

This is our second week to consider the discipline of waiting on God. One reason we are taking two weeks is that it is spoken of so frequently in Scripture, and the other is that it is rarely spoken of in our instant gratification culture. Last week we looked at waiting on God for salvation and His goodness, and also considered the promises to those who wait on God. We saw that it was important to wait only upon Him and to take time to do so in silence. Today we'll look at the Scriptures regarding waiting on God as to **our relationship** with Him, our **growth and direction**, in **intercession** for others, and for **the return of Jesus**.

We'll begin with the Scriptures regarding our relationship with the LORD. ²⁵ *The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him.* Lamentations 3:25 (ESV) We tend to read this verse as saying God gives me what I ask for if I wait for and seek Him. I would challenge us to see that as a carnal reading. Let us see it saying that the soul who waits for and seeks Him will realize the goodness of God's nature. Even if we do not receive our requests, we experience He is good. If we truly seek Him and not things or what He can do for us, but to know Him, we will value our relationship with Him because He is always good and only does what is good. (Psalm 100:5)

The soul who does not wait for Him and only seeks His hand will not consider His goodness when they do not receive what they desired when they wanted it. We become the tyrant who demands that God change His nature and give us what will harm us. That kind of attitude doubts the goodness of God. But the soul who waits on the LORD will find He is good. (Psalm 25:21) If you want to know the goodness of God wait on Him not on what He can give.

Your requests may be the very heart of God, for your spiritual growth, for a sense of His presence to encourage you, for the healing of broken relationships, for direction regarding your service to Him. Still, you may not have the answers. Remember, you are not waiting for answers, you are waiting on the LORD. He works in His time. It is good to list these things for which you are waiting on the LORD. "LORD, I am waiting on You for the victory over this area in my life." You've done all you know to do, but now you look to God to show His power in His time and do what you cannot. (James 4:6)

²⁴ *Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the LORD!* Psalm 31:24 (ESV) Here is the great difference between religion of the head and that of the heart. Religion of the mind says, "Here are my duties. I must muster the strength and be courageous and strive to be a good Christian." A relationship of the heart waits upon God. It realizes that without Him there is no real strength or courage. (Isaiah 40:29) In fact, it realizes that without Him we can do nothing. (John 15:5) It takes courage in our dependency upon God and the strength and courage He brings to our life. This waiting

Commented [notes1]: Psalm 100:5 (ESV)

⁵ For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Commented [notes2]: ²¹ May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you. (ESV)

Commented [notes3]: James 4:6 (ESV)

⁶ But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Commented [notes4]: Isaiah 40:29 (ESV)

²⁹ He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength.

Commented [notes5]: John 15:5 (ESV)

⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

shows we depend on God's goodness and not our own. Our hearts rest in Him both to wait for direction and to act when the direction comes. (Matthew 11:29)

⁵ I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; ⁶ my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning. Psalm 130:5-6 (ESV) What expectancy this describes! The watchman on the last shift of the night would begin at 3A.M. The enemy often would sneak up the walls of a city at night to open the gates to an invader. That last shift was the most important, and yet the most difficult. The darkness weighs on the eyelids, but the importance of staying awake is too urgent to give in. And then the dawn begins to glow and the heaviness lifts and the city is safe for another day. How the watchman waits for the morning with hope and expectancy. So our souls should be waiting upon God and hoping in His Word. We wait for His light to shine upon us, and in us, and through us. Could we have a greater expectancy? (Psalm 43:3)

The Word tells us that God is light. (1John 1:5) When darkness seems to overwhelm us we must wait for the Light of God to flood our souls. We see it in nature every day. As plants and trees simply are still and soak up the rays of the sun that give them the strength and energy to grow, so our souls can do voluntarily what plants do by nature. We turn to the Son of God and be still in His presence. His light dispels our darkness as we are still in the presence of His light. And day by day without even perceiving it we grow like the oaks, spreading the roots down into His love and lifting our branches out to receive even more light. (Ephesians 3:16-17)

We also wait upon the LORD for our spiritual growth and daily guidance. *¹⁴ Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!* Psalm 27:14 (ESV) We should hold to great expectations while we wait on the LORD. Because God is love (1John 4:8), we can hope for the best as we wait. We can count on God meeting us and bringing a blessing. It may not be in the form we imagine, but if not, we should know that what He will bring is better than what our understanding expected. **He wants to give us Himself and in Him are all good things.** If you feel weak and unworthy, remember that you are in the Son whom He loves. (Colossians 1:13) Just soak in His love and light as you wait and let your heart take courage. Be strengthened in Him.

