

WAITING



# Introduction

There isn't a ton of positive association with waiting. Lines at an amusement park are hardly a picture of joy. Waiting rooms at a hospital are often palpable with anxiety. The time between taking a massive test and hearing the results that determine your future is far from a favorite place to be.

Our culture has done everything it can to eliminate the tension of pause.

From overnight Amazon deliveries, to lightning lane passes, to receiving your lab results on your phone at the same moment your doctor does so that you can Google all the possible meanings and implications without a medical degree-

I start to wonder if maybe our ruthless pursuit to eliminate the tension of waiting has put an unsustainable pressure on the walls of our soul.

If longing is a prominent experience in faith, then it's safe to say that waiting is also an inevitable experience.

Wouldn't it do our souls well if we learned how to hold the tension?

# Introduction

40 days after Jesus resurrected, he ascended into heaven with the clear instructions not to go, but to wait. The 11 waited for 10 days. On the tenth day, while gathered in the upper room for a traditional holiday, the Holy Spirit was breathed upon them. Tongues of fire burned upon their heads and the love of the Father poured out so that ALL people could be part of the family of God at last. The waiting birthed something in the disciples as they learned to depend on Jesus when He wasn't with them in the way they were used to. This day, the day of Pentecost, marked the beginning of something beautiful. Waiting is an active posture to cultivate our souls with God for the work He is about to do. So what do we do when we wait? For the next 10 days, we invite you to join us on a devotional series leading to the day of Pentecost. Each day will reflect on a verse from 1 John and will provide a practical discipline of worship for you to use in any time of waiting

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

2 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

4 We write this to make our joy complete.

***1 John 1:1-4***

# Day 1

Our words carry weight.

This isn't a metaphorical statement. There is literal weight behind the phrases and statements we give our attention to. Weight that can either pull our gaze inward from despair or lift our face to heaven through the relief of grace.

There is weight behind the words shaping our memories. We don't just say "It was a good day", we feel the sunshine written in our memories. The hugs of a loved one lost still brush across our skin when we tell their stories.

There is weight behind the words we hear. As laughter breaks out across the table in the evening, we share in each other's joy not because we know their experience, but because we have known our own.

Our words carry weight; like a bridge drawing pathways of connection out of darkness and to richer joys.

What kind of a bridge are we drawing?

# Day 1

Worship is so much more than a song on a Sunday.

It is the fixing of our attention to the One  
who is truth and the light of life.

It is the declaration of His word, not in manifestation,  
but by proclaiming what we have  
seen and heard and felt  
God's presence to be.

It is the reflection of his light in your life  
over and over and over.

It is our remembrance and our hope.

There is weight in our words.  
Words that connect us to our story with  
God and our stories with one another.

Worship turns our attention to Jesus  
and draws a bridge between heaven and earth  
so everyone to come near too.

# Waiting in action

## WORSHIP

Everything we do and say is an act of worship, the question is what are we worshipping?

Over the next 10 days we are intentionally seeking God through different practices of worship to fix our eyes and hearts on Him.

Today, we are focusing on worship through song, reflection, confession, and declaration of God's truth as the family of God.

We invite you to join us at Living Christ Church for a worship night at 7pm in the Sanctuary. If you cannot join us in person, we invite you to join us online.

Engage in worship with us from wherever you are; we're glad to be with you in Spirit.

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

***1 John 1:1-4***

# Day 2

Silence for some of us is easy.

Silence for some of us is hard.

Oftentimes, when we are met with silence,  
we find ourselves bursting with noise.

Noise from our jobs, our families,  
relationships, check lists and chores.

Silence can be easily filled.

There is so much fighting for our attention.

Before moving forward,  
would you take a deep breath in and exhale out?  
Take a deep breath in, then exhale slowly, releasing the  
noise that's built up inside you.

Find a quiet spot to sit in silence for five minutes  
– anywhere will do.

Once you find your spot, set a timer.

Set a timer and sit, knowing you're with The One  
who knows  
and loves  
and advocates  
for you.

You have a place with Him, always.

# Day 2

Before you begin...

Start your time of silence with a simple prayer.

You can say something like:

"God, I'm here with you,"

or ask God to bless your time:

"God, would silence with you bring delight to my spirit."

There's no goal to meet; it's simply being with God.  
Reflect on the silence that surrounded Jesus' death.

People were upset;

his friends and the disciples were now left alone.

They sat in a waiting period of silence.

They did not have the luxury of  
knowing what was about to come to pass.

The silence of that day led to being blessed by  
The One who continually advocates for you.

That silence led to the one who continually advocates for  
you, and just a few days later, to celebration through his  
resurrection.

Would you choose silence today?

Step into the waiting and know celebration is on the other  
side.

# Waiting in action

## SILENCE

Spend 5 minutes in silence at 3 different points of your day.

You could pair the times up with each meal time.

Come to this page after each time in silence and write a reflection on your time with God.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

***1 John 1:1-4***

# Day 3

When I reflect on the discipline of confession, I'm reminded of the times I would join my catholic friends for mass growing up in New England. I always wondered how each person could find time in the day to break away from work and school to come to the church and bear their soul and confess their transgressions during a lunch break.

We live in a world that promotes activity while on the go, Quick access and pinging notifications just to break our concentration. For some we're able to use vacation time to find comfort and solace in slowing down and quiet reflection. If we're able to find the time we seldom experience full restoration without confession.

Confession is a practice that invites Jesus's forgiveness to work in our lives while ushering in restoration to relationships that might have been affected in our busy lives.

Confession, as presented in 1 John, is our gateway into deeper relationship with Jesus both personally and with each other. If in our walk of faith, we acknowledge and confess our sin, we're then met by Jesus, who has been faithful to us all along. He whose character is marked by justice will restore us from where we have gone astray.

# Waiting in action

## CONFESSION

### **Step 1 - A Time of Silence**

Begin with 2 minutes of silence ...

### **Step 2 - Acknowledge All Anxious Thoughts**

Through prayer, confess the following items. Sometimes listing these can help.

- What are the daily, weekly, monthly demands for my time, attention, and energy?
  
- What activities or things would you prefer your time be used for?
  
- What are the dreams and goals that you've been waiting to see come to fruition?

# Waiting in action

## CONFESSION

### Step 3 - Prayer of Confession and Listening

Pray the following and listen...

...”Lord Jesus, today I make room for you to speak to me. I confess that within these last few days, the thoughts of (insert previous answers) \_\_\_\_\_ have been my priority and single focus. While these are important, I’ve neglected my own sin and how it’s affected our relationship and my relationship with others...

... “Lord, I ask that you reveal to me where I have deviated, made decisions, and acted in ways that hurt the heart of God...

### Step 4 - Prayer for Restoration

... Lord Jesus, I ask you for forgiveness for the ways in which my actions have hurt your heart and for how I’ve distanced myself. Please restore me back into right relationship with you and with \_\_\_\_\_... I ask this in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**End with 2 minutes of silence ...**