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Patiently Waiting

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Patiently Waiting

Abstract

"Use your moments of waiting to train your heart to wait for the Lord, and put your hope in him."

Posting about anticipating help from the Lord from *In All Things* - an online journal for critical reflection on faith, culture, art, and every ordinary-yet-graced square inch of God's creation.

<http://inallthings.org/patiently-waiting/>

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Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

Patiently Waiting

 [inallthings.org/patiently-waiting/](https://allthings.org/patiently-waiting/)

Alexis Kreun

Daily Scripture Texts

[Psalm 130](#)

[Ezekiel 37:1-14](#)

[John 11:1-45](#)

[Romans 8:6-11](#)

A song of ascents.

¹ Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;

² Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

³ If you, Lord, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.

⁵ I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.

⁶ I wait for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

⁷ Israel, put your hope in the Lord,
for with the Lord is unfailing love
and with him is full redemption.

⁸ He himself will redeem Israel
from all their sins.

I think I can speak for most Americans when I say that we're bad at waiting. As an international student advisor, one of the first things I teach in orientation is that Americans take time very seriously and don't like to wait. In many cultures, life is organized around the idea of events and relationships, and time is not so crucial or controlling. For example, instead of the bus leaving at 4:30, the bus leaves when it's full. Instead of the party starting at 7:00, the party starts when everyone gets there. Time is viewed as flexible, ongoing, a renewable resource that never expires. However, in U.S. culture, time is a commodity, something that can be bought, sold, saved, or lost. We have common expressions like "Don't waste my time" and "Time is money." Henry Ford, the developer of the automotive assembly line, said that "Time waste differs from material waste in that there can be no salvage." My father, the enforcer of the get-ready-for-school assembly line, would always remind us kids that "If you're on time, you're late, and if you're early, you're on time!" We're often told that we're in a "race against time," suggesting that time is the enemy, the bad guy, and that we have to beat it! Time rules our lives, and we're constantly waging a war against waiting.

Since childhood, we are inundated with the idea that waiting is bad, and that everything should always happen as quickly as possible. Whenever we do need to wait for something, we grow impatient and feel like we have been wronged. We write complaint letters, sigh and twiddle our thumbs, roll our eyes in exasperation. I'm reminded of the

popular animated movie “Zootopia”, in which a humorous scene of the sloths working in the DMV plays off of Americans’ shared aversion to long lines, slow answers, and inefficient processes. I think of my own personal experiences waiting in government offices, at doctor’s appointments, in airports. Waiting, in my mind, has a negative connotation. It implies frustration, disappointment, and despair.

However, in Psalm 130, we are given the image of waiting with hope! Waiting attentively, like a watchman waiting for the sunrise to break over the horizon. Waiting with our whole being, like a dog waiting for his owner to walk through the door, tail wagging excitedly and body shivering with anticipation. It’s important to realize that waiting is not inherently bad, and that during our time of waiting, God is molding, shaping, and refining us to become more like him. So, the next time you’re checking your clock and starting to feel anxious, instead of imagining your time as money, think of that time as practice. Use your moments of waiting to train your heart to wait for the Lord, and put your hope in him.