

DISCIPLESHIP

Lesson w/answers

Waiting on the Lord

Many years ago I had the honor of bringing a Sunday message from Christ to a local church in Hawaii. I gave the title of that message “The Hardest Thing For A Christian To Do Is...” There are many things you could complete that sentence with. Perhaps it’s have faith, perhaps it’s tithe, perhaps it’s daily reading the Bible or perhaps it’s being in constant prayer, but the Lord led me to speak that day on “waiting on the Lord”. That I believe is the hardest thing for a Christian to do.

We live in a society today that is all about doing, all about calendars, multi-tasking, communicating on multiple levels at the same time, getting ahead and staying ahead and so on. Doing, accomplishing something, moving ahead, growing, increasing, you name it, we live in a time when waiting is not in the vocabulary - to wait is to be indecisive. Yet it is the very thing God often asks us to do.

As I have struggled with seeking out God’s will in my life in the past, I’ve found the search and the struggle exhausting at times. It’s easy to be a follower of Christ when all is going smoothly, it’s altogether something else when it’s not - just ask Peter and the other Apostles. One moment I feel God is leading me in one direction then suddenly that door appears closed and another opens. Tossed about and torn between so many different challenges and alternatives, I have discovered -- as many of you also have -- that living the life Christ leads us to live is not always easy.

In this lesson, we'll look at something that affects many of us: discerning and doing God’s will. We’ve said in the past that some of the things that we can do to discover God’s will for our lives is to be in fervent prayer, earnestly seeking it from God. We also learned from Romans 12:1-2 and James 1:1-2 that we need to be sure our lives are cleansed from sin and that we seek God’s will with a righteous heart. In this lesson, we’ll look at something else we can do, something that is perhaps the hardest and least understood, yet perhaps the most important thing we can do -- wait on the Lord.

I’ve chosen the passages in this lesson because the Lord has led me this week to better understand His Will through these verses. I pray they will also speak to you no matter your situation. How can we know God’s will when we are tossed about and searching for reasons why God is allowing us to go through whatever our experience might be? When we put God first above all – and become completely dependent on Him. It also means we must wait on Him and not rely on our own strength, our own initiative, our own vision – but only on Him, the God above all gods, our Sovereign Lord and Savior.

Consider the following for this week:

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1. What does Proverbs 3:5-6 teach us about following Christ and being dependent on God’s will for our lives? What does it say will happen in verse six if we do what Proverbs 3:5 teaches?
 - a. ANSWER: If we trust in the Lord, and are not dependent on our own wisdom and understanding, and we acknowledge him he will “make our paths straight”, make it clear to us how we are to live and where he is leading us. We will know His will for our lives, but first we need to set aside ourselves and be completely dependent on Him.
 2. Have you ever felt that suddenly your world was turned upside down? That suddenly seemingly out of nowhere you found yourself in a place or time or situation that you never imagined and had no way of understanding or seeing a path forward? What does God say to us during those times? In Psalm 46:10 what action does He command us to do immediately? Why?
 - a. ANSWER: He commands us to be still, to know that God will be exalted - we need do nothing and He will be exalted. Don’t be anxious, don’t be about doing, just “be still” and God will do the rest - He will see that all that needs to get done is done and it will exalt Him - be still and wait on Him.

3. During the time Christ walked the earth and his disciples followed him they witnessed many miraculous acts by Christ that man had never witnessed. Yet when the storms came and troubled waters surrounded them, even though Christ was still with them what did they do, how did they react? In Matthew 8:18-27 we see this illustrated. Consider this story for a moment, what can we learn about the storms and rough seas in our life from looking at this passage? What does it tell us about Christ and our relationship with Him, even during times of storm and uncertainty when our faith is shaken to its roots?
- a. ANSWER: We can learn many things from this passage:
- i. Storms of life come upon us without warning.
 - ii. Some of these can appear life threatening.
 - iii. While these seem life threatening to us, Christ knows better.
 - iv. Even though these times cause our faith to dwindle, Christ loves us in spite of it and will come to our rescue without question.
 - v. Christ has power over all creation, over the entire universe - therefore there is not a problem he cannot solve, no cry for help he will not hear.
4. As I studied waiting on the Lord this week I came across Psalm 37. Perhaps you find that your situation is not necessarily that of an enemy or evil influence so much as simply trying to understand God's will for you during a time of change or transition. In either case it will serve you well to read this reassuring Psalm. As you read note what we can learn this week from verses seven, nine, and thirty-four. Jot them down in the space below:
- a. ANSWER 1: Verse 7 teaches that we should "be still before the lord" and wait PATIENTLY".
- b. ANSWER 2: Verse 9 teaches that if we wait, if we "hope" in the Lord we will be rewarded, we are therefore encouraged by God to wait, to "hope" in Him.
- c. ANSWER 3: Verse 34 teaches us again to wait and to keep "His Way", if we do he will not only reward us, He will exalt us and we will have victory over our enemies.
5. Finally, God tells us about the "doing" and how we can succeed in that as well. He tells us about those who succeed - read Isaiah 40:31, this is God talking directly to us, telling us what to do if we want to finish the race, if we want to succeed in the kingdom, if we want to do His will - read this well known verse and write down what God tells us to do - then pray for the wisdom and strength to be able to carry it out.
- a. ANSWER 1: If we "hope" or "wait" on the Lord, He will renew our strength.
- b. ANSWER 2: Waiting or Hoping in the Lord will allow us to soar like eagles, to run and not grow weary, to walk and not faint.

As I prepared this lesson, the Lord reminded me of what it really takes to follow God – waiting. You can't follow if you're trying to lead. As I told my class: cattle are driven, but sheep are led. If we are going to follow Christ, then times will surely come in our life when the right thing to do is pray and wait for His will to be revealed -- sometimes doing something is wrong and waiting is right. When we wait, when we fast from doing, we allow God time to work through His Holy Spirit in our lives and in the lives of others – then we can know His will. I pray this week that you'll wait on the Lord – He will not disappoint.

Thanks again for studying with us, may God bless and enrich your life through the faithful study of His Holy Word.

In Christ,

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