

Sermon Series: “Growing Pains”—Lord of Life Lutheran—7/23/2000

Title: “Growing through Waiting”

Text: Psalm 62: 1-12

Introduction: *Illus.: Little Problem Solver*

(Quote: Margaret Thatcher: “I am extraordinarily patient provided I get my own way in the end.”

Theme: God’s growth for us through waiting comes when we get past seeing this season of our life as a time which we must endure and rather look for what great things God is accomplishing in us and around us while we wait.

Time honored principles about “waiting”

C Waiting on God is the rule rather than the exception in life

1. The Biblical record of God’s people is growth through **waiting**—Noah—years to build; Job—life’s work wiped out; Abraham/Sarah—barren in later years; Joseph—20 years in jail; Moses—forty years in desert twice; Jesus—30 years in preparation for three; Paul—commissioned as an “apostle to the Gentiles” to sit in jail
2. We get frustrated, impatient, frazzled, worn out when loan not come through; biopsy results not back; marriage or child-rearing not responding; job interviewer delays in getting back—we think **it is not fair** and wish that it was over
3. **Illus.: Happiness Now**

C Waiting on God means resting, not worrying

1. “Do not be anxious then, saying, “What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or with what shall we clothe ourselves?” For all these things the pagans eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.” Matthew 6: 31-32
2. Resting does not mean being passive, inert—but active, going about doing and living the life God has given right now storing up for the time of high energy or faith that God is getting you ready for up ahead
3. **Illus.: IMPATIENCE—GENERAL PATTON**

Waiting through Tough Times

C “What” to do while waiting

1. **Focus on God**
 - “My soul waits in silence for God alone.” (1)
 - Not panicking, not fretting, not going into hyper-drive to fix it—but keeping your focus on God
2. **Trust in God’s character**
 - It is easy to look at the bigness of the problem, the clout of the adversary, the darkness of the night
 - “From Him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my Savior—my stronghold.”
 - Remember God is not touched by the circumstances and He is refuge to seek out when the “going gets tough”

C “How” to wait

1. **Be SILENT!!!**
 - “Be still and know that I am God!” Psalm 46: 10
 - That means not being so quick to let “many” others hear your verbal complaint against the thing, other, or God
 - **ILLUS.: LIKE A TRAPEZE FLIER**
2. **Be CONFIDENT**
 - “He alone is my rock and my Savior. . .I shall not be shaken.”(2)—*tottered, overthrown*
 - **ILLUS.: KING OF THE HILL—ONLY AS GOOD AS THE FOOTING YOU STAND ON**
 - Putting no confidence in ourselves or in any other earthly thing to bail us out and get the quick fix
 - **ILLUS.: THE LUCKY PLUMBER’S SON**
 - In Christ Jesus we can be guaranteed that God will never go back on his promise, commitment, or grace
 - “He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also in Him freely give us all things.” Romans 8: 32

C “Why” wait—because of God’s promises. . .

1. **Deliverance**— “From Him is my deliverance”(1b)—when no resolution is in sight God is ready to deliver(eg.: cross)
2. **Security**— “He is my only stronghold”(2,6)—security blankets only work if they can’t be lost—God’s can’t be lost
3. **Hope**— “For my hope is from Him”(5b)—not a wished-for hope but a realized hope that ends up in heaven

4. **Glory**— “On God my salvation and my glory rest”(7a)
— maybe the wait/deliverance is tarrying because we still trying to steal the show from God
— God’s plan for you and me is that we might share in his glory
— “But to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.” 1 Peter 4: 13

LITTLE PROBLEM-SOLVER

One day while my daughter-in-law and I were chatting on the phone, her 9-year-old son, Aaron, had a problem with the VCR. Aaron is hearing-impaired and so he signed to his mother that the VCR needed fixing. She, in turn, signed to him that he would have to wait until she was finished talking. Shortly after that my daughter-in-law's doorbell rang and she hurriedly brought our conversation to an end.

She went to the door and there was Aaron. Knowing how extended some of his mother's phone conversations could be, he had gone outside and rung the doorbell. He had never heard it in his life, but he knew how to use the device as a problem solver.

HAPPINESS NOW

People seem to believe that they have an inalienable right to be happy--"I want what I want and I want it now." No one wants to wait for anything and, for the most part, no one has to anymore. Waiting is interpreted as pain. ... People walk into my office and say they are Christians, but I see no difference except that they want to be happy and now expect God to make it so.

The problem is that, in this country, you can have what you want when you want it most of the time. ... People like the fact that they can buy a 50-foot tree and instantly plant it in their yard. Why on earth would anyone want to wait on relationships or wait on God?

IMPATIENCE

Perhaps you recall the scene from the movie "Patton". General Patton was pacing back and forth on the balcony of an English mansion. General Eisenhower had him set up as commander of an entirely fictitious army, complete with fake air traffic. The Germans are fooled and do not rush to the defense of the beaches of Normandy, thinking that the real invasion will be at Calais, headed by Patton. Of course Patton is extremely upset. He can't believe that he is being kept out of the most glorious war of the century. He says to a subordinate that he feels God has some great calling for him, some great army to move, but General Bradley, of all people, is in charge of the only army then going anywhere.

LIKE A TRAPEZE FLIER

Not long before his death, Henri Nouwen wrote a book called *Sabbatical Journeys*. He writes about some friends of his who were trapeze artists, called the Flying Roudellas.

They told Nouwen there's a special relationship between flyer and catcher on the trapeze. The flyer is the one that lets go, and the catcher is the one that catches. As the flyer swings high above the crowd on the trapeze, the moment comes when he must let go. He arcs out into the air. His job is to remain as still as possible and wait for the strong hands of the catcher to pluck him from the air.

One of the Flying Roudellas told Nouwen, "The flyer must never try to catch the catcher." The flyer must wait in absolute trust. The catcher will catch him, but he must wait.

THE LUCKY PLUMBER'S SON

Executive consultant Richard Hagberg told this story: The head of one large company recently told me about an incident that occurred as he and his wife waited in line to get his driver's license renewed. He was frustrated at how long it was taking and grumbled to his wife, "Don't they know who I am?"

She replied, "Yeah, you're a plumber's son who got lucky."

Psalm 62:1-12

¹My soul waits in silence for God alone.

From Him comes my salvation.

²He alone is my rock and my savior—my stronghold.

I cannot be severely shaken.

³How long will all of you attack a person?

How long will you try to murder him,

as though he were a leaning wall or a sagging fence?

⁴They plan to force him out of his high position.

They are happy to lie.

They bless with their mouths,

but in their hearts they curse.

⁵Wait calmly for God alone, my soul,

because my hope comes from him.

⁶He alone is my rock and my savior—my stronghold.

I cannot be shaken.

⁷My salvation and my glory depend on God.

God is the rock of my strength, my refuge.

⁸Trust him at all times, you people.

Pour out your hearts in his presence.

God is our refuge.

⁹Common people are only a whisper in the wind.

Important people are only a delusion.

When all of them are weighed on a scale, they amount to nothing.

They are less than a whisper in the wind.

¹⁰Do not count on extortion to make you rich.

Do not hope to gain anything through robbery.

When riches increase, do not depend on them.

¹¹God has spoken once.

I have heard it said twice:

"Power belongs to God.

¹²Mercy belongs to you, O Lord.

You reward a person based on what he has done."