

# Empowering Healthy Leaders for Missional Impact

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Waiting Part Three: Waiting and Loving

Roy King February 2008

This is the third in a three part series on WAITING.

In Part One "[Waiting on Christmas Eve](#)" I presented the idea that a great deal of the Christian's life is invested in waiting. Waiting well is looking in faith at God's promises.

In Part Two "[Remembering & Anticipating](#)" I described waiting as a revisiting of the past by remembering what God has done and a longing look at the future as we anticipate what God will do. When God "engineers" a waiting gap for us he is calling us to exercise our faith and hope 'muscles' to strongly hold on to him.

Now... Part Three,

God not only creates the space of waiting to strengthen faith and hope, it is also the place that contains a great opportunity for loving God and others. Waiting is standing in a space where we look back to mountains God has led us over in the past and where we can see mountain tops in front of us that make our necks sore from looking up. Waiting is the flat plain in between. Waiting is that boring walk through miles of endless open terrain where there are very few identifiable land marks to give us clear bearings. You can be walking in circles and have difficulty detecting it. You can be walking in the wrong direction because the horizon cuts off a vision of your destination. In the plain of waiting it is easy to feel lost, unsafe, exposed, uncertain, and then doubt shows up and asks to walk with you. But these waiting walks can also be a good opportunity to love.

## How are waiting and loving connected?

Biblical loving is a joyful giving, with little thought to the personal cost, for the sake of the beloved. "For God so loved...He gave", and "For the joy set before him Christ endured..." He is the perfect model of loving and he waits for us to receive and then become an expression of that quality love.

God loves me before I love him. He gives, and then **he waits**. He is the father looking and waiting for the son's return. He patiently endures the gap between his reaching out and my response. How does God love us?

**He sees us as we really are – and still treasures us.**

Loving someone involves seeing them in a holistic way. If I only see the outward appearance I am not loving but lustfully consuming their beauty – without even knowing their name. If I only see someone's present failure then I miss the total person and it is easy to believe they are not worthy of being loved by me. And how can I love my enemy if I only see them as my enemy? I must see them as loved by God, and probably at least by their mother! To love them I must see that they are more than just my agitator.

**The motivation for love is fueled by remembering and anticipating.**

Remembering – includes the spiritual exercise of seeing the whole person.  
Anticipating – is the spiritual exercise of seeing the person with potential and possibility. This expanded perspective of the person being loved increases my capacity and fires up my motivation to love them.

**To wait with someone is an act of loving them.**

In Mark 14 ***Jesus is waiting*** for the cross. He receives the loving act of a woman taking a treasure and pouring it out on Him. She loved Him with her treasure. In a just a few days Jesus would love her by pouring out the treasure of his cleansing blood for her. Waiting often accompanies the giving of oneself in love to another.

Have you ever seen a waiting person's eyes brighten, even as tears flow, when a friend arrives at the Intensive Care Waiting Room to wait with them? They embrace and quiet words of comfort pass between them. The treasure of time and presence are broken and released like a fragrant aroma that touches everyone close by.

Notice how God's kind of love is described in 1 Corinthians 13. Notice how being in the 'waiting room' is often where these love gifts are given.

***Love is patient***

Waiting is an essential ingredient in patience

***Love is kind***

Waiting creates space so I can see what is needed and respond in kindness with a cup of coffee, a roll of mints, or a hug

***It does not envy***

Waiting and competitive comparing are opposites

***It does not boast***

Waiting makes me aware of my lack of power and control – I see how small I really am

***It is not proud***

Waiting tends to still my heart and let me see myself as God sees me

***It is not rude***

Waiting is not running a sprint to the next destination and so I weigh responses more carefully

***It is not self-seeking***

Waiting draws my vision upward to God and his promises and outward to my need for others making it easier to measure my life by more than my own desires

***It is not easily angered***

Waiting helps me discover contentment with both the timing and the lack of fulfilling my goals, plans, and desires

***It keeps no record of wrongs***

Waiting makes me cautious and lessens my desire to be judge over others

***Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth***

Waiting sharpens my vision of what is worthy of attention or investment

***It always protects***

Waiting is an alertness and awareness much like a security guard standing outside the door of the person they serve

***Always trusts***

Waiting at its biblical best is confident and positive

***Always hopes***

Waiting at its biblical best knows God is in control

***Always perseveres***

Waiting refuses to abandon the one loved just like Ruth with Naomi

***Love never fails***

Waiting is anchored by promise and always keeps the vows

Waiting is a room we enter where we find opportunities to love. So now, with a fresh vision for God's use of waiting in our life, we embrace the waiting periods more easily and begin to look around, as we walk through the door into the waiting room, for who and how to love.

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