

The Delays of Life

by Warren Wiersbe

Delays are a part of God's plan and are meant to fulfill His purpose.

Duration: 37:41

Scripture: Psalm 37:4, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:7, Luke 6:38, Acts 24:23, Romans 5:3-4, Romans 8:28

Topics: "Gods Plan", "Trust And Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of delays in God's plan. He emphasizes that delays are a part of God's plan and serve to fulfill His purposes. The preacher also highlights the importance of trusting in God's promises during times of delay. He uses the example of the apostle Paul, who received promises from God when he faced difficult situations. The preacher concludes by reminding the audience that the will of God is not a rigid machine, but a living body that can adapt to changing circumstances.

Transcript

We read today from Acts chapter 25. We last left Paul in the hands of Felix, and now Felix has been replaced by Festus, and they start the round all over again. Acts chapter 25, I'm going to read the first 12 verses.

Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem. Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul and besought him, and desired a favor against him, that he would send him to Jerusalem, laying weight in the way to kill him. But Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly for there.

Let them therefore, said he, who among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him. And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Caesarea, and the next day, sitting on the judgment seat, commanded Paul to be brought. And when he was come, the Jews who came down from Jerusalem stood round about and laid many grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.

While he answered for himself, neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar have I offended in anything at all. But Festus, willing to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, Will thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

For if I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die. But if there be none of these things of which these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.

Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? Unto Caesar shalt thou go. And God ruled and overruled, and because of this we are here today. May God bless his word to our hearts.

Delay is perhaps one of the most difficult things for us to endure. By nature, most of us are impetuous and impatient, and if the fellow in the car in front of us doesn't start, the minute the light turns green, we honk our horn. If the elevator doesn't show up immediately, we lose our patience.

By nature, we are impatient and impulsive, and we are surrounded by a society that's always in a hurry. And I suppose the most difficult thing for any of us to do is to wait, to be still, and just wait. Now delay is a part of life.

Little children don't realize this, and they think that things should be jumping all the time, and some adults don't realize this, but delay is a part of life. And I don't mean just occasional temporary delays. Some of us had an interesting time Wednesday night in the snowstorm.

I'm talking about some of those long-term delays. There are people listening to me right now who say, Pastor, I've been praying about a job for a long time, and God hasn't answered. A young person says, you know, I've applied to a school, and nothing has come.

Somebody else says, I've been to the doctor for treatments, and we're praying, but somehow nothing's happening. And someone else says, we have a serious problem, and we're just waiting, and we're wondering when is God going to do something. All of us face this matter of delay, and the older we get, the more impatient we become with the delays of life.

In spite of our praying, and in spite of our planning, and in spite of our sacrificing, we come to those points in life, such as Paul came to, where we are delayed. For two years, Paul had to wait in Caesarea. And it was frustrating, because Paul was an apostle.

An apostle is one who is sent with a commission. He's not one who's chained to a soldier, but he was chained to a soldier. It was frustrating.

Paul had a job to do. There were churches to found. There were churches to strengthen.

There were souls to win. He was on his way to Rome, the great capital city of the empire. And from every human point of view, God had made a tremendous mistake by keeping Paul in prison at Caesarea for over two years.

After all, in Acts chapter 12, when Peter was in prison, the Lord delivered him. And when Paul had been in prison in Philippi, it didn't take long for the Lord to get him out. I think you're learning, are you not, that the experiences of life aren't always the same.

Oh, you say, Pastor, I'm going to have surgery again. But I've had surgery before. It won't be the same.

Well, I'm going to do this or that. It won't be the same. Time is a river that keeps on moving.

And when you step into a river, it's never the same as when you step out of it. Now, Paul was delayed for some two years, and I want to learn from him how to handle the delays of life. Somebody may be saying at this point, well, I've never had that problem.

I've pushed the button. The door has opened. I've done this and it's happened.

I've never faced any delays in life. It may be that God can't trust you with waiting. Not having delays in life is no evidence of maturity.

It might be just the opposite. It might be that God is saying, you know, I can't trust you with waiting. I've got to keep you on the treadmill or you'd think you weren't spiritual.

