



The Senior Scene



Love people. Know Jesus. Live Transformed.

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No Wasted Time

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him...
Psalm 37:7



How good are we at waiting? Here are some interesting (or perhaps not-so-interesting) statistics for you to ponder: in the average lifetime, we spend about 6 months at stop lights, 8 months opening junk mail, 76 days waiting for our coffee to brew, 43 days on hold, a year and a half looking for lost items, and an astounding 5 years standing in line! (thefactsite.com)

Waiting is not easy. We twiddle our thumbs, shuffle our feet, stifle our yawns, heave long sighs, and fret inwardly. Psalm 40:1 admonishes us to wait patiently. Really? Do we do that? I think we're more like Psalm 70:5— Come **quickly** to me...!

But waiting does not have to be dreary, teeth-clenched resignation. What if we spent those hours truly “waiting” on God? What if we acknowledged that all of our time is His?

Waiting is one of life's best teachers because in it we learn the virtue of . . . well, waiting—waiting while God works in us and for us. It's in waiting that we develop the quieter characteristics of joyful perseverance, submission, humility, patience, unwavering trust in God's love and goodness— all of those characteristics that take the longest to learn. God is never in a hurry, and He doesn't want us to be either. In our “wasted” time, we can be in anticipation of God's faithfulness and His purpose... even when things aren't moving at the speed we want them to!

The prophet Habakkuk learned this. Habakkuk did a great deal of waiting. And he wasn't just sitting around reading a magazine. He was seeking the Lord in the waiting. God told him (2:3) that the answer was on the way... *wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.* It will not delay! Perhaps Habakkuk was thinking, “Great! I won't have long to

wait!” But the deliverance he waited for took decades to arrive! Our delay is God's timing. Habakkuk received the assurance that things would be right on time. And in the meantime, he was to walk by faith (2:4).

Imagine what our times of waiting would be like if we spent each of those “impatient” moments as a time of worship and connection to God— of preparing our hearts and minds in anticipation of His “next thing” for us. When we give that “down time” to God, those pointless wasted moments become precious and purposeful.

Standing in the grocery store line or sitting in our car in traffic can become a sanctuary when we redeem the time to lift our hands, figuratively, to our Lord. We can turn them into a pilgrimage to His throne of grace. We can pray and worship anywhere we are. We don't need to be structured or eloquent – a word of thanks, a simple request to see His Sovereignty in this moment, a moment of adoration, a time of resting in His presence.

And as we are waiting, we can consider what we are *always* waiting for... the return of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13). There is much to do while we wait -- to tell and show others who He is and what He has done for us

Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. (James 5:7-8)

Whether “at hand” is today or next week or 50 years from now, each moment is another opportunity to be patient as we wait.

IN THE
waiting
GOD IS WORKING

You Gave Me Life

Being a southerner, I suppose my story started out a little differently than most in the South. My parents did not go to church. Well, my mom did but it was to a Primitive Baptist Church. Primitive Baptist Churches only meet once a month because the pastor is a 'pastor' over many churches.

The aunt of my best friend started taking me to Salem Baptist Church when I was 13 or 14. When I was 15, I answered an altar call and gave my life to Jesus. I was baptized in the Fisher River. At the time, I didn't realize the full meaning, but I can tell you as I have gotten older, I cherish that moment.

I was very faithful for the next several years until my mom died in 1975 and my dad died in 1978. Looking back, I know that I desperately needed them. I wandered away from the church and my core integrity. My faith was always there but my actions certainly didn't show it.

Not until my job landed me here in the Pittsburgh area did I start coming back to Christ and His church. I moved here in 1988, but it was not until 1990 that I found, or I should say God led me to Memorial Park Church. I had attended several churches, trying mostly to find a Baptist church but none of them seemed to draw me back a second time.

After attending Memorial Park that first Sunday, I knew I wanted to go back and that I would go back. I always felt as if Pastor Doug was speaking directly to me. It was definitely God speaking through him. God got my attention, and I listened. I joined Memorial Park in 1991.

My life from 1978 to 1990 was period of not following God and one that has wreaked consequences. I know without a doubt that God led me here... to Pittsburgh, to Memorial Park. In the Baptist church where I grew up, you learn quite early the laws of God. It was not until here that I learned the love of God. For a girl that lost both her parents essentially during her teenage years when they were both very sick, I needed a parent's love. I was a teenager. Were they showing me their love as best they could under the circumstances? Probably. Most importantly, it was God's love that I needed. It was there all along; I just didn't know. He's the greatest Parent... I just wish I had known.

I have grown so much over these last several years, with my faith and relationship with my Savior getting stronger. I still had my share of bumps in the road, but I know without a doubt that God is right beside me, teaching me and guiding me. Other times, He has placed roadblocks, and I am eternally grateful for those. It is beyond words to say how very grateful I

am for Christ to have died for me and to give me eternal life. I know that He lives within me and that He is with me each and every day. I love Him with all my heart.

Job 10:12 says "You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit." This is my story, wrapped in one small verse.

Charlene Cave



A Thanksgiving Prayer from Psalm 23

Dear Father in heaven —
Thank You for the promise
that in You I shall not want.
When I am overwhelmed,
You calm my restless heart.

