**WAITING AND LEADERSHIP**

Sunday School Lesson 1

*THE WORTH OF WAITING*

Psalm 25:1-5

11/28/2021

**Introduction:** This morning, we embark on a new series of lessons for Sunday School. In this series, we are going to discover the worth of waiting. The word *wait* is probably one of the most underappreciated words found in the Word of God. There are over 150 uses of it in the Bible. That’s almost the same number of Scriptural references as we find for the word *obey.* We hear sermons and lessons on obedience, faith, and love, but how often are we exhorted to wait? It is an active word. It means to stay or to rest in expectation. It also means to attend to or to be ready to serve. Our mind likely goes to the word *patience* when we hear waiting mentioned, but waiting is more than just having patience. In fact, it is possible to wait without being patient. We must then understand that a lack of willingness to wait is more than just being impatient. There are many reasons we find in Scripture to explain why one does not wait on the Lord as they should. We are going to evaluate several of those reasons in our lesson series with the hope that we will come to understand just how important it is to wait on the Lord. The lesson series should also cause each of us to consider our individual motivations when it comes to waiting on the Lord. In this first lesson, we will be examining the correlation between waiting and leadership. Let’s observe the following truths:

1. **WAITING ON THE LORD IS A NECESSITY IF HE IS THE ONE LEADING US.**
2. **Notice that a follower must wait on the leader, especially if he doesn’t know where he is going (Psalm 25:1-4; Jeremiah 42:3).** The psalmist asked the Lord to show him His ways. He needed to be taught His paths. He submitted to the Lord as a follower submits to the leader. When you are following someone, you must be willing to wait on them. When Abraham followed the Lord, he had to wait for Him to show him the way to the land that had been promised. He did not know where this land was. He did not know the way to get there. When the children of Israel left Egypt, they had to wait on the Lord. He was the One who was leading them to the Promised Land. When we are not willing to wait on the Lord, it speaks to our lack of following Him. If He is truly the leader of my life, then waiting on Him is not even a question. I have to wait on Him so that I end up in the place that He wants me to go. Some of us claim that we stopped waiting on the Lord in our life because we got impatient, but how can that be the case if we don’t know how to get where we need to go? The truth is that we did not wait on Him because we thought we could get there on our own. That speaks to a lack of willingness to follow Him.
3. **Notice that the necessity of waiting does not cease as long as you are following (Psalm 25:5; Hebrews 11:13; Hosea 12:6).** The psalmist said that he would wait on the Lord all the day. This is speaking to a continuous action. When you are following someone, you may have to wait for them at any time until you are done following. Obviously, once you have reached your destination, you don’t have to wait for them any longer. Friends, we have not reached our destination yet. The leadership of the Lord ought to be present throughout the end of our days on this earth. We are strangers and pilgrims, and we see the fulfillment of promises afar off. We possess them now, but we have not experienced them yet in their fulness. Thus, we continue to follow the One who leads and guides us. Some have stopped waiting on the Lord because they believe that have arrived. There is nowhere left for the Lord to lead them to. They know all of His ways, and they do not need His leadership anymore. Again, the lack of waiting is not a result of impatience. It is a result of pride. Are we willing to truly let the Lord be our leader every single day? Do we wake up each morning waiting on His directions?
4. **WAITING ON THE LORD IS NEGLECTED BECAUSE WE DON’T WANT HIS COUNSEL.**
5. **Notice that we often wait to make decisions until we get counsel from those who are our leaders (Job 29:21; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Matthew 22:15; Proverbs 1:5; 15:22; 20:18).** We might not always identify them as leaders, but the truth is that the people we get counsel from are those we are looking to for leadership in a decision. Sometimes, those leaders are obvious to us. If you’ve ever worked a job, you’ve doubtless sought counsel from your boss before making an important decision on the job. Sometimes, you probably even had to wait and hold off on a decision until you could speak to the boss about the matter. Would you go and ask counsel from someone who you had no intention of following whatsoever? You’d probably only do this if you had to or for the sake of appearances. You certainly would not be inclined to wait for counsel from someone who you do not view as a leader. You’d simply make the decision and move on without consideration. Counsellors are leaders. They are there for the purpose of helping us to make the right decisions. The Lord is THE Counsellor (Isaiah 9:6).