During this two year time that Paul was delayed in Caesarea, he learned some lessons about waiting. And I want to share these lessons with you. Lesson number one, Paul learned, and we must learn if we're going to cope with delay, Paul learned that delays are a part of God's plan.

Delays are a part of God's plan. Now, you and I won't usually plan delays. When we make our plans, we say now at one o'clock, we're going to do this.

At three o'clock, we're going to do that. I recall when my father was very, very ill at the recuperating center down in Lansing. I'd gone down to see him and I had an appointment at the Institute at a certain time.

And I was so happy my schedule was falling right in line. I turned a corner and came on to Dan Ryan and sat and almost missed the appointment and almost lost my sanctification. We make our plans and we don't plan for delay.

We should. We should. We should say now, suppose we have a flat tire.

Suppose there is a traffic jam in Chicago. You don't usually say, suppose there is a traffic jam. We live in the age of jets and we don't plan for delay.

We live in the age of the digest. Get it quickly. Get it now.

We live in the age of TV dinners. We can have it right now, instant potatoes. We don't plan for delay, but God does.

Delays are a part of God's plan. Now you don't even have to read the Bible to find that out. Just open your eyes and look at nature.

When God made this world, he built in certain delays. You can grow mushrooms overnight. You can't grow oaks overnight.

You can paint butterflies, but you can't manufacture butterflies. You'd think God would have had more sense when he started manufacturing butterflies. First they have to be a little upholstered worm and then it has to crawl into a cocoon.

That's an awfully slow way to come out with a butterfly, but it's the best way. Or let's graduate from butterflies to babies. Nine whole months.

You see, God has built into nature certain delays. If you and I keep going at the same frantic pace, we're going to fall apart. But when I read my Old Testament, I discover that God plans for delays.

Moses was going to deliver Israel from Egypt and he had the plan all worked out. God said, Moses, you're 40 years too soon. Sorry.

And he put them off into the desert to take care of the sheep for 40 years. What a delay. Joseph wanted to become a ruler and God wanted him to become a ruler.

But at the age of 17, Joseph wasn't fit to be a ruler. And so God spent the next 13 years equipping him. And it took 13 years delay for Joseph to become a ruler.

And then a few more years delay to deliver his people from hunger. And I think of David when David was just a young lad, perhaps 15 or 16, taking care of the sheep. He was anointed to be king.

He didn't become king immediately. All the delays that he went through, hiding in caves, taking his little army and escaping by night, living by his sword. It took several years before David got on that throne of Israel.

And when I move into the New Testament, I discover that Jesus came and was born into this world. And it took many centuries when the fullness of the time was come. Wouldn't you have sent the Savior a long time before? No, God was delayed.

God's people were crying out, how long? Oh, God, how long? And he said, just wait a little while. I notice in my Lord's ministry here on Earth, he planned for delay. He sent his disciples out across the lake in that ship and he knew the storm was coming.

And that storm came sweeping down upon them, a very unusual thing. And these men were frightened. And Jesus just waited and waited.

He could see it all. He was there on the mountain praying and he could see it, but he waited until it was the darkest hour of the night and all of their strength was gone. Then he came walking on the water and he rescued them.

And I imagine the first thing they said to him was, why didn't you come sooner? One day, a telegram arrived from Mary and Martha. Behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. Lazarus was sick.

And the Bible says, and Jesus waited. He just tarried until finally Lazarus died. And when Jesus finally showed up at Bethany, Martha said to him, and so did Mary, Oh, if only you'd been here, our brother wouldn't have died.

The delays of our Lord Jesus. Jairus came to Jesus and said, my daughter's about to die. Won't you come down and heal her? He said, I'll come.

And while he's walking along, he feels someone touch him. Power goes out. He stops and says, who touched me? And Jairus's blood turned cold and his heart stopped beating.

He said, Lord, don't stop. Then they came and said, don't trouble the master. Your daughter's dead.

Oh, he delayed. Jesus said, now don't be afraid. And he went down and raised the girl from the dead.

You see, God plans for delays. And God's delays are appointments, not accidents. You say, well, here I am.

I plan to do this and now I have to wait. I'd made these decisions and now I have to wait. Some accident? No, an appointment.

God's delays are not interruptions. They are intermissions. Would you remember that? You go to a concert and at a certain point it says intermission.

