

# Waiting Well

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 29 June 2023

[ 0 : 00 ] Oh man, thank you so much. You see some of the parallels there? You see that theme of waiting? That's kind of where we're going tonight. If you want to jot down a title as we're getting started, here's the title that's just kind of seemed to come together as I've been studying this.

Waiting well. Waiting well, okay? Now, who enjoys waiting? I know somebody who absolutely hates waiting, and his name is Thaddeus. He's our son, and he will let you know that he despises any delays to what he wants to see happen in his life, and he's a masterful exaggerator.

So he does something like this. You say, hey, turn off the TV. You know, we'll finish that movie tomorrow. It's time to go to bed, and he's like, I'm never going to see what happens with Winnie the Pooh. Is he ever going to get the honey or not? I'm never going to see it. It's like, no, just like go to bed, and then tomorrow you can finish Winnie the Pooh. One of his favorites, and you've probably heard somebody say this, when are we going to be there? How long is it going to take? You know, we're driving somewhere. Is this going to be a long drive? And it's like, well, it's going to take about two hours to drive where we're going. He's like, this is going to take forever. And then here's what he tacks on, and he says, I can't take this, or I can't take it anymore. Those are like the two variations. And it's like, no, buddy, you really can. You will be fine. You will survive this experience.

It's not that bad. It's not hopeless, right? Because he acts like it's absolutely hopeless. Now, here's the sad reality, is that we might not, maybe we've grown past that point where it's like a two-hour drive is just like, okay, we deal with it, right? I mean, unless it's going like around 285 and you get stuck in traffic, that gets pretty trying. Can we put it that way? But we've learned that a couple hours is going to be all right. But there are many other situations where we probably don't verbalize it, but in our hearts, we definitely are saying that, I can't take this anymore. I can't stand the wait. I don't want to wait anymore. Like, we have this association with waiting that waiting is only negative and to be avoided, right? It seems like everywhere they give you the, what's it, like the online check-in stuff.

I have this love-hate, well, it's not love-hate. I like the Great Clips check-in because you check in online, and then you go in there, and your name's at the top of the list, and you haven't had to sit there for a while. But then I also kind of feel like self-conscious because there's other people that have come in, and you're like, did I skip the line or something like this? What's going on here?

[ 2 : 41 ] But we live in a society where waiting is always negative and always to be avoided, right? If we order something, and you are foolish like me, and you canceled Amazon Prime, you can no longer get packages in two days. You have to wait three or four, and it's like the worst thing in the world.

When's this thing going to get here? You know, I can't wait till fill in the blank. I can't wait till the week is over. Praise God, it's almost Friday, right? The week is almost over, but I can't wait until, you know, I get a promotion, or I can't wait till the kids move out, or I can't wait till I retire or fill in the blank. I just can't wait until something happens. So if we could, honestly, we'd honestly want to just like opt out of all waiting, but the reality is we can't just opt out of waiting. Waiting is going to be a part of life. We can't opt out of it. Now, let me give you one other thought. The question, this is kind of what we need to wrestle with in our hearts and minds in the Scripture. What if waiting is good, and we can wait well, and God can do something in that waiting? And then the related question, what does it take to wait well? Would you read with me Lamentations 3.26? We'll get this up on the screen. Lamentations 3.26. Listen to this. This kind of blows my mind a little bit. It goes against the grain of our culture.

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good that a man should do what? Hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.

He's like, it's saying there's salvation that is with God, that is coming from God, that is far off, and the process of hoping and waiting. Notice how he says quietly. We're going to actually see this show up in our Psalms tonight. That is a good thing. That is a good thing. You see, God is not slacking when there's times that we wait in our lives. It's not like God needs to get His act together and make things happen for us. You see, I think what God has done is He's built into this process of our lives waiting. And God has a totally different perspective than ours, right? Our perspective is time-bound. Like, we look at hours and minutes and days and years, but that's not how God looks at these things. And God is accomplishing something in your life and in my life that requires waiting.

And He says that waiting for the salvation of the Lord, waiting in anticipation of God's promises is a good thing because it does something in your life. Waiting in Psalm 130 is not a waste.

