

# Waiting On God

Teaching given by Peter Warren at FGPC, August – November 2017

## 1. The Need To Wait on God

### Psalm 27.14

“Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!”

Several times in the Scripture we read these words ‘wait on the Lord’. In this series of teaching we are going to explore this theme and see what the Bible says about it, what it means and how we can practice it.

Twice in this verse the psalmist mentions ‘waiting on the Lord’, so before we do anything else let us clarify the meaning of this statement.

First let us look for meaning from within the psalm itself:

In several places David mentions being in the presence of the Lord -

- vs4 – His one desire was to dwell, remain and abide in the house of the Lord and to seek the answers to his problems and situations from the Lord
- vs5 – David talks about being hidden in the secret place of the Lord’s tabernacle (dwelling place)
- vs8 – God’s instructions to David was to ‘Seek My face’
- vs11 – David also wanted to learn the way of the Lord

So in this psalm we see a man whose desire is to seek God, to dwell in His presence and learn the secrets of the Lord.

Now let us look at the word ‘wait’ from this verse in the original language:

The word used is **qāvâh** (Strong’s #6960) – this has two main streams of thought\*

1. to wait, to look for, to hope, to expect, to linger, to tarry
2. to collect, to gather, to bind together

\*Brown-Driver-Briggs’ Hebrew Definitions; Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary

And finally let us look at the word in Webster’s Dictionary of American English (1828):

### WAIT

- The sense is to stop, or to continue.
  1. To stay or rest in expectation; to stop or remain stationary, till the arrival of some person or event.
  2. To stay proceedings, or suspend any business, in expectation of some person, event, or the arrival of some hour.

3. To rest in expectation and patience.
  4. To stay; not to depart.
  5. To stay; to continue by reason of hindrance.
  6. To lie in ambush, as an enemy.
- To wait on or upon, to attend, as a servant; to perform menial services for; as, to wait on a gentleman; to wait on the table.
    1. To attend; to go to see; to visit on business or for ceremony.
    2. To pay servile or submissive attendance.
    3. To follow, as a consequence
    4. To look watchfully.
    5. To attend to; to perform.
    6. To be ready to serve; to obey.

So what does it mean to wait on the Lord.

All of God's children should be people who meet with God regularly –

- this helps us keep Jesus as Lord of our lives
- helps us to live humbly before God
- it enables us to worship Him
- helps us live holy lives which do not dishonour God

Too many of us relegate this time of waiting on the Lord to times of trouble, difficulty, stress. Some of us try everything else but wait on the Lord. We are going to see through these studies over the coming weeks that waiting on God is vital and a requirement.

In the verse from Psalm 27 we read that waiting on the Lord will actually strengthen our heart

I began by looking at other verses from that psalm – let us read them in the Amplified translation:

“One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek, inquire for, *and [insistently] require*: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord [*in His presence*] all the days of my life, to behold *and gaze upon the beauty [the sweet attractiveness and the delightful loveliness]* of the Lord and to meditate, consider, *and inquire in His temple.*” (vs4, Amp)

“You have said, Seek My face [*inquire for and require My presence as your vital need*]. My heart says to You, Your face (Your presence), Lord, will I seek, inquire for, *and require [of necessity and on the authority of Your Word]*.” (vs8, Amp)

Waiting on the Lord is not a one-off thing – it needs to be a daily discipline that spans our entire lifetime, it should be our lifestyle where we come into His presence for a while no matter how busy our schedules are.

Martin Luther, the 16<sup>th</sup> century Reformist, famously remarked, “*Work, work, from morning until late at night. In fact, I have so much to do that I shall have to spend the first three hours in prayer!*”

Waiting on God needs to be our number one priority of life as a Christian.

There is a promise in the Bible – James 4.8 “[Draw near to God and He will draw near to you](#)”

If we could look at our time-use priorities from God’s eyes, we would probably be very shocked. Remember what Jesus spoke to Martha, who was extremely busy serving Him and complaining that her sister Mary was doing nothing to help. He said that Mary had chosen the better thing – sitting at His feet and listening  
“[And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."](#)” Luke 10.41-42

Waiting on God is the one thing that is needed. A lot of Christians are weak spiritually because they do not give the time they need to wait on God,

We have just been studying (last few weeks) on the topic of God’s Presence with Man. The men and women who accomplished anything for God had learned the secret of waiting on Him

In waiting,

- we strengthen ourselves in God
- we get God confidence, which reinforces our faith
- we hear from God
- we learn the ways of God
- we are raised up and delivered out of our troubles

Over the coming weeks, God willing, we are going to explore this topic and see the process and fruit of waiting

## **2. God’s Order**

### **Psalm 27.14**

“[Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!](#)”

We began a teaching series last week on the subject of Waiting on God. This follows on from the series we looked at recently on God’s Presence with Man.

We saw last Wednesday how we need set our priorities right. Waiting on God is our number one priority, because in waiting

- we strengthen ourselves in God
- we get God confidence, which reinforces our faith
- we hear from God

- we learn the ways of God
- we are raised up and delivered out of our troubles

The term waiting on God does not mean that we are doing nothing while God performs something for us as though we're waiting for God to catch up with us. We saw last week that it can mean to rest or stay in expectation and patience. But we also saw that it can mean to attend to, to perform, to look watchfully, to be ready to obey or serve - such as a waiter would attend to and serve the clients in a restaurant.

This means we spend time in the presence of God attending to Him, serving and ministering to Him – this is not time that is rushed, yes we rest and remain in Him but that resting involves us doing something.

We are going to develop this theme a little more, but first let us see what God's order is.

God created us to work from the inside out – that is from our spirit and heart outwards

*“On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”* John 7.37-39

*“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”* Luke 6.45

That means that if our heart is in a disordered state we can expect nothing but turmoil to come to the surface. Our heart is made right by waiting on the Lord and responding to the things the Holy Spirit convicts us of. David prayed that the Lord would not restrict him from His presence

*“Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know wisdom.... Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me *by Your* generous Spirit.”*  
Psalm 51. 6, 10-12

The Proverbs tell us to guard our hearts, to guard the spirit because it is from these that all the various parts of our life emanate.

