

WHILE WE WAIT

By Pastor Jacob Sylvia

I recently embarked on a nine-day cross-country road trip, moving from Florida to California with my wife and three young boys ages 10, 9, and 5. With overwhelming uncertainties ahead and the comforts of familiarity behind, we were peppered by questions about the new city we would live in, the home we rented sight unseen, the school, schedule, and so on. Yet there was one question that struck a nerve, pouring proverbial salt in the wound of overwhelm for us all: “Are we there yet?”

Barrett, our five-year-old, barely made it out of the neighborhood before that question got asked. We laughed at the adorable absurdity of the question, but looking at 2,500+ miles to go, we truthfully wanted to cry.

The truth is we ask that same question to God all the time. In our relationships, finances, careers, and even in our relationship with Jesus, we cry out, “God, are we there yet?!” No one likes to wait! Whether it’s getting stuck in traffic, the pickup line at school, grades being posted, or results of a biopsy, scan, or exam, waiting can be one of the most taxing human experiences.

What if there was a better way to wait?
What if waiting actually has a purpose in our lives?
The truth echoed throughout scripture is that waiting is less about enduring until we get what we want, and more about communion with the One we need.

All throughout scripture God uses waiting as a tool to sharpen our faith, if our posture is prayerfully relational. From the Israelites in the wilderness to the disciples in the upper room, how we wait is far more important than what we are even waiting for.

So no matter where you’re at in your relationship with Christ, or what you’re waiting for, use the following five prayers and verses to redirect your heart, mind, and soul on Jesus.

Prayer is how we surrender our situation to God, so use these prayers not as a formula for a solution, but as a refocusing on your relationship with the One who is good, even when waiting isn’t.



LET GO OF CONTROL

Scripture – Based on John 15:1-11

Statement – “I will focus more on Jesus than the outcome.”

Dear God, you are my strength, my provider, my rescuer, and my redeemer. You created the heavens above, breathed stars into the sky, and brought order, beauty, and purpose to what was once only waste and wild (Genesis 1). Lord, you command all of creation and yet You call me by name (Isaiah 43). You are powerful and personal, Creator and Caretaker, there is no problem in my life that You can’t wrap in purpose.

Jesus, you know I struggle with letting go of _____. Teach me to remain in You when I’m tempted to find comfort in things of the world. I give up trying to understand why or how things work in my life, because I trust that God is good even when life is not (Proverbs 3). Thank you for never giving up on me, never leaving me, and being in control when life feels out of control. Steady what feels hurried, heal what feels unhealthy, and let me find rest in the God alone, the only source capable to sustain. Amen.

WILLING > READY

Scripture – Based on Joshua 1

Statement – “God doesn’t need my readiness, just my willingness.”

Father, you know exactly where I feel completely ill-prepared, overwhelmed, and under pressure. Those are the areas, situations, relationships, and places that I give completely to you. God, give me the faith of Joshua and the courage of Caleb which can only be found in complete surrender and obedience to You. Your Word says “farmers who wait for perfect weather never plant,” so Holy Spirit, give me the boldness to act (Ecclesiastes 11).

Like the Israelites in the desert, I often feel like I’m wandering the wilderness with the Promised Land always out of reach. In the mighty name of Jesus I release my desire to control, my preference for readiness, my desire for perfection, and forgive me for any pride keeping me from surrendering all to God.

I am done trying to do God’s job for Him. I call upon the mighty name of Jesus Christ as I face what feels like a Jordan River of “what-ifs.” When I am at my least, feeling empty and powerless, is right when Your power is made perfect (2 Corinthians 12). Father, I’m not ready, but I am willing. I trust You to lead as I take leaps of faith to follow. Amen.



ENOUGH FOR TODAY

Scripture – Based on Exodus 16

Statement – “Even in the wilderness, God provides.”

Heavenly Father, you are my Provider and Good Shepherd. I ask that you forgive me for not trusting You to provide. Cleanse me of my discontent and distrust as I seek Your will and place my life in Your hands. Your Word says You will supply my every need (Philippians 4), and I will rest in that promise. Even in the wilderness, even among the complaints, You provided for the Israelites. You still provide for Your children today because You are the God of yesterday, today, tomorrow, and forever.

Give us each day our daily bread, because whether it’s food or the Word of God, I trust my Father to provide what I need most. For Your Kingdom to come, I must be willing to lay mine down. Yahweh Jireh, I lay down my hunger at Your feet. Be my nourishment, my sustenance, my all and only source to carry me through today. I love you, I trust you, I thank you. Amen.

SEARCHING FOR SABBATH

Scripture – Based on Matthew 11:28

Statement – “Margin is the space between your pace and your limits.”

Jesus, my Shepherd, teach me to number my days that I might grow in wisdom as Your Word says (Psalm 90:12). Margin is something I know I need in my mind, but I struggle to apply it to my life. Give me the wisdom to be aware of my limits, and the boldness to obediently prioritize You above all else. God, you model rest in Genesis and offer rest in Jesus. Give me the wisdom to take honest inventory of my time, treasure, talents, and attention, and then the faith to do something about it. Lord, if I need to rearrange my priorities to make You the priority, I will do so with joy.

God, forgive me for not slowing down enough to sit with You. Pour out the rest and restoration found in Your Son, Jesus. I may need to say no to some good things to say yes to Godly things, and I ask you to give me the strength to do so. Strip away the noise and distractions and recalibrate my soul to hear the Holy Spirit’s whispers.

Heavenly Father, You are the author of time, everlasting to everlasting. Speak life into me as I sit in stillness, knowing that You are God. I take responsibility for my rest and give it all to You. Lord, lead me to quiet waters and refresh my soul so that I might bring glory to Your name in all things. Amen.



TARGET FIXATION

Scripture – Based on Joshua 3

Statement – “What gets your attention, gets you.”

Almighty God, Elohim, Yahweh Rapha (The Lord that heals), Yahweh Shalom (The Lord is peace), The Great I Am...these are not just names of You they're descriptions of You. Your might, character, and power is worthy to be praised! I come before You humbly, not forgetting Your strength, glory, goodness, and power. I ask that You forgive me for the times I forget. Teach me to remember how good You have been to me. When I'm alone and hopeless, you are the God of courage and strength. When I'm struggling through a storm, you are the Peace beyond all understanding. God, I don't just want to know your names, I want to believe in them.

Thank you for pulling me out of the pits through my life. Thank you for never giving up on me. Thank you for Your Son, Jesus, dying so that I might have a relationship with You. Thank you for believing in me when I didn't believe in myself. I don't walk arrogantly into your presence, I was carried here because of the blood on a cross, and I can't say “thank you” enough. When my life felt the darkest, You broke the chains and brought new life so that I might carry the light within me.

I am forever grateful that whatever I need, You are. Fix my focus on You, God. Be the Ark ahead of my obstacles, and give me the unyielding persistence to never lose focus on You. You have already beaten the battles I face. You don't remove the issues, you make a way through them. You didn't remove the Red Sea, but parted it. You didn't remove Daniel from the lion's den, you made a way through it. You didn't break Paul and Silas out of prison, You broke into the prison. Where there was death you bring life. God, I give You my suffering, my disappointments, frustrations, and mess-ups, knowing You make all things new. Thank you Lord, I love you. Amen.