



THE UPPER WAITING ROOM

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THE UPPER WAITING ROOM

I will use the label, “Waiting Room” several times in this message, so for clarity sake, here is what I’m referring to. A “Waiting Room” is understood to be the seasons in your life when it feels like God has is refusing to pick up your calls. It’s those extended periods of silence when it feels like God has pressed pause on whatever momentum you think you have.

In reality however, what you perceive as detours and delays, could very well be God-ordained waiting rooms where He prepares and equips you with the tools you need to thrive and excel when He brings you to your final destination.

With this message, I want to talk about how to wait when you find yourself in a waiting room through no fault of your own, and there’s no clear end time in sight when you will be released. So this is clearly different from previous messages we’ve explored where your “Waiting Room” is a direct result of foolish decisions in your life.

Look at Acts 1, starting in verse 3, “After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait

for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” 6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” 9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

When you find yourself in the waiting room,

DON'T FOCUS ON THE UNKNOWN (TIMING); FOCUS ON WHAT'S KNOWN (HOLY SPIRIT'S POWER).

It's natural for us to want to know the exact dates and times on God's planner. The reality is that clock watching is one of the most distressful activities you can engage in while in your waiting room.

You'll note here that Jesus only gives His disciples a general description of what it was they were waiting for. You'll also note what Jesus didn't tell His disciples. He didn't give them a specific timeline explaining that it would take exactly 10 days before the Holy Spirit arrived on Pentecost. He just said, “don't leave Jerusalem.” Jesus also didn't go into details about the experiences the disciples would have when the Holy Spirit arrived. He didn't say anything about rushing wind, or shaking buildings, or tongues of flame. He simply said they would receive power to do things they could never otherwise do.

You and I, (and the disciples) would have loved it if Jesus said, “Hey listen guys, a week and a half from now at 9:00am on Wednesday morning, the Holy Spirit will come while you are all together in a prayer meeting. You'll know it's Him because His arrival will sound like a violent tornado, but without the fuss of an actual tornado. The building you're in will shake violently, then it will settle. When you finally see the Holy Spirit, He will look like a giant flame of fire floating in the air. The fire will then separate and settle on each one of you. Don't worry, it won't burn you up. As soon as the fire settles on you, you will feel a welling up from deep within and will suddenly begin

speaking in different languages you've never studied. At that same time, there will be foreigners in town from all over the world who will hear what you're saying and will be convicted of their sin. Peter you're going to stand up and preach and by the end of the day, 3000 more people would have been baptized and put their faith in me.”

Wouldn't that have been nice? (By the way, all of that actually happened, according to Acts 2).

Most, if not all of us, would love God to give us that level of detail about every decision we need to make, wouldn't we? But God will rarely, if ever, do that. In fact, Jesus says, “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority...”

So here's the deal. If you find yourself in a waiting room waiting for the unknown, don't spend your nights worrying about the how and when, instead, concern yourself with what you know to be true of God. Call back to mind past seasons in your life when God demonstrated in practical ways His faithfulness. Call back to mind seasons past when you accomplished a task in the power of the Holy Spirit. Dwell on those thoughts. Remind yourself from His word that He sees through to the end everything He begins.

Focus on what you know is true about Him.

That my friend is how you wait out those long nights in your waiting room.

But it mustn't end there, you must move to the next step. When you find yourself in the waiting room,

PRAY CONSTANTLY WITH A SENSE OF EXPECTATION AND ANTICIPATION.

“...12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James, (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty). 14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Though the disciples weren't certain of what they were expecting, they weren't completely oblivious to

what the Holy Spirit was capable of doing. Remember, these men had spent three years doing ministry alongside Jesus. They had seen Him accomplish several supernatural deeds through the Holy Spirit. In addition, at the end of John's gospel (20:22), it says Jesus breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit,

Here's what I'm getting at. These men weren't praying for something completely unexpected or unknown. They had tasted, they had seen and even experienced the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. They knew that through His power in them, they could accomplish unfathomable things. So when they gathered to pray in the upper room, it would not have been just a regular quiet time in prayer.

It would have been constant, perhaps multiple times daily. More importantly, it would have been FULL of great expectations and great anticipation fueled by faith. They would have prayed, "Lord Jesus, do in us greater works than you did during those other times we were empowered by the Holy Spirit. Do more Lord in and through us. More of you Lord. More."

Remember, faith attracts God. When you find yourself in a waiting room, get on your knees and pray

like you've never prayed. Remain in prayer continually. Dare to dream and pray audaciously for the next season of your life, as you remind yourself how faithful God has been in the past.