*“Keep *and* guard your heart with all vigilance *and* above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life.”* Proverbs 4.23 (Amp)

No matter what is happening around us we should know Him so well that we go on in Him and need nothing else in order to stand. Nothing should be able to shake us or move us or cause us to fail or give up.

*“[For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly], and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection [which it*

*exerts over believers*], and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [*in spirit into His likeness even*] to His death, [*in the hope*]" Philipians 3.10

We can only do this by offering ourselves to God and allow Him to change us through waiting on Him, so that we become more Christ-like. The Holy Spirit will lead us and direct us in the ways of the Lord as we wait on Him.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service*. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*." Romans 12.1-2

Waiting on God is not an option, neither is it just the domain of the more spiritually minded or preachers/ministers – it is an essential part of every believers life.

It is also worth noting that waiting on God isn't unproductive – it may appear to be so from the external - it is reinforcing the foundations upon which our life is built and established

As we wait on Him we are being transformed in our spirit and renewed in our mind.

The instruction of Jesus was to seek Him first in every area and all the things that are associated with life would come in their rightful place and order

"But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides." Matthew 6.33 (Amp)

When we meet with God and give Him the room He needs in our lives, He pours in all the strength and power we need. We receive all the wisdom and insight that is necessary, and the faith that moves mountains. Our priorities will be ordered rightly and our love for God and others will grow.

Once we meet with God personally, he will get the creases out of our life, straighten us up, and make us effective for Him. He will lead and guide us as we yield to His Spirit working in and through us.

We saw recently that in the fire of God's presence our lives are heated as God purifies and refines us, then we are moulded and shaped into what God needs and intends us to be.

### **3. Deep Calls Out To Deep**

#### **Psalm 42.1-11**

"As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. <sup>(2)</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? <sup>(3)</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, While they continually say to me, "Where *is your God*?" <sup>(4)</sup> When I remember these *things*, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, With the voice of joy and praise, With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast. <sup>(5)</sup> Why are you cast down, O my soul?

And *why* are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him *For* the help of His countenance. <sup>(6)</sup> O my God, my soul is cast down within me; Therefore I will remember You from the land of the Jordan, And from the heights of Hermon, From the Hill Mizar. <sup>(7)</sup> Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; All Your waves and billows have gone over me. <sup>(8)</sup> The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, And in the night His song *shall be* with me—A prayer to the God of my life. <sup>(9)</sup> I will say to God my Rock, "Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" <sup>(10)</sup> As with a breaking of my bones, My enemies reproach me, While they say to me all day long, "Where *is* your God?" <sup>(11)</sup> Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God."

This psalm expresses the desperation of a man to meet with God. We read here of a man who is so in touch with God that he longs to be in His presence. Although he has found the reality of spiritual depth he needs to meet with God afresh. He portrays himself like a deer that is thirsty and panting for fresh water – he is hungry and thirsting for the presence of the Lord.

We are reminded in the Scriptures that when the people of God were traversing the wilderness, God supplied them with Manna everyday (except the Sabbath). They were told to gather in fresh supplies sufficient for that day and not to keep any over for the next. Anyone that did try and keep some of the Manna found that it stank and bred worms.

What does this teach us about God:

- The Bible tells us Jesus is the Living Bread
- We need to come to Him and feed on Him daily
- What we received before is not sufficient to sustain us today. In the natural we do not normally go days without eating – we eat at least once/twice every day. If that's the case in the natural, how much more we need to with our spirit

John 6.31-35, 48-58

“(31) Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'HE GAVE THEM BREAD FROM HEAVEN TO EAT.'" (32) Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. (33) For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." (34) Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always." (35) And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. **He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst**..... (48) I am the bread of life. (49) Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. (50) This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. (51) I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." (52) The Jews therefore quarrelled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us *His* flesh to eat?" (53) Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. (54) Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. (55) For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. (56) **He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him**. (57) As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. (58) This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."”

We come to Him, we abide (stay/remain) in Him – that's waiting on the Lord.

This is where we get our life (vs 57)

In verse 7 the psalmist writes: “Deep calls unto deep...”. What he is expressing here is that we all need to learn how to reach into the depths of our spirit and into the heart of God. This is not talking about waiting on God during a church service or even in our personal prayer time – this is much deeper. This is where our heart touches the heart of God. As if we are standing directly before the throne of God and meeting with Him who is Lord of All.

The ISV (International Standard Version) reads like this: “*Deep waters call out to what is deeper still*”

Waiting on God draws us deeper into Him where we no longer become stimulated by external things (which can become our foundation if we let them) but by God Himself. Many Christians lack this direct sense of God – He is our Source, not our experience, ideas, ministries, doctrines or methodologies. While these things may be valid to a certain degree we must learn to go deeper.

We do not learn to swim in shallow water – it’s ok to begin with but we need to go deeper where we become out of our depth and into His depth.

We can only do this by the Spirit of God – it was the Spirit that took Ezekiel through the depths of the river (Ezekiel 47)

1 Corinthians 2.10-11

“But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”

“For us, however, God has drawn aside the veil through the teaching of the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, *including the depths of the divine nature*. For, among human beings, who knows a man's inner thoughts except the man's own spirit within him? In the same way, also, only God's Spirit is acquainted with God's inner thoughts.”  
(Weymouth)

John 16.13-15

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”

Waiting on God is like those people who abseil into underground caverns, or go deep sea diving. They know how to get safely right into the depths, and to explore where few have gone before.

Most of us have a mechanical approach to our Christianity – we read somebody’s book or hear someone’s testimony, we might get to know of some method that a church uses, and we follow these ideas and try and programme them into our life. That’s just religion, following a set of rules, ideologies – we need to go deeper and hear from God directly. These things are good but should not form the foundation of our faith. We need to plummet the depths of God, wait on Him.

This is what the psalmist was searching for – thirsting for God. He asks ‘when can I appear before God?’

“My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?”  
(Psalm 42.2)

All of our prayers, speech, writings, songs, everything we do ought to be an expression of something deeper, where we have met with God. That’s the problem with a lot of the modern so called ‘worship’ songs – they are written to meet a need, or to fit a theme and not from the depths of waiting on God.

