

The Waiting is the Hardest Part

Questions for Covenant Groups Week of September 17-23

Psalm 5:3; Psalm 33:20; Isaiah 8:17; Romans 8:23-25

Hosts – Thank you for faithfully preparing to facilitate your group. The role that you play is a strategic part of FCC’s desire to see people become more like Christ. Please read through the four passages this week and if at all possible, participate in the daily 40 Day Challenge that Michael is leading us in as a church.

Say, this week Michael began his sermon with mentioning that there are basically 3 Categories of waiting on God. Ask, Does anyone remember what he mentioned?

- Waiting for God's providence - His will for your life
- Waiting for God's salvation - not just spiritual but from difficult circumstances as well.
- Waiting for God's blessings

Say, there were basically two main points to the sermon this week. The first one is . . .

1. **Our God is a promise keeping God of perfectly timed delay.**

Ask, does anyone remember the difference between contract and covenant? (Covenant vs contract - contract – “you break the terms I walk away” and Covenant – “keeping the terms even if terms are broken by us - His promises are still true”)

Say, In the midst of delay, we can see “delay” throughout Scripture. Here are a few. Review some of these with the group and allow them to talk through a few of them as you choose.

- God took time in creating - He could have snapped His fingers and "there you go"
- God delayed in creating man and woman – created last
- God delayed destroying the earth even after the world was sinful - flood
- Delay of the water receding after the flood
- Delay of Abram and Sarah having children
- Delay of Joseph in Egypt
- Malachi to Matthew - delay of over 400 years
- Messiah arrives as a baby - delay in being Messiah-ish (a new theological term) ;-)
- Delay in resurrection and ascension
- Christ is delayed in coming again

Say, Sin is what sinners do in time of delay and waiting is what faith-filled sinners do in time of delay. (You might have to say this a couple of times.) **Ask**, what do you think about that statement?

To God it is not delay but us believing that we are defined by time, we see waiting as delay.

2. **Say**, the second major sermon point dealt with the benefits of waiting on God. Let’s take a look at those. Share this . . .
- **Say, Waiting on God leads to expectancy** – Have someone read. Psalm 5:3 - *“O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.”*

Ask, Why might it be important for us to begin our day focusing on Christ? **Ask,** How have you found that helpful in your own life/walk? (Allow people to share some things they may do to help them focus on Christ in the morning as they begin their day.)

Say, waiting on God leads to hope – Have someone read Psalm 33:20 - *“Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.”*

Ask, When have you needed help, and Christ has been your hope. Allow time for people to share how Christ has been their shield and protection.

Say, Waiting on God leads to trust - *Isaiah 8:17 “I will wait for the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him.”*

Say, also Waiting on God leads to patience - *Romans 8:23-25 “And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.”*

Michael made these two points -

- First fruits - we get God's first fruits but what do we give to Him? (The example is like tipping your meal before you are served.)
- Praying for patience is praying for the gift instead of more of the giver of the gift.

Say, finally Waiting on God reveals our character - When we don't get what we want, our true character and current maturity is revealed.

Ask, How have you seen God shape and mold your character over time? Or have you allowed Him to change your character?

Remind your group of the opportunity they have to participate in the 40 Days of Waiting on God Challenge by receiving the daily emails.

Allow for your participants to share any prayer requests they have and close in prayer by focusing on God and His perfect timing in every situation.