

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, February 19, 2014 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

## THE MAGNIFICENT JOY OF TRIALS

### Introduction

*James 1:2-4*

There is a very famous verse that we quote often in James 1:2, ***“Consider it pure joy, my brother (and sisters) whenever you face trials of many kinds.”*** What do you think of this verse means? Do you think that this verse sounds a little or a lot “crazy” to the world? Why or why not? Is it a realistic verse? How do you do what it says? Why do what it says? Share your thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_

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***Here is how the passage in James goes in context, James 1:2-4, “Consider it pure joy, my brother (and sisters) whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”*** So true! Maturing in our faith and finding a complete (or whole, full, mature) faith includes times of trial... sometimes great trial. Without them we never really develop... and nobody every escaped the process. We simply cannot become the people God intends us to be without some headaches and heartaches. Even Jesus our Lord “learned obedience from the things which He suffered according to Hebrews 5:8.

This is a realistic series of Biblical studies about life in God’s family... a life of disappointments, mistakes, struggles, hardships, and misunderstandings; not a moment, however, spent apart from God’s watchful eye. Hopefully, each study will bring you reassurance and renewed determination to stay true and hang tough in your faith journey... an encouragement for the crazy “joyous” trials you will invariably face and what it really is that is so “joyful” about them.

Remember the road from earth to heaven is not an easy, downhill slide. It is, rather, a challenge that forces us to look to Him who has gone before us. He will see us through! Each tough experience simply reminds us we are on the right course.

Over the next several weeks we are going to going through a series of Biblical studies on how God matures our faith through the crazy joyful trial we face. I’ve titled this study, “The Magnificent Joy of Trials.” It is surprising to many, that is seem our greatest potential for developing a mature and complete faith as believers comes not at the easy, smooth sailing

moments of our lives, but at the difficult, troubling, and hard moments of our lives... we seem to learn and develop the most. Of course when troubles and hardships come we can do a couple of things with it:

## **2 Possible Things To Do When Trials Come:**

**(1) We can grow bitter, angry and distant** – Get mad at God, mad at the world and mad at others. We can lash out and allow our pains and disappointments in life to literally defeat and stifle the life out of us.

**(2) Or we can mature and grow stronger** – Sound crazy? How do I develop and mature rather than wilt and die in despair when I'm hurting? How do I turn moments of struggle, and hardship, and difficulty into opportunities to develop my faith?

Again, this is a realistic series of Biblical studies about just such things. Hopefully, each study will bring you reassurance and renewed determination to stay true and hang tough in your faith journey... an encouragement for the crazy "joyous" trials you will invariably face and what it really is that is so "joyful" about them.

## **The Trial of Waiting**

### ***Psalm 62:1-2, 5-8***

We live in a day that is marked by hurry. Our steps are marked by speed, impatience, noise, and activity. To that list let's add panic. Instead of moving calmly and smoothly through life, we ricochet! We volley, back and forth, tossed between fear and frustration like a log in the surf. We'd rather do anything than have to wait... even if it's a wrong course of action we take. Our mentality is geared high and our fast-paced movement reveals it. But God has a better way – although it is not easy. It doesn't flow naturally and it's never automatic. However, it is His preferred way of taking charge. His way: "waiting," trusting Him during times which would normally call for action and rapid movement. Our own spiritual development and maturity accelerates within us when we learn to "wait" patiently for Him.

## **I. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF "WAITERS"**

Across the landscape of Bible history rise forms of men who triumphed over their human impulse to rush God. They had to learn to wait on God because the control of their situation was not in their hands.

### **1. From the Old Testament**

- (1) Noah... waiting on God to act** - He was told by God to build an ark (ship) and to keep his faith until it rained. Noah waited 120 years.
- (2) Job... waiting on God to heal and restore** – Described as a man *"blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil"* (Job 1:1), Job was allowed by God to encounter physical suffering that intensified with time. After losing his children and all of his material wealth, he suffered a paralyzing infection that nestled in pockets across the surface of his skin. He waited perhaps years before his disease was removed.
- (3) Abraham... waiting on God's promise fulfilled** – At the age of 75 he moved from his native land of Ur to pursue God's promise to him, *"... I will make you a great*

**nation... bless you... make your name great...**” (Gen. 11:27-12:4). When he died at the age of 175 he still had not witnessed the grand fulfillment of God’s declaration. Over 100 years, moving from one place to another, he developed a discipline of waiting and trusting God was pleased.