#### **4. The Place of Waiting**

In many places through the Bible, it talks about ‘knowing God’

- this is not talking about knowing about Him – there are many that know about God but do not know Him.
- It is not knowledge gained through much learning – we can have all the theory but still not know God – the Pharisees were a bit like this, they knew the Scriptures inside out and back to front, yet they didn’t know God.
- Neither is knowing God following a set of rituals or traditions, however godly these may appear – this is just religion

When the Bible talks of knowing God – it is talking about a personal living relationship with God Himself.

We saw last time that Paul’s great desire was to come to that place where he knew God in this way:

“Yes, furthermore, I count everything as loss compared to the possession of the priceless privilege (the overwhelming preciousness, the surpassing worth, and supreme advantage) of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord *and* of progressively becoming more deeply *and* intimately acquainted with Him [*of perceiving and recognizing and understanding Him more fully and clearly*]. For His sake I have lost everything and consider it all to be mere rubbish (refuse, dregs), in order that I may win (gain) Christ (the Anointed One), <sup>(9)</sup> And that I may [*actually*] be found *and* known as in Him, not having any [*self-achieved*] righteousness that can be called my own, based on my obedience to the Law’s demands (ritualistic uprightness and supposed right standing with God thus acquired), but possessing that [*genuine righteousness*] which comes through faith in Christ (the Anointed One), the [*truly*] right standing with God, which comes from God by [*saving*] faith. <sup>(10)</sup> [*For my determined purpose is*] that I may know Him [*that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly*], and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection [*which it exerts over believers*], and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [*in spirit into His likeness even*] to His death, [*in the hope*]” **Philippians 3.8-10** (Amplified)

Paul made two statements about knowing God:

- he said that he counted everything else as loss, so that he could know God – he describes this as a priceless privilege



- also, he made it his determined purpose to know, or become ‘more deeply and intimately acquainted with’ God

listen again to how the Amplified translation describes this knowing God:

“*perceiving and recognizing and understanding Him more fully and clearly*” (vs8)

“*perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly*” (vs10)

perceiving, recognizing and understanding – this is seeing Him more fully and clearly.

Job makes this statement after spending time in the presence of God

“I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.” **Job 42.5**

The Bible tells us of many that saw God – Moses, Job, Isaiah, Ezekiel and John to name just a few

But how can this be?

The Bible also tells in Exodus 33.20 “But He [God] said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.”” - this was after Moses asked to see God’s glory.

How can God say “no man can see Me and live” and yet the Scriptures tell us of these ones who saw God and not just lived, but had their lives dramatically changed, like Isaiah.

“In the year that King Uzziah died, **I saw the Lord** sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.... (5) So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; **For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.**”” Isaiah 6.1-5

These statements at first glance seem to contradict each other but they do not.

The first (Exodus 33) is talking about seeing with our **physical eyes** – no man can look at Him with their physical eyes and live. There are probably only three in the Bible that saw God with their physical eyes: 1.) **Adam** and 2.) **his wife** – this was before the Fall of Man, before sin, and therefore they were not prevented. 3.) **Moses** – probably the only man to see God with physical eyes after the Fall – but he could only look at the Lord’s back and not at His face, and then he had to hidden in the crevice of the rock and covered by the hand of God as the Lord passed by (Exodus 33.22-23).

The subsequent statements are talking about seeing God with spiritual eyes. These men were ‘in the Spirit’ (Revelation 1.10) and they saw God, they were not the same after their ‘vision’. They had such a deep and profound sense, or understanding, of God that it changed who they were.

We use the terminology a lot of *seeking God* or *seeking His face* – we are talking about seeking Him in the Spirit. This is what Paul was getting at in the book of Philippians when he talked of knowing God. Getting to know God like this comes out of waiting on Him.

Last week we were looking at the psalmists prayer, he was longing after God like a deer panting for water (Psalm 42.1). Let us loom at similar words from another psalm.

### **Psalm 63.1-8**

“O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. <sup>(2)</sup> So I have looked for You in

the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. <sup>(3)</sup> Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You. <sup>(4)</sup> Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. <sup>(5)</sup> My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. <sup>(6)</sup> When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the *night* watches. <sup>(7)</sup> Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. <sup>(8)</sup> My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.”

David, like Paul, knew that he could afford to lose his material possessions, his status and position – he can count all these things as loss. However he couldn't afford to live without that personal intimate relationship with God, no matter how bad it got. He only got into trouble when his relationship with God faltered.

We too need to learn this – our priority is maintaining that intimate relationship with God.

In his search for God, David mentions:

- looking for God in the sanctuary (vs2)
- seeking God on his bed (vs6)

In other Scriptures we read:

- people sought God in a cave
- in the House of God
- in the gospels we often read that Jesus withdrew to the mountain to pray
- Jesus taught us to go into our closets to seek God

So where should we seek God and wait on Him? Is there a right or wrong place?

To answer this question we are going to see what Jesus had to say on the subject:

### **Matthew 6.5-6**

“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. <sup>(6)</sup> But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

In these two verses we see that:

- Our seeking or waiting on God is not meant to be done in public where men can see and praise or thank us for our piety – that's pride (we want the recognition) and hypocrisy where we want to make a public show (the literal meaning of the word hypocrite is '*an actor*').
- We are to go into the secret place where only God can see us. Where we are alone with Him. Here there are no external distractions.
- This is often why we do not really have a breakthrough in waiting on God in a church setting – often we are conscious of what others are doing around us (distraction) or how others will perceive what we are doing (fear).

### **John 4.20-24**

“Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, and you *Jews* say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.” <sup>(21)</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

<sup>(22)</sup> You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. <sup>(23)</sup> But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. <sup>(24)</sup> God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

In these verses we see that:

- it is not necessarily the place that is important where we get alone with God – there is not some physical place that is right or wrong. But that we are alone with God – whether that’s a private room, a mountain, the beach or on our bed
- it is the attitude of our heart that is important - ‘in Spirit’
- our motive must be pure - ‘in truth’.

We are going to develop this theme more next time as we look at some Scriptural and practical ways that will enable us to wait on God.

## **5. The Process of Waiting – Part 1: Laying Aside**

We finished last time by thinking about the places we should wait on the Lord.

