

Strangers In This Land [Trust God's Timing] Discussion Guide

Summary

This sermon explores the story of Abraham and Sarah from Genesis, focusing on the theme of trusting God's timing versus trying to force outcomes through our own efforts. Jonathan highlights how Abraham and Sarah, impatient for God's promise of a child to be fulfilled, took matters into their own hands by having Abraham father a child with Hagar, which led to conflict and complications. Despite their failure to wait on God's timing, God remained faithful and eventually fulfilled His promise when Abraham was 100 years old.

The sermon draws parallels to David's experience of waiting to become king and emphasizes that waiting on God is not passive but an active tension of trust.

Jonathan encourages believers to trust God's timing, seek His presence through prayer and worship during seasons of waiting, and remember that God sees us in our struggles. The message concludes with the reminder that God is faithful to His promises and works according to His perfect timing, not our limited human understanding.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather to discuss Your Word today, we acknowledge our tendency to rush ahead of Your timing. We confess that waiting is difficult for us, and we often try to control outcomes rather than trusting Your perfect plan. Open our hearts to receive the lessons You have for us about patience and faith. Help us to see waiting not as a burden but as an opportunity to deepen our trust in You. May our discussion today strengthen our

ability to wait with hopeful expectation for Your promises to be fulfilled in Your perfect timing. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What's something you had to wait a long time for that was worth the wait?

Key Verses

- Psalm 130:5-6
- Genesis 16:1-16
- Genesis 21:1-5
- Psalm 27:1-14
- Ecclesiastes 3:11

Questions

- Can you share a time when you tried to "help God" make something happen instead of waiting on His timing? What was the result?
- In Genesis 16, what were the consequences of Abraham and Sarah's impatience? How do you see similar patterns in your own life when you rush ahead of God?
- The sermon mentions that Hagar called God "El Roi" - the God who sees me. How does knowing that God sees you in your struggles affect how you wait on Him?
- What's the difference between passive waiting and the active waiting described in the sermon? What does active waiting look like in your life?
- Jonathan mentioned that waiting in Hebrew indicates "a deep tension, like twisting or stretching of rope." How does this image help you understand the spiritual discipline of waiting?

- According to Psalm 27, what are some ways we can actively wait on the Lord? Which of these practices do you find most challenging?
- How does our culture's emphasis on immediate gratification make it harder to wait on God's timing? How can we resist this influence?
- The sermon states that "God is faithful despite our failures." How have you experienced God's faithfulness even when you've tried to force things to happen your way?

Life Application

This week, identify one area in your life where you've been trying to force an outcome or rushing ahead of God's timing. Write down this situation and commit it to prayer daily. Each time you feel anxious or impatient about this situation, practice turning it over to God with a simple prayer: "Lord, I trust Your timing in this. Help me to wait with hopeful expectation." At the end of the week, reflect on any changes in your perspective or peace level regarding this situation. Consider sharing with someone how this practice of active waiting has affected your relationship with God.

Key Takeaways

- God's timing is perfect, even when it doesn't align with our expectations or desires.
- Trying to force God's promises to happen in our own way and timing often leads to complications and unintended consequences.
- Waiting on God is not passive but an active spiritual discipline that involves trust, seeking His presence, and prayer.

- God sees us in our struggles and remains faithful to His promises despite our impatience and failures.
- God works outside the constraints of time and human understanding, so we can trust His timing even when it doesn't make sense to us.

Ending Prayer

Lord God, thank You for Your perfect timing in all things. Forgive us for the times we've rushed ahead of You, trying to make Your promises happen in our own strength and timing. Help us to remember that You are El Roi, the God who sees us in our waiting and our struggles. Give us the courage to wait actively through prayer, worship, and seeking Your presence. Strengthen our faith to believe that You are working even when we can't see it. May we walk forward this week with renewed trust in Your faithfulness and perfect timing. In Jesus' name, amen.