But it also doesn't end here. Instead of praying alone while you're in the waiting room,

GATHER WITH LIKE-MINDED BELIEVERS AND PRAY FERVENTLY

One of the most rewarding experiences you will have in the waiting room is not only to wait with constant prayer, but to wait in constant prayer with other like-minded people.

The kind of person you wait with might sometimes even determine how much time you spend in the waiting room. If you wait with someone who lacks faith, someone who doesn't see and can't envision what God is capable of, or someone who complains every step of the way; a few months can end up feeling like years of waiting.

What you want to do while you wait and pray is to surround yourself with people who not only share some of your specific burdens, but

also people who share the same spiritual temperament. Find people like you whose hearts long to experience more of God's power and presence. Find people like you are willing to meet regularly to seek God for the same things you're waiting on Him for. Find people like you who have had some of the same spiritual experiences you've had, and have experienced the same faithfulness from God.

From time to time, also look for people who are more on fire for God than you are. Rub shoulders with them for a while, pray together with them for a while as you observe their level of faith and intensity. (Catch some of their fire!) Then gather again with your spiritually like-minded friends and pray together some more with even greater passion than before.

If your faith ever finds itself lacking, then your prayer partner is there to remind you of how faithful God was in past times and why that automatically means He will be faithful this time. If you look around you and you can't find any of your peers who share your level of passion for God, or have a greater passion than you do, then look outside your circle of friends. It's okay if they aren't the same age as you or necessarily in the same life stage as you. If they are on fire for Jesus Christ and care enough

about you to seek God on your behalf, then get next to them as often as you can so their passion and faith can rub off on you!

Here's something interesting to consider. Sometimes, the waiting room you think is a detour can sometimes be the actual destination, (at least for that particular period in your life). Perhaps the faith you're building up in your life through constant prayer with other like minded believers is part of the tools and gifting you will need to thrive and succeed when God eventually moves to whatever He has prepared next for you! You need to begin thinking to yourself, "If I have to wait, then I'm going to get praying, constantly, expectantly, and with others around me who share the same passion!!!"

Which leads to the last point, if God has placed you in a waiting room;

FULFILL YOUR CALLING WHILE YOU WAIT

Starting in Acts 1:15, Peter stands up among the disciples, who were numbering about a hundred and twenty at the time. He leads them in a discussion that essentially amounts to them finding a replacement for Judas Iscariot, the

man who betrayed Jesus. They decide that the person selected to fill in spot number 12 has to have been one of the people present during the three-year ministry of Jesus. They cast lots, (an ancient form of finding out God's will), and it lands on a new guy named Matthias, who makes the disciples a dozen again.

The disciples had options here. Though under strict instructions from Jesus to wait in Jerusalem, they could have returned to their day jobs to fill up the time. In fact, prior to Jesus ascending to heaven, Peter, for a brief moment actually quits ministry and returns to his former career as a fisherman. According to John 21:1-3, six more of them decide to join Him. I guess they figured it was pointless to continue in ministry if Jesus was gone. It's not until Jesus shows up in that same account and says, "Hey dude, you wanna catch fish or you wanna win souls for me and change the world" that the guys finally get the message.

Where has God currently placed you? What responsibilities has He currently entrusted to you? It's okay to dream big and trust Him for the next thing. But until He makes it clear and opens doors for you to step into the NEXT thing, stay where you are and fulfill the

duties, responsibilities, and ministry calling He's placed on you.

In some sense, your faithfulness and responsible management in handing the things you're entrusted with in the waiting room, will sometimes determine what will be entrusted to you when God moves you to where He's taking you to next. To him who has been faithful in little things, much will be added.

There is no greater companion in the waiting room than prayer.

Fervent constant prayer accomplishes things beyond what you can physically see with your eye. It doesn't automatically force God to show up when we want Him to, but it does prepare you and position you so you are good and ready to go when HE shows up!

Gathering together to pray constantly and expectantly did not dictate when the Holy Spirit would come. But in God's perfect timing, when the Holy Spirit showed up in Acts 2. Everything had been set in place.

Acts 2:1, "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to

be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” When all was said and done, verse 40 of Acts 2 says, “With many other words Peter warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day... 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

What a story huh?

Listen. When you find yourself in the waiting room, don't focus on the unknown (timing); focus on what's known (holy spirit's power). Pray constantly with a sense of expectation and anticipation. Gather with like-minded believers and pray your hearts out. Fulfill your calling while you wait.

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