‘Is there a right or wrong place to wait on God?’ We answered this question by looking at what Jesus said:

In Matthew 6.5-6 we saw that

- Our seeking or waiting on God is not meant to be done in public where men can see and praise or thank us for our piety – that’s pride (we want the recognition) and hypocrisy where we want to make a public show (the literal meaning of the word hypocrite is ‘*an actor*’).
- We are to go into the secret place where only God can see us. Where we are alone with Him. Here there are no external distractions.
- This is often why we do not really have a breakthrough in waiting on God in a church setting – often we are conscious of what others are doing around us (distraction) or how others will perceive what we are doing (fear).

And then from John 4.20-24 we concluded with the thought that:

- it is not necessarily the place that is important where we get alone with God – there is not some physical place that is right or wrong. But that we are alone with God – whether that’s a private room, a mountain, the beach or on our bed
- it is the attitude of our heart that is important - ‘in Spirit’
- our motive must be pure - ‘in truth’.

Saying this, waiting on God should not be a dreamy, mystical sort of thing. God is portrayed in the Bible as a vibrant, powerful, real, active, dynamic personality. Meeting with Him should have an affect on our lives.

Waiting on God should be revelation to us:

- it should make us more aware of Him and His ways
- it should open up the treasures of His Word
- it should enable us to grow in understanding and wisdom

- it should change our heart and life

Waiting on God develops and grows out of two distinctly opposite experiences yet in God's heart they find their connection:

- (1) God making Himself so real to us that the desire to meet with Him will not go away
- (2) A desperate sense of our need to meet with God in a deep, life-changing way

We see this in the case of the psalmist

**Psalm 42.1-2**

*“As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?”*

While God does not give us problems, trials and difficulties, He does often allow them to bring us to the point where become desperate for Him. Through these difficult times he prompts and draws us to Himself – to get us to the point where we come to Him and wait on Him for the answers.

Those who know the most about faith are often those who have walked through the greatest of difficulties and stayed close to God. Daniel had this revelation:

*“Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.” Daniel 11.32*

Those who know God by staying close to Him will not be drawn away through flattery or any other difficulty or temptation but will be strong and come through with a great victory.

The *Tree of Life Version* says: *“but the people who know their God will stand strong and prevail”*

Let us turn our focus on some Scriptural guidelines to enable us to wait on the Lord. We have already touched on most of these in previous studies.

**1. Laying aside**

**Hebrews 12.1-2** tells us to *“lay aside every weight... looking unto Jesus”*

A weight is anything that will hold us back – sin, a distraction, temptations, our concerns. Peter writes *“casting all your care upon Him...”* (1 Peter 5.7). If we are going to wait on God we cannot do it with the pressures of concerns or any other distraction (whether that's a telephone, somebody else or a thought). We need to be alone with God. Remember Jesus told us *“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place”* (Matthew 6.6) – shut the door, this isn't just to stop people from seeing us but also that there are no distractions.

One of the biggest weights we need to be free of is sin – we must make sure that our lives are right with God. We don't need to do lots of digging of self-examination for this because as we begin to draw near to God the Holy Spirit will point out the things we need to repent of.

We need to be holy to see the Lord, *“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord” Hebrews 12.14*. This verse follows on from the early part of the chapter – lay aside every weight, looking unto Jesus... pursue peace.. be holy. We become holy and righteous as we repent before the Lord -

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” **2 Corinthians 5.21**

Jesus became sin for us so that we could become righteous. He took our sin so that we could take His righteousness.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” **1 John 1.9**

If we confess our sin, repent, He forgives us and cleanses us from ALL unrighteousness – that is we are made righteous

“And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness” **Romans 6.18**

Another weight we need to learn to lay aside is the influence of the enemy in our lives through temptation and any of his schemes. Not that temptation is wrong because it isn't, but yielding to it is. However we do need to control the access that the devil has to our heart and mind by resisting him.

“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” **James 4.7**

We cannot resist the devil in the flesh – we cannot use our mind or will to overcome him. The devil is not flesh and blood, he is spirit. We need the help of the Holy Spirit and spiritual weapons to come against him.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.” **Ephesians 6.10-12**

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” **2 Corinthians 10.3-5**

“And they overcame him [the devil, *see verse 9*] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony....” **Revelation 12.11**

## **6. The Process of Waiting – Part 2: Making Time**

Last time we began looking at some Scriptural guidelines to help us as we learn to wait on the Lord

We saw that as part of the process we need to:

- (1) Lay aside every weight and distraction

### **2. Taking time (making space)**

Another big weight we must learn to deal with and lay aside is time. To wait on God we need to take time – we have said before, waiting on God cannot be rushed.

So, we need to allocate time in our busy schedules to wait on God on a regular basis. This requires discipline, we shouldn't let excuses or busyness dictate.

*On 30 December 1997 while watching a film on the TV, the Holy Spirit prompted me to spend time with Him. I immediately left the room and went to the bedroom and got close to God. While I was waiting on Him the Lord spoke to me, during this time I vowed to teach others everything that the Lord revealed to me – in one sense, from this time, the teaching ministry was birthed in me. I had to make the time to spend time with God.*

Of course waiting on God can be done anytime and anywhere because it is simply setting aside a time to seek and meet with God.

- This can be just a few minutes when we needed, or over a day or a longer period of time.
- At times it is valid to get away on a 'retreat' where we can give the time wholly to the Lord

Although not essential, many people agree the best time to get close to God and wait on Him is at the beginning of the day.

*"O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water." Psalm 63.1*

*"Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my meditation. Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, For to You I will pray. My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct it to You, And I will look up." Psalm 5.1-3*

*"Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He [*Jesus*] went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed." Mark 1.35*

Meeting with God early:

- helps us be more God-aware during the day
- prevents us pushing this important activity into the background
- enables us to start the day right with Him
- allows us to get God's order and direction for the day
- invites Him to be in control of every part of the day and our lives
- keeps God as the central focus of our life and day

### **3. Finding the right environment**

The next part of the process of waiting on the Lord is to find the right environment.

Waiting on God is not dependent on ethos or atmosphere, but finding a place that best suits us can help us get into the right frame of mind to meet with the Lord.

Find a place/situation in which your spirit can be at ease – it often helps to go to the same place for your times of waiting on the Lord and dedicate and consecrate those place to Him. Do not allow these places to be used for anything ungodly. This will help you settle quickly and get into the right attitude of heart to seek the Lord.

