

Session 4 Leader Guide

Key verse:

Let us not become tired of doing good; for if we do not give up, the time will come when we will reap the harvest – GALATIANS 6:9 GNT

Lesson Outline:

When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along... the shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, “If the people are faced with battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.” – EXODUS 13:17 NLT

God uses delays to _____ us.

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The Lord led you through the wilderness for all those forty years... testing you to find out how you would respond, and whether or not you would really obey him – DEUTERONOMY 8:2 TLB

When You’re Going Through a Delay:

1. Don’t _____

Fear keeps you in the wilderness and prolongs the delay.

The Lord said to Moses, “Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites... But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” – NUMBERS 13:1-2, 31 NIV

Fear keeps you stuck in the deserts of life.

“I will never leave you; I will never abandon you.” – HEBREWS 13:5 GNT

2. Don’t _____

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On the way the people lost their patience and spoke against God and Moses. They complained... - NUMBERS 21:4-5

Rest in the Lord; wait patiently for him to act... Don't fret and worry-it only leads to harm – PSALM 37:7-8 TLB

Resting can be an act of faith. It means you're waiting on God.

3. Don't _____

All the Israelites grumbled against Moses... "If only we had died in Egypt! We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt." - NUMBERS 14:2, 4 NIV

The LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands...The wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up." - JOSHUA 6:2, 5 NIV

"March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days...On the seventh day, march around the city seven times." - JOSHUA 6:3-4 NIV

Don't settle for less than God's best for your life. Instead of fainting, you need to be persistent and pray.

Let us never grow tired of doing what's right, for if we do not faint, we'll reap our harvest at the right time. - GALATIANS 6:9 MOFFATT

There is always a delay between sowing and reaping.

...always pray and never lose heart. - LUKE 18:1 PHILLIPS

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. - ISAIAH 40:31 TLB

4. Don't _____

They forgot the many times [God] showed them his love, and they rebelled against the Almighty at the Red Sea. But he saved them, as he had promised... - PSALM 106:7-8 GNT

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But they soon forgot all he had done; they had no patience for his plan. - PSALM 106:13 NABRE

Has God done things for you in the past? Of course he has. And you can count on him to do them again.

I will bless the Lord and not forget the glorious things he does for me. - PSALM 103:2 TLB

The Lord is not being slow in carrying out his promises; rather, he is being patient with you. - 2 PETER 3:9 NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE

A delay is not a denial ... and "not yet" is not the same thing as "no."

These things I plan won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day! - HABAKKUK 2:3 TLB

There's always a delay between the dream and deliverance.

Discussion Questions

1. How has God brought you through delays in the past? What lessons did you learn about yourself and about God while you were waiting?
2. Review the Bible verses in the lesson outline. Which verse is the most meaningful to you at this time in your life? Why?
3. What is one thing you can change about your schedule or your expectations so that you are not tempted to try to rush God in the delay phase?
4. What do you need to change about your attitude as you spend time in God's waiting room?

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Prayer Direction

If you are in the delay phase of faith, call on the Lord as your Sustainer (see Psalm 54:4). Ask him to give you patience and hope and to hold you up when you grow weary. Before you pray for each other's requests, take a few minutes to offer prayers of thanksgiving for God's blessings in your life.

Putting It into Practice

Remembering the things God has done in the past will build your faith as you face your current situation. Take ten minutes during a quiet time this week, and make a list that summarizes all the things God has done for you.

God is never in a hurry. We have no record in the New Testament that Jesus ever ran anywhere. God can do things immediately, and sometimes he does. But he is working on a much larger agenda than our timeframe. The delays that come into our lives do not destroy God's purposes. Rather, they fulfill God's purposes.