[ 5 : 40 ] We must learn to wait and hope. And waiting is hard. Now, this is one of the things that I don't think we can't erase. Waiting is hard. And oftentimes, we are waiting in bad situations or difficult situations. Waiting is hard, but it doesn't have to be hopeless. Waiting is hard, but it doesn't have to be hopeless. Waiting is a workshop in which we become people of faith. I think that's what Psalm 130 wants to show us tonight. So would you turn back there with me, and we'll begin to work through this passage of Scripture together? And actually, how about this? We've been praying a lot in this service, but let's just pray one more time because we need God to help us with this. Because I believe, at least for me, as I was studying this, man, this goes totally against the way that I want my life to work. We need God's help tonight. Dear Lord, we come to You, and I thank You for Your Scripture.

Thank You for how it works in our lives and changes our lives. And God, I pray as we come to Your Word tonight that You'd open our eyes, open our hearts, help us to grasp this truth, and help us to embrace this truth. Lord, I don't know the waiting that is in the lives of Your people, of those that are here in this room, those that are watching online, but I do know that life has seasons of waiting. In fact, so much of life is waiting. And God, I pray that right now You'd speak through Your Word to us that we might wait well, and that we might become the people that You want us to be, that would glorify Your name. We're praising in Jesus' name. Amen. First thing to make note of, kind of as we work through this, is that this psalm, He's describing someone who learned to wait.

They learned to wait in hope, and they learned to still themselves in waiting. So how can we wait well? How can you do a good job waiting in the times when God just says, wait? Well, here's the first thing. Here's the first encouragement. God hears you in mercy. God hears you in mercy. He knows right where you are. He hears you in His mercy. And so you don't need to despair. You see, there's like two things that I believe happen in times of waiting that God doesn't want for us. We can become agitated, right? Like Thaddeus in the car saying, man, two-hour drive is forever. I can't take this.

I can't take it anymore, right? We can become agitated. He's going to deal with that in Psalm 131. But we can also become hopeless, and we can give up. And that's what Psalm 130 really drills down on.

So God hears you in His mercy. Don't despair. Let's read verse 1 through 4, and we'll walk through this together. Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice. Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared. All right, did you notice first off where this person is starting? Where do they stand at this moment? They're crying out, and they're crying out from the... someone say it here? The depths, okay? Can we say all that all together?

[ 9 : 01 ] They're crying out from the depths. Okay, so what are the depths? This is a good question. What are the depths? In the Scripture, these depths describe the extremities of creation. It describes the depths of the sea. Let's turn back, actually, to Psalm 69, and we're going to see David use this same language to talk about a time when he's on the run, he's oppressed, he's being attacked, and he says, listen, this is like deep waters that have come into my soul. Look at this. Psalm 69, 1 and 2.

Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire where there is no standing. I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me. Does that language, do those words resonate with your heart? Where there's like times, and again, this is not literal, right? It's metaphorical. It's songs and prayer. He's looking and saying it's just like it all keeps flooding, into my life. It all keeps pouring upon me, and notice what he says, like, feel these words.

The waters have come into my soul. Like, it's one thing when the difficulty and the danger is out there, right? But it's another thing when it's like I'm drowning. Like, that's the imagery right here. Like, I'm drowning. I mean, I think if we imagine this, we can really get a grasp on it.

Y'all been, y'all followed or saw the Titan submersible this week, right? The Titan submersible, where these people, they go down the submersible, something goes wrong, and they just sink and sink and sink. Man, pray for those families. That's horrific. But that's what's going on here. He's saying, I am in the depths. It's cold. It's dark. I'm isolated, and it's crushing. That's where he's at. He says, I'm in the dark. This is a place that I think if we think on this and we meditate on Scripture, we can relate to this, where it's like I can't get out, right? I can't get away from my troubles. I can't get away from the problems that are all around me, and they feel like they're within me. They're just pouring over me. Psalm 129 described the attacks that came against God's people. This is one of the things I want to back up a little bit, just kind of more of a high-level view. When we've been going through these pilgrim psalms, there's a cycle that happens, and it goes from trouble to trust to triumph. And last week when Pastor Greg preached Psalm 129, we saw the trouble.

It says, they've afflicted me. They've attacked me. Many times from my youth, they've attacked me. They've attacked me. Psalm 130 is where the trust component comes in, and that's what we're seeing here. We're saying, man, I'm in the depths, but God, I'm crying out to you. I'm asking you to work. I'm calling upon you because, hey, you're the only one who can help me. We're going to see in Psalm 131 some triumph, some victory there. But he starts off in the depths, and he says, from the low place, I'm crying out to the high place. Now, I want to highlight this imagery, right, where he's saying low place, depths, high place. What's the high place? God's presence, God's throne, right? Because he's calling out to God, and God is the one who's seated high above all on the throne. He's the Lord of lords, the king of kings. He's saying, I'm crying from the lowest place to the highest place, and how can I do that? There's only one way that those that are in the depths can cry, can reach up to the heights, and that's because God has mercy, all right? Let's go back with me, go back with me there to Psalm 130, and notice this. This is, I love this. He says, Lord, hear my voice in verse 2.