In trials that overpower me as mighty torrents in a
raging river,
You call me to rest beside still waters.

In a world that only knows what it means to take,
You bring the peace that restores to me even those
things I did not know I had lost.

So many voices call to me,
beckoning me to walk another road.
But You invite me to walk in paths of Your
righteousness In the name of Your Son.

In the inevitability of the shadow of death, I thank
You Father that I need
not fear the unknown, I need only look to You for
comfort and protection.

Even in the midst of those things that bring fear —
that make me feel alone,
You prepare a banquet, and Your sure love
overwhelms my enemies.
The things that burden me are washed away in Your
presence and I am overcome with Your grace.

Abba, I could never ask for that which You offer to
me as a gift.

My heart overflows. Your goodness and mercy
are always with me and
I rejoice in the invitation to dwell
in Your house ...forever.

(praisegathering.com)

A Mighty Fortress is Our God

Martin Luther; Translator: Frederic Henry Hedge

*A mighty fortress is our God,
a bulwark never failing;
our helper he, amid the flood
of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
does seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great,
and armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.*

*Did we in our own strength confide,
our striving would be losing,
were not the right Man on our side,
the Man of God's own choosing.
You ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth his name,
from age to age the same;
and he must win the battle.*

*And though this world, with devils filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God has willed
his truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure,
for lo! his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.*

*That Word above all earthly powers
no thanks to them abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours
through him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
this mortal life also;
the body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still;
his kingdom is forever!*

We know Martin Luther as the man who sparked the Protestant Reformation. As a young man, Luther studied law. As the story goes, on a stormy night in the early 1500's, he came very near to being struck by lightning. Following this close call with death, he changed his course of study to theology. As he studied the Word, he discovered that true Christianity did not depend on what one knows *about* God, but upon a right relationship *with* God. Forgiveness through the sacrificial death of Christ was all important. As he read the verse, "the just shall live by faith," (Hab 2:4) he was struck by the truth and simplicity of it, and it literally lifted him to his feet to run to his desk and begin to write the 95 Theses to challenge the corruption of the Church of Rome.



He advocated a personal relationship with God over reliance on priests. He refused to retract his writings and was excommunicated in 1521.

One of Luther's greatest accomplishments was to translate the New Testament into the language of the people. But he was also a proponent of music as a tool for worship. He took to writing his own hymns – hymns that congregations sang with great joy and enthusiasm and that emphasized a personal relationship with the Lord.

He is credited with 37 hymns, the best-known one being "A Mighty Fortress," which he wrote during the time of reformation when there was widespread persecution of those who opposed the Catholic Church. It was seen as a "battle cry" during those dark times, although Luther did not intend it to be. He wrote it as, "A Hymn of Comfort."

At the time, Luther was going through difficult personal trials. In addition to the conflict within the church, a student of his was martyred, a plague broke out in Wittenberg (where Luther lived and taught theology), then his newborn daughter was unwell and later died. Luther described those 6 months as the worst period of trial he had experienced in his life as he wrestled in prayer with the Lord to save his daughter. He was mentally and spiritually fatigued. But he took comfort in the Psalms.

This hymn's title and themes are inspired by Psalm 46:1. When Luther wrote this hymn in the 16th century, fortresses were common. They provided safety and protection from attacking forces. Luther draws on this context and conveys the truth of God as an impenetrable stronghold and unfailing refuge for His people during life's trials.

Even in the factions within the church, Luther never stopped proclaiming the gospel. He confessed and defended the literal words of Jesus. He argued that there was nothing more true, certain, or powerful than the Word of God. Indeed, His Word is a "mighty fortress." The last line of the hymn proclaims that God's truth will remain when all else has fallen short.



The Grocery List... the leftover letters reveal a Scripture message.



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| A | C | T | G | O | W | M | F | T | H | I | P | C | E | O | A | T | I | P | E |
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| G | A | H | R | N | I | I | E | S | E | M | U | N | G | O | S | Z | G | O | H |
| E | C | G | T | E | S | D | E | R | B | T | W | O | L | L | Z | R | K | S | C |
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APPLES
AVOCADO
BACON
BAGELS
BANANAS
BOLOGNA
BREAD
CARROTS
CELERY
CEREAL
CHICKEN
CHOCOLATE CAKE
COFFEE
COOKIES



COTTAGE CHEESE
CRACKERS
CREAM
CREAM CHEESE
CUCUMBERS
DORITOS
EGGS
ENGLISH MUFFINS
FISH
GRAPE JELLY
GREEN BEANS
GROUND MEAT
HOT SAUSAGE
ICE CREAM



JELLO
LETTUCE
MILK
MINT
NOODLES
OATMEAL
ORANGE JUICE
PEACHES
PEANUT BUTTER
PIE
PIEROGIES
PIZZA CRUST
PORKCHOPS
POTATOES



PRETZELS
RAVIOLI
RICE
ROOT BEER
SALAD DRESSING
SOUP
SPAGHETTI
STEAK
STRAWBERRIES
SWISS CHEESE
SYRUP
TOMATOES
TURKEY
YOGURT

