

The Potter's Christian Life Center

SERMON NOTES
with Pastor Greg Formey



Delay: God's Waiting Room

Hebrews 11:13

Sunday, February 8, 2026

Most of us know what it feels like to wait on God. Prayers are offered up, Scripture is read that speaks of expectation and hope. All this, and still answers are slow in coming. It can feel like sitting in a waiting room where time stretches and at times minutes seem like hours. In those moments, God can feel hidden, even distant.

The Word of God reminds us that waiting is not a useless endeavor. It is a place where faith is developed.

GOD OFTEN HIDES HIS TIMING WHILE REVEALING HIS FAITHFULNESS.

The God of Israel often worked on a longer timeline than His people expected. While He appeared silent, He was never inactive. His delays had purpose, shaping the hearts of the people and national and world history at the same time.

Hebrews 11:13

"These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth." ESV

Hebrews teaches that many devout believers died without receiving promises. The verb "received" speaks of an outcome they did not experience. Nevertheless they "saw" and "welcomed" the promises by faith, trusting God beyond the visible lack of results. Israel waited centuries between promise and fulfillment. God promised Abraham a land and descendants.

Genesis 12:2

And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing." ESV

The problem is that Abraham lived as a nomad.

Hebrews 11:8-10

8 It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. 9 And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner, living in tents. And so did Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the same

promise. 10 Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God. NLT

In ancient Near Eastern culture, land ownership meant stability and honor. Living in tents signaled dependence, not success. God was teaching Abraham that faith rests in promise, not possession.

Israel later waited over four hundred years in Egypt.

Exodus 12:40–41

The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.” ESV

To the nations, Israel looked forgotten. To God, the timing was exact.

Like bread rising slowly, God's work often happens out of sight. Rushing the process ruins the result. Waiting does not mean nothing is happening.

Where might God be asking you to trust His timing rather than demand immediate results?

GOD USES DELAYS TO DEEPEN FAITH, NOT TO DIMINISH HOPE.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” ESV

The present tense participle “seek” describes ongoing pursuit. Faith pleases God not by quick outcomes but by steady trust. The future-oriented verb “rewards” reminds believers that God's answers may arrive later, yet never fail to come.

Many Jews expected immediate, dramatic deliverance from Rome. Instead, God sent Jesus quietly, born in obscurity.

Galatians 4:4–5

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law. ESV

The phrase “fullness of time” reflects God's hidden calendar. His delay prepared roads, language, and hearts for the gospel.

The Hebrew verb often translated “wait,” also means “to bind together.” This suggests that waiting ties your heart to God's strength.

Isaiah 40:31 - But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength.” ESV

History shows that delayed breakthroughs often carry lasting impact. Movements that mature slowly tend to endure longer because their foundations are deep.

How might God be strengthening your faith through a delay rather than weakening it?

Conclusion

The waiting room of faith is not a place of punishment but preparation. God may hide His timing, yet He never hides His goodness. Scripture shows that delayed answers often serve a greater purpose than immediate relief. When believers trust God in the silence, they join a long line of faithful witnesses who pleased Him without seeing everything fulfilled. The same God who worked in the dark for them is working in the dark for you. Trust Him. He is never late, and He is never absent.