

FINDING THE LOVE OF JESUS & LOVING HIM BACK

Discipleship Essential: Knowing God

Series: Finding the Love of Jesus and Loving Him Back

Study 2: In the Woods of Waiting

Finding the Love of Jesus and Loving Him Back: In the Woods of Waiting
(through grief, loss and sorrow)

Introduction

Waiting is something every one of us experiences. Whether we're waiting for healing, direction, restored relationships or God's promises to come to pass, seasons of waiting can test our patience and our faith. Like walking through a long stretch of woodland where every turn looks the same, waiting can leave us wondering how much further there is to go.

The Bible is full of people who experienced their own 'woods of waiting'. Abraham and Sarah waited decades for God's promise. Joseph endured betrayal, slavery and imprisonment before seeing God's plan fulfilled. David wrote, "I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in His word, I put my hope" (Psalm 130:5). Waiting is a normal part of following Jesus, but James reminds us that God is at work even when we cannot yet see the outcome.

READ James 5:7–11

"Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming... The Lord is full of compassion and mercy."

DISCUSS

1. Why do you think waiting can be one of the hardest seasons of faith?
2. Have you experienced a season where God seemed silent, or His timing felt different to yours?

REFLECT

James encourages believers to be patient, using the example of a farmer who faithfully waits for the early and latter rains. The farmer cannot rush the harvest, but he continues trusting that growth is taking place beneath the surface. In the same way, waiting doesn't mean God is absent or inactive. Often, while we are waiting for God to work around us, He is also working within us.

DIG DEEPER

In James 5:9, believers are reminded not to grumble or judge one another while they wait.

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Waiting can make us impatient, not only with God, but also with the people around us. James reminds us that our posture matters just as much as our perseverance.

DISCUSS

1. Why do you think seasons of waiting can affect the way we relate to other people?
2. How can we encourage one another to remain hopeful while we wait on God?

APPLICATION

In God's hands, waiting is never wasted. James reminds us that even when God's plans seem delayed or unclear, He is full of compassion and mercy. As we continue to trust Him, He is growing our faith, shape our character and teaching us to depend more deeply on Him.

DISCUSS

How might this passage shape the way you approach your current season of waiting?

CONCLUSION

James reminds us that the 'woods of waiting' are not wasted but become opportunities for spiritual growth and maturity. When God's plans seem delayed or unclear, we are called to stand firm, practice patience, and remain rooted in God's character. We remember that we do not walk alone. We have the examples of those who have gone before us, the support of Christian community around us, and the assurance that God is compassionate and merciful. The waiting may feel long, but God has not abandoned us there. He is still at work, even when we cannot yet see the destination.

If you are in the waiting season, take time to share and pray with one another.

PRAY

Jesus, thank You that You are present with us even when we cannot see what You are doing. Help us to trust Your timing, remain patient and stand firm in faith. Grow our character as we wait and remind us that You are always working for our good and Your glory. May we encourage one another and continue to hope in You, knowing that You are full of compassion and mercy. Help us to recognise Your presence even before we see Your promises fulfilled. Amen.

Additional Study Material:

Early Christian Letters for Everyone: James, Peter, John and Judah by Tom Wright

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