### **4. Training the mind**

When we first start to wait on the Lord our mind will naturally try and wander and rebel against this. This is why we need to get into an environment and place where there are no distractions to divert our focus and waiting on the Lord. The more we renew our

minds in this area the sooner we will notice the transformation taking place. This is what Paul was saying in his letter to the Romans:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service*. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*.” Romans 12.1-2

We present ourselves before the Lord through waiting, but we don't get to that place where we can '*prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*' until we learn how to renew our minds.

There are lots of Christians that are so addicted to noise that they find silence to be 'louder' than the noise and feel uncomfortable when trying to be quiet. It is the same in our worship – we do not need to be loud all the time and just because there is a quiet time in our worship doesn't mean it needs to be filled with talking or singing etc. It is this aspect which many Christians need to overcome in order for them to get a breakthrough in their waiting on the Lord.

How do we renew or train our minds – with the Word of God. It is helpful to write down what God says to us so that we do not forget it later.

- We can then go back over what God has said, meditate on it, in order to obey it fully.
- It is also useful to go back to for encouragement when we are faced with tough times in our walk with God.
- We can use it to trace God's hand upon our lives – see how we've grown in God, His faithfulness to us and to make sense of what is happening to us.

*There were times in the early days of us being in Malta that we were in desperate need both financially and spiritually. We didn't share these hardships with anybody in the church, we didn't even show it at services, we were upbeat and joyful in church but back in our apartment we were feeling broken and in tears. We thought we had made a mistake and worse missed God, his calling and timing. However, I had made a note of every Scripture that the Lord had used to speak to us in order to get us to the point we were at, and we began to go back over these as we waited on the Lord. After re-reading them our hearts were encouraged and we were strengthened although the physical need hadn't gone away. This renewed our way of thinking, transformed us inside and then effected the external – the financial need was soon met (within days).*

Meditation of the word in this way is essential to the training (or renewing) of our mind. This is what the Lord spoke to Joshua regarding his ministry and mission to conquer the lands of Canaan

“This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe *and* do according to all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall deal wisely *and* have good success.” Joshua 1.8 (Amplified)

When we renew our minds like this a transformation takes place inside us – we are like those of the Scriptures that met with God. We cannot meet with God and come away the same old person. Our waiting on God effects a change in us which begins to manifest in our external dealings

## **7. The Process of Waiting – Part 3: Cultivating Our Spirit**

Over the last couple of weeks we have been looking at some Scriptural guidelines to help us as we learn to wait on the Lord

We have already seen that as part of the process we need to:

- (1) Lay aside every weight and distraction
- (2) Make time to be with God – allocate a time that is set apart for Him out of our busy schedule.
- (3) Find the right environment – where we are at ease before the Lord and not in a rush
- (4) Train and renew our mind with the Word of God – through meditation.

### **5. Cultivating your spirit**

As we continue to add to this growing list we see another area that we should pay attention to is learning to recognise what stimulates our heart toward God. This is cultivating our spirit

We just mentioned and saw it last week that we need to make the time to meet with God. This requires discipline – even though the heart has a longing to commune with God, we shouldn't wait for that urge to spend time with the Lord. We must build it in to the daily routine and be disciplined in it, and allow God to inspire us.

How can we cultivate our spirit – or put another way, how can we activate our spirit to have an effective waiting time. Think of a plant – to cultivate it means to nurture and look after it by watering/feeding it, giving it light and warmth, getting rid of the weeds, keeping the pests away. This is what we must do with our spirit to make it effective

There are a number of things/ways that we can use to do this, these include:

- quietness (be still and relax – don't think that silence needs to be filled with noise)
- praise & thanksgiving -
  - remember God's past faithfulness – revisit your testimonies
- worship
- speaking in tongues - [“He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.”](#) 1 Corinthians 14.4, see also **Jude 1.20-21**
- operating other gifts of the Spirit (for self edification)
- prayer
- God's Word
- meditate on the Scriptures, and notes/journals you made from personal study/prayer
- read other good devotional aids
- change in routine – to shake yourself from lethargy [*becoming sluggish, indifferent, lack of enthusiasm or energy, abnormally drowsy or sleepy*]

### **6. Recognising and understanding the reasons for failed times of waiting on the Lord**

There might be times when all our waiting seems to be of no avail. We do not experience that breakthrough or hear from God. Maybe we drift off into some other train of thought or an urgent need pulls us from our alone-time and demands a response.



When these things happen we may have the tendency to feel guilty about our failure, or think that we have let God down. This is not a time for condemnation – that’s what the devil will do to you - condemn you, accuse you (that’s how he is described in Revelation 12.10 “[the accuser of our brethren, who accused them](#)”. At these times we need to just throw ourselves on the mercy of God, repent and come back to the Lord. He is not going to judge us because of it, He loves us and desires fellowship.

But knowing the warning signs, or recognising the things that could make our waiting on the Lord ineffective, is useful. These include:

- We are so dry spiritually and God seems so far away that we do not recognise the need to have any input from Him in order to get right with Him and be able to minister to others.
- Tiredness or fatigue prevents us from concentrating
- Personal burdens which cause us to be so pre-occupied with our own problems that we do not go to God
- Just using our quiet times as study periods. We therefore do not actually meet with God, do not listen to Him and do not make any room in our lives to enable God’s specific word to us to have an effect (i.e. a dead word).
- Thinking we do not have the time or rushing our time of waiting on the Lord
- We are so bored with our quiet time that our heart is not in it
- Lack of discipline
- Discouragement, i.e. we are failing and it turns us from God, rather than to Him
- Wrong priorities
- Wrong motives
- Too much noise or too many distractions
- Disobedience. Failure to obey God when He speaks to us. We should have a deep desire within us to obey whatever God tells us to do during our time of waiting on Him. Many Christians do not hear from God because they are stubborn in the refusal to obey His commands and directives.

## 7. Being active and not passive

- If we want answers from God, we need to ask Him questions – especially about the things which are relevant to our day or life at the time.  
“[Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.](#)” Isaiah 55.6  
This word ‘*call*’ literally means ‘to be vocal, to make a noise’. James says “[you do not have because you do not ask.](#)” James 4.2
- Next we need to give Him some room so that He can answer. Too many ask the questions but don’t hang around to listen. This is not necessarily a passive waiting time but an active – read His word to you. Faith comes by ‘[hearing the word](#)’ Romans 10.17
- We must be obedient to what He says if we want to continue hearing from Him. God will not waste words on the disobedient.
- The things which God repeatedly says to us are either (1) those which are really important for us or, (2) those things which we continue to not obey.
- Don’t just limit your waiting on the Lord to asking Him questions – there is also a time to just be quiet before Him and allow the Holy Spirit to do whatever He wills. Time given to God is never wasted time, even when the pressure is on.

