

Waiting: Dependence and Confidence

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Date: 17 February 2019

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[0 : 00] Good morning, Bramar Baptist. My name is Kent Dixon. It's my privilege to be the lead pastor here. This morning, we'll be continuing our series on waiting, looking at that concept through the lens of dependence and confidence.

Are there people in your life that you depend on? Perhaps you depend on your spouse or your children to cook or clean for you. Maybe you depend on a sibling or a friend to answer the phone when you want to call or text them to vent about something or just talk.

There's a fundamental connection between waiting and dependence. As I was preparing this week, I reflected several times on how dependence affects me and the way I'm personally wired.

I wouldn't necessarily refer to myself as a proud person, but I have a very strong sense of not wanting to inconvenience other people, and that seems to be hardwired into me.

I don't like it at all when I perceive that somehow something I've either done or not done causes other people any kind of trouble or inconvenience.

[1 : 19] So where does this pride piece come in? It's directly tied to not wanting to inconvenience someone. You see, I've always had a sense that needing to rely upon or depend upon someone else must somehow cause them some kind of inconvenience.

So I generally avoid consciously depending upon someone else simply because I perceive it to be an inconvenience to them. And then, oh boy, add in that very male wiring of wanting to be a reliable provider when society seems to suggest I should have all the answers.

And I'm in big trouble. So in waiting for something to happen, I need to reconcile to myself, like it or not, the fact that my waiting may very well depend upon someone else.

More confession time. Now, I actually dislike inconveniencing people with a request that I need to depend upon them for.

I dislike that so much that I will actually do it myself rather than ask in the first place. Yes, I know that seems crazy, but I know that many of you here this morning can likely relate to that, can't you?

[2 : 48] The weirdest part in my case is that I'm the youngest child. So you'd think that I'd be more than happy to have others wait on me hand and foot.

And my brothers would probably say that they have and they did. But alas, it's not so. I'm not more than happy to do that. So you see how waiting for anything is directly tied to a state of dependence?

As we wait, we are definitely waiting for something. And for that end result to come to be, we're dependent on the action, response, or provision of something else.

Technically, we're dependent on the light to change before we can continue driving down the road. Technically, we're dependent on our winter tires or road conditions to keep us from bouncing around like we're in a pinball machine.

And parents, you can explain pinball to your kids after the service. Simply put, as we wait, no matter what it is we're waiting for, we are in a state of dependence.

[3 : 58] Something must take place or our situation or circumstances must change somehow before our waiting can end.

Does that make sense? Imagine yourself waiting for something right now. Imagine that. Anything that pops into your head is fine. Unless rest there for a moment.

Now, knowing that you're waiting for something and recognizing that you are waiting, or more importantly, that the end of your waiting depends on someone or something, how's your level of confidence while you wait?

If you pictured something that involves a person waiting for someone to open the door for you, to make supper, to do the dishes, to meet you somewhere, are you confident that they will come through?

Or maybe you've imagined waiting for a thing, like a light to change or that second slice of cake to suddenly have no calories. How confident are you that things will pan out the way you want them to?

[5 : 12] You see, as we wait, we have to recognize that waiting requires both dependence upon something or someone, and confidence that we can trust that thing or person to come through.

And that's another inherent point of tension for us as we wait, isn't it? From one perspective, we are powerless. But we'll also see this this morning how we can begin to change that perspective.

Now let's take a moment and dig into the concepts of waiting as they were originally presented in Scripture. And we're going to get into a bit of language study this morning.

So are you ready for some Hebrew and Greek? Now in the Old Testament, the word most often translated as wait, as in waiting for the Lord, is kavah.

And kavah means to bind together, perhaps as in making rope. To look patiently, tarry or wait, and hope, expect, and look clearly, look eagerly, sorry.

[6 : 24] The second most frequently used word translated wait in the Old Testament is yachal. Now yachal means to wait, or hope, wait expectantly.

And it's generally translated this way in our English Bibles. A third word sometimes translated wait is deimam.

Deimam means to be dumb. Not as in clueless, but to grow silent, to be still. But it's sometimes translated as wait, tarry, or rest.

And a fourth word used for waiting in the Old Testament is shahah, which means to wait or tarry, or to long for.

So we see in the Old Testament an emphasis on the idea of a daily wait, and the need to wait on the Lord and his providential care in the pressures of life.

[7 : 34] And not surprisingly, in the New Testament, the focus is on the promise of Christ's return. And in the New Testament, as we continue to look at the words used for the concept of waiting, it all becomes Greek to us.

Literally. So the Greek word, pros dechomai, is the primary word used in the New Testament for the concept of waiting.