[ 13 : 05 ] Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. And he says, if thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand? He's asking this rhetorical question. God, if you counted up and marked and tallied all my sin, and you held up the bill of my sin against me, or against anybody, could anybody stand before the Lord? And the answer is, no. If God dealt with us only on the basis of our sin, none of us could stand before God. Not one of us. We couldn't come into God's presence. And again, come into God's presence. And again, think about the imagery here.

It's talking about from the low place to the high place. And when he says, when I'm praying, I'm standing in your presence. That's even a New Testament phrasing that we are going to read in just a second. Those that are in the low place, how can they stand in God's presence? Well, there's only way, one way, the mercy of God, the forgiveness that God offers, the forgiveness that God gives. And look at what happens when we understand this forgiveness, when we grasp it. In verse number four, he says, I'm about to read the wrong passage. Verse four, but there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared. God, if you held our sin against us, if you marked iniquities, no one could stand. But you have forgiveness. And so we fear you. And do you remember we talked a little bit of this, might have been a couple of weeks ago, about what it means to fear God. It's both this being drawn to the awesomeness of God, the fact that he is wonderful, he's majestic, he's magnificent, where it's like, wow, he's amazing. I stand in awe of him. But it's also a pulling back of realizing

God is powerful and he's the judge of all the earth and he is not to be trifled with. And so he says, man, the fact that the king of kings grants forgiveness, oh, that makes me fear him because he's good. He's good to you. He's forgiven your sin, wiped it away, blotted it out, covered it with the blood. There's a whole bunch of different phrases that we use for that.

And so when you're in the depths, when you're in the dark place, when the waters are coming into your soul, it feels like I'm drowning. I can come before God and he does hear me because he, he forgives. I hope that would encourage you. I hope that would give you some strength to like always the first place that we must turn is the Lord. We've got to go to him because he receives us based upon his mercy. Let me give you Hebrews 4. Hebrews 4, this might be a phrase that you jot down and this is the one that we're familiar with. But again, think about this in terms of people who are in the low place, standing up in the high place. Hebrews 4, 14 through 16 says this, seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin. Now, verse 16 is really the key to this. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Now, this is not talking about you and me making a pilgrimage to some place like I need to plug into my GPS, throne of grace. When we go to our knees, when we're standing up, it's not about the posture, but when we go to God in prayer, we are standing before the throne of grace, bringing our request, and we are received because God forgives.

And so, you don't need to despair. You're in the depths. You're in the depths. There's something that is just like, I can't get away from this. I can't get past this. I can't get relief from this. I'm just waiting here in this difficult, dark, crushing place. Turn to the Lord. Go to Him. He hears you.

[ 17 : 16 ] And let that truth give you courage to continue waiting. Because one of the things I want to ask you to look at as we continue on through Psalm 130, does He ever get out of the depths?

When we read that, did you see Him getting out of the depths? Like God threw down a rope and He drew me up out of the waters? We don't see that. He's in the depths. And throughout the whole Psalm, it's like He stays there, but He learns something. He learns to wait in dependence. That would be maybe one that you could maybe jot down. Waiting in dependence upon God. Not giving up on trusting God, because that's what happens when we turn to despair. When we allow despair to just overwhelm our hearts and lives, we stop trusting Him. So a couple things before we move on that I want to point out to you. You might be here and you're thinking, okay, that's, that's, I'm not sure if God could truly forgive me or someone like me in the place I'm at could ever speak to God to go before His throne. Like, that seems impossible. Well, that's the thing about our God. He says, there is forgiveness with Him. And we're going to see a little bit further on that He has plentiful redemption.

That's, that's a word of freedom, of being free from sin. You're never too far for God to forgive you. Don't lose sight of that. Don't despair. All right, second thing, second thing. Okay, what does He learn about waiting here? God gives us hope in our waiting. And where's that hope found? Anyone want to take a stab at it? It's in the Word. It's in the Word. All right, let's continue on looking here in verse number five. He says, I wait for the Lord. My soul doth wait. And in His Word do I hope. God gives you hope in your waiting, right? He's saying, I'm waiting with all my being. I'm waiting. And this idea of waiting, we're going to see that it's, it is, it's like, it's kind of a strange thing. It's not exactly passive, right? Where I'm like sitting back and just kind of, all right, I'm along for the ride.