Let us wrap up this part of our study with some great promises about waiting on the Lord or seeking Him.

(1) “Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the LORD...” Jeremiah 29.12-14

“But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find *Him* if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.” Deuteronomy 4.29

Here and in Jeremiah we see that God promises us that we will meet with Him if we seek Him with our heart

(2) “Evil men do not understand justice, But those who seek the LORD understand all.” Proverbs 28.5

We get wisdom and understand, revelation and knowledge as we see the Lord and wait on Him

(3) “Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!” Psalm 27.14

“But 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

Strength will rise in our spirit, our hearts and our physical bodies as we wait on the Lord.

(4) “For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel: “Seek Me and live; But do not seek Bethel, Nor enter Gilgal, Nor pass over to Beersheba; For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, And Bethel shall come to nothing. Seek the LORD and live...” Amos 5.4-6

These places were all significant, they were places of victory and blessing – God says don’t seek these, seek Me and live!

(5) “For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth.” Psalm 37.9

“Wait on the LORD, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see *it*.” Psalm 37.34

This psalm declares that those who wait on the Lord will inherit the land/earth – this is enjoying the full benefits of our salvation – all that God has promised. We will be victorious over the circumstances. This is what God spoke to Joshua - “...*you will be prosperous and have good success*” (Joshua 1.8)

“But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good *thing*.” Psalm 34.10

(6) “so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.” Hebrews 9.28

Our ultimate inheritance is the salvation of our bodies (rapture) – when Christ comes again for us and takes us home to be with Himself.

## **8. The Fruit of Waiting – Part 1**

Over the next couple of weeks we are going to consider the benefits of waiting on the Lord, or the fruit of waiting.

We finished last time looking at some scripture promises. These are some benefits of waiting, we will go back over some of these as well as see others.

The first fruit we are going to see is:

## 1. Patience

Let us first make sure we understand this word patience. It is not the kind of patience where we just put up with everything and do not anything - this is a dynamic, godly patience.

There are two words used in the New Testament for patience:

- one means 'steadfastness or perseverance'
- the other means 'patience with the image of keeping up the pressure'

Let us go to a Scripture verse we looked at last week:

“Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret—*it* only *causes* harm. For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth.” Psalm 37.7-9

Here we are told to wait patiently for the Lord – this is being steadfast, persevering, keeping up the pressure and not quitting. If we wait patiently we will inherit the earth – we will inherit the fulness of our salvation

David lists these benefits in his psalm: “Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good *things*, So *that* your youth is renewed like the eagle's.” Psalm 103.1-5

This fruit of patience is essential for our walk of faith, we need patience as we learn to trust God's word. When we hear the word and obey it, it will become very fruitful and productive in our lives as we apply the fruit of patience.

“But the ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep *it* and bear fruit with patience.” Luke 8.15

## 2. Rest

Another fruit of waiting on the Lord is rest. Resting in God is drawing aside for a period of time to meet with Him

- To rest in God is to cease from work – this is resting from all effort, all difficulty and bringing them to God.

“There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.”

Hebrews 4.9-11

- To rest in God is to know absolute dependence on God, and seeing our lives and circumstances as He does.

“Truly my soul silently *waits* for God; From Him *comes* my salvation. He only *is* my rock and my salvation; *He is* my defense; I shall not be greatly moved. How long will you attack a man? You shall be slain, all of you, Like a leaning wall and a tottering fence. They only consult to cast *him* down from his high position; They delight in lies; They bless with their mouth, But they curse inwardly. Selah My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation *is* from Him.” Psalm 62.1-5

- To rest in God is to cast all our cares on Him, giving to Him all our difficulties, problems, worries, anxieties and concerns. When we rest in Him we humble ourselves under His hand.

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” 1 Peter 5.6-7

### 3. Instruction

David declared: “Show me Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You *are* the God of my salvation; On You I wait all the day.” Psalm 25.4-5

This is the next fruit of waiting on the Lord – receiving instruction, learning His ways. The word of God comes to us as a result of waiting on the Lord. It gives us the guidance, insight and clarification we need for our walk as a Christian. As previously mentioned we need to know the strategies from the Word to be ‘successful’, to live victoriously and be fruitful for God.

““For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are* your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. “For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.” Isaiah 55.8-11

God says that His thoughts and ways are higher than ours – that means we need to download them. We do that through the word which He likens to the rain that comes and waters and refreshes the earth. As we wait on Him we download His instruction which makes us fruitful.

In **2 Samuel 5.17-25** we read that David took time to wait on the Lord to receive all the instruction that he needed for the battle against the Philistines. For both cases there was a different strategy that needed to be employed. He couldn’t assume that the instruction would be the same both times.

Joshua was told something similar – wait on the Lord through meditation of the Word – the instruction he received would make successful in his mission

“This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe *and* do according to all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall deal wisely *and* have good success.” Joshua 1.8 (Amplified)

God can use a variety of ways to speak to us - these might include visions, dreams, audible voice, still small voice, circumstances, inner witness ('hunches'), spiritual gifts or even other people. However, remember whichever way He uses, it will always be confirmed and backed up with the Scripture.

Many Christians are good at talking to God but terrible at listening to Him. So we find that waiting on the Lord

- helps us discover God's will for our lives
- helps us know what God is doing and why
- enables us to sort out our spiritual and time priorities before God
- assists us in our decision making – we can make decisions based on God's wisdom and revelation
- enables us to know what is on God's heart – particularly important for those who minister and preach

**“Evil men do not understand justice, But those who seek the LORD understand all.”**

Proverbs 28.5

We get wisdom and understand, revelation, knowledge and the ways of God as we seek the Lord and wait on Him

#### **4. Strength and Refreshment**

**“Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!”** Psalm 27.14

**“But 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

His strength rises in our spirit, our hearts and our physical bodies as we wait on the Lord.

