would have met Potiphar. Had he never met Potiphar, he never would have been falsely accused by Potiphar’s wife. Had he never been falsely accused by Potiphar’s wife, he never would have gone to prison. Had he never gone to prison, he never would have interpreted the other prisoners’ dreams. Had he never interpreted the other prisoners’ dreams, he never would have had an opportunity to interpret Pharaoh’s dreams. Had he never interpreted Pharaoh’s dreams, he never would have become Pharaoh’s right-hand man. Had he never become Pharaoh’s right-hand man, he never would have been able to save the lives of so many people during the terrible famine that came upon the land.

So, in retrospect, things were clear to Joseph. When we are waiting on God, though, we don't have the advantage of retrospect. There's nothing to **look back** on yet. Don't get me wrong. We can certainly look back on other times in our lives when God came through for us. But we are not yet able to look back on the situation we are now in because we are still in it!! So what do we do? Since we can't **look back** yet, we need to **look up**. We need to **look up** to the God Who has promised, "I know the plans I have for you" (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV). We need to **look up** to the God Who has come through for us in the past and Who will come through for us again. And we need to trust our God to work things out for us...in His own time and in His own way.

3. Wait silently...there's no need to complain.

As we wait patiently and confidently for God to intervene in our situation, we also need to learn to wait **silently**. David said, "My soul, wait silently for God alone" (Psalm 62:5).

That would be a good thing for all of us to do. We don't have to run around telling everybody that we are waiting on God. If we

are always talking about what God **will do**, we miss the joy of what God **is doing**. We miss the joy of today by spending all of our thoughts and words on tomorrow. And if the sole focus of our lives is on what God **will do**, the longer we wait the more negative we will become.

When David was a teenager, God chose him to be the next king of Israel. The prophet Samuel even anointed young David to be the successor of King Saul. As you read the biblical narrative in I Samuel 16, you expect David's "swearing-in ceremony" to follow. But that's not at all what happened. David had to wait many years before he actually became Israel's king.

During those years, David spent most of his time on the run from paranoid King Saul. Saul was jealous of the popularity David was experiencing after his monumental victory over Goliath. And, as a result, Saul tried to kill David. In fear for his life, David spent his time hiding in the caves of the Judean desert.

Think about that. The young man who had been anointed to be king was now on the run from the current king, living in caves like an animal. Not a very smooth transition plan!! I imagine there were some nights when David

prayed, “What about that ‘king thing,’ God? I thought You had something special for my life. What are You doing, God? This is not the way a future king is supposed to live.”

What was God doing in David’s life? Why such a long and painful delay between his **anointing** as king and his actual **coronation** as king? Here’s why: **God was teaching David to trust Him moment by moment.** He was teaching David to live in the present, not in the future. David could not afford to spend his time daydreaming about being king. He was having to trust God for each new day.

While it is true that many people live in the past, mired in the mistakes and sins of yesterday, it is also true that many people live in the future, constantly wondering what God is going to do for them one day. Friend, it is wise to **learn from the past** and to **look to the future**, but God wants us to **live in the present.** The Bible says, “**This** is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it (Psalm 118:24, emphasis mine). And the only way to do that is to trust God and enjoy His goodness **right now.**”

If it seems to be taking God a long time to work a certain situation out for you, stop

talking about it. Stop thinking about it. Put it in His hands and begin to live in the present, enjoying every moment of every day. If you are enjoying the presence of God in the present moment, along with the countless blessings you already have, you won't be so obsessed with what God is going to do down the road. **Wait silently for God to act in your situation.** That's the lesson of Psalm 62. And it's a lot easier to do when you are satisfied with Who God is in your present. He is your Savior, Sustainer, Protector, Deliverer, Father, and Friend. That's what David learned in those caves. And that's what he would need to know when he eventually became king!!

In fact, when David wrote Psalm 62, he had already become king. As he wrote, he was waiting for God to take care of a new set of problems. His leadership was being threatened. As he reminded himself to wait silently on God, I cannot help but wonder if David quietly reminisced, "I waited silently in those caves, and God **made** me king. I'll wait silently again, and God will **keep** me as king. Those who threaten to destroy me cannot undo God's plan. I'll trust Him...one day at a time." What he had learned in those caves was now paying dividends in the palace!!

4. Wait expectantly...your life's story is not yet complete.

As we wait patiently, confidently, and silently, satisfied with Who God is to us right now, we should also wait with a sense of expectation and anticipation about what God has planned for the future. With God, the best is always yet to be!! The Bible teaches that God always leads us to a place of victory, even when it looks like we have suffered an insurmountable defeat.