6. **Notice that when we don’t wait for counsel from leaders, it’s likely because of the lusts of our flesh (Psalm 106:13-14; 1 Samuel 13:1-14).** Why didn’t the Israelites wait for the counsel of the Lord in the wilderness? The Bible says that the reason for the lack of counsel was their exceeding lust. Simply, they wanted what they wanted, so they really did not care to seek His counsel. This reminds me of what took place with King Saul and the Philistines. Saul disobeyed the commandment of the Lord. He did not wait for the prophet Samuel to get there. Was this just due to impatience on the part of King Saul? I do not believe that it was. Of course, that’s what Saul tried to tell Samuel. He claimed that he had waited as long as he could for the prophet. Yet, the Scripture shows us that King Saul did what he wanted to do. He never sent messengers to find Samuel the prophet. He never entreated the Lord for an answer. The truth is that he wanted to be the leader. He saw that the people were afraid, and he wanted to be the one to deliver them. Many times, we do not wait for the Lord because we do not want His counsel.
7. **WAITING ON THE LORD IS NOT ARGUED IF WE PROPERLY ESTEEM HIS AUTHORITY.**
8. **Notice that we are to wait on Him as a servant waits for his master (Psalm 123:1-2).** There are levels of leadership in this world. How many of us can claim to only have one leader? Again, if we use the example of a job, it is likely that most of us have worked a job where we had multiple bosses. One of those bosses had authority in the company above the other. While we may wait for each one, let’s consider which leader we would wait for the longest. Would it not be the one who is at the highest level? Would we not prioritize waiting for him above waiting for the others? Now, let’s apply that to our spiritual walk. We follow others as they follow Christ, but ultimately, we follow Christ. He is the Master. He is the One we will answer to at the judgment seat of Christ. This ought to show in our willingness to wait for Him. If we regard His authority in leadership, it should prompt us to be more willing to wait for Him than we would be to wait for anyone else. A servant waits for his master for as long as it takes. It does not really matter how long the wait is.
9. **Notice that a servant waits for his master in order to be ready when he is called upon (Luke 12:36).** The Lord Jesus showed the need to wait to His disciples. He compared them to servants waiting for the Master to return from the wedding. The servants wait for the Master so that they can open the door immediately when the Master knocks. When we wait on the Lord as a servant waiting on his Master, it shows our great respect for His leadership. We want to be ready for His arrival. We do not want to be caught off guard because we were not waiting for Him. A servant who is not ready to serve his master has failed in his job of service. I believe that there are many believers who miss opportunities to serve the Master because they are not waiting on Him as they ought to. They do not respect His leadership enough to wait for His every beckon call. Again, it must be reiterated that this has nothing to do with patience, but it has everything to do with respect for the Lord as our Master. That second definition of waiting speaks to attending to. It speaks to service. Let’s give Christ the best service possible.
10. **WAITING ON THE LORD IS NEVER DISREGARDED BY THE MASTER.**
11. **Notice that the Master gives honor to the servant that waits for Him (Proverbs 27:18).** He that waiteth on his master shall be honoured. That is a promise from the Word of God. The Lord never disregards the servant who simply waits on Him. Instead, honor is given to him. As we consider waiting and leadership, let’s be thankful that the Lord regards the faithful waiting of His servants. It might be difficult to wait for someone who does not appreciate it. I’m certain we’ve all had to wait for someone like that at some point in our lives. Our feeling might be to leave and forget the waiting. While this might be understandable, what excuse can we possibly provide for not waiting on the Lord? He is a kind Master. He is a considerate Master. He does not make us wait just for the purpose of waiting or to be cruel. He does everything in His time. He seeks to order our steps and cause us to go in the right way. He always calls on us at exactly the right time. He is never late. Why do we struggle so much to wait on Him?
12. **Notice that a servant is not worthy of honor for waiting, as that should simply be part of his service (1 Timothy 6:1; John 12:26; Malachi 1:6).** Is a servant worthy of honor just because he waited for the master? The answer is definitely no. The Bible tells us that the Master is the one who is worthy of honor. I’d say that waiting as a servant is simply a reasonable task. When you go to a restaurant, the server comes to the table to serve those in your party. That server will ask you if you are ready to order. What happens if you say no? Generally, they will wait and come back again in a few minutes. There’s nothing special about that behavior. It’s expected. It would be considered rather forward for the server to rush you and your party. Let’s not be lifted up with pride because we are willing to wait on the Lord. That should be a reasonable response for us as servants to the Master. He is the Leader. We are waiting on His commands. We are waiting on His timing. We are waiting on His direction.