He's, He's looking for something and expecting something and anticipating something. That doesn't change the fact that we're still in the same place, right? Still in the depths. But I'm waiting for the Lord. With all my being, with all my soul, I'm waiting for Him. And in His Word do I hope. His Word is what's giving me this anticipation, this expectation, this hope that salvation's coming.

God's going to work. God's going to do something. God's going to change things. Would you read verse number six with me? My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning. I say more than they that watch for the morning. He goes on to verse seven, let Israel hope in the Lord. For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He shall redeem Israel from all His iniquities. So what does He do? He says, I'm learning to depend upon God, to pray, to trust Him. I know that He hears me, and I'm learning to wait, and I'm learning to hope.

[ 20 : 25 ] Waiting is hard, but it doesn't have to be hopeless. Because if you'll turn to God's Word, if you'll believe the truth that's found in God's Word, that will give you the hope required.

We can hope in the Word, and that sustains us in the waiting, right? Again, because He's still in the depths. Has He gotten out of the depths yet? He's still there, still in the depths, still in the deep, still struggling. And God's Word shows us that God has a good destination. Okay, let's go back to kids riding in the car. Okay, how long is this going to take? Two hours. I can't take it. Mom and Dad know that we're going somewhere good. And so we say, listen, you're going to be okay. So just listen to what I'm telling you. It's all going to be all right. We're going to have a great time once we get to wherever we're going. We get to Grandma's house. We're going to have a wonderful time. So just calm down.

Wait. Don't be agitated because I'm telling you, it's going to be good. That's basically what God's Word does, right? It gives us the whole of the story. It says in the beginning, here's what happens.

It got real bad. And throughout the middle, there's a lot of bad, and then there's also a lot of good where God begins to give us glimpses of what's going to be at the end that's going to be really, really good. Think about Jeremiah 29 11. It says, for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. That's super good.

A friend pointed that verse out to me this week, to give you an expected end. God's saying, listen, I've got something really good for you. So keep waiting, keep hoping, because I have something that you're going to enjoy. So the Word, it's what gives us hope. It's what sustains our waiting.

[ 22 : 18 ] Now, waiting, waiting, staying in a place of waiting. Let me say this. Staying in a place of waiting is winning the battle. Staying in a place of waiting is winning the battle, because what's the opposite? The opposite is despair, losing hope, giving up, changing our focus, right? Because those wait and hope are both focus words. What am I desiring, right? Because notice what he says, more than watchman for the morning, right? He's waiting for the Lord. And what does the watchman do? The watchman's standing up at his post, and it's dark outside, and he's hearing sounds that could be enemies, and he can't see what's going on, but he's trying to watch and trying to wait. And what is he looking for and wanting, most of all? For the sun to rise. Because, man, when the sun rises, my work is done, the danger's gone, right? Because if we're talking about ancient cities with walls, the best time for the enemy to get up close is when it's dark and you have the cover of darkness, right? That's a military strategy. And so when he's waiting, he's looking and wanting the light to come. And he says, just like the watchman wants the light to come, I am looking for the Lord to come. But he doesn't say just as much. He says, more than that watchman, I'm looking for the Lord.

I'm wanting the Lord to come. I'm waiting for him. And that's where he's learned this lesson. It's deep within his soul. And that's where verse 7 comes in, where he's like, I'm waiting. I'm watching. I'm hoping. I'm looking. And Israel, listen, you know what y'all need to do? Y'all need to hope as well.

Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. There's a lot here that we're not going to take the time to go into. But one of the things that Israel was looking for, they were looking for the Lord to come and to rule, to reign, to establish his kingdom, to free them from their enemies. And what the psalmist is doing here is he's looking and saying, Israel, hope in the Lord. He has redemption. He's going to come and redeem us. Redeeming is to free from an oppressor, to purchase from an owner, from an oppressive owner. In their day, one of the biggest things was, and you see this all throughout the Old Testament, is they have good times, and then they sin, and then they go into really bad times. And you remember what happens in the really bad times?

It's usually some other country comes in and occupies them, and comes in and oppresses them. And that's what happens so many different times with all the nations that were around them. And so they're looking and saying, the Lord's going to redeem us. He's going to free us. He's going to buy us back. But here's the other thing that is a little interesting that verse 7 and 8 show. Okay, they're looking for the redemption, but what is the ultimate redemption? Would you look at verse 8 with me one more time? And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities. What was the real oppressor?

