

GOD'S TIMING

Galatians 4:1-7; Luke 1:26-28; Luke 2:1-20

1. God's timing is always perfect.
2. God's timing is according to His schedule, not ours.
3. It takes a humble heart to accept God's invitation and to submit to God's timing.
4. God's timing requires faith and patience on our part.
5. God's timing reveals God's wisdom and results in God's praise.

STUDY & DISCUSSION

1. Where is it now? Where is that “thing” that you could not wait to have? Is it in storage, has it been sold, given away, or completely forgotten? Most of us have paid the price for something that we just had to have and couldn’t wait. We acted impulsively and lived to regret it. What’s your story? Take a moment to tell us how you could not wait and what happened later. What did you learn from the experience?

“Therefore Jesus told them,
‘The right time for me has not yet come;
for you any time is right.’”

— John 7:6 NIV

2. Timing is everything. In John 7:1-9, the brothers of Jesus did not believe in him or his claims. So they tried to talk Jesus into doing things their way, in their time. Jesus told his brothers that the time was not right for him. What is Jesus talking about in this passage?
3. Have your family or friends ever tried to talk you into doing something before you were ready? How did you feel? What did you do?

4. Have you ever been guilty of trying to talk God into doing something on your terms rather than waiting for His timing? What happened?

5. God's timing is just as important as God's will. God wants us to do His will His way in His timing. When you think of doing God's will, do you usually think about God's timing, or do you just jump right in and start doing things?

“There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under heaven.”

— Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NIV)

“There's an opportune time to do things,
a right time for everything on the earth.”

— Ecclesiastes 3:1 (The Message)

6. Read Psalm 31:14-15. Here the psalmist speaks of trusting God and that his time or future is in God's hands. When we trust God we often do not know how God will accomplish what needs to be done or when God will do it. Timing is an important part of learning to trust God. If God did everything for us immediately, we would never grow in our walk with the Lord. How has waiting on the Lord helped you to grow in faith or trust?

7. Read Psalm 20:6-8. Trust is something we learn through experience. God will often lead us to a place or point in time where we have no choice but to trust Him. As we experience God's faithfulness time and time again, we learn not to put our trust in things, or in people or even in ourselves, but to put our trust in God. What person in the Bible stands out in your mind as a person who really learned to trust God? Why?

8. It seems like the more we want something, the harder it is to wait. But God's timing is different than our timing. God has a different perspective. He sees the whole picture, not just what we want. The key to waiting is more about how we handle the wait rather than the amount of time we wait. "Wait on the Lord," is a statement repeated throughout the Bible (ex. Psalm 27:14; 33:20; 37:7; 40:1; Proverbs 20:22) to encourage us to look to the future with confidence, trusting God to help us in His time. For you, what is the hardest part or the biggest challenge with waiting?

9. Read James 5:7-11. James encourages us to wait patiently for the Lord, like farmers do all the time, waiting for their valuable crops to mature, patiently letting the rain do its slow but sure work. And not to complain about each other while we wait. But to consider the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord, and even Job, and how God brought it all together in the end in God's timing. Which one of these three examples encourages you the most in waiting for the Lord: 1) Farmers 2) Prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord, or 3) Job? Why?