

## **WAIT ON THE LORD!**

### **Psalm 62**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

There are two things I learned to love growing up as a kid: amusement parks and roller coasters. Less than an hour from where I lived outside of Cleveland, OH was Sandusky, also known as the roller coaster capital of the world! Now if you don't already know what I'm referring to, it's Cedar Point! Cedar Point is home to 18 world-class roller coasters. The riding experiences are so diverse, there's a coaster for every thrill seeker. One particular ride is Top Thrill Dragster, which accelerates you from 0 to 120 mph in less than four seconds. It then shoots you straight up to 420 feet and then straight down spiraling as you go! The ride is only 17 seconds long, but it's a sensation that cannot be matched! I learned from a young age to be a hands-up all the way rider! I wanted to feel the sensation of being pulled out of my seat by the movements of the ride.

Now I know down here in Tampa, FL I'm not talking to thrill-seeking infants. With Busch Gardens a few minutes away and Universal Studios, Islands of Adventure, and Disney about an hour away, you all know some good rides, too! Some of us love these heart-pumping adventures and others do not. But while we may not all agree these extreme rides are exciting and enjoyable, there is something we all do agree on: we hate waiting in lines!

Few things are worse than waiting two-plus hours for a ride that lasts a couple minutes...and then doing that three or four more times in one day. Trust me, I've been there. I learned quickly to never go to amusement parks on the weekend. John Tauer, a professor at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN and a blogger for Psychology Today, has researched the psychology of waiting in line and is aware of how frustrating it can be. In doing his research, he even flew down to the Magic Kingdom to have a personal experience in long waits!

He says, *“Waiting in lines is common in some parts of Europe, but Americans — with our fixation on time management and obsession with instant everything — are much less tolerant about such things. When we get stuck in a line, even at the 100+ flavor red Coca-Cola machine, we tend to take it personally.”*

Waiting too long in a line is often perceived as a violation of our right to manage and control our time.

He goes on to say, *“The notion that we should be able to meet our needs without waiting too long, coupled with the reality that many of us get a bit irritated or anxious when we have to wait too long for something we think we need or want, is so deeply and culturally ingrained in us we come to believe it’s ‘natural’ to not want to wait longer than we think we should.”*

We all have felt this way during this pandemic season. It has been a challenge for America to slow down and attempt “waiting out” this virus till it dies. We are inclined toward a quick resolution! In the culture we live in, we all from time to time fall victim to this mindset. ***But the unfortunate implication is that it can carry over into our relationship with God.*** When everything else is instant, we also expect instant spiritual growth, instant answers to our confusion, instant defeat of temptation, instant spiritual direction, and instant answers to prayer. ***Rather than living by faith, trusting a known God with our unknown resolutions, we allow the influence of our cultural training to steer us toward quick results that often lack the power and blessing of God! (repeat)***

Coming back to our research professor from earlier, he concludes, *“Waiting is often reduced to a cost-reward ratio: Do we consider what we’re waiting for to be worth the time spent doing so?”* This is the heart issue we are diving into today: ***Is God worth waiting for?*** We will look at Psalm 62 for answers. Our Big Idea that flows from this passage is this: ***In the midst of confusion, chaos, or conflict, Christians must wait on the Lord.***

## BACKGROUND

Before we dive into the text itself, it's helpful for us to understand the background that motivated its writing. We can see at the top that it's a psalm of David. In v.3-4 we are clued into the setting. It says, *"How long will all of you attack a man to batter him, like a leaning wall, a tottering fence? They only plan to trust him down from his high position."* → So here we can conclude that David wrote this while in his "high position," King of Israel. Yet we know there were multiple moments when his enemies tried to take him down from this position. The most notable is when his own son, Absalom in 2 Samuel 15-19 temporarily overtook David's throne! Behind David's back, Absalom built an army of loyal constituents who found an opportune time and chased David away! David had to flee to the Mount of Olives where it says in 15:30 as he ascended the mountain, he was weeping, barefoot, and covering his head. During this trying time of utter betrayal, David, more than ever, needed to wait on the Lord!