It's a compound word for those language geeks out there like me. It's a compound word from pros, which means to or towards, and dechomai, which means to receive or accept.

So towards receiving or accepting, looking towards. Pros dechomai, then, means to receive to oneself, or receive favorably, or to expect, look for, wait for.

The focus of the word is on the coming of the Lord, either in his first or second advents, when he came as a baby, or when he will come again.

[8 : 48] The second most frequently used word is, ap dechomai. And now this is a triple compound word, geeks again, made up of two prepositions, apo, which means from, ek, which means out, and dechomai, which means receive or accept.

So the word is primarily prophetically focused on the return of the Lord, and the glorious blessings that follow. The other word translated as wait in the New Testament, is anemeno.

This word literally means to wait up. Now this is powerful, especially if you're a parent. To wait up as a parent might wait for a child to come home.

And I remember my parents waiting up for my older brothers to come home when they were that age, the age of making parents wait.

And I remember doing it myself. I remember curfews. I remember extending curfews myself, not my parents.

[10 : 02] And I remember now, I can reflect now, on making my parents wait up for me to come home. So anemeno means to await one whose coming is expected, perhaps with the idea of patience and confidence.

Do you think parents are always patient and confident as they wait for their kids to come home? I'm not. It's interesting to note that the word anemeno is used only once in the New Testament, and that's in 1 Thessalonians 1 verse 10.

And it is used there specifically in reference to the return of the Lord. One time, one verse, one focus.

So I think as we bundle all of this together, the Old Testament understanding and the New Testament understanding, I think it's helpful to return to the idea of kavah, the weaving together of

all of these points into a fully understood biblical concept of waiting.

It's also important to note that Scripture is clear about the direction between the impact which our waiting for the Lord's return should have on our daily walk.

[11 : 26] So now, with a bit of a linguistic insight into how the concept of waiting is formed in Scripture, let's look at what the Bible actually tells us about waiting, particularly with dependence and confidence.

Psalms 104 verses 27 and 28 tells us that all creatures look to you, and I put in the emphasis God to identify there, to give them their food at the proper time.

And when you give it to them, they gather it up. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things. Psalm 104 is such a beautiful hymn of praise to God as the creator of all things.

And I encourage you to read it through yourself. It reminds us that not only has God created all things, but that as his creations, we are wholly dependent upon him.

Only God can provide for our needs, and certainly in the only possible, deeply fulfilling and meaningful way that it is intended.

[12 : 43] We seek to meet or satisfy our needs with so many things in life, don't we? But only God has the perfect recipe to provide the ingredients to deliver exactly what we need.

Not only to sustain us, but to give us a complete sense of purpose and fulfillment. And that's the perfection of our relationship to God.

It's about waiting on him to provide for us only as he can, and as he so lovingly wants to do. You see, friends, we are God's beloved.

He deeply cares for us. He deeply knows us. He deeply understands our needs and can provide for our needs far beyond our expectations, far beyond our wildest dreams.

Waiting on God is not some form of weakness or laziness. So I'm going to try and continue to work that out of all of our heads during this series. Waiting on God is about recognizing the dependence and confidence we can have through that relationship with God that is like no other.

[14 : 03] In Psalm 145, verses 14 and 15, we read, The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down.

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. So here we see this idea of provision described as food again.

But knowing how essential our daily bread is as an aspect of provision, I believe we can also recognize God's provision for us means so much more than that.

This passage reminds us that not only will God sustain us in times of trouble and adversity, but also that as we wait on God, He will never fail to provide for our needs.

You see, waiting on God means coming without expectations for the specific ways or timing of how He will work in our lives. Now, that's not to suggest we should not ask specific things of God, as we are definitely encouraged in Scripture to do that.

[15 : 16] But we need to remember that it's God's timing that's perfect, not ours. I'm going to return to our story a bit, our personal story.

As we waited, as our family waited, as Michelle and I waited on God's direction over the past few months, I came with a very clear request. Lord, you know we have financial needs.

I need you to provide. Please show up in ways that I know only you can.

And you know what happened? Apart from several other things, we received a letter from our insurance company out of the blue to let us know that an internal client assessment, which is not something they have done much in the past, had identified that we'd been overcharged premiums on our car insurance.

And folks, the letter identified we'd been overcharged for approximately six months. And included with that letter was a check.

[16 : 39] The check was attached to the letter. It was part of the letter. It was all black and white. There was a logo, but it was black and white. There was contact information, but my radar went off a little bit, I'll be honest.

So I called our insurance company the next day to see if that letter was genuine or not. The client services person I spoke to confirmed that, yes, the check was genuine and that also the amount of our check was greater than any he had seen so far.

God showed up. Not because of anything we did, but because I very specifically asked and then I waited.