- (4) **Joseph... waiting on God’s plan for this life** – From Judah he’d been transported to Egypt as a slave...sold into slavery by his own brothers. Because of a false accusation he was placed in prison, where he waited for about fourteen years before being released. For so long he was forgotten and mistreated... only to later be placed in the position of prime minister of Egypt, a position that ultimately God would use to restore his family to him and save an entire nation.
- (5) **Moses... waiting on God’s deliverance** – The adopted son of the Pharaoh’s daughter, heir-apparent of the kingdom, at the age of forty was sent by God to a most unlikely setting in which to live. For forty years he lived in the Midian desert leading his father-in-law’s sheep. He waited for the hand of God to touch him and use him. The desert wait resulted in Moses trusting God so that he could finally say to the people he was to lead, “Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today...” (Ex. 14:13)

## 2. From the New Testament

- (1) **Jesus... waiting for God’s timing** – A step at a time God, His Father, directed Him. Through suffering He learned obedience (Heb. 5:8). He waited for His Father to carry out His own plans in His own time (Mt. 24:36). He gave focused attention to twelve men who vacillated between trust and disbelief, men who were to carry on His work in His absence. Patiently He continued until His time had come.
- (2) **The Disciples... waiting on God to call and empower** – They had been told to wait in an upper apartment until the Spirit came, who anointed their lips. They went into the streets of Jerusalem and bred precious faith among others, who multiplied into a church – which in turn learned the art of waiting. The church waited in prayer for Peter to be sprung from prison... for Paul to be nurtured and sent to the mission field.
- (3) **Paul... waiting for God to open doors** – The prime zealot of Judaism, whose mark was aggressive leadership, had been set aside for three years so that his heart and mind could be seasons. He listened to God and received His revelations. Later, he waited one day after another for God to open doors to different areas.

## II. INITIAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT WAITING

Looking at the experiences of past lives, we can draw two conclusions:

### 2 Conclusions on Waiting from Biblical Example:

1. **Waiting on God is the rule... the open door is the exception –**
2. **Waiting on God is resting... not worrying -**

Most people don’t like to wait. We hate traffic jams, checkout lines, and other delays. And our consumer culture fosters the idea that we cannot only have *what* we want, but we can also have it *right now*. Spiritually speaking, however, we learn some of life’s greatest

lessons through delayed gratification. The Lord promises to reward those who submit to His timing.

**Life Principle: God acts on behalf of those who wait for Him**

**Spiritual Reward of Waiting:**

1. **We discover God's will and purpose in the things that most concern us (Lamentations 3:25)** - Lamentations 3:25 says, *"The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him."* From this verse, what do you think it means to "wait on the Lord"? God does not tease His children or string them along. Right now, as we wait, He is working all things together for our good and His glory (Rom. 8:28).
2. **We receive supernatural energy and strength (Isaiah 40:31)** - Trying to manipulate circumstances drains our energy. Actively waiting on God is energizing. When we allow Him to strengthen us for the tasks we're called to do, we can experience supernatural energy. **Read: Isaiah 40:20-31.** What does this passage promise to the person who waits on the Lord?
3. **We win battles (Proverbs 20:22)** - When we rush God's plans or do things our own way, we end up defeated. But waiting on Him will ensure our victory and keep us from foolish and precipitous acts. Proverbs 20:22 says, *"Do not say, 'I will repay evil'; wait for the LORD, and He will save you."* Think about this... the disciples were encouraged and excited after the resurrection of Christ. Why did Jesus tell them to wait before sharing the gospel with the world? (Acts 1:8) What was the fruit of their obedience? (See Acts 2, especially vv. 41-47.)
4. **We see the fulfillment of our faith (Isaiah 49:23)** - The Lord says, *"Those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame"* (Isa. 49:23). In the end, we'll never be embarrassed if we choose to wait on God. It's always the wise thing to do. When others encourage us to forge ahead, we need to remember the Lord's plans and timing are always best. He knows our strengths, weaknesses, and preferences better than anyone else—even better than we know ourselves. And only He can predict the future. Don't let circumstances tempt you to take matters into your own hands. God has a purpose for all you experience. Ultimately, you will be honored—whether during your life or after it ends—if you remain faithful to Him.
5. **We get to see the Father working on our behalf (Isaiah 64:4)** - Isaiah spoke of a God "who acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him" (Isa. 64:4). What a wonderful promise! While we actively wait, He actively works. Think of this: Every single day, we have the greatest Mediator working on our behalf. Although waiting can be one of the more difficult things in the Christian life, it is *not* wasted time. During periods of waiting, God teaches us lessons we couldn't otherwise learn. In such a season, He sifts our motives, strengthens our faith, and may even change our circumstances. His purpose is to keep us in step with Him as He prepares us to receive the answers we need to hear.

