

Waiting on the Lord

By Natalie Madsen

“I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined to me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, and He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; many will see and fear and will trust in the LORD.”

Psalm 40:1-3

Once I heard about a young man who wanted to find out what the Lord’s will for him was. He decided, “I’ll open up the Bible randomly, and the passage I point to will tell me God’s will.” So he opened his Bible, pointed at a passage, and read, “And Judas went out and hung himself.” *Hmm*, the young man thought. *Surely, that isn’t the Lord’s will for me.* The young man decided to try again. Once more, he opened the Bible to a random spot, pointed at a passage, and read it: “Go now and do likewise.”

Many times in my life, I have desired to know the Lord’s will for me, and sometimes I get anxious when He tarries in telling me. For me, I want to know it now, so I can pursue certain things or put an end to other things. However, the Lord has been recently laying on my heart the importance of *waiting on Him*.

Psalm 62:1-2 says, *“My soul waits in silence for God only; from Him is my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken.”* If we wait for the Lord, He is faithful to deliver us. I have always had difficulty overcoming worry, but the Lord has been reminding me lately that when I *wait* for Him, I am placing my complete trust in Him, and He will not let me “be greatly shaken.” His decisions may not be what I want, but when I fully surrender to His plans, I can have faith that His ways are best. If we postpone our wishes and rely on His wisdom, we don’t have to guess at God’s will.

As James 4:8 says, *“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”* We are all called to purify ourselves - clear our consciences - repent from sin. When we draw nigh to the Lord with a clean heart, He promises to draw nigh to us.

As I have been thinking about waiting for the Lord, He has reminded me of the importance of some very simple yet vital points in diligently seeking His will.

- **Prayer** – How can we learn and discern God’s will if we do not spend time in the presence of our Heavenly Father? How can we expect to hear His voice if we never take the time to listen for it? Do not only speak, open your heart and *ask* Him to give you discernment to hear what He has to say. (Psalm 139:17-18)
- **Reading His Word** – Just as we cannot easily travel to an unknown destination without a map, we cannot easily reach the place where God wants us unless we read the “map” that He has given us. If we are driving without using a map, we usually end up taking a longer amount of time to get to our destination, and sometimes our route is more hazardous than if we went by the map. Likewise, if we ignore the Word He has given us, we can take a much longer time coming to the place God wants us, and we might find some hazards that we would have missed if we’d stayed in the refuge of the center of His will. (1 Peter 2:1-2)
- **An Open and Willing Heart** – A friend of mine once said, “If you had to choose between two volunteers to serve for a certain purpose, whom would you choose - the one who willingly asked to serve or the one who didn’t bother asking?” Instead of simply

hoping to see if the Lord will use us, we should be constantly *asking* Him to use us and disregarding our wants while seeking His guidance. (Isaiah 6)

- **Repentance and a Clean Heart** – If we have our focus on worldly things or sins that we hang on to, we cannot be fully dedicated to the Lord’s work. Let us shake off “the affairs of everyday life” and seek Him solely. (2 Timothy 2:4)
- **Complete Trust and Reliability in Him** – Commit yourself fully to Him! Wholly surrender yourself to His purpose. Then when you wait for Him, you have confidence that His promise is truth and His way is pure, no matter what trials come up. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)
- **Listen Unceasingly** – Pray for discernment and a hearing heart; spend time in His Word and alone with Him in prayer. We should be listening and yearning for His voice. Pray for patience and a receptive heart as you depend on Him only. (Habakkuk 2:3-4)

What I have learned is that when I wait for Him, I’m not simply setting my future in His hands and sitting back, passively waiting for an immediate response or direction. It’s a continual act of *true* obedience and surrender, and I’m using my time before He sends me where He wants me to go to grow in knowledge of Him and to delight in my Shepherd. Just this week, I have felt so much security, confidence, and joy as my King is teaching me once again to diligently delay *my* wants and seek Him, keeping my heart open for His answers. I challenge you to place sweet trust in Jesus Christ and pursue His kingdom and righteousness by waiting on Him. I pray that you will be encouraged by the strength and joy He provides!

“The LORD’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail.

They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

‘The LORD is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘therefore I have hope in Him.’

The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him.”

Lamentations 3:22-25