

Priorities of Faith

DAY 3 — THE BLESSING OF WAITING

“Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10)

The Bible Teaches Us to Slow Down

In world that is always busy and full of distractions, finding peace and quiet is most important. Our daily lives are full of many important things that need our attention. We've become used to the thought that we can have everything we want and fast, and we expect things the quickest possible way. We forget how to wait patiently, and this can damage our relationship with God. Our highly connected world with technology, visual and sound distractions make it even harder to slow down and be still. Today, many people may think it is strange to wait quietly, pray and focus our thoughts on God, but these are good things that the Bible teaches us that we need to learn to do again. Making a quiet time for God that is not full of interruptions and keeping that time appointment is very important to connect with God. To slow down, to sit still, to breathe, to remind ourselves of God's caring love, to patiently wait, and not to get nervous if God does not immediately answer our prayers—these are skills that we need to learn again.

Benefits of Waiting

In the Bible, we read about God's people in a focused attitude of waiting. Biblical writers often wrote about their hopeful waiting with a question: “How long, O Lord?” (Hab. 1:2; Dan. 8:13). Waiting is needed to bring hope (Titus 2:13), build endurance (Rom. 5:3, 4), develop patience (Rev. 14:12), and waiting is connected to our deepest desires (Psalm 42:1). All who live must wait. There is no human history without waiting. Waiting is part of human life.

When we wait, we often focus on the bad problems and hope they will go away. But waiting does not mean we just sit, do nothing, and hope that an uncomfortable problem will disappear. The Bible teaches that the reason for waiting is to show who I am and who I am becoming while I wait. When waiting I have an important spiritual decision: When I am not patient do I doubt that God is good and all powerful? Or do I understand that when I wait, I have a special opportunity that will help me to become the person God wants me to be? The experience of waiting can help me grow to become a new person.

If we understand waiting this way, then waiting becomes God's way to change us for His will. So, waiting truly shows us God's goodness and grace. Waiting helps us to become more like God, who waits in great patience, not wanting anyone to be lost who could still be saved.

Let's pray together.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

All prayer groups have different ways of praying together. We want you to spend the next 30-45 minutes praying together, however the Holy Spirit leads you. Short informal prayers (1-3 sentences) are good. This way, more people can pray many times. Below are some examples of praying with Bible verses based on the theme. You may also pray through other Bible verses and include other topics in your prayer time. See the Leader's Guide and World Church Prayer Requests for other prayer ideas.

Praying God's Word — Psalm 46:10

"Be still, and know that I am God."

"Be Still"

God, we have been restless. We have allowed ourselves to become very busy and stressed, thinking that if we are not, then we are not important. God, we need Your help to slow down, to learn to simply be still. Our minds have been taught by the world today to always be in a hurry to do something. Help us to understand the goodness of being still and the blessings it brings. Speak the words "Be still" into our impatient hearts. Amen.

"Know that I Am God"

Dear Jesus, knowing that You are our God and Lord strongly affects our lives, but sometimes we choose not to make You Lord of all of our life. We want control, and it is hard to stop doing what we are doing. Teach us that You, the Almighty Creator, the One who fills eternity, are Lord. Help us to understand that You are able to take us and our plans beyond anything we can imagine, if we only become still, wait, and recognize You for who You are. Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to give wisdom for today's challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for local and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Have Thine Own Way, Lord (#567); Be Still, My Soul (#461); Leaning on the Everlasting Arms (#469)

Other Songs: In His Time; In Moments Like These; Open My Eyes, Lord