What was the real enemy? It was their own sin that took them to dark places so many times as a nation. He said, you know what's happening? The Lord, he's going to come. He's going to free us from our sin.

[ 25 : 51 ] That's why it highlights forgiveness. And ultimately, you know where we see that happen? We see that happen in Jesus. I want to take you to two people who were there around the time that Jesus was born. This is in Luke 20. It's not Luke 20. Luke 2, 25 to 38. We're going to read a couple verses from here. I want to introduce you to two people that they were waiting on this to come true.

They were watching for this. Let's read in verse 28. Luke 2, 28 says, Then took he him up in his arms. This is a man named Simeon. Simeon takes up the child Jesus in his arms and listen to what he says. He blesses God and says, verse 29, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. He's holding this child Jesus and he's like, here it is. The salvation's here.

The freedom's here. The purchase is here. This is the one that's going to bring us freedom. Verse 31, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles in the glory of thy people Israel. He says, I've seen it. I've seen the salvation. The salvation that they were talking about and writing about and prophesying about. He's here. There was one other person, just a couple verses down, named Anna. And she also was one who waited. Would you read verse 38 with me? Skip down a couple verses. Read verse 38. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. She was like, we found him. And listen, everybody, he's here. The redemption's here. Come meet him. Come know him because he's the salvation. He's the redemption. In Jesus, you and I, we have redemption. We have freedom from our sin, from death, from the enemy. That's incredible that we live in a time when we have the light that has lightened the Gentiles. That's us. Unless you're Jewish in here. Then it says, the glory of thy people Israel. But either way, the glory of the people Israel, the light for the

Gentiles, those are both wonderful things. That's freedom. And that's salvation. And so we look and we say, man, God's word, it gives us hope. We're looking forward. And then finally, here's the third thing that I want to give you. And this is where we transition to Psalm 131. You can have a quiet heart right now waiting for the Lord. And this is probably the hardest part, right? Because if we're honest, a lot of times we're like a little kid sitting in the car saying, are we there yet? Are we there yet? And we get antsy and we start wanting things to entertain us. And we're just like, we can't just sit still and wait and relax. We need to learn that. That's a skill to be learned. And that's what happens in Psalm 131. Let's read that one more time. We'll give a few more things and then we'll close out. Psalm 131.

Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty. Neither do I exercise myself in great matters or in things too high for me. Surely I've behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother. My soul is even as a weaned child. Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and forever.

[ 29 : 27 ] Okay, so what's going on here? This is a little bit strange. First, it goes back and it pulls in that high, low imagery again. Now, where is that? He talks about his eyes, his heart being haughty, his eyes lofty. Both of those terms speak about pride. He's saying, I've not lived in pride.

I have, what does he say? I've not exercised myself in great matters or in things too high for me. This is kind of interesting where he said, I've not lifted myself. I've not become proudful. I've not tried to grasp for things that are too high for me. And if you're not proud, which is shown in the scripture as lifting yourself up, what are you? You are humble, which is lowering ourselves before God.

And what does God do with those that are proud, those that have lifted themselves up? What does he do? He lowers them. He abases them is what the scripture says. Those who are proud, he is able to abase.

But those who have humbled themselves and who are low, what does God do? In due time, God lifts them up. So he says, I've humbled myself, right? And think about how this ties in with that idea of waiting.

Man, when we're sitting there and we're waiting, maybe you've experienced this at a restaurant, right? You're there at the table, you got the family around, everybody starts getting a little antsy, right? Two minutes, the server's not there. Four minutes, six minutes, 15. And you're like, okay, I'm about to go find the manager and get this person fired because they haven't got to, right?

[ 31 : 12 ] And so you get up and you go over there and it's like, if you could, you would just go and prepare the food yourself. It's like, man, we just want to eat or maybe not that, but you'd go and get some bread out of the kitchen. Like at least give us some bread and some water. Like, please, Lord, help us here.

He says, I've not gone to grasp these things that are too high for me. I've not gone after things that aren't in my control, that aren't in my responsibility. I've humbled myself. And look at what it says in verse two. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother. My soul is even as a weaned child. Now there's an illustration for you. I'm like a weaned child. What does that mean? Okay. If you've been around little babies, many of you have, you know that the little, little ones, they just always want mom for everything. And some of you moms are like, yes, I know. Please let it stop, right? Give me a break because all they want is mom, mom, mom, mom, mom. And they're never satisfied. They're never okay unless they're like asleep or eating something. And then even you have like maybe 60 seconds while they're eating something, then they're okay. And then it's not okay. And it's just like, there's always something that's not okay. But a weaned child, they've learned that mom's going to take care of me and I don't need to be holding on to her the whole time. Always at her feet. I see this like so clearly with two of our kids. With Winston, our littlest, and with Winter, she's a little bit older.

