



Six Week Pursuit
Impact Culture

Dear Church Family,

Driving on the ruddy back-roads in the mountains can be a rewarding adventure. That is, until you rig breaks down. This happened to me. Fortunately for myself (and unfortunately for them), I was accompanied by friends. While exploring the winding dirt roads in the mountains, my beloved Ford Explorer decided to, well, stop exploring. Stranded miles from the main road, with dusk fast approaching, the four of us set out in hopes of finding either a camper or cell service – whichever came first. After miles of walking, a cold rain-shower, and a cow scaring the living daylights out of us, we made it into cell-service where we could call for help. Then came the wait; the long, agonizing, cold, tiring wait. But hey, at least I wasn't alone.

Sometimes you must wait!

Have you ever been forced to wait? Of course you have! The better question might be: when was the last time you were FORCED to wait? It is an agonizing feeling, and the disciples, Jesus' followers and closest friends, understood this feeling all too well.

"You heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

- Acts 1:4-5

young men begging the question: what next? What crazy thing is Jesus going to do now? Then Jesus shocks his followers once again with an astounding command:

"You heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." – Acts 1:4-5

The book of Acts opens stating Jesus has risen again from the grave! Hurrah! Jesus' followers were ecstatic and worshiped Him in awe. You can just sense these

Shortly after this, Jesus repeats His instructions to His followers then abruptly floats away into heaven. Uh... Wow! The disciples are left stunned as they watch Jesus disappear into the clouds. You know, I would have reacted the same way. It's not every day you are visiting with someone and they suddenly ascend into the clouds and disappear!

Can you imagine how stranded and confused these young men felt? One moment, Jesus was back and had defeated death itself!

Now what? Then, just like that, He is gone and the disciples are seemingly stranded. Well, now what? Now, the disciples waited. Sometimes you must wait, and in those times, you usually wait with urgency.

Sounds paradoxical, doesn't it? But that's exactly what the disciples did when Jesus ascended into Heaven. All of us have experienced this odd phenomenon of waiting with urgency. You know, like when you are stranded along the road and waiting for the tow-truck. Or perhaps waiting in line at Disneyland? What about waiting for an interview, waiting for an appointment, or waiting for your wife to be finished shopping at Walmart, but she keeps finding deals and so you just keep waiting, and waiting, and waiting, and ARGH!

God wants you to wait. in

Jesus commanded His disciples to wait. Why? Because something was coming: the promise of the Father. Usually, when we find ourselves urgently waiting, it is because we need something. The disciples needed something, even though they did not fully understand what it was. All Jesus said was: wait and don't you dare leave!

Why wait? God has an astounding plan for your life that will radically IMPACT your world and enrich your CULTURE! Your life will never be the same! Restoration, purpose, excitement, meaning, wisdom, peace, joy, and so much more is given through

It's an urgent wait! God's promise – the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Sign me up! But, oh no, does this mean I must wait? Yes, and it is an urgent wait. Why is it urgent? Because you need this! We need this!

Our world is full of stress and anxiety, fear and hatred. All you have to do is turn on the news or check your Facebook feed. This is a broken world. How do we live in such a day? How do we raise our kids in such times? We need something to IMPACT our CULTURE and guide us! I urgently need it! It's time for an urgent wait!

Waiting is difficult. It takes effort and commitment. But, it doesn't have to be something you do alone. In fact, the disciples waited together. Acts

1 tells us the disciples committed to

But, how do I wait?

seeking God together DAILY in prayer.

Hey, they had urgency; they needed God to show up. Guess what, *we* need God to

show up. So, let's commit to meeting together! Let's do this! Let's seek God together!

Waiting is tedious and hard, but is so much easier when you have others waiting with you. When we wait on God, when we pray together, when we seek God together, something crazy happens – He shows up!

Matthew 18:20 says, "For when two or three gather in my name, there I

We need to wait together!

am with them." We need this church. We need to wait on God together! We need the promise! For the sake of our lost family members who do not know Jesus, for the sake of our kids, for the sake of our own stress, worries, fears, and pain, we need to see God do something! So, let's grab our family, our friends, our church, and let's urgently wait! The promise is coming church!

With love,

Pastor Vern Pastor J

Group Discussion

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions with your group.

1. When was the last time you were forced to wait? What happened? Were you able to wait patiently? Why or why not?
2. Why is it easier to wait for things if others are waiting with you? Why is it so hard to wait alone?
3. Jesus asked the disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit. Why? What would have happened if the disciples disobeyed God and didn't wait?
4. What steps can you take to practice waiting with others?
5. How can you impact your culture by waiting with other Christians?

In Poland, there's a board game that simulates waiting in line, called Kolejka (Queue)
– Matthew Day, The Telegraph

Closing Prayer

Close your time together in prayer. Here are a few ideas of what you could pray about based on the topic of today's discussion:

Jesus Help us to:

- Learn to wait together.
- Be more patient in waiting.
- Open-up to more people, inviting them to wait with us.

Weekly Challenge

This week, devote one whole day to the Lord. Spend that day in prayer, worship, and study of His word. If you can't do an entire day, challenge yourself to devote 1 hour every day to the Lord. This doesn't mean you stay home and watch a televangelist or take a nap. No, this is a time to reflect on what the Lord has done in your life, to communicate with Him, and to praise God.



Questions for Kids

If you have children, here are some questions you can go over with them.

1. Have your parents ever made you wait? What happened? Did you wait patiently?
2. After Jesus rose from the dead, he was visiting with his friends. After Jesus talked with them he went into heaven, right in front of his friends! How do you think his friends reacted? What would you have done?
3. Jesus wants us to wait on Him together! Who can you wait on Jesus with? What can you do together to wait?

Closing Prayer

Pray together as a family. Here are a few ideas of what you could pray about.

Jesus help us to:

- Be more patient.
- Spend more time with you.
- Talk to you more.
- Talk to you more with our friends and family.

Did you know?

Camels can survive up to six months without food or water due to the nutrients stored in their humps.

Talk about waiting for your next meal!

THE EXTREME CHALLENGE

Do you have what it takes to conquer this challenge?

Ask your parents how you can spend time together with Jesus as a family! Maybe you could start a family devotional time, or after dinner worship with your favorite worship songs, or maybe even go outside and thank God for all the beautiful things in your backyard. See if you could spend time with Jesus as a family three times this week. Think you can do it?