

Wait on the Lord.

Isaiah 40:27-31

Pastor Stephen Herrod
Sermon Notes

MESSAGE:

WAIT ON THE LORD

PASSAGE: ISAIAH 40:27-31 ESV

27

Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
“My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God”?

28

Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

29

He gives power to the faint,
and to him who has no might he increases
strength.

30

Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted;

31

but they who wait for the LORD shall renew
their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like
eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.

MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this message is to address the tension of feeling distant from God, emphasizing it as an opportunity for spiritual growth and discipleship, and remind the audience of God’s constant presence, the enduring nature of God’s love, and the

transformative strength and power that comes from waiting on the Lord.

INTRODUCTION

In the heart of Orlando’s rainy season, which falls between the months of June-September, picture a day filled with the promise of sunshine. As the sun graces the sky with its brilliance, there’s a radiance and a tangible warmth that envelops everything below. People step outside, embracing the day bathed in sunlight. Yet, in the midst of this sunshine, the clouds begin to gather, creating a gradual shift in the atmosphere. The once clear sky starts to be veiled by the incoming clouds. And as the clouds gather and obscure the sun, the day takes a different hue. The warmth diminishes, and it feels as if the sun has momentarily disappeared behind this natural curtain. Beyond this natural curtain however, it’s crucial to grasp that the sun hasn’t shifted its position or ceased to shine. Instead, it appears as though it has, simply because the clouds have momentarily covered it up.

And in a parallel sense, I want you to think about how the adverse circumstances in your life can act as clouds – temporary obstacles that may obscure your view of God and God’s blessings. It’s important to realize that during those moments in your life, it’s not that God has moved, stopped being God, or turned His back on you, rather it is your own clouds of circumstances, that may

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be temporarily blinding you from seeing God clearly!

I would have you to know that just like the sun persistently shines beyond the clouds, God's presence endures amidst the cloudy, adverse circumstances in your life. God's love and guidance remain constant, and God's blessings does not cease from flowing. If you are blinded from seeing God clearly because of the clouds of adverse circumstances you are dealing with, I say to you this:

In the tension of feeling that God might be distant or does not care about what you are going through, there lies a profound opportunity for spiritual growth and discipleship!

I am suggesting that the tension of feeling that God is distant from you and/or has turned His back on you is an invitation from God to learn more about Him and grow in your relationship with Him, and instead of giving up on God, cursing God, or turning away from God, you are to embrace your cloudy days and sleepless nights as an opportunity to grow in your relationship with God, because no matter how it looks, or how it seems, God is always up to something and God is always at work!

SERMON POINTS

1. *WHEN WE LET OUR CIRCUMSTANCES CLOUD OUR VIEW AND DISTORT OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD, GOD GRACIOUSLY PROVIDES*

REMINDERS FOR US TO HELP US REDISCOVER HIM AND RECEIVE A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR CIRCUMSTANCES.

In the context of this passage, the people of Israel were expressing a sense of despair and frustration. The phrases "my way is hidden from the Lord" and "my cause is disregarded by my God" convey a feeling that God was not paying attention to their situation, or that their circumstances were beyond God's awareness. They were questioning the perceived absence of God's intervention in their lives and expressing a sense of hopelessness, but amidst that tension God delivered a message to them to provide them with reassurance, emphasizing His enduring and powerful nature. Listen to the word of God for the people of God, it says in verse 27-28:

Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
"My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God?"

"Have you not known?
Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
There is no searching for His
understanding!"

Interestingly, in this case, the things they were questioning God about, are answers that God had already given. In other words, considering who they truly knew God to be,

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and in light of what God had revealed to them about Himself, the people of God already knew the answer to their questions and complaints, but they were in their feelings.

So the problem with God's people then, and a common problem that exists among the people of God even today is that the people of God often allow their circumstances to cast a shadow over their perception of God and distort their understanding of Him!

These people possessed a wealth of past experiences, teachings, and sermons that adequately depicted who God is and how God interacts with God's people, and that should have equipped them to remain steadfast when life got cloudy during a challenging season. However, due to the succumbing weight of their circumstances, they inadvertently allowed their challenges to overshadow their view of God and distort their understanding of His revealed character!

Nevertheless, God's grace shines brightly in the fact that even when we forget or let our circumstances cloud our view and distort our understanding of God, He graciously provides reminders, and these reminders are seeds planted by God to help us rediscover him and receive a clearer understanding of our circumstances.

You see, Given the normalcy of "forgetting" in our human memory process and the occasional lapses that we all experience,

there are times when our circumstances can overwhelm us, blurring our vision of God. Yet, God, in His infinite mercy, provides reminders to help us see him again, and see our circumstances rightly.

These reminders come through sermons, teachings, theologically-sound worship songs, scripture readings, daily devotionals, and prayer! And these reminders will strengthen your faith muscles, lift your spirit, rejuvenate your mental health, and recalibrate your perspective so that you can see God and see that all things are working together to the good of those who loved the lord, to those who are called according to his purpose!