They planned on that because you've got to tune the instruments and you've got to get some water and you've got to give people a chance to relax a little bit. The intermission is not an interruption. And God's delays are not interruptions.

They are intermissions. He's saying, let's stop now. There are some things I want to do.

Lesson number one, delays are a part of God's plan. Lesson number two, delays fulfill God's purpose. Just as the orchestra has an intermission at the concert and they tune up their instruments and the conductor is able to go change shirts and wash up a little bit because he's been working hard up there holding that heavy baton and leading that orchestra, so the Lord knows when you and I need to have an inspired intermission.

Oh, don't you just love to keep on going? Ah, but you can't do it. If the violinist keeps those violin strings constantly taught, it won't work out so well. They have to loosen them up a little bit.

If the archer keeps the bow, the string of the bow, constantly tight, he loses something. When he's through using it, he takes that cord off and he lets it rest. And so with God, delays fulfill God's purposes.

Now, God had a purpose for Paul. We hear this statement so often it becomes a cliché. God has a plan for your life.

You ever heard that? We say, oh, I believe that. Sure, but it's true. It's just so wonderfully true.

God has a plan for our life. And God had a plan for Paul. God's plan for Paul was to go to Rome.

Now, as I read between the lines here and I pray and I meditate, I've come to the conclusion, as you know, that God did not intend for Paul to go to Jerusalem. Paul wanted to go to Jerusalem. He said, I'm burdened to go to Jerusalem and then to Rome.

And when he gave his speech to the Ephesian church leaders, he said, all I know is that the God, the Holy Spirit is telling me that in every city bonds and afflictions await me. Paul got to Caesarea. That's where Philip, the evangelist, lived.

That's wonderful to have Christian friends all over. Jesus said, if you give up your father and mother and brothers and sisters, I'll give you fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters. You can't count them.

This is true. And Paul got to Caesarea and Philip opened the door and Paul moved in. And I think God wanted Paul to stay in Caesarea.

He did not want Paul to go down to Jerusalem. But you remember, Paul went and Paul was arrested. And you know what happened after he was arrested? They took him back to Caesarea.

That's where he should have stayed to begin with. But now he was there, not as a free man, but as a prisoner. And God was going to rule and overrule.

And God came to Paul in the dark of the night. Jesus appeared and said, don't be afraid, Paul. You've witnessed for me at Jerusalem.

You're going to witness for me at Rome. That's all Paul needed. Paul knew they'd never kill him.

Paul knew they couldn't do any harm to him. Jesus said, Paul, you're going to go to Rome. That was God's plan for Paul's life.

I want to add this. I have said this three or four times recently. I'm going to say it again.

Please do not believe that the will of God is a machine and that if one or two parts of the machine cease to work, the whole thing falls apart. Many people have this idea. I have students coming to me and they say, oh, pastor, I'm through.

I have to drop out of school. Well, how come? Oh, I did this and I disobeyed the Lord and this is what happened. The will of God is not a dead machine where parts have to work together.

The will of God is a living body. And in your body, when one part isn't functioning properly, the other parts compensate for it. You knew that.

And the will of God is this way. And God said, Paul, you should never have gone to Jerusalem, but I'm going to overrule what you've done. When God cannot rule, he overrules.

And I'm going to see to it that you get to Rome. But meanwhile, for two years, I want you to wait here in Caesarea. Why? What were God's purposes? May I suggest some purposes for delay? Number one, Paul needed to rest.

Paul had been through beatings, travelings, perils in the city, perils in the sea. He had faced enemies, believers and unbelievers. He had been out starting churches.

Paul wasn't a strong man. Paul was really able to sympathize with the psalmist who said he knows our frame. He remembers that we're dust.

That's all we are. Dust. Some of us live like we're steel.

Just keep on going, going, going. God says, now, Paul, if you keep those strings too tight, it'll kill you. I want you to rest a little bit.

You see, the delays of God are not delays of inactivity. They are delays of preparation. The life of Hudson Taylor has always been a challenge to me.

I've recommended that you read it. I hope you followed my recommendation. God's Man in China is the book you want to get written by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor.

