

**CONTEXT FOR YOU**

The disciples and other members of the early church had seen the resurrected Jesus and heard him speak. Jesus made a promise to send power for His followers before going to heaven. They were ready to *go*. But then Jesus told them to go to Jerusalem and…wait.

In their waiting, they did the right thing: they started to pray. This time in prayer and waiting positioned them to receive the Father’s promise of the Holy Spirit. For Christians then, and Christians now, to fulfill the call of God in our lives, we must commit to prayer and seeking to live our lives surrendered to the power of the Holy Spirit, just as we see those first Christians doing. When we call out to the Lord and rely on the Holy Spirit’s power, we get to be an active part of the work of the kingdom of God here on earth.

**A Question for You: Why do you think it seems easier to trust our own strength instead of relying on God’s strength?**

**OPEN THE CONVERSATION**

**Imagine this: you’re at the back of a plane and you just landed. Are you the kind of person who waits your turn to stand up or are you the kind of person who has to stand up as soon as you can?**

Someone recently did a survey and found that 70% of people associated waiting in line with negative feelings like boredom, annoyance, frustration, and impatience.

**Why do you think we get so restless and resist waiting even in small situations?**

***READ ACTS 1:7-14***

1. ***What would you have thought if you just saw Jesus ascend to heaven and then the first thing he says is* WAIT?**
2. ***What are some ways waiting often feels like a “waste”? How can we be sure that our moments of waiting are never a waste?***
3. ***Why did the disciples immediately start praying?***
4. ***Why do you think it was important the disciples prayed TOGETHER?***
5. ***Where is it hardest for you to wait on God right now? How can you seek to trust Him more as you do?***
6. ***How might God be using your current waiting to prepare you for something to come?***

**WRAP UP**

**What can you do this week to wait the way Jesus teaches us to here?**  *Ask for any prayer requests, and pray for one another.*

**EXTENDED CUT**

After Jesus’s death and resurrection, He appeared to His disciples over a forty day period. During this time He gave them “convincing proofs” that He was alive. These became important as they spoke as witnesses to His resurrection. He also instructed them about the kingdom of God. Most likely He opened up to them the Old Testament Scriptures about the Messiah. His scriptural interpretation would become important for the Christian preaching to the Jews. Finally, Jesus instructed the disciples to wait for the Spirit in Jerusalem.

Jesus concluded His final instructions with the reminder to wait for the Father’s promise. Following this instruction may have been more difficult than we perceive. These Christ followers were in the place where Jesus had been killed, and they were supposed to stay there and wait. Whatever emotions they felt, being told to wait was likely not what they were hoping for. When you realize you are on the edge of something new, you typically want to get going, so being told to wait can feel impossible. But when the Lord directs us to wait, it is the best thing we can do. Obeying the Lord is always worth it. Even when waiting is hard, it is best to obey Him.

Jesus knew the magnitude of the mission He gave His followers. If they were going to obey His commands, they were going to need power and help from outside themselves. This power comes from the Holy Spirit. To carry out the mission of God in our lives and in our church, we must follow the example of Jesus and rely on the power of the Holy Spirit. ***This concept is countercultural in a time when we are bombarded with messages that tell us the opposite. Self-reliance is celebrated with false ideas that assure people they can do anything, be anything, and achieve anything—if they just tap into the power already inside them. This way of living and thinking goes against the way of Jesus.***

Waiting can stir up anxiety, but it also can bring about excitement and anticipation. Think about things that you eagerly wait for: Christmas, a vacation, an exciting game, a concert, or even a package delivery. You happily wait for things that are valuable to you because you know it is worth it in the end. Nothing will fulfill our longing like the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. He is worth waiting on because He is trustworthy and is always about the glory of God.

God knows what you **need** and often uses waiting as an opportunity to grow your faith. You learn to trust what God wants to do in you as much as what He wants to do through you. He may call you to wait as a preparation for something coming in your life. Instead of complaining about the wait, like the disciples, we can look to what God is doing to prepare us for the next part of His plan. God always keeps His promises, and we can count on that. Every promise of God is good and trustworthy.

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would bring power. What is this power for? This is not power meant to bring glory to any of Jesus’s followers but to continually point back to the truth about Him.

God the Father has established a timeline for the world that is His to know and control. Although we get caught up trying to figure things out or know all the details of the future, it is better to trust that God holds it all together, no matter what we know or don’t. Relying on Him completely as you continue living in the power of the Spirit brings freedom and security. Our call is the same as it was for these first followers: to seek that same filling and anointing so we also can be used in mighty ways for the Kingdom.

Instead of trying to live on our own strength, we surrender to the Spirit. When we do, we will be empowered to live in such a way that we are effective witnesses for the Lord. **We are all witnesses for something.The question is who or what will you be a witness for?**