

**OPEN THE CONVERSATION**

Take some time to build relationships with the students: Ask for each student’s high and low from the week.

Today’s RBQ (Relationship Building Question): What’s your favorite thing to do on a snow day?

**INTRODUCTION**

Based on books and tv, I expected quicksand to be a much bigger concern in my life. Over and over, I watched or read about people wandering along in some forest or desert and, suddenly, they find their feet won’t move. They struggle and struggle, but the more they struggle, the further they sink. They’ve been caught in quicksand.

While I’ve never encountered that exact scenario, I’ve certainly felt like my life was stuck in quicksand before. There I was going along just fine. It seemed like God and I were doing well. I had friends and community. School was in a good place. Home was peaceful. And then all the sudden, without warning, it’s like my feet stopped moving and I started sinking. My relationship with God got stale. Conflict with friends began. My grades slipped. Home got tense. And the more I struggled to make things better, the more I seemed to sink.

Have you been there before? Stuck in the muck. What do you do in that space? That’s what David faced as well. He felt stuck without a way out, so he did the only thing he could: he prayed. And what he learned matters massively to us, especially as we begin our year with 40 days of prayer. He learned that no one who waits on the Lord in prayer is going to be disappointed.

***READ Psalm 40:1-5***

1. **What’s something you had to wait patiently for in life? Was it easy or hard to wait? Why?**
2. **What does it look like to wait patiently on God? Why is it so hard?**
3. **What else does David say people turn to instead of God? Why don’t those work out?**
4. **Why does David say it’s still worth it to wait on God?**
5. **Have you ever heard of or seen God answer a prayer for someone else in a crazy way? What did that do for your faith?**

**WRAP UP**

**Put today's lesson into action: What is one thing you can do tomorrow based on this lesson?**
*Ask for any prayer requests, and pray for one another.*

**EXTENDED CUT**

Sometimes we can picture David’s life as pretty charmed. He got to be king after all. But the truth is, he faced a lot of hard moments. He was the runt of his family, shoved off into the role of a shepherd boy. He was doubted by his father and his brothers. He was anointed king, but had to wait years before fully taking the throne over a unified Israel. He faced the consequences of his own sin, and had to endure years of struggle because of it. His own son rebelled against him and tried to usurp his throne. The list could go on. David didn’t have an easy life. But the story we read in his Psalms isn’t misery; it’s hope-formed joy. He knew his God and he trusted him. So over and over again, David models a beautiful example to us of what it looks like to wait patiently on God in prayer, knowing that no one who trusts in him gets disappointed.

**What does it look like to wait patiently on God? Why is it so hard?**

It’s one thing to toss a prayer up to God, but another thing to wait *patiently* on God. Waiting patiently means continually taking your needs and requests to him in prayer, leaving your heart there with him, but then continuing to live confidently in the way he’s called you to, even when the answers don’t come fast or in the way you want. But doing that is difficult. These are some of our deepest felt needs, our desires, or painful situations we desperately want out of. Leaving those in the hands of someone else feels like losing control and any guarantee of change—and it is. The promise isn’t that you won’t have to give up control. The promise is that waiting patiently is the only true way forward.

**What else does David say people turn to instead of God? Why don’t those work out?**

In verse 4, David mentions the “proud” and “those who run after lies”. These are poetic ways of saying people who trust in themselves to answer their own prayers or turn to something else besides God to answer their prayers. Shia LeBeouf in an interview about his decision to accept Christ once remarked that he spent most of his life trusting his own manager skills to make his life good. But he eventually found out what David says here: that doesn’t work out. You won’t be able to control every situation that comes your way. Nor can anything else—technology, governments, other people, other religions, good vibes. None of that can rescue you. They aren’t God.

**Why does David say it’s still worth it to wait on God?**

Because God has done incredible things and has plans for you and me. This is a way of saying God both can and wants to help us. He’s both able and willing. He’s answered plenty of prayers before, and he still can and will answer ours. We might have to wait, but the testimony of time says God never disappoints people who trust in him.

**Have you ever heard of or seen God answer a prayer for someone else in a crazy way? What did that do for your faith?**

David says that many will see what God has done for him and will trust God. Why? Because that’s what a powerful testimony does. When we share the ways God has worked in our lives, it moves the faith of others, the same way that your faith is moved when you hear how God has worked for others. You have testimonies to share—ask God to show them to you and then give you the chance to show others.