Several times in Hudson Taylor's life, God just took him and, it seemed, put him on a shelf. He was in London, so burdened to get back to China, and God wouldn't let him go. He got sick.

And yet during those months in London, God prepared him for the greatest years of his ministry. And I find this has happened to many of God's servants, many of God's people. Paul just needed to rest.

Somebody says, well, the devil doesn't take a vacation. There are two answers to that stupid statement. One of them is the devil is not my example.

Jesus said, come ye apart and rest a while. And the second answer is the devil doesn't have a body. He doesn't know what it is to have tired bones and tired muscles and headaches.

And God just looked down at the apostle Paul and said, you know, you've been working so hard. I want to give you two years in Caesarea. I'll protect you.

I'm going to keep you in the Caesarea Hilton. And you know what? You won't even have to pay the bill. Rome is going to pay for it.

You can't beat that. He just gave him a delay for physical rest. I wonder if some people don't need that.

Sometimes the scripture says he maketh me to lie down. And I hope if the Lord has to make you lie down, it's not in a hospital. There's a second reason why our Lord gave him this delay.

It was for his own spiritual refreshment. Now, for four years, I was in an itinerant ministry. I don't envy those who are in an itinerant ministry, a different bed every night or every week.

Some of you missionaries know what I'm talking about and preaching in different places. You just get acquainted with somebody and you have to leave. This was this was Paul's life.

The longest he stayed anyplace was Ephesus. And that ended in a riot. He was there for three years.

Then there was a riot. He stayed for 18 months in Corinth. But usually it was two weeks here, three months there.

And you just get your just get your heart wrapped up in somebody else. You have to leave. God said, Paul, I want you to stay here in Caesarea.

It's Gentile territory. This is where Cornelius was saved, you know, and this is where Philip lived. And I just want you to get better acquainted with some of the saints here in Caesarea.

I read that the apostle Paul in chapter 24 and verse 23 was able to receive his acquaintances and they could come and minister to him. This word minister in Acts 24, 23 is one of the beautiful little words that Luke uses. It's not the usual word for minister.

It's not the usual word for servant. It's the word for the fellow on the boat who was on the lowest level and pulled the oars. That's the word there, the under rower.

Here was the apostle Paul being ministered to by these saints in Caesarea, and they were the under rowers. You'd think Paul wasn't getting any place. They were going someplace.

They were rowing away, plowing away. God was accomplishing his purposes. You know, sometimes God has to bring a parenthesis into our lives just for spiritual refreshment.

Paul had been giving, giving, giving, giving. Now he's going to do some getting. Nothing wrong with that.

Jesus said, given it shall be given unto you. Physical rest, spiritual refreshment. I'll make another suggestion to you.

Paul gave, God gave to Paul this time of delay to give him a chance to practice what he preached. That's an awful thing for a preacher. Something comes to our lives.

We've been preaching to other people and then we've got to practice it ourselves. Paul had written to the Romans in anticipation of his arrival, and in the book of Romans he says so much about one subject, patience. Patience.

Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience. And over and over again in the book of Romans, the letter to the Romans, he talks about being patient in trial, and now he's having to practice it. You know, sometimes the Lord puts us aside and gives us a period of delay just to give us a chance to practice the word of God.

Something else was true. During this period of delay, the apostle Paul was fulfilling one of the purposes for his ministry. You know, when God called Paul and saved him, he said, this man is going to witness to rulers and kings.

When God spoke to Ananias and said, go and meet Saul of Tarsus and open his eyes and get him baptized, and Ananias said, oh, I know him. He's a persecutor. God says, you do what I tell you because he is my chosen vessel, and he's going to witness before kings and rulers, and that's what he did for two years.

I've never witnessed to a king. I've had occasion to say a word about the Lord to some people in high places, but not very high. The Lord's never given me a ministry on stilts.

I've always had the privilege of feeding the sheep, not the giraffes, but I thank God for people who can get to high places. You know, mayors and governors and kings and presidents and senators need the gospel just like everybody else, maybe more, and here was Paul for two years chained to a Roman soldier. What if you were that soldier? Imagine being chained to a fellow who wrote one day, pray without ceasing, and one by one, Paul was winning these soldiers to the Lord.

