

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE

Lingering with God

SERIES

DATE

8/10/2025

KEY SCRIPTURE

Psalm 27:4

SYNOPSIS

Lingering with God helps us to really know him and grow in faith.

HIGHLIGHTS

10 minutes of lingering at the end





👉LINGERING WITH GOD

I was thinking about our series on God's timing and how we have to learn to wait well. Leaning into God and trusting his timing is critical in our faith walk. Then, at our small group, I was reminded of how I grew in my faith. I always knew about God and was raised going to church, so I routinely heard about God and Jesus. But, how did I really connect with God in a way that made him real to me? What was it that drew me in and made my faith stick?

It was times around the altar, lingering in worship and prayer. It was Camp experiences where I went to focus especially on God. It has continued to this day with times when I just wait on the Lord, worshiping and meditating on him. Now, I will say bible study and discussion with others helps me to be strong and firm in my faith. But, *those times of lingering* are when I genuinely know that God is real in a very personal way.

I want you to know God personally in a way that is very real to you. I want you to have more than just knowledge about God. Some are studiers and have a great grasp of the scriptures, but I want more than just head knowledge for you. Some are content with an hour a week at church, but I want you to have an ongoing connection with God.

If all you have is some bible knowledge and little bit of church, you are missing out on a much richer experience. You can know God very personally and you can *experience his presence*. And, I'm convinced that lingering with the Lord is key to knowing him in this manner.

If you're like me, you've probably prayed, "God, I want more of You." But here's the question: Do we give Him more of us? Sometimes, God is not looking for us to *do* more. He's calling us to simply *be with* Him; to linger. As we've been talking about God's timing, we've noted that we live in a time where speed is everything. We want fast food, fast internet, fast results... even fast faith. But the kingdom of God doesn't run on speed; it runs on stillness, on depth, and on relationship. It requires time.

👉Psalm 27:4

One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life

To linger means *to stay longer than necessary out of reluctance to leave*. It's what lovers do at the end of a date. It's what children do when they don't want bedtime to come. It's what hungry hearts 👉do in the presence of the Lord. **Lingering** is not about obligation; **it's about desire**. And I believe God is calling His people not just to seek Him, not just to serve Him, but to linger with Him.



Let's look at a few people in Scripture who lingered in God's presence and what happened because of it.

Joshua stayed behind

Exodus 33:11 tells us that after Moses spoke with God face to face, he would leave the tent, but *Joshua... stayed there*. He lingered. We don't know what God said to him, or how long he stayed. All we know is that this young man loved the presence of God. And later, God chose *him* to lead Israel into the Promised Land. Leadership was birthed in lingering.

Mary of Bethany sat at his feet

Luke 10:39-42 shows us Martha was busy serving while Mary sat at Jesus' feet. Martha was doing a good thing—serving Jesus! But Jesus says, "Mary has chosen what is better." What was better? Linger in His presence. Not rushing. Not working. Just being with Him.

Anna was a faithful intercessor

Luke 2:36-38 describes Anna, a prophetess who spent *decades* in the temple, worshipping, fasting, and praying. She lingered in God's house, and because she did, she was one of the first to recognize Jesus when He was brought to the temple. Those who linger in the secret place often see what others miss.

Jesus waited on the Father

Even Jesus lingered. Mark 1:35 says He rose early to pray, often withdrawing to lonely places. If Jesus, the Son of God needed unhurried time with the Father, how much more do we?

☞ Here's a few reasons why **lingering with God changes everything**:

Depth comes through duration

You can't microwave intimacy. Real relationships require time. When we linger in God's presence, we move past surface-level prayers and into true intimacy.

☞ **Lingering trains our spiritual senses**

The more time you spend with someone, the more you recognize their voice, their ways, their heart. The same is true with God. Linger in His presence makes us sensitive to His whisper.

☞ **Lingering changes us**

Moses' face glowed after being in God's presence. Isaiah said, "Woe is me!" after a moment in the throne room. The disciples, though unschooled, became bold, persuasive and influential. When we linger, we're not just filled, we're transformed.

☞ Those are all very good outcomes. So, why don't we linger more? **Hindrances to lingering.**



Distraction. Phones; schedules; notifications; entertainment. Our minds are overstimulated. God doesn't shout over noise. He often whispers in the stillness.

☞ **Busyness.** We equate activity with fruitfulness. But in the Kingdom, abiding precedes producing. Busyness can be the enemy of intimacy.

☞ **Fear of Silence.** Sometimes we avoid lingering because silence feels awkward. We're afraid of what might surface when everything else is quiet. But silence is where God speaks.

☞ But these are worth overcoming because there are **Rewards of Linger**ing. What happens when we overcome these hindrances and linger?

We develop **intimacy** with God.

We receive **fresh revelation**.

We experience **inner healing**.

We are filled with **peace** that passes understanding.

We walk in **spiritual authority** that comes from abiding.

This is all powerful stuff for a personal relationship with the Lord. Now, let's get practical. How can

☞ we build this into our lives? **How to linger.**

Set aside unhurried time

Create margin in your day where you don't have to look at the clock.

☞ **Stay beyond the "breakthrough"**

Don't leave the presence of God the moment you feel goosebumps or peace. Stay a little longer. That's where deeper things happen.

☞ **Embrace silence**

Let God speak into the stillness. Don't rush to fill every moment with words or songs.

☞ **Create a sacred space**

Find a place where you consistently meet with God. A prayer chair; a walk route; a room. Let it become holy ground.

☞ **Use worship to linger**

Worship isn't just the opening act, it's a gateway into God's presence. Don't treat it as background noise. Let it lead you to linger. You can come to the altar during worship, and you can stay after the sermon for a spell.



☞ **So stay a little longer.** I believe God is saying to many of us today: "You've visited My presence... but will you dwell? You've touched Me... but will you stay? You've asked for more... but will you give Me more of your time?"

Why Aren't We Waiting On You by The Booth Brothers

Too often we come with preconceived notions.

We stick with our programs; we go through the motions.

Everything works out just fine; we get out on time.

But I wonder if it makes heaven cry when we say we love the One we deny.

Do we need You enough; Do we want You enough?

Lord, if we do; why are we in a rush?

What has taken our time; what has blinded our eyes?

We claim to love You heart, soul and mind

But Lord, if we do; why aren't we waiting on You?

Psalm 27:4

One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...

Will you be content to just pass through His presence? Or will you become someone who dwells; who lingers?

☞ **(start music)** Let's take a few moments right now to do just that. No rush. No pressure. Just you and God. Let's linger...