

SERMON NOTES

From *In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley*



How Should We Wait?

KEY PASSAGE: Various Scriptures from the Psalms | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Psalm 25:3; 27:13-14; 37:9; 40:1-3; 62:1, 5; 130:5 | Isaiah 40:28-31 | Matthew 7:7 | 1 John 5:14-15

► SUMMARY

Whether you're about to make a purchase or facing an emergency, the last thing you want to do is wait.

In fact, today, having what we want immediately is almost the norm. What we once waited a month to receive is now available the same day. Although this is very convenient, it has also led to a moral decline, including the actions of people who aren't willing to wait for sex until marriage. Furthermore, it has resulted in the selfish conclusion that we should always get what we want right away.

► SERMON POINTS

God doesn't work by this world's standards. Psalm 27:14 says, "Wait for the LORD; be strong and let your heart take courage; yes, wait for the LORD." This command is given to us because God knows that it's not easy for us to wait, especially if we've already had to do so for an extended period of time.

God speaks often about waiting because it's important and essential for every area of our lives—in our relationships, finances, physical life, and spiritual life. That's why Scripture often admonishes us to wait for the Lord. It's one of the key lessons in the Bible that we'd do well to learn.

Yet so often we don't see the value of waiting and prefer to get what we desire immediately. But God knows that sometimes we're not ready to receive what we've requested, and some of the things we want are unwise or even physically, emotionally, or spiritually dangerous for us.

Waiting on God is a principle in His Word.

There are great advantages and protections for us in God's delays. Some things become richer and more meaningful when we wait for them. Another benefit is that we avoid the consequences of impatiently running ahead of God.

■ **Isaiah 40:28-31** "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly, yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary."

To become the person God wants us to be and accomplish what He desires, we must learn to wait upon Him. Instead of making decisions based on our limited understanding, we need to wait until God shows us what He would have us do. If we ignore the Lord, there is a price to pay.

■ **Psalm 25:3** "None of those who wait for You will be ashamed." If we obey God, we will not be ashamed because He works in our lives as we follow Jesus and depend on Him rather than jumping ahead.

■ **Psalm 37:9** "For evildoers will be cut off, but those who wait for the LORD, they will inherit the land." God's blessings come to us when we seek His guidance and obey. And since He is good and loves us, He will not forget our need. However, we must not assume that if

God hasn't stopped us, then it's fine to do as we desire. The wiser approach is to wait for Him to make His timing clear.

What are wrong ways to wait on God?

- **Impatiently.** Fussing at the Lord because He hasn't done anything.
- **Nervously.** Being anxious about the outcome.
- **Complaining.** Grumbling at the Lord for His lack of response.
- **Questioning.** Doubting that God's judgment is right.
- **Frustrated.** Being annoyed because God isn't working according to your desires.
- **Irritated.** Becoming aggravated by His seeming inactivity.
- **Miserable.** Feeling that God is withholding something from you.

All these attitudes result from a failure to realize that God is good and generous, giving us much more than we deserve. Because He is also wise and loving, He withholds those things that are not beneficial for us, that we're not ready to handle, or that could become stumbling blocks in our walk with Him.

How should we wait on the Lord?

- **Patiently.** "I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined to me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, and He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; many will see and fear and will trust in the LORD" (Ps. 40:1-3). We can wait patiently for God if we understand that He is wiser than we are and that blessings follow obedience.
- **Quietly.** "My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him" (Ps. 62:5). Instead of complaining, we should wait calmly for the Lord's provision.

- **Trusting.** Waiting isn't passive resignation but active trust in God, which allows us to rest in Him and wait patiently. Instead of fretting, we bring our requests to Him and trust that He will answer as a loving Father would—in the right way and time. We can trust Him to keep His Word and do what is best for us.

- **Expectantly.** "I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living" (Ps. 27:13). After salvation, the Holy Spirit came to take up residence within us and give us guidance for life. We can confidently expect that He will direct our paths and show us the way in His timing. For this reason, we should begin each day with the Lord in prayer and wait expectantly for Him to guide us through this sinful world.

- **Courageously.** "Wait for the LORD; be strong and let your heart take courage; yes, wait for the LORD" (Ps. 27:14). Waiting on God may require courage when we don't understand why He is delaying His response.

- **Standing on God's Word.** "I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait, and in His word do I hope" (Ps. 130:5). Scripture is the foundation on which we stand as we watch for God to act according to His perfect timing and will. He has given us a promise: "This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him" (1 John 5:14-15).

► RESPONSE

- Look at the lists of right and wrong ways to wait for God. Which one more closely resembles your response?
- How does your view of God influence your trust in Him and shape how you wait for Him?

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