You're probably familiar with the story of a man named Job. An entire book of the Bible is dedicated to his experience. Job was an incredibly righteous man who suffered unimaginable tragedy and loss. He lost his possessions, his income, his ten children, and his health. If that's not bad enough, he lost his reputation as a godly man as well. His friends told him that the reason for all of his problems was because of sin in his life. His friends were wrong. They didn't understand that God had allowed Satan to bring these problems into Job's life in order to demonstrate Job's true love for God. And Job passed the test. After his unthinkable experience, the Bible says, "Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong" (Job 1:22). Instead of becoming bitter, Job began to

praise God by saying, “The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD” (Job 1:21).

Although Job went through a painful loss, by the end of the book we see that God had led him to a place of triumph. The Bible says, “The LORD restored Job’s losses...Indeed the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before” (Job 42:10). In chapter 1, he lost it all. In chapter 42, he received back twice as much as he had lost. Twice the number of sheep. Twice the number of camels. Twice the number of oxen. Twice the number of donkeys. And then the Bible says that God gave him ten more kids. Why not twenty? Why not twice as many kids? Because he still had his first ten kids. They had just moved to heaven early!!

What I want you to see is this: **Just because you have suffered a defeat, that doesn’t mean you are defeated.** God is a God of comebacks!! He “always leads us in triumph in Christ” (II Corinthians 2:14). Not sometimes. Not many times. Not most times. Always!! Your responsibility is to trust Him until the victory comes...no matter how long it takes.

There are forty chapters between Job's **losses** in chapter 1 and his **restoration** in chapter 42. He had plenty of chances to give up. He had a lot of opportunities to walk away from God. But he didn't. He stayed faithful to God, and God stayed faithful to him.

As you wait on God, there should be a sense of excitement, not dread, about your future. Your life's story is not yet complete. You may be in chapter 13 or chapter 15 or chapter 23, and you may feel like giving up. But if you give up now, you're going to miss chapter 42!! You're going to miss the grand finale!!

If you give up, that's your decision. But I've decided that I'm not giving up. I've been through too many chapters. I'm closer to chapter 42 than I've ever been. And so are you!!

Live in the present, but be convinced of one thing deep down in your heart: God has something planned for your future that you haven't experienced yet. We don't know **what** it is or **when** it is, but we know **that** it is. The Bible says, "The LORD will perfect *that which* concerns me" (Psalm 138:8). That promise is good enough for me. It is good enough to

convince me that giving up is not an option. I hope it's good enough for you, too!!

You talk about a great life!! I'm satisfied with Jesus right now. And I'm expecting Him to do unusually good things in my future. I hope you're living with a similar attitude. You should be!! The Bible says, "*Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him*" (I Corinthians 2:9). We haven't even thought about all of the blessings God has already prepared for us!!

A New Perspective on Waiting

The Bible says, "Those who wait on the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31). There are several wonderful truths in that verse, but I only want to focus on two of them here.

First of all, notice that as we wait on God we will renew our strength. We will gain a new energy. That word "**renew**" literally means "exchange." Exchange what? It means that we will exchange **our weakness** for **God's**

strength. His strength will literally become our strength. As we wait on God, our energy level literally increases. As we wait patiently, confidently, silently, and expectantly, something begins to happen on the inside of us. Spiritual vitality emerges. Our faith is strengthened, our character is developed, and we begin to gain confidence that God really is up to something in our lives. We know by the fact that God is doing something **in** us that He is also in the process of doing something **for** us. This expectancy creates an energy level we had never known before. We begin to understand what the Bible means when it says, “The joy of the LORD is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10). As we wait, His joy begins to fill our hearts.

The second thing that happens as we wait on God is that we gain a new perspective of the situation. The Bible says that as we wait we will “mount up with wings like eagles” (Isaiah 40:31). An eagle sees things from above. And as we wait on God, we begin to see things from above, too.

One of the amazing attributes of eagles is their eyesight. I once read that the sharpness of an eagle’s vision is at least four times that of a human being with perfect vision. An eagle can

identify a rabbit from almost a mile away. At 1,000 feet in the air, an eagle can spot its prey over an area of almost three square miles. Eagles simply have a perspective on things that we humans don't have.

