

☞ Why the Wait?

Anticipation... it's making me wait...

I remember when I was young and wanted a mini bike...

I remember when we finally said "yes" to senior pastoring...

I think about some personal prophetic words I've received over the years...

Our church has also received several prophetic words that are yet to be fulfilled...

Burliss Parker April, 2004 Word to Pastor Phil & Church

You have set a very solid, sure foundation. God is going to use that foundation. This is not the ultimate. This isn't "it." This is the beginning of "it." Don't get discouraged.

*Don't get frustrated, wondering how come some of the things that God has promised you in secret hasn't happened yet. It's okay. He's taking you one step at a time. One of the most frustrating things as pastors and leaders is waiting on God. It's frustrating. **It's hard ☞ when you get a promise and then you're waiting for the promise to happen. He has not forgotten his promise to you. And what he has shown you he will accomplish.** But you need to understand what's going to be done here has to be solid. And he's using you to build that solid foundation and then will come the next level and the next phase.*

Some may wonder about a promise you've received from the Lord... Why the wait?

☞ **Psalms 27:13-14**

I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. **14** Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

Still confident; I will... Be strong; take heart...

Wait = to hope, to expect; to look eagerly for... It literally means to bind together. So I think in this case it means to hold on to those promises! Don't let go! Be confident; be strong; take heart! God will keep his word. Wait for him!

When things are taking longer than expected... **Why the wait?**

1. ☞ Because of disobedience and unbelief.

God promised the Israelites the land of Canaan, but in Numbers 14 the people disobeyed and grumbled against God and didn't believe he could give them the Promised Land. They were terrified of the enemies in the land and they didn't fully trust God to take care of them. So, God decided that most of them would not receive the promise. He waited for a new generation to grow up that would trust him wholeheartedly. Of the original generation, only Joshua and Caleb entered into the Promised Land.

☞ --Louis Cassels... ***Obedience leads to faith.*** Live faithfully by the little bit of light you now have, and you will be given more.

--DL Moody... *Obedience means marching right on whether we feel like it or not. Many times we go against our feelings. Faith is one thing, feeling is another.*

--F.B. Meyer... *Unbelief puts our circumstance between us and God, but **faith puts God between us and our circumstances.***

--Martin Luther... *What greater rebellion, impiety, or insult to God can there be than not to believe his promises?*

2. ☞ **To teach us patience.**

Psalms 37:7-9

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. **8** Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret — it leads only to evil. **9** For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.

In 1 Samuel 13 King Saul was waiting for Samuel to come and bless him before going into battle. He got impatient and did the blessing himself and it ended up costing him dearly. He ultimately lost his kingdom because he wouldn't wait.

☞ ***Never think that God's delays are God's denials.***

Patience is a virtue that God is looking for. Will you hang in there and hold on when the wait gets long?

One moment of patience may prevent disaster; one moment of impatience may ruin a life.

I've often commented to people about finding God's will. If you sincerely desire God's will for your life and you obey him while you wait, you can't miss it. But, if you become impatient and try to make certain things happen, you just might miss God's plan. He wants us to wait and follow his plan, not to invent our own plan.

3. ☞ **Waiting builds maturity.**

Do you really believe what God said? Waiting with faith develops perseverance which leads to your maturity and completeness.

☞ **James 1:2-4**

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, **3** because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. **4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete**, not lacking anything.

It's the old oak trees that are the strongest. And stronger yet are those that have endured fierce storms.

--James S. Hewett... *When they first manufactured golf balls, they made the covers smooth. Then it was discovered that after a ball had been roughed up one could get more distance out of it. So they started manufacturing them with dimpled covers. So it is with life; **it takes some rough spots in your life to make you go your farthest.***

Strong faith in God and maturity does not come all at once. It is often gained through willing submission to His love and goodness in the midst of trial.

4. ☞ Because you're not ready yet.

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly — mere infants in Christ. **2** I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. **3** You are still worldly.