⁴ Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. ⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long. Psalm 25:4-5 (ESV) The Psalmist delighted in God's word. (25:10) But he did not lean to his own understanding to interpret and apply the word. He looked to the LORD, waiting all day long on Him for guidance. The psalm reiterates two essential truths, our absolute need and the absolute certainty of God's guidance. Once again, the temptation is to rush ahead and do as we think best. **But those who wait on the LORD are looking for the best response to their need.** We know God's leading is more helpful and productive than anything we can imagine. His instruction is really a promise of what He

Commented [notes6]: Matthew 11:29 (ESV)

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Commented [notes7]: Psalm 43:3 (ESV)

³ Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling!

Commented [notes8]: 1 John 1:5 (ESV)

⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

Commented [notes9]: Ephesians 3:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Commented [notes10]: 1 John 4:8 (ESV)

⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Commented [notes11]: Colossians 1:13 (ESV)

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

Commented [notes12]: Psalm 25:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

will do through us if we will wait on Him. Our prayer time should express our need, but also our confident assurance that He will direct us. Verse 9 of this same psalm assures of that. ⁹ *He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.* Psalm 25:9 (ESV)

We follow this time of surrender in prayer with our continual looking to Him for the answer. (Hosea 12:6) For You I wait all the day long. It is that attitude of the heart that is always looking to God. That is the heart that sees Him as the only source of wisdom and goodness, longing to be to us more than we even require of Him. If we can see that He is love, waiting to be gracious to us, to guide us in the best way, to deepen our relationship, we would find waiting upon God to the sheer delight and expectation of our soul.

¹³ *But they soon forgot his works; they did not wait for his counsel.* Psalm 106:13 (ESV) The consequences of not waiting on God are clearly seen when Israel went into the Promised Land. Their conquest of Jericho with those strange tactics was the result of waiting on God. (Joshua 6:2) But their next battle that resulted in defeat was the result of not waiting on his counsel. (Joshua 7:3) Their treaty with the Gibeonites was another example of not waiting on God. (Joshua 9:14) How easily we forget that our fruitful times of victory came from our obedience to the guidance we received when we waited on the LORD.

This has been a problem with the people of God throughout history. We even look to the Word but then think our own thoughts. Instead of letting the Spirit guide us into all truth (John 16:13), we lean to our own understanding. (Proverbs 3:5) Instead of waiting on the LORD to influence our thoughts and understanding so that we might have the mind of Christ, we rush ahead with our best idea. Past experience, a God fearing heart, even knowledge of Bible passages, cannot be all that our mind relies on as we seek God's will. We need above all else to seek the mind of God. That will never contradict Scripture, but it may show us a different application of Scripture than the way our natural thoughts were leaning. Jesus looked to the Father not only for what to say, but how to say it. (John 12:49) What great fruit would result if we patiently waited upon God for our steps to be entirely His will and not our own?

If our intercession for others is to be effective, we must wait on the Lord. ¹⁷ *I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him.* Isaiah 8:17 (ESV) Isaiah was waiting upon God for the difficult days his nation was enduring. Our prayer life and waiting upon God may begin with our own needs, but because we love one another (John 15:12), it will naturally extend to those who are experiencing times of darkness. Christ entered into heaven to ever intercede for us. (Hebrews 7:25) We must join Him to intercede for our brothers and sisters who are in need. As we do, we wait on the LORD to see how He might direct us to assist them or for His direct intervention in their circumstances. Our hope is not in our ability to

Commented [notes13]: Hosea 12:6 (ESV)

⁶ "So you, by the help of your God, return, hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God."

Commented [notes14]: Joshua 6:2 (ESV)

² And the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor."

Commented [notes15]: Joshua 7:3 (ESV)

³ And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not have all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not make the whole people toil up there, for they are few."

Commented [notes16]: Joshua 9:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ So the men took some of their provisions, but did not ask counsel from the LORD.

Commented [notes17]: John 16:13 (ESV)

¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

Commented [notes18]: Proverbs 3:5 (ESV)

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

Commented [notes19]: John 12:49 (NIV)

⁴⁹ For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.

Commented [notes20]: John 15:12 (ESV)

¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

Commented [notes21]: Hebrews 7:25 (ESV)

²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

encourage them, but in God's direction as to how to truly bless them. I have often tried to encourage and point someone to the Word to encourage them in a time of trial, but sometimes my efforts seemed to make matters even worse. I can see now that I was trying to do my best when what they needed was God's best.