Waiting on God also

- increases our motivation to serve Him.
- Helps us receive the rest and reassurance we need
- enables us to regain confidence and strength - not in ourselves but in God
- recharges, renews and refreshes our spirits
- gives us the strength we need to face the challenges and difficulties that come against us
- helps us overcome the disappointments and discouragement when things don't go well

## **9. The Fruit of Waiting – Part 2**

Last time we began looking at some benefits or the fruit of waiting on the Lord. We saw four fruits, waiting produces:

- (1) patience
- (2) rest
- (3) instruction

#### (4) strength and refreshment

Let us continue to look at these fruits of waiting on God

#### 5. Brokenness

You may not view brokenness as a fruit or benefit but what we are talking about here is not being crushed through circumstances or by people.

There is a more profound brokenness where we meet with God and our lives are changed and transformed. This is what Isaiah experienced in the Temple when he saw the glory of God:

“So I said: “Woe *is* me, for I am undone! Because I *am* a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.”” Isaiah 6.5

He was broken before God, but this encounter changed him and transformed him.

David knew this brokenness that come from waiting on the Lord.

“For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give *it*; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.” Psalm 51.16-17

Those who are broken God can use – He does not choose the mighty, the strong or the noble. He chooses those that are broken before Him – this is so He gets all the glory

“Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.” 1 Corinthians 1.25-29

#### 6. Revelation of God

“And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the LORD...” Jeremiah 29.13-14

“But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find *Him* if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.” Deuteronomy 4.29

In these two verses we see that God promises us that we will meet with Him if we seek Him with our heart. James puts it like this: “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...” James 4.8 As we wait on the Lord, we will certainly meet with Him because as we draw near to Him He draws near to us.

Those who wait on God also find that God acts on their behalf, working for them and through them, ministering to them, blessing them.

“For since the beginning of the world *Men* have not heard nor perceived by the ear, Nor has the eye seen any God besides You, Who acts for the one who waits for Him.” Isaiah 64.4

“For from of old no one has heard nor perceived by the ear, nor has the eye seen a God besides You, Who works *and* shows Himself active on behalf of him who [*earnestly*] waits for Him.” (Amplified)

God becomes bigger to us and His kingdom and reign become more firmly established in our lives as we wait on the Lord.

- The more we express our love for Him, the more we find that we love Him
- The more we worship Him, the more we will want to worship Him
- The more we thank Him for all His faithfulness and provision, the more grateful we will be for His working in our life.

Waiting on God also helps us develop an attitude of submission to God

“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.” James 4.7-8

As we draw near to God and wait on Him, we are submitting ourselves under His mighty hand. We acknowledge who He is and what He means to us.

Submitting ourselves to God by waiting on Him teaches us one thing about God – we just need to let Him be God.

‘Let go and let God’ - *we had this saying on a poster in our house*

This was the attitude of the prophet Elijah – if God is God then let Him be God. He challenged the people and prophets of Baal with these words:

“And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.” 1 Kings 18.21

## **7. Changed Life**

We have said it before we cannot come to the Lord in sincerity of heart and come away from His presence unchanged. This changed or transformed life is another fruit or benefit of waiting on Him.

There were many in the Bible who after an encounter with the Lord had their lives changed – these include Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Isaiah to name but a few from the Old Testament.

In the New Testament Paul had a life changing encounter with the Lord Jesus (Acts 9.1-22) - His life was turned around and rather than persecute the church, he became one of it’s greatest evangelists.

Later he wrote:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Romans 12.1-2

As we present ourselves to God we find that our lives are transformed as our mind is renewed. This word transformed is *metamorphoo*, the metamorphosis takes place as we meditate on the word of God – we change from the caterpillar into the butterfly.

Paul also talks about being changed from one degree of glory into another after we turn to the Lord.

“Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3.16-18

## 8. Holy Spirit

This verse shows us another benefit or fruit of waiting on the Lord - opening ourselves up for the ministry of the Holy Spirit

As we wait on the Lord we

- give room for the Holy Spirit to search us and work within our lives, transforming and changing us, taking us from one degree of glory to another.
- learn from the Holy Spirit as He reveals Jesus to us  
“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you. "A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father.”  
John 16.13-16
- are filled with Holy Spirit afresh, and so are filled with the power and strength of God  
“Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” Luke 24.49  
  
“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1.8

## 10. Worship Arises Out of Waiting

As we continue this theme of waiting on God we are going to see that an integral part of our waiting is worship.

Worship shouldn't be something that is just limited to our church services but should be the lifestyle of every believer. Everything we do should be an act of worship of God.

Worship is a big subject, but let us look at what worship is in simple form:

- offering or giving ourselves to God
- being totally available and obedient to Him



- being so aware of God that it takes away any awareness of ourselves – the focus shifts to God not on us
- acknowledging who God is and thanking Him for all He has done

## Corporate Worship

“I will praise You forever, Because You have done *it*; And in the presence of Your saints I will wait on Your name, for *it is good*.” Psalm 52.9

Let us begin by looking at corporate worship – when the church comes together as a group to worship the Lord.

- We often make the mistake of thinking that worship can only be done in a certain way, at a certain place or at certain times. We have church services that are designated ‘worship services’, others are labelled ‘prayer meeting’, ‘gospel service’, ‘Bible study’. We must fall into the trap of compartmentalising these so that we become so rigid that we are not open to the Holy Spirit leading.
- Worship is an overflow of the heart in adoration, praise and thanksgiving to God. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that our worship of God was not about time or place but an attitude of the heart and spirit  
 “Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” **John 4.21-24**
- Worship isn’t just singing a particular song, or having a quiet lull in the service. The role of worship leaders is not to promote their latest album or favourite song. The worship leader should lead the church to worship so that their focus is on God - not on the group, the musicians or any other thing. This focus will enable the church to receive from God. As individuals, we may not necessarily like a particular song or style but that should not distract us from worshipping God.
- Worship not only brings us closer to God but to each other too. There is unity in the group. God blesses the group that is of one heart and one mind to worship Him.

“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* For brethren to dwell together in unity! *It is* like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. *It is* like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing—Life forevermore.” Psalm 133.1-3

“indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying: “*For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,*” that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.” 2 Chronicles 5.13-14

There are many examples of corporate worship in the Bible. The people of God were commanded to come together to worship, as a whole congregation, to be united and at one.