**III. PERSONAL EXHORTATION TO WAIT (Psalm 62:1-2, 5-8)**

An appropriate title for this psalm is "Waiting for God." Observe the first phrase of David's piece, *"Truly my soul silently waits for God..."* Apparently, his back was to the

wall and he had no place to turn. His only option was to look God-ward. In verses 1-2 and 5-8, David gives good advice to waiters...

### **2 Bits of Biblical Advice to Waiters:**

- (1) **Wait for God to direct your steps (v.1)** – *“Truly my soul silently waits for God...”*  
 Note in **verse 5** the way David handled his own tendencies to move ahead of God. He became his own counselor, *“My soul, wait silently for God alone...”* It is as if he is speaking to himself... his own soul and instructing it. He practiced the counsel he gave to others.
- (2) **Trust God to provide for your needs (vv.1-2)** – *“He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved” (v.2).* David had good perspective on his own incompetence in providing for himself in this situation. Man’s problem is not only found in his possessed weaknesses, but also in his perceived confidence, his professionalism, his expertise, and his independence. Sometimes we can just get too big for our britches and thing that we can handle it on our own, we can take care of ourselves, we don’t need anyone not even God. It’s not up to us to meet our own needs. It is up to Him to do that.

### **How Waiters Wait?:**

- (1) **Wait in silence (vv. 1&5)** – *“My soul, wait silently for God alone...”* The Hebrew term translated *“silently”* means to *“whisper softly.”* It’s idea is that of whispering a secret to someone you love so that no one else hears. David spoke his own words loud enough for only God to hear... shouting was unnecessary. Sometimes the best moments of prayer are those of silence when God does all the talking, shaping our thoughts and conclusions.
- (2) **Wait in stability and confidence (vv. 2&6)** – *“He only is my rocks and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved.”(v.2,6)* Reliance upon, and trust in, the Lord results in stability which man cannot mimic on his own. Isaiah, God’s faithful prophet to Judah, put it this way in **Isaiah 40:31**, *“They that wait upon the Lord will renew their strength, they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not faint.”* To Hebrew term there translated as *“wait”* means *“to twist or stretch in order to become strong.”* Here the thought is that of twisting together strands of hemp so that far greater strength results. *“They that wait upon the Lord...”* We are to take our lives and twist them around the Lord... or wait, on Him.

### **Why Waiting on God is Worth the Wait?:**

- (1) **Deliverance (v.1)** – *“... from Him comes my salvation.”*
- (2) **Security (v.2)** – *“He only is my rock... my defense.”*
- (3) **Hope (v.5)** – *“For my expectation (hope) is from Him...”*
- (4) **Glory (v.7)** – *“In God is my strength and my glory...”*
- (5) **Refuge (v.7)** – *“... the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.”*

## **IV. PRACTICAL APPLICATION FOR TODAY**

Waiting is often confused with failing to do something that is responsible. However, as we look back upon these men of faith in God’s Word who became noteworthy “waiters,” we

find that they were not passive people. What do we learn from them... at least three practical truths for those of us who desire to likewise mature and develop in our faith even through time of waiting.

### **3 Practical Truths for Developing your Faith in Waiting:**

- 1. Waiting should lead us to develop a deepening trusting** – Do you think Noah trusted God? Was that a big deal as he waited for God to do what He said he would do? You bet! Remember God is faithful and as we wait we can “trust” Him to see it to completion. He never fails. He never lets us down.
- 2. Waiting should prompt us to greater praying** – Times of waiting ought to prompt a believer to greater number and intensity of prayer. Sometimes that prayer may be one of questioning, but as our faith matures those should turn to prayers of heart preparation and God’s perfect timing and will to be done. How many times to you read of Moses’ conversations (prayer) with God as he struggled with leading a stubborn people and God’s timing as they marched toward the Promised Land.
- 3. Waiting should introduce us to a calming resting** – Resting in God and relaxing ourselves and our circumstances into His hands signals a deepening and maturing faith. We are often forced to rest in waiting with there is nothing else we can do by wait for Him to act. Think of Joseph sitting in a cistern, or wiling away his days in a prison cell... all he could do was wait and rest, and perhaps wonder if he had been forgotten. But don’t kid yourself, Joseph learned in those days to wait and rest in God. His faith was maturing and developing in those resting times so that one day God could use him to save His people.