There are times when we see a problem in ministry, too much dependence on man, or a work motivated by pride, or a lack of joy and passion. It is a call to intercede and then wait upon God to see Him bring about a transformation in that ministry. Don't give in to a spirit of judgment or despair, wait upon God who can do more than we can ask or imagine. When you are tempted to give up or be critical, give yourself in an even greater way to waiting upon God and hoping in Him. ⁷ *Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him...* Psalm 37:7a (ESV)

We wait for God for His justice. ^{8a} *In the path of your judgments, O LORD, we wait for you;* ^{8b} *For when your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.* Isaiah 26:8a,9b (ESV) There is so much injustice in men dealing with men. The world has its courts with lawsuits and laws and politics to deal with it all. The children of God get caught up in it, and we should be a voice for justice and righteousness, but let our spirit never depend on men for righteousness in the earth. Look to God to bring justice when you are wronged. (Proverbs 20:22) We look to God for true righteousness and justice. We wait on Him to act in His time. (Isaiah 30:18)

If we had our way, we would be ruling with a rod of iron today. (Psalm 2:9) That day will come, but not until grace has reached every soul. Today we wait upon God's judgments. We can expect God to teach people righteousness in His time and His way. But we must not only look outward, but inward as well. His judgments in our own life are blessing to teach us righteousness. Our attempts at waiting on God often stir in us a sense of conviction and reveal the dark places in our own hearts that we have tried to keep from God. (John 3:21)

We also wait on God for the final judgment when righteousness will reign in the earth. But as we wait we intercede for those who think they are saved by their works. We intercede for those who have been misled into thinking they are god. We wait upon God to bring conviction to the churchgoer who attends for the sake of interacting with others and has no relationship with the living God. It is a sobering thing to consider that we wait for the final judgment. (Romans 14:10)

And in that vein, we wait for the return of Christ Jesus. ³⁶ *and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.* Luke 12:36 (ESV) We wait with expectation for the fulfillment of all the promises, for our final transformation, being made in His likeness (1John 3:2), and eternity in His presence. Are you waiting in expectation for His return? (1Thessalonians 1:9-10) *The Waiting on God for His*

Commented [notes22]: Proverbs 20:22 (ESV)

²² Do not say, "I will repay evil." Wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you.

Commented [notes23]: Isaiah 30:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

Commented [notes24]: Psalm 2:9 (ESV)

⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. E

Commented [notes25]: John 3:21 (ESV)

²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."

Commented [notes26]: Romans 14:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;

Commented [notes27]: 1 John 3:2 (ESV)

² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

Commented [notes28]: 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 (ESV)

⁹ For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

presence and power in daily life will be the only true preparation for waiting for Christ in humility and true holiness. The waiting for Christ coming from heaven to take us to heaven will give the Waiting on God its true tone of hopefulness and joy. The Father, who, in His own time, will reveal His Son from heaven, is the God who, as we wait on Him, prepares us for the revelation of His Son.¹⁴

Commented [notes29]: Andrew Murray; *Waiting on God*; Day 28

Let me close with this wonderful final thought. ¹⁸ *Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.* Isaiah 30:18 (ESV) Waiting on God is a blessing because the LORD waits to be gracious to you. He is waiting on you! He is waiting for you to come and spend time in His presence. He is waiting for you to recognize how much you need Him. He is waiting for you to realize He is everything you need and that waiting on Him is the best thing you can do. He is waiting for you to quit trusting in your abilities and to look to His goodness, love, grace, and power to do more than you can ask or imagine.

One author put it this way. Imagine that you were among the hundreds following Jesus. One day John the Beloved comes to you and says he has a message from the Master. The Master invites you to come to Him anytime you want. He wants to hear your heart. (Song of Songs 2:14) He wants to teach you personally. He said to not worry about how much time you take. He'll take all the time you want and you can ask whatever you will. But He wants me to prepare you by telling you that He doesn't always answer right away. However, if you trust Him, He will always give you an answer at the right time.

Commented [notes30]: Song of Songs 2:14 (ESV)
¹⁴O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the crannies of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.

Dear family of God, John did tell you Jesus said this. ⁷ *If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.* ⁸ *By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.* ⁹ *As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.* John 15:7-9 (ESV)

O God! teach us, above everything, the blessed lesson, that all the day, and every moment of it, You are around and within us, working out Your work of love. Show us that You only ask of us that we wait on You. Teach us to say from a heart filled with faith, 'on You do I wait all the day.' Amen!

Questions

- 1 What questions do you have about waiting on God?
- 2 Review Lamentations 3:25.
- 3 What is it we are waiting for?
- 4 What is the difference between religion of the head and that of the heart?
- 5 How are we like the watchman?
- 6 How does waiting strengthen us?
- 7 Why do we need to wait for direction?

- 8 What happens when we don't wait?
- 9 How does waiting relate to intercession? Judgment?
- 10 How do we wait for Jesus' return?
- 11 Who is waiting for us?