They'd go back to, this happened in Rome. When Paul got to Rome, he was chained to a Roman soldier and he writes to the Philippians, all the saints salute you, especially those in Caesar's household. How do you ever get saints in Caesar's household? You get chained to some soldiers and you win them to the Lord and they go back and they witness.

You've heard of chain smokers. Paul was a chain preacher and he was winning people to Christ. Oh, you say, pastor, I've got to go into the hospital.

It's going to take three weeks or, you know, I don't have work. And wait a minute. Did you ever stop to think that during this period of delay, you might reach some people for Christ you could never reach otherwise? Delays are part of God's plan and delays fulfill God's purposes.

There's a third lesson. Delays demand that we trust God's promises. I've noticed that whenever Paul got into a tight spot, the Lord gave him a promise.

Does he do this for you? I hope he does. I hope when you get into a tight spot, you don't give up. You go open your Bible and let God give you a promise.

When things were rough in Corinth, oh, they were so hard. Paul was ready to leave Corinth and Jesus came and said, now you stay here. I'm with you.

Don't be afraid. They aren't going to hurt you. And I have many people in this city.

And he stayed for 18 months and built a church. When he was arrested and they dragged him before the Sanhedrin and a riot broke loose, they took him back to his confinement. And the next night Jesus showed up and said, Paul, don't be afraid.

You've witnessed for me in Jerusalem. You're going to witness for me at Rome. And when Jesus says something, it happens.

And so all during these two years, Paul wasn't frustrated. Paul didn't bite his fingernails off. He didn't pace the floor.

He didn't complain. You don't find him. We have no record of any letter that Paul wrote where he said, oh, I'm here and I wish I weren't here.

He just simply said, I'm waiting for God's time to fulfill his promise. You know, the trouble with us when delays come is we complain. Paul wrote to the Philippians, I have learned in whatsoever state I am there with to be content.

Now that word content does not mean complacent. That word content means contained. I have learned in whatsoever state I am there with to be contained, to be self-contained.

I have within me all I need for contentment. What is it? Well, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Now, somebody listening to me right now has had to wait, wait on a job or wait on school or some physical affliction or some emotional problem.

And you've been waiting and you've been praying. Have you laid hold of God's promises? The thing that kept Paul going during two years of so-called parenthesis in his ministry was the fact that Jesus said to him, I'll see you in Rome. Meanwhile, I'm staying right with you here.

I'm going to get you to Rome. It won't cost the church a cent. Caesar is going to take care of it.

I was just thinking the other day, I wonder what scriptures Paul meditated on when, when he was waiting there, the devil would come and say, oh, you're the great apostle Paul. Why aren't you out apostling? Oh, if you, if you had been obedient, you wouldn't be here. And then the word gets to the apostle Paul that the Jewish leaders are plotting against him.

They want to kill him. Can you imagine that? His own countrymen want to kill him. I wonder if Paul didn't sometimes turn to Psalm 37, fret not thyself because of evildoers.

Neither be thou envious of the workers of iniquity. Commit thy way unto the Lord. Trust also in him.

He shall bring it to pass. Trust in the Lord and do good. Delight thyself also in the Lord.

He shall give thee the desires of thy heart. I'm sure the apostle Paul many, many times meditated on Psalm 37 and God just quiet at his heart. Oh, I've had times in my life when I have taken my little prayer list and I've said, Lord, I've been praying about this.

There it is all these years. When are you going to do something? And I can just hear the Lord say to me, just commit it to me. Roll your burden on the Lord.

Don't fret. Don't worry. Don't get impetuous.

Don't get impatient. Don't get overheated. I'm taking care of it.

You see, Paul couldn't complain about being there because he had written Romans 8, 28. And we know that all things are working together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. What is his purpose? That we might be conformed to the image of his son.

Delays demand that we trust God's promises. Now, says somebody, if Paul really trusted God's promises, would he have appealed to Caesar? Why, of course, that's why he did it. You see, every Roman citizen who had not been tried in a lower court had the privilege of appealing to Caesar.

Now, if you've been tried in a lower court, that was a, you couldn't do it. But anyway, every Roman citizen could appeal to Caesar. Now, Jesus Christ had said to Paul, I'll see you in Rome.

