



WOW: Word Of the Week

WAITING – Waiting and Watching God’s Timing

February 24, 2021

Waiting is hard. The children of Israel waited for God’s deliverance from Egypt for almost 400 years. God’s promise to Abraham was not fulfilled for almost 2000 years. The nation of Israel waited for hundreds of years for the Messiah to arrive. Can we today really grasp the patience, perseverance, and faith of multiplied generations who believed what they had never seen and confidently expected their faithful God to fulfill his promise?

Waiting is not easy. The sufferings and challenges they endured are summarized toward the end of Hebrews 11. They looked forward to receiving the promise, but century after century, the promise was not fulfilled. Through their faithfulness to their God, they lives became a testimony, anticipating with confidence and conviction the fulfillment of the promise.

Since March 2020, almost a year, during the pandemic, we have been waiting. A year is a long time. We hoped that relief would arrive more quickly. We are big fans of immediate gratification. Recent reports from medical experts suggest we in the U.S. will likely wait for most of another year – perhaps the end of 2021 at the earliest, or early 2022. Our brothers and sisters in other countries will wait even longer! Already we are ready, more than ready, for the restrictions to be gone and our lives to be normal – time together as family, with friends and neighbors, with brothers and sisters in our spiritual family. We are ready to discard the masks and the suspicion. That day is coming. Until then, we wait. For just a moment, can you identify with the generations of God’s faithful people who waited and longed for the coming of the Messiah?

Acts 1 tells us about a small group of Jesus’ disciples who waited in Jerusalem as they had been instructed. They were waiting on God’s promise. Galatians 4 declares that God sent Jesus to this earth “right on schedule” (in the fullness of time—when the right time arrived).

God has a purpose for us in seasons of waiting. After Jesus’ Ascension, the believers waited and Pentecost came! Waiting either makes us stronger and more resilient, or weaker and hardened. During the pandemic, many Christians have learned new dynamics and dimensions as they have spent more time with God. God is deepening my trust in him—I relish the opportunity to “waste time with God.” I more clearly see what matters. Other Christians have spun to the periphery of faith and community, wondering where God is in the midst of intense pain, illness, suffering, and death. Difficulty drives some closer to God, and distances others from their God.

As long as we live on this earth where time is measured and life is scheduled, we will spend time waiting. In the future, the story of our lives will include what happened in 2020 and 2021—how lives were shaped and changed. I hope that this time of waiting is for you a time of growth and spiritual maturing, advancing the gospel, growing stronger in the weak places. I hope that this period of waiting is not for you merely marking time. Above, I hope that this time of waiting has not pushed you into doubt and darkness.

Those three options probably catch virtually all of us. God is at work. If we could talk about where and how he is at work in your life -- sharing strength, seeking stability, or restarting, I am ready. Write, text, call, make contact.