2. *WAITING ON GOD IS NOT AN INACTIVE, PASSIVE ENDEAVOR, BUT IT IS AN ACTIVE DEPENDENCE ON GOD THAT PATIENTLY AWAILS GOD'S TIMING WITH CONFIDENT EXPECTATION.*

Isaiah also reminds us that "God gives power to the faint, and to him or her who has no might he increases their strength. God gives them strength." You see, your adverse circumstances and difficulties have the capacity to burn you out, deplete your energy, and weaken you. In light of that, it is essential for you to tread through life carefully because when life gets tough, you may be worn down and weak, and instead of admitting and pointing out your own weaknesses, you may end up blaming others or even pointing the finger at God.

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But let me share this insight with you: You need to unlearn the idea that being weak is something to be ashamed of. Believing you always must be strong is a misconception and a bit like having a God-complex. As a human being, it's normal to feel weak, tired, burned out, and even stressed out. Thinking you must always be strong is unrealistic, but embracing your weakness and weaknesses is a profound acknowledgment of your humanity. You're designed to have moments of weariness and vulnerability. And the good news is, God grants power to the faint and strength to the weak.

Nevertheless, you have to be honest with yourself when you're hurting, tired, burned out, and weak, because if you end up pointing the fingers at others, or even God instead of yourself, you might miss out on the blessings of strength and power from God. Let me remind you of the words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 that reveals God's strength shines the brightest when you are at your weakest! Paul says, in Christ, you will find real strength when you reveal your real weakness! You see, when you come to an end of yourself, you are right where God wants you to be because it is then that you can begin to tap into a strength and power from above. You see, God designed you to experience moments of weakness so that you will rely and depend on Him. And when you rely and depend on God, coming to an end of yourself and your strength, you will discover that in Christ, your real strength will emerge! When you come to the end of yourself, that's when the real strength and

power from above will kick in! He gives power to the faint and to them that are weak, he gives them strength!

"Even the youth get weary, and the young men shall utterly fall!"

That's a word in and of itself, and I implore you to check on the youth.

Check on your children.

Check on your grandchildren.

Check on your teenagers.

They might be weary.

They might be suicidal.

They might be depressed.

They have feelings, too.

They may not have the weight of responsibilities that you have, but they get tired, weak, and burned out, too.

Check on the youth.

Even though young people are full of strength and vitality, "even the youth get weary, and the young men shall utterly fall!"

Check on the strong ones in your family, too.

Check on the one who you go to advice for because they get weak too.

Check on the strongest person you know because he or she gets weak, too.

The reality is, all of us have moments of weakness and moments when we fall down.

But: They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint.

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You see, the people of God found themselves in need of strength. As they journeyed through challenging times, their own strength diminished, leading them to mistakenly blame God instead of looking within themselves. Nevertheless God, through his prophet, intervened to clarify that the root of the problem was not that He was far from them, but it was that they allowed their circumstances to cloud their view and understanding of God, allowing them to deflect from the truth that they were weak and burned out, and what they really needed was for their strength to be renewed. And this renewed strength that they really needed would come by waiting on the Lord! Now beloved, I will have you to know that this waiting on the Lord, is not a dormant or passive state; it's not about idleness, inactivity, or doing nothing. Waiting on the Lord is an active dependence on God, patiently awaiting his timing with confident expectation!

Let me see if I can illustrate it this way:

My daughter is enrolled in gymnastics, and I dropped her off 2 weeks ago with her nana and papa before going to gymnastics without packing her leotard, and she was upset because she did not have her leotard for gymnastics. Then, I assured her that I would move around my schedule to go back home and get her leotard bring it to her so that she could have it for gymnastics. So I went home, found her leotard, drove back to my parents house, and when I arrived back to

my parents' house to drop off the leotard, True was in the window waiting on her daddy to get back with her leotard. And when I got out of the car with her leotard, she was cheering in the window, and by the time I came to the door, she was jumping in celebration!

Ladies and gentlemen, waiting on God is not an inactive, passive endeavor, but it is an active dependence on God that patiently awaits his timing with confident expectation!

And now that I think about it, if my daughter can lift her hands in joy because her daddy brought her a leotard in her waiting process, what shall the people of God do as they wait for their heavenly father to renew their strength!

As I get ready to take my seat, here is what I recommend:

Praise him while you're waiting. Thank him while you're waiting. Live your best life while you're waiting.

QUOTES BY STEPHEN HERROD

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opportunity for spiritual growth and discipleship!”

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“All of us have moments of weakness and moments when we fall down.”

“When you come to an end of yourself, you are right where God wants you to be because it is then that you can begin to tap into a strength and power from above.”

“Waiting on the Lord is not a dormant or passive state; it’s not about idleness, inactivity, or doing nothing. Waiting on the Lord is an active dependence on God, patiently awaiting his timing with confident expectation.”