That's where Caesar is, by the way. And so when they took Paul before this council and Paul knew that they were plotting to kill him, he simply stood up and said, I will stand before Caesar's judgment seat. I appeal to Caesar.

And any Roman citizen who said those words, I appeal to Caesar, that automatically took everything out of the governor's hand. From then on, he was in the hand of Caesar. You say, well, it was very simple for Paul to do that, was it? Suppose Caesar didn't pass his case.

Suppose Caesar found him guilty. Paul could be killed. When Paul stood up and said, I appeal to Caesar, he was laying his life on the altar for you and me.

You know why God wanted Paul in Rome? Because in Rome, there were Christians who needed his ministry. And in Rome, he was going to write Ephesians, for by grace are you saved through faith. Philippians, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Colossians, and ye are complete in him. Second Timothy was going to come out of Rome and Philemon was going to come out of Rome. And we're here today because Paul went to Rome and then the gospel moved across Europe.

And we're Christians today because of this. Oh, it wasn't easy for a man to stand up and say, I appeal to Caesar. He was saying, I lay my life on the altar.

He's so much like the Lord Jesus. You see, Luke wrote two books, the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. In the gospel of Luke, it's Jesus going up to Jerusalem to die.

In the book of Acts, it's Paul going up to Rome to die. Delays demand that we trust God's promises. If you're waiting and you're getting nervous, get a hold of the promises of God.

He that has begun the good work is going to complete it. He is the Alpha and the Omega. He's the beginning and the end.

There is no unfinished business on God's agenda. You're going through an intermission. One of these days, the conductor will step on the podium and he'll start the harmony once again and the symphony of life will begin and you'll be better for it.

You're going through a parenthesis. Perfectly all right. One of these days, the one who's writing our lives will pick up his pen and continue the next sentence and it'll be just right and you'll be prepared for it.

Delays are a part of God's plan. Accept them. Don't fight them.

Delays fulfill God's purposes. Just trust him. Delays demand that we trust God's promises.

Get a hold of them. And this, my friend, includes the greatest delay of all. You say, what's the greatest delay of all? The greatest delay of all is the one that Peter wrote about when he said, where is the promise of his coming? Why hasn't the Lord come back? Lo, all these many years he's coming, he's coming, but he's not here.

That's the greatest delay of all. You know why Jesus Christ is delaying his coming? This delay is a part of his plan. He knows when he's coming back.

This delay is fulfilling his purposes. This delay demands that we lay hold of his promise. He's going to come back.

You know why the Lord is delaying his coming? Peter tells us why he's delaying his coming. You know why. The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish.

You know why Jesus didn't come back yesterday? Because you weren't ready. That's why. And for those of you here today who don't know Christ as your Savior, you had better get ready.

We Christians don't worry about delays. Whether the Lord delays his coming for another 40 years, I don't know. I'm not worried about it.

I'm believing his promise. I'm trying to fulfill his purpose, and so are you. Ah, but those of you who don't know the Savior, what about it? The Lord has delayed his coming that he might save you.

For if he had come yesterday, you weren't ready. Now, if you hear my voice right now and you've never trusted the Lord Jesus Christ, you'd better trust him. Because one of these days, the greatest delay of all, the most patient delay of all, will end.

Oh, think of how much the Lord has had to endure waiting to come back. Hebrew says he is up in heaven expecting, waiting until his enemies be made the footstool of his feet. And my Lord has died to purchase his bride.

Ah, but the wedding hasn't taken place yet. Yes, it's costing him something to wait. It's costing you something.

Your heart gets harder. Your eyes get blinder. Your will becomes more paralyzed.

I plead with you today, give your heart to Jesus Christ and let him save you. Gracious Father, help us to learn from the delays of life. Forgive us for our impatience.

Forgive me for my impatience. Lord, we don't want to be complacent and do nothing. We want our delays to be filled with blessing.

And we have learned that your delays are not denials, that your postponements are not denials. We pray, Father, help your dear people who are tempted to be impatient to lay hold of your word and to accept the delays of life for the purposes you have in mind. And Father, we pray for those here who don't know the Savior, for those who hear my voice now who ought to hear your voice.

Oh, I pray, may they trust Christ and come and be saved. For it's in the Savior's name that we pray. Amen.

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