

Wait for It...



There was a stop light that I would manage to always catch near my home. It stayed red forever even when no other cars were present. So annoyed, I decided to time it so I could report it. You know how long it was? I'm embarrassed to say. Forty-five seconds. I timed it again later just to be sure. It's amazing how long 45 seconds can seem. I would have sworn it was closer to five minutes. You could have told me it was half an hour, and I would have believed you.

I want what I want, and I want it now. It's just how I am. I'm not very good at waiting. Never have been.

We are in the season of Advent, a season for most Christian denominations celebrate as a time of expectant waiting. It's really a confusing season because we celebrate looking forward to the return of the Messiah, while looking back and celebrating that he already came, while also celebrating that he keeps coming into the hearts of believers. So, which is it that Advent celebrates? The answer is, yes.

Being bad at waiting is very much tied to my addiction. My addiction is about wanting to alter how I feel and most of the time I do not feel good enough. My dysfunctional emotional life has to do with my anxious attachment issues, growing up in a dysfunctional home, and a past filled with trauma. These experiences have made it harder to regulate my internal world. I have feelings that are hard to bear and when those feelings become unbearable, I want to do something to change what's going on inside. That used to mean have a drink or snort some coke. Now it means, work harder, exercise more, eat too much...

Addiction is trying to regulate inner emotions with outer things—outer things that only work temporarily to mask my feelings. We all do it, it's just that some of us do it more than others. Those with addiction don't have the "off button" like so many normal people do. We must work harder at recognizing and reacting appropriately to those unhealthy behaviors that cause us harm in the long run.

One thing they teach in 12-Step programs is, "This too shall pass." It means that no matter what you are going through it will pass and you will be okay. It's a mantra that helps while waiting for painful situations and painful emotions to pass. And they always do.

Whatever you are going through right now, no matter how bad it might be, just remember, this too shall pass. Just wait and trust the Lord and it will be okay. It always will be. Even if that worst possible thing happens and you end up dead? It's still going to be okay. That's God's biggest and best promise of all. Wait for it...

I hope to see you at the Longest Night Service, Thursday, December 21, at 7 p.m. Central Time.

God bless,
Pastor Ed