Now this was a lesson he was already well-versed in as we can already see in v.1. There is no wavering in his heart or lack of confidence in what he was to do. He learned this while being chased down by King Saul before he became the next king himself. David had every opportunity to kill Saul, but chose to not take the matter into his own hands. ***He chose instead to wait on the Lord.***

## BODY

This idea of waiting can be easily misunderstood. Look at what David says in v.1: *"For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation."* He says the same thing again in v.5: *"For God alone my soul waits in silence."* This sounds to me like inactivity and even passivity. Are we ever told to just sit back and passively watch God do everything for us? Well, there are a few examples from Scripture that seem to promote this.

One is when the Israelites were on the brink of crossing the Red Sea. The Egyptian army was fast on their tracks and there seemed to be nothing they could do. Yet this is when God made clear the work he would do in splitting the sea in half. Moses responded to the people in Exodus 14:13-14, *“Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”* There’s that word again: “silent.” While it seems like the Israelites are to do nothing, we do see that Moses tells them to fear not and to stand firm. Even more, up until this one moment, the people have acted in faith by following Moses out of Egypt all the way to the edge of the Red Sea. ***There has been much activity that has brought them to this point when God acts!***

***What we find is that it’s often our obedient activity in what we do know that leads to God’s activity on our behalf.*** Thus, “waiting on the Lord” is not a passive experience. ***To “wait on the Lord” means “to continue in confident expectation that God will do what only He can do.”*** There are moments in our lives when in our following after the Lord we are led to obstacles that look like the Red Sea. Our responsibility in that moment is not to passively sit. Likewise, on the other end of the spectrum, our responsibility is not to strive in fear in our own strength to quickly build a boat. ***Rather, our job is to continue in confident expectation that God will do what only He can do!***

This doesn’t come naturally to us. We want quick solutions to our obstacles. So let’s use Psalm 62 this morning to guide us in understanding how Christians can wait on the Lord and why that is the case. With each statement I will also present the temptation we all face in the midst of waiting.

How do Christians wait on the Lord? ***They trust in God because He alone saves us.*** Notice in v.1-6 how often the word “alone” is used. v.1 ***“For God***

*alone my soul waits; v.2 "He alone is my rock and my salvation; v.5 For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence; v.6 "He only (same Hebrew word), is my rock and my salvation."* How can David confidently conclude that in God alone his soul would wait? **Because he has already confidently concluded that in God alone is his salvation!** In the situation before David, on the run from his son, Absalom, he knew only God could deliver him; only God could be a fortress that could protect his life and restore him to his position. Thus, David experienced waiting on the Lord by trusting in God alone because he alone saves.

***This requires us in our waiting to know the difference between what God has called us to do and what God alone can do.*** Continuing on in what God has called us to do is simple obedience. It's knowing we are to be people of faith when we are afraid; we are to be people who share our faith when given an opportunity; we are to always be people of love even when we sense a root of bitterness trying to form. ***God always gives us enough direction to know what our next decision needs to be.*** He says in Psalm 119:105 *His word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.* We do not walk in the darkness in regards to God's commands. This is why a Christian is never entirely stationary: there is always a next step of obedience to take or a condition of the heart we are to uphold.

Our problem arises when we cannot accurately discern our role and God's role. Our problem in our waiting comes when we try to do what God alone can do. ***The temptation in the middle of our waiting is to instead trust in ourselves to solve God's problems.*** What does this lead to? Well, it leads to either of two things: If we think we have to solve God's problems in our lives and we know we can't, we may become overburdened, overwhelmed, and ultimately depressed. This gives rise to stress, fear, and a crippled walk with God. You cannot carry the world on your shoulders and some of us know that and admit that - thus, we fall into depression.

But if you're like most Americans, you look out at the problems in your life and at least for a while go after solving them all yourself! There is no thought given to God's responsibility and our responsibility! We get antsy and impatient. We don't want to wait. We'd rather intervene and believe we can right the ship! ***We decide instead to willingly strive in our strength to save ourselves.*** We become like a man on a raft who is quickly approaching a waterfall. In his fear of what the river's current is pushing him towards, he frantically starts paddling with his one oar as rapidly as he can, going back and forth on both sides. Yet he fails to remember in that moment that his raft is equipped with an engine that could quickly get him out of that predicament.