I recognized that we had to depend on him and I had confidence that somehow he would meet our needs.

Does God always answer specific prayers or take action in precisely the way we would expect? No. At times in our lives our prayers may not seem to be answered, but especially at those times we need to remember to remain dependent on God, have confidence in his timing, and trust that ultimately it is his plan at work, not our own.

[18 : 23] Have you experienced a time in your life when it felt like God wasn't with you or he didn't answer your prayers? I'm nodding and I can see others nodding this morning.

I can speak from personal experience that when God doesn't act as we hope or expect that can be deeply discouraging. But I want you to remember something.

Please, please remember this. when God doesn't act as you hope or expect, it's because God has other ideas for us and those ideas are both good and beyond our wildest imaginings. things. My friends, in Christ, thwarted plans are the beginning of something better.

There are many seasons in life and as we all know, some of them are far from easy. forgive your weepy pastor again this morning.

[19 : 48] Life can challenge us and stretch us and even injure and scar us. And there are times when we may feel that God is hiding his face from us.

God's blessing on your life or you are waiting on him, you can trust that he is with you no matter where you are.

as a theologian once said, God gives us everything that we would ask for, take hold of this, if we knew everything that he knows.

I'm going to say that again. God gives us everything that we would ask for if we knew everything that he knows.

My friends, if you're facing struggles in your life and feel like God has gone silent, I want to encourage you with the words of Jesus from John 16, 33.

[21 : 00] Jesus said, in this world, you will have trouble. Jesus felt betrayed, and hurt, and crushed, and sad, and discouraged.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Jesus felt like God had gone silent even to him at one point.

But we know, we know that he did not. God was still at work in the life of our Lord, and he's at work in your life.

Jesus said, in this world, you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world. my friends, Jesus knows and deeply understands what it means to be human, to experience pain and loss, and to have a sense that you're alone.

While we may experience sorrow and pain at times in our lives, and in the world at times, we have hope and salvation and redemption of all things.

[22 : 24] Isaiah 30, verse 18 says, yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you, therefore he will rise up to show you compassion, for the Lord is a God of justice, and blessed are those, hear this, blessed are those who wait for him.

There's such richness and encouragement in this verse. And as we touched on earlier, God deeply loves and cares for us.

We don't need to be ashamed of waiting for him, and we can trust that we're not waiting for no reason. As we wait on him, God will be gracious to us.

He will show us compassion. and we will ultimately be blessed for our faithfulness. God asks us to trust him and wait on him and promises that we will not be disappointed.

But remember, we're talking here about God's plans and his timing, not our own. God is not a genie who grants wishes, but our loving creator who has a grander story of which our personal story is a very, very important part.

[24 : 05] There's such an amazing confidence and assurance in Micah 7, verse 7, where the prophet Micah says, As for me, I watch in hope for the Lord.

I wait for God my Savior. My God will hear me.

This simple statement by the prophet Micah can easily be the words that we adopt ourselves as we wait on God. These words overflow with both dependence on and confidence in God.

We watch and wait in hope for God at work in our own lives, in the lives of others, and in the world around us. We wait knowing that we can depend upon God to act, not only for us, but for all of

creation to be restored.

And we wait with confidence that God will act in his perfect timing. No matter what it is we're waiting for, whether it's something we've asked God for in our own lives or for someone else's, or we're waiting faithfully for Jesus to return, we must recognize, and if you remember nothing else from this morning, recognize that the most important thing we must do as we wait is to seek God.

[25 : 53] God. And this is a reminder to all of us this morning, to seek God in prayer, to seek him in reading his word, and as much as it seems to be contrary to the very idea of seeking, we must rest in God's perfect timing, provision, and care for us.

So my friends, as we continue to be awaiting people, allow yourself to completely depend upon your God because he is more than worthy of your confidence.

and I want you to remember our verse for this series, Psalm 27, verse 14.

Wait for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Yes, wait for the Lord.

next week we'll be continuing our series on waiting by looking at what the Bible tells us about waiting with wisdom and courage.

[27 : 23] Let's pray. Father, thank you for all the marvelous things you've done today. Thank you for your love that you have revealed to us and for the love that we share together as your body.

we pray for all the words that you've sown into our hearts this day. Watch over them and protect them.

May they take root and produce wonderful things, things of beauty and great blessings to many.

And as we leave this place now, thank you that you walk with us.

May we be alert to your promptings and live in your endless love. For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory in this age, and forever more.

Amen. And our benediction this morning comes from Ephesians, the book of Ephesians, chapter 3, verses 20 and 21.

[28 : 37] Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations, forever and ever.

Amen. my friends, go in peace with these words, and have a great week. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.