

"When God Delays" Theme: *God's delays are never God's denials.*

Key Scriptures

- **Habakkuk 2:3 (NKJV)** –
 - **Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV)** –
 - **John 11:5-6 (NKJV)** –
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Opening

Have you ever prayed and wondered why God wasn't answering? Perhaps you've prayed for:

- Healing
- A job
- Restoration in a relationship
- Financial help
- A child to come home to Christ
- Freedom from addiction

The silence can feel overwhelming. Yet throughout Scripture, God often worked **through delays rather than despite them.**

A delay is not proof that God has forgotten you.

Sometimes God is preparing **you**.
Sometimes He is preparing **the situation**.
Sometimes He is preparing **others**.

God never wastes waiting.

Scripture 1 – Habakkuk 2:3

"For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay."

The prophet Habakkuk wanted answers immediately.

God's response wasn't: *"I'll explain everything."*

Instead He said, *"Wait."*

Waiting is one of the hardest parts of faith because we naturally want control. God works according to **His appointed time**, not ours.

Notice:

The verse doesn't say: *"Maybe it will happen."*

It says: *"It will surely come."*

God's timetable may seem slow, but it is always perfect.

Discussion Question: Have you ever looked back and realized that something you wanted sooner would have actually hurt you?

Scripture 2 – Isaiah 40:31

"but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint."

Notice something interesting. The verse doesn't say waiting makes us weaker. It says waiting renews us.

God uses waiting rooms to build:

- Patience
- Faith
- Humility
- Dependence
- Character

Waiting isn't wasted time. It's training time. Sometimes God delays the answer because He's preparing us to handle the blessing. Imagine giving a sixteen-year-old the keys to a race car. The car isn't bad. The timing is. God knows when we're ready.

Scripture 3 – John 11:5-6

"Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days,"

So He waited. That almost seems backwards. If He loved him... Why delay?

Because Jesus wasn't just planning a healing. He was planning a resurrection. Everyone wanted Jesus to arrive sooner. Jesus wanted something greater. Sometimes we're asking God to fix something. God is preparing to completely transform it. The delay wasn't because Jesus didn't care. It was because He had something better planned.

1. Delays grow our faith.

Faith isn't trusting after the answer. Faith is trusting before it comes.

Ever wondered why we say grace and give thanks, before a meal? It's because we are thankful that God provided and whatever that meal is. It will bless us to do God's work.

2. Delays reveal our hearts. Waiting often exposes:

- Fear
- Doubt
- Impatience
- Pride

God lovingly works on these areas while we wait.

3. Delays often protect us.

We don't know what God sees. He sees tomorrow. He sees next year. He sees dangers we'll never know existed.

Many unanswered prayers later become reasons to thank God.

4. Delays make the miracle greater.

Imagine if Jesus had arrived before Lazarus died. People would have said, "He healed another sick man." Instead, four days later...

Everyone knew only God could receive the glory. Sometimes God delays because He intends to receive greater glory.

Questions for Reflection

- What prayer have you been waiting on?
- Have you confused God's delay with God's absence?
- What might God be teaching you during this season?
- Can you trust God's heart even when you can't see His hand?

Closing Challenge

This week, every time you're tempted to say, *"God, why are You taking so long?"*

Replace it with, *"Lord, help me trust Your timing."*

Remember:

God has never been late. Not once. He has always arrived exactly when His purpose required.

Give each person a **clock bookmark** with the words: **"God is never late. His timing is always perfect."**

Encourage them to keep it in their Bible as a reminder that while they may be waiting, God is still working.