### Personal Worship

Worship is not just a Sunday thing! - it is the lifestyle of every believer. While most of the worship was corporate, there are some references in the Bible where men sought the Lord and worshipped Him privately - Daniel was one of these.

“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.” Daniel 6.10

Daniel learned that a decree had been signed by King Darius – that no man should worship or petition any god or man other than the king would be thrown to the lions. Daniel’s first response was to go home, and in the privacy of his house he prayed and sought God. This was not just because of the written decree, it was his custom from his youth.

Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David – these all met with God and sought Him privately as well as publicly.

Jesus’ teaching to His disciples was that they should also spend time alone with God: “But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” Matthew 6.6

In this verse, and in the few that will follow (in this study) we have the word **pray** (Gk. *proseuchomai*). James Strong says this word means ‘to pray, supplicate, worship’

When we pray we worship, we address the Lord, we entreat Him and bring our requests to Him

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” Philippians 4.6

Supplication (entreaty) and thanksgiving are the hallmarks of prayer – addressing God with thankfulness and praise – worship.

Jesus told us go into the room and pray – get alone. Personal worship is most beneficial to us as Christians.

Jesus Himself often got alone with the Father and prayed:

“So He Himself *often* withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.” Luke 5.16

“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.” Luke 6.12

“And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.” Matthew 14.23

“Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.” Mark 1.35

Jesus need for private personal prayer and worship only magnifies and intensifies our own need for personal worship.

When we pray and worship, not only do we bless God but we build ourselves up  
“But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,” Jude 20

## 11. Worship: A Weapon That Causes Us To Be Victorious

Last week we were seeing that worship arises out of our waiting. The Bible tells us that praise and worship are mighty weapons we have in order to see the victory in given situations. Let us look at some circumstances where God’s people won the victory through worship and praise:

### **Habbakuk 3.17-18**

“Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labour of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls— Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.”

Everything was going wrong! Famine had blighted the land so that:

- **Fig tree had no blossom** – no blossom means no buds and no chance of fruit, figs were in wide use in the land, providing food and medicine
- **No fruit on the vines** – no grapes, no wine. Wine was an everyday substance used for drinking, medicine and social events. It also formed part of the offerings for God.
- **Labour of the olive failed** – Israel’s greatest trading crop, used for oil. No work as many were employed in the pressing of oil.
- **Fields yielded no food** – the fields were unproductive, no wheat corn or grains – no bread. No grazing for cattle.
- **Flock was cut off from the fold** – *cut off* is often used to denote death. No meat, no offerings, no work for the shepherds.
- **No herd in the stalls** – used in all manner of ways - for transportation, carrying loads, ploughing, as meat, offerings.

The prophet determined in the midst of all this trouble that he was still going to praise the Lord.

“Yet I will *rejoice*..” - rejoice in triumph; prim root means 'to jump for joy'

“I will *joy* in the God of my salvation” - to be glad and rejoice, literally 'to spin around'

When things are against us we can make one of two choices, either grumble and complain about it all ;or else rise up in praise and give God thanks.

“But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel” Psalm 22.3 (AV).  
When you praise, you bring God into the situation. He dwells in the praises of His people. When God comes onto the scene, victory and blessing come with Him.

## 2 Chronicles 20

The enemy was coming out after Jehoshaphat. The Moabites in allegiance with the Ammonites had conspired to come and attack.

- Jehoshaphat set himself to seek the Lord (v3) “And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.”. He wanted to hear God's instructions
- Position yourselves (v17) “You will not *need* to fight in this *battle*. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD *is* with you.”  
They did not have to fight in this battle but they did have to do something - they had to position themselves in battle array against the enemy.
- “And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: “Praise the LORD, For His mercy *endures forever.*”” (v21)  
Jehoshaphat sends in the choir ahead to the front of the battle line – those that would sing and praise the Lord
- “Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.” (v22)  
As they began to praise, God comes onto the scene and the victory is assured.

When things come against us, too often we say 'just let God deal with it' – Yes He will, but we have to position ourselves and worship/praise Him. Praise and worship are weapons that cause us to be victorious.

## Psalm 108

(combination of 2 psalms: v1-5 from Psalm 57.7-11; v6-13 from Psalm 60.5-12)

Wave after wave of attacks were coming against David – the Philistines, the Moabites, Syrians, Ammonites and the Amalekites (2 Samuel 8). It wasn't just the armies of Israel's enemies that came against him but earlier in his life Saul hunted him (1 Samuel 24)

Yet in the midst of these attacks David could pen this song of praise to God which finishes “through God we shall do valiantly, it is He that treads down our enemies” (v13).

We are valiant through God – David says: I will sing (v1), I will praise (v1,3), I will make music (v2), I will exalt You (v5) - “That Your beloved may be delivered, Save *with* Your right hand, and hear me.” (v6)

David learned the secret of praise, when you bring God into the situation, you end up triumphant.

### **Acts 16.23-26**

“And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw *them* into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. (24) Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. (25) But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. (26) Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed.”

In Philippi Paul & Silas were locked up in prison for preaching and ministering.

- They were beaten and fastened to the stocks.
- At midnight they sang praises to God – their chains fell off and God wrought a mighty victory.

At the sound of praise God came into that prison cell, loosing their shackles and chains, shaking the foundations of the prison house so that all the doors flung open.

### **Joshua 6.20**

“So the people shouted when *the priests* blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.”

Joshua and his armies marched around the fortified city of Jericho thirteen times. Once a day for 6 days and seven times on the 7th day.

At the end of the final circuit the shout of praise caused the walls to fall down and they won the victory that day.

### **Isaiah 12.4-6**

“And in that day you will say: "Praise the LORD, call upon His name; Declare His deeds among the peoples, Make mention that His name is exalted. (5) Sing to the LORD, For He has done excellent things; This *is* known in all the earth. (6) Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, For great *is* the Holy One of Israel in your midst!”

- ***In that day***.. in the earlier chapters of Isaiah, the prophet talks about judgement on Israel and also looks forward to the Day of the Lord.
- Cry out and shout – great (and mighty) is the Lord God in the midst (v6) – Praise and worship brings the great and mighty God into any situation.

Praise and worship are weapons that cause us to be victorious – they turn the situation into a blessing.

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