

Text: Isaiah 40:28-31

Theme: In God's Waiting Room

February 4, 2018

What are some basic characteristics of a waiting room? Whether it's the doctor's office, the dentist's office, or some other waiting room, we typically find the same things - People who would rather be somewhere else, impatient people, and people who are sure they have more important things to do than wait. In today's text, Isaiah speaks about waiting. His encouragement is to wait with a mindset that says, "Waiting is the best thing I can do!"

I. God's plan is that we meet Him in His waiting room, that we wait for and trust in Him. A. But why do we need to wait for God? 1. We need to wait for Him because we are weary. Why do people go to the doctor's or dentist's office? Is it the place where people hang out like the coffee clutch at McDonalds? We go because we've admitted that we have a need. Isaiah writes, "Even youths shall be weary." His point? Weariness is a reality regardless of age. Yet we have a problem. We're slow to admit that we are the weary. In God's waiting room, in His presence, we find the weary. Until we admit that we are weary, we will never be where we need to be.

2. We need to wait for the Lord because we lack self-control. In our Epistle, Paul writes, "Every athlete exercises self-control." As we hear those words, we say to ourselves, "Yep. Sounds like a good plan," but moments later, we do the opposite. We're not denying it's a good plan; we're just choosing not to implement that plan in our lives. Our motto too often is, "I'm doing fine on my own, so who needs to stand in God's presence?" Actually, we do because our way doesn't work; we need to be in God's waiting room because we can't say, "no" when we need to or "yes" when God is waiting for our yes. We need to wait on the Lord because we lack control over our self-control.

3. We need to wait for the Lord because without Him we will wander aimlessly. Paul says in our Epistle, "So I do not run aimlessly. I do not box as one beating the air." Have you ever found yourself walking around, but not really going anywhere in particular? That's what our God calls "walking aimlessly." We have no plan, no goal, no mission. When that occurs, we need to step into God's presence because we are going nowhere productive. And when we are going nowhere, we're off God's path; we're lost in the forest of nothingness. To focus on our mission, to be on our mission every morning, every noon, every night, we need to meet Him in His waiting room.

B. What does God offer us when we meet in His waiting room? 1. He offers us His understanding. Isaiah tells us that God's understanding is unsearchable. God's understanding is so far beyond us that we can't begin grasp the tiniest portion of His understanding. Since that's true, how likely is it that God understood what you faced last week even when you thought He didn't understand or that God's understands what's going on in your mind right now a thousand times better than you do? Because God understands us, we gladly sit in His waiting room, in His presence, so that we can better understand ourselves.

2. He offers us power and strength. "He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might, He increases strength." How do power and strength affect weariness? As we face our weariness, God says, "I offer you power and strength, power to do what you think you cannot do and strength to get up when you fall down, to

accomplish My work as I intended.” God, because of grace, because His love is beyond our understanding, offers us far more than we deserve or imagine. Because we lack power and strength, God says, “Come into My presence. Wait on Me and I guarantee you will not be disappointed.”

3. He offers to renew our strength. Isaiah pens those power-filled words, “But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.” What imagery does the word “renew” create in your mind? For some, it’s restoration, like restoring an old tractor or your favorite car. For others, it’s like shedding our old skin and suddenly we become new again. For the eagle, it’s the process of losing its old feathers in order to grow new feathers. Whatever imagery you choose, God offers to renew you, to re-inspire you, to reinvigorate you, to refocus your life on what really matters. Renewal - it’s a great thing and God is the source of renewal which makes anything possible.

4. He offers us strength to run. Paul in our Epistle encourages us to run in order to obtain the crown. Ever had someone say to you, “You look like you’re dragging today?” Or maybe you were the one speaking those words to someone else. Either way, we know what it’s like to be tired of running, tired of the rat race, tired of being tired. Because we know that side so well, our God invites us into His presence. Like a coach encouraging his team, our Coach says, “Get out there and run your race. You have the power; you have the capability. You have everything you need to make it happen because I am God and I will supply all your needs.”

5. He offers a solution to our weariness. How many of you have gone through the drive-thru at McDonalds and ordered a number 17 - unlimited energy? Obviously, it doesn’t exist. Yet weariness has a solution and it’s found in God’s waiting room. Jesus says, “Come to Me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” Who does He invite? What does He offer? Now, what’s the most important word in that statement? At first glance, it’s the word “rest,” isn’t it? But the most important word is actually the word, “Will.” “I will give you rest.” Not a possibility, a maybe, wishful thinking, or in your dreams. In God’s presence, He offers rest.

6. He offers the ability to soar. There’s a story told of an eagle, who, when it was very small, fell from its nest. A farmer took the little eagle and placed it in with his chickens. As the eagle grew older, he did what the chickens did because he thought he was a chicken. As the story goes, one day the eagle saw a beautiful eagle soaring in the sky and he said to the other chickens, “How I wish I could soar like that,” but the chickens simply replied, “Don’t even think about it because you’re a chicken, not an eagle” and so the eagle spent his entire life thinking he was a chicken. How many of us deep within think we are chickens instead of eagles? In God’s waiting room, in His presence and empowered by Him, you can soar like the eagle. It happens the moment you listen when God speaks to your heart and says, “You were created and I have empowered you to be like the eagle, not like the chicken. Now soar like the eagle!” Amen.