A real life example could be that of a man who as a result of the recent pandemic lost his job. This person's life that seemed so secure is suddenly more like that of a man who has been tossed overboard to flap his hands in the rough waters all alone. In that moment he decides he will attempt to be the savior for his family. It leads to quick and rash decisions. He cuts into his retirement fund, takes the first job he could find, and cuts all unnecessary spending, including giving to the church and other missionaries. More than this, his passion to save his family has led to anxiety and fear. This is the natural movement of our hearts. ***But the Christian's first movement is not to save, but to TRUST THE SAVIOR!*** We are to immediately fall on our knees and admit our weakness and admit our need. Does it say in our passage that our job is our fortress? No, v.2 and v.6 say ***God alone is our fortress!***

***Our striving in our own flesh to solve all our problems is the overflow of a deeper struggle in the heart known as pride.*** What is pride? Pride is the removal of God from the throne and appointment of ourselves to the throne. Instead of waiting for God alone in silence, we strive in our own strength in pride. We become like the man who built his house on the sand and not on the rock. He was initially very proud of his work, but when the storms came, he with all his pride was washed away. But our passage here

says that God is a rock! He isn't just one rock among many rocks - *he ALONE is my rock!* When we build our lives on The Rock, no storm is too great to knock us down. V.2 says at the end, *"I shall not be greatly shaken."*

It makes me think of Psalm 16:8, which says, *"I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken."* In the Bible, the right hand is the hand of strength and action, and the left is the hand of weakness. Interestingly here, David's hand of strength is replaced with God's strength. God is the one who is at his right hand. His dominant hand is now dominated by God! This means that every time David wanted to act out in his own strength, he now remembers that God is his right hand of strength. He no longer trusts in his own ability, but in God's ability.

This is what enables us to be people who can wait when presented with obstacles too big for us to solve. We first acknowledge that if our left hand of weakness can't solve the problem, we must lean in to God's right hand of strength. We then choose to trust God's timing and God's way of solving the problem. We humbly walk in our weakness while simultaneously trusting in God's strength.

How are you doing with trusting the Lord in the midst of this pandemic? Are you overwhelmed, frustrated, and stressed out because the problem seems bigger than you? Or are you still trying to fight your way out of it with bitterness, cynicism, rants, and endless energy that seems destined to very soon fizzle out? I invite you to again trust in the Lord alone because he alone can save us! He is a solid foundation! Church, what do we want our anthem and legacy to be through this virus? Do we want it to be a bitter striving in our strength to fix the problem or do we want it to be a confident trust in God to solve this problem in His way and in His timing?

Secondly, how do Christians wait on the Lord? *They rest in God because He alone encourages us.* Look at v.7: *"On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God."* Even when our feet and hands

are busy doing good things, our heart can be at rest. In the Christian faith there is an inner peace that comes even in the midst of war. It can be compared to a flickering flame of a candle in a lantern that remains lit on the lower level of a ship that's in the middle of a storm.

God brings security for our hearts when life's disappointments come. We understand that our salvation rests in God, but it's harder to understand our glory resting in God. ***"Our glory" is our source of joy, our source of praise, our reason for raising our hands.*** When we say, "Jesus is our glory," we are saying Jesus is our joy and hope. This is the declaration in v.5: ***"For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him."*** To have our hope and joy rest in God means that our hope and joy is secure in God. It means our hope and joy is complete in God. Our inner person can be pleased in God alone because in him rests our source of hope, our glory, and our encouragement.

***Yet, the temptation in moments of worldly sorrow is to impatiently turn to another form of lesser encouragement.*** Our hearts can be so fickle. We can say on Sunday that our joy is solely the Lord, yet so quickly be amused by worldly offerings. Hosea 6:4 says, ***"What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? Your love is like the morning cloud, like the dew that goes early away."*** A great example is that of the wilderness generation. They were set free from the oppression of Egypt, yet in the wilderness they quickly became restless. They began demanding meat; they bitterly despised the trek through the wilderness, and they even longed for the security of food and blessings of a place to live back in Egypt! As their hope in God's promises faded, they began hoping for immediate relief in the things they left behind.

Jesus in the parable of the sower draws the same conclusion for this type of person. He compares these people to those who have God's seed sown in rocky soil. In Mark 4, when they hear the word of God, they ***immediately*** receive it with joy, but when tribulation or persecution arises on account of



the word, they *immediately* fall away! They settle for lesser forms of encouragement.

