

STAYING IN FAITH WHILE YOU WAIT FOR GOD'S PROMISE LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION (WEEK 3)

Memory Verse

"We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what is promised." (Hebrews 6:12 NIV)

Introduction: It's one thing to have faith when God shows you or gives you a promise to claim, it's another thing to stay in faith when the promise seems delayed or even dead. Most miracles in the Bible were a journey. Many, like the children of Israel, start towards the miracle but get off the train before they see the miracle. They draw back their faith and go back to living in fear and defeat. God wants us to imitate those, who by faith and "stick-to-it-ness" persevere to receive the promise.

I. Abraham and Sarah were examples of persevering faith.

(Romans 4:16-22) Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not."

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."

Icebreaker: Tell us how you do with waiting. What is one of the hardest places for you to have patience? What is one thing that stands out to you about Abraham and Sarah's waiting?

II. Where have you experienced a delay in something you have asked for and believe that God has promised to give you? (a prodigal, a calling, a healing, a breakthrough...)

How have you been doing with that? Why is that such a struggle? Have you ever gotten off the train of waiting and believing in faith?

Praise God today is the day you can get back on the train and continue to wait and believe in faith.

III. Which of the following things Abraham and Sarah did or learned to do that you feel you should especially claim, imitate, and learn from?

- A. Dedicate a “bulldog” tenacity in the way you stay committed to believing God for the fulfillment of His promises.
- B. Beware of taking detours (Having Ishmaels-taking things in your own hands) “Many people decide to focus on relieving their pain instead of focusing on claiming and staying in faith for their promises.” **What are some negative results that come from taking things in your own hands?**
- C. Believe the promises are in route, speak your faith, even when it appears that the promise is dead. Some truths that help:
- “He is the God who raises the dead.”
 - “God says there is an “appointed time” for the fulfillment of the promise. (Habakkuk 2:2)
 - “God is working behind the scenes when it seems like nothing is happening.”
 - “If it’s not good God isn’t finished.”
 - “God says the package is in route.”
- D. Recognize before God changes the circumstances, He wants to bring a change in you. Sometimes God not only uses the wait to change the circumstances but uses the circumstances to change us. In the wait we go from a caterpillar to a butterfly. He especially wants to teach us to be content in whatever situation we’re in.
- E. God wants us to take advantage of the waiting times to prepare for the miracle the Lord is bringing.
1. Think of waiting like a farmer. Don’t force things while you are waiting for change; farm things. *“See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop.”* (James 5:7)
 2. Learn how to chill and be still. Waiting is learning to be still and know that He is God.
 3. Focus on what I should believe more than what I should do.

IV. Share with the group where you are waiting for a promise and a miracle in your life. Describe how you will do it differently, in light of this lesson. Commit to praying with each other for the ability to align everything with God’s perfect timing.