Winston, in the morning, if breakfast is not ready, five minutes after he has woken up, it's just the end of the world. And he's in the kitchen. He's grabbing onto people and like, please get me back. You think he's dying? He's starving. Winter, she gets up and she's a little bit sleepy, but she comes downstairs and usually it's like, hey, how's everyone going? She doesn't usually say that. It's more like grunts, like, hey dad. Hey mom. Hey Winston. And then she usually just like either finds something to play with or just kind of sits on the couch because breakfast is coming. Winston's over here acting like the world's about to end. And Winter's like, I can just play and I'll do my thing and then I'll get some food and we'll go on with our day and it'll be great. Now it's not always that clearly defined. Sometimes there's regression, but that is like the difference, right? That's the difference. And what he said, did you look back with me at these words? I behaved and quieted myself. Do you feel yourself anxious and getting a little frantic?

You have the opportunity, hoping in God's word, trusting in the Lord to behave yourself. That sounds funny to say, doesn't it? Behave yourself and quiet yourself. It's like stilling yourself.

Like I have come to the point where I've learned that God's going to take care of me. God's got this. God's got me. And even though I'm still in the deep and I'm still waiting, I've learned patience.

[ 34 : 16 ] I've learned patience that I can trust in the Lord. I can hope in the Lord. I've ceased raising myself, grasping for control. I've humbled myself before God. Let's do this. One more verse. 1 Thessalonians 4.11. There's some parallels with this in the New Testament that I think sometimes like they don't stick in our minds maybe like they should. Listen to this. And that you study to be quiet and to do your own business and to work with your own hands as we commanded you. In the verses preceding, he says, man, I want you to grow in love. He's talking about growth in the life of the Thessalonians. And he says, man, grow in love and then study to be quiet. Work on living a quiet life.

How countercultural is that? Right? It's always about more and bigger and better. And we've got to succeed and we've got to grasp and we've got to go. We've got to have goals. He says, man, figure out how to have a quiet life. Take care of yourself. Do your own business. Work with your hands. And you're good. Love Jesus. Love people. Live a quiet life. That's what it looks like to wait.



To wait on the Lord. Because, hey, one day he is coming back. One day we will see that final and complete redemption. The freedom, not just from the power of sin in our lives, but even from the presence of sin. We've taken from the presence of sin into the presence of God. That's going to be a wonderful day. And right now, what do we do? We've got to learn to wait well. Wait well. Can we end with the verse that we started with?

Lamentations 3.26. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. Would you bow with me? Father, we come to you tonight. And Lord, we thank you for your word. There is so much that we need to chew on and meditate on and think about. And Lord, we ask that your Holy Spirit would teach us these truths, that they might become reality in our lives. I want to give you a few moments to pray there in your seat.

And if you're a Christian, if you're a believer, a couple thoughts. The depths are difficult, but don't despair. God hears you. God receives you. You can't opt out of waiting, but you can wait well. Don't lose focus. Don't lose hope. Focus your heart, your life, your attention on the promises of God right now. Would you come to God and just quiet your soul? Quiet your soul. You don't need to be frantic. Whatever you have need of, bring it to the throne of grace. He gives grace and mercy to help in a time of need. And if you're here tonight and you've never put your faith in Jesus to save you from your sins, you're not, you've never believed, you've never called upon Jesus as your Savior.

Maybe you're not even sure if He's real. Well, I'd like to tell you something about God. He has forgiveness. We don't deserve it. We can't earn it. But there is plenty of forgiveness, plenty of redemption for you. And He paid for that with His blood on the cross. When Jesus died, He buried, He was buried, and He rose again, proving that He can give salvation to you. It might be that tonight you would call out to Jesus, just something as simple as, dear Jesus, I believe that you died for me.

[ 38 : 05 ] You died for my sins. I believe that you rose again. Jesus, save me. Make me your child. It's not the words that matter, but it's the call of your heart to a God who loves and forgives.

Father, we just thank you for your goodness to us. Lord, as we go from this place, Lord, I pray that we would learn to wait well. We learn stillness. God, I pray for someone who might be on the fence about calling upon Jesus. I pray tonight that they would believe in you, call on you. Praise things in Jesus' name. Amen.