***Don't think you are any different!*** For we today have the same seeds of impatience within our hearts! If we cannot find immediate encouragement, we too will turn to another source. ***Rather than resting in what God can offer our hearts, we settle for what the world can give us right now!*** In this unique season, will you not admit that there have been times your heart is discouraged by the quarantine, having to wear masks, being kept from your place of employment, not being able to be with friends face-to-face, canceling travel plans, lacking faith in the government, and feeling concern for the future of our nation? And what do we do in that moment? We turn on Netflix. ***Rather than going to God to encourage our hearts, we ignore hearts and satisfy our flesh.***

Yet, what does [v.8](#) say here? ***“Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him!”*** If it's true that God alone can heal a broken heart, then we must go to him with our sadness and grievances. In my own life I find that only before God can I express all that I am. There are times when my heart has been poured out before Him like water gushing forth from a broken dam. I can recall a period of crisis in my life when I was in college. I felt extreme emotional pain. I remember getting into my car and driving north for a few hours, pouring myself out to the Lord all the while. In that moment, God's presence came upon me in such a way that I was almost transfixed before Him. There was a profound cleansing of my inner being, and as a result, healing began to come. As I experienced God's love I grew more intimate with Him. He encouraged me in a way no earthly thing or person could. He became, as our passage says, a refuge, a place I could rest.

How do we get a heart prone to restlessness to rest in God? It goes back to our opening statement. ***We believe God is worth waiting for. Even when you don't feel encouragement and joy in God, you must wait for it to***

**come!** Going to the book of Hosea again, in 6:3 it says, *“Let us know; let us press on to know the Lord; his going out is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth.”* When we come to God, He promises to come to us. James 4:8 says, *“Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.”* When you turn to God to again be your glory, your reason for rejoicing, He will again prove Himself to you.

Church, I challenge you in pain, distress, discouragement, and restlessness to run to God as your refuge and to rest in Him. ***Don’t put off true joy. Go let him rain it down on you.*** Take an evening this week to get away from troubles and to get into God’s refuge. Rest in Him because he alone encourages us.

## **CONCLUSION**

To conclude our time in Psalm 62, I’d like to bring us back to lonely King David, ascending the Mount of Olives, weeping as he goes. His brother had just ascended to his rightful throne and forced David to flee. We cannot forget that this is the setting in which David wrote this psalm! Yet this setting provides the foreshadowing of an even greater scene. In similar fashion, Jesus, all alone and weeping that His own people had rejected Him as their king, ascended the hill of calvary and was nailed to a cross. Laid upon Him was the sin of all mankind. For all the times we failed to wait and to trust in Him, those sins he took upon himself.

Just as David was called to wait, so Jesus now was called to wait until the bitter end. In his distress, feeling the full weight of His own Father’s wrath, he cried out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” This text in the Hebrew can also be translated, “My God, my God, how long until you deliver me?” Jesus knew there was hope beyond this moment of his painful waiting because connected to his identity and mission were the power and promises of God! After his death, on the third day, Jesus unjust death was vindicated by the power of the Father through his resurrection from the

grave! He ascended from the grave and took His seat at the right hand of the Father as Savior and reigning King!

This glorious vindication of painful waiting IS the reason we can wait today. We KNOW that because Jesus overcame the grave, He has the power to overcome our distress and sorrow. We can proclaim that because Jesus was restored to his rightful place in Heaven, we too in his kingdom will be restored to our rightful place as sons and daughters at his side. Because Jesus waited in hopeful obedience upon that cross, we can be certain he gives us the strength to be obedient now in the hope that is to come. Whether God makes things right for us in this life or the next, we can be assured that the ending is great!

We said at the beginning that “Waiting is often reduced to a cost-reward ratio: Do we consider what we’re waiting for to be worth the time spent doing so? ***Is God worth waiting for?*** Based on Christ’s resurrection, the verdict is a resounding **YES** - both in David’s life, Jesus’ life, and in yours! It may sometimes feel like waiting in a line, but we know the reward at the end is a joy-filled ride!

## **CLOSING PRAYER**