As we wait on God, though, we gain that same perspective, spiritually speaking. The need we are waiting on God to meet begins to come into focus more clearly. The problem we are waiting on God to solve can now be seen from His perspective. We begin to understand that our ultimate joy in life doesn't come from God meeting that need or solving that problem. Our ultimate joy in life comes from God Himself.

Use your imagination for a moment. Imagine that you are at an upscale restaurant with your favorite person in the world. The two of you take a few minutes to look at the menu. You make your decisions and place your orders. And then you begin to talk and wait. And wait. And wait. And wait!! You inquire as to the delay. Your server kindly explains that the kitchen is running a little slower than normal, but he assures you that your meal is being prepared and that it will be out shortly.

Now you have a choice to make. You can sit there and be frustrated, or you can sit there and enjoy each other's company. But you can't do both at the same time.

Several years ago, as I was praying about my future, God gave me that visual on waiting. It was like Jesus said to me, "Jon, I know you are waiting on Our Father to work everything out for you, and at the right time, He will. But don't become so preoccupied with what He is doing in the kitchen that you fail to enjoy My presence with you here at the table."

That image forever changed my view of waiting on God. Here is what I have learned: **Who I am waiting with is more important than what I am waiting on!!** The presence of Jesus, at the table with me, brings me greater joy than all of my other prayers being answered and all of my other needs being met. Friend, God's greatest gift to us is not a better job, a bigger home, a newer car, or a wonderful spouse. God's greatest gift to us is Jesus...and He is at the table with us right now.

That's the picture I pray you will begin to have of waiting. You're not just waiting **on** God; you're waiting **with** God. He is at the

table with you. And His company is better than whatever it is that you're waiting on.

And as you sit at the table with Jesus...just talking...just listening...just letting Him meet the deep needs of your soul...the needs for peace, joy, contentment, acceptance, and purpose in life...you will become so captivated by Him that you will almost forget whatever it is that you have been waiting on. After all, compared to Jesus, it isn't all that important anyway.

And as Jesus Himself becomes the deepest desire of your heart, an amazing thing will happen. One of these days, the kitchen door will swing open, and God the Father will walk out. He will bring to your table the order you requested...seasoned with His goodness and purified in the oven of His will. And when He brings that surprise to your table, He will whisper in your ear, "I was just waiting for you to understand that Who I gave you in Jesus is more satisfying than this little surprise I prepared for you." And when He says that, you're going to say, "I know, Father. You're right. Jesus has become everything to me."

So, in a nutshell, that's the key to waiting. We're not just waiting **on** God; we're waiting

with God. And His presence is the sweetest, most peaceful, most satisfying thing I've ever experienced in life.

One Thing You Don't Have to Wait For

As I close this booklet, I should remind you that there is one thing you don't have to wait for. You don't have to wait to be saved. The Bible says, "Behold, **now** is the accepted time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation" (II Corinthians 6:2, emphasis mine).

If you have never been saved, or if you just don't have the full assurance of your salvation, I am going to end this booklet with a little prayer. If you will pray it sincerely and trust Jesus to save you, He will. The Bible says that "*whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved*" (Romans 10:13). That's a promise from God. So, in order to be saved, you have to **ask** Him to save you, and then you have to **trust** Him to save you. If you will do that, He will save you right now. And when He does, you will begin to experience a peace you have never known. The Bible teaches us that **peace** is a result of **trust**. The Scripture says, "Therefore, having been justified by **faith**, we have **peace** with God through our Lord Jesus

Christ” (Romans 5:1, emphasis mine). If I have learned anything in life, I have learned that we can trust Jesus to save us. Trust Him now as you pray the following prayer:

The Salvation Prayer

“Dear Jesus,

I know that I have sinned. Please forgive me of everything I've done wrong. I believe You died on the cross to pay for my sins, and that You rose from the dead, conquering death and hell. Right now, as best as I know how, I invite You to come into my heart, forgive me of my sins, and make me a Christian. I ask You to save me, Jesus, and I trust You to do it. Welcome to my heart, Jesus. Begin now to make me the person You want me to be.

*In Your Name I Pray,
Amen.”*

If you just prayed that prayer, God just saved you!! I want to welcome you to the family of God. I also want to encourage you to share your decision with another Christian. And finally, I want to encourage you to become a part of a good church.

And I want to remind you to keep looking up...the best is yet to be!! Good things **always** come to those who wait!! One day you'll see!!

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A graduate of Baylor University (B.A.), Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (M. Div.), and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (D. Min.), Jon's desire is to lead people to trust Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord and to help them grow in their relationship with Him.