When God promised the land of Canaan to Israel in Exodus 23 he said he wouldn't do it all at once. He knew it would be too much for them at first and that they would need to increase in order to take full possession of the land.

God is looking for growth in us as well. **Some of his promises require us to be spiritually ☞mature enough to handle it.**

--Chinese Proverb... *Be not afraid of growing slowly, be afraid only of standing still.*

☞ Learn whatever God is trying to teach you and grow!

5. ☞ To reap the greatest harvest.

James 5:7-8

See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. **8** You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

Why does the farmer wait? For the best time to harvest! God is always interested in the harvest.

--Doug Goins... I had an experience of waiting that was very difficult a number of years ago. Ed Woodhall and I were supposed to fly to Bogotá, Colombia to meet with the leadership of a prison ministry there. We had to make connections in Miami. It was a difficult trip that we didn't really want to make because we had to bring the bad news to our brothers and sisters in Colombia that we were not going to be involved in their ministry anymore, for important reasons. Also, it was a time when the Colombian drug lords were running the country, and American businessmen were being kidnapped off the streets. So we felt some fear and apprehension. But we knew that it was the right thing to do. So we left San Francisco at 7:00 a.m., and we were supposed to catch a 4:00 p.m. flight on to Bogotá in Miami, but because of mechanical problems we missed that flight and ended up having to wait for twenty-four hours in Miami.

Late that night, after a full day of traveling, we were in a shuttle bus being driven to North Miami to sleep in some fleabag hotel that the airline had grudgingly provided for us. We were not in the best of moods, to confess honestly. Ed and I were talking about what was going on: "Why is God doing this? What does it all mean?"

We were the last people to get off the bus. The Jamaican bus driver said to us, "You men are Christians, aren't you?"

"Yes," we replied.

He continued, "I asked God last week to bring me in contact with a Christian who could tell me how to accept Jesus."

Ed and I both said, "That's what's going on here!" We had the amazing pleasure of praying with this dear brother as he came to faith in Christ. Then God gave us the next day to get our own hearts straight, to pray together and plan together. We were anxious to get to ☞ Colombia and get out, yet **God said, "Wait. I've got some things I want to accomplish."**

6. ☞ **Because it's not God's perfect timing yet.**

Habakkuk 2:2-3

Then the Lord replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. **3 For the revelation awaits an appointed time**; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

-- Oswald Chambers... Don't jump to conclusions too quickly; many things lie unsolved, and the biggest test of all is that God looks as if he were totally indifferent.

Perfect Timing – Sweet Comfort Band, Randy Thomas

You've got perfect timing

☞ **You're not a minute too soon**

Not a moment too late

You've got perfect timing

I can see when you move

*I can feel when you wait
You hold tomorrow in the palm of your hand
Everything runs by your master plan
You've got perfect timing*

Examine your heart. Is there unbelief regarding his promises? Is there disobedience on your part while you're waiting?

☞ Can you hang in there and **remain obedient** no matter how long? Will you **learn what God is teaching** you while you wait? Will you continue to **grow** in spite of the wait? Can you **trust** God for the greatest harvest? Will you trust God's perfect timing?

Church, will we continue to stand on God's promises to us? Will we obey his leading ☞ even if revival is a ways off? Will we **keep on praying** for God's provision?

Imagine if we all trusted God completely, knowing his timing and plan is perfect! Imagine if we all resolved to keep on believing and growing no matter how long his promises took!

God can use people like that! God can do miraculous things through people who simply ☞ **believe what he says and trust him!**

☞ **Psalms 145:13**

The Lord is faithful to all his promises

☞ **2 Corinthians 1:20**

no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ.

Altar Ministry – If there's a promise from the Lord that you've been waiting for I want to encourage you today. God's promises never fail! As this video plays let's demonstrate our faith. If you can say that you'll continue to stand on God's promise I want you to come forward as a symbol of your faith.

☞ **Video – Standing on the Promises**

Now, let's individually reaffirm our confidence in God. Let's take a few moments to tell God that we still trust him; we still believe him; we still look forward to his promises.

☞ **Video – Your Promises**