

Teen Devotion

Year B – Lent 5

Rethinking Religion



One truth shared: Sometimes it doesn't feel like God is listening or cares, but he shows complete commitment in his salvation plan.

"Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour."

John 12:27

God's timing is always on time

Have you ever wondered, "God what are you waiting for?" You're not the first:

- "Jesus' mother said, "They have no more wine." ... "My hour has *not yet* come." Jesus replied. (John 2:4)
- Jesus said, "You go to the festival. I am not going up to this festival, because my time has *not yet fully* come." (John 7:8)
- Now there were some Greeks... with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." ... Jesus said, "*The hour has come* for the Son of Man to be glorified. (John 12:20-23)

It seems like just the right time to see the miracle or at the very least experience something good. But then you wait, and wait, and wait. Trusting God and waiting is not always easy. Sometimes you wonder, "God, what are you waiting for?"

There is a promise that believers had been waiting on for a long time, literally from the beginning. God promised someone who would be struck on the heel but would in turn crush the devil's head. The pages of the Old Testament provide more and more detail on this promised Messiah. Generation after generation longed for his arrival but never saw that promise fulfilled in their lifetime. After so much time, people must have wondered, "God, what are you waiting for? Will you come to save your people?"

Thousands of years passed. More and more detailed prophecy was shared. Finally, when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son to redeem those under the law. Jesus the Messiah came. Early in Jesus' ministry it is odd to hear him say, "My time has not yet come." So many had already waited for so long. But Jesus waited a little bit longer. Until... some Greeks wanted to see Jesus. Now is the Son of Man glorified. This is a great example of God's love and his timing. Jesus wanted his message to reach not just the people of Israel, but every nation, and in time, to come to you with this message. Our Lord has meticulous planning and enduring patience to save us. God's commitment to his people is solid and trustworthy.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for always listening and always providing what is best for my soul and those around me. I'm sorry when doubts creep into my heart. I know that no promise from you will ever fail. Thank you for sticking to your plan and your purpose which meant going to the cross for me. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.

Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

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Starting the Discussion: *This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

In the group, compare the longest students have had to wait for something. (Examples: vacation, birthday, getting their license, school or health test results, etc.) What makes patience easy or difficult?

Connecting: *This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

How would you respond to someone who says, "Because of what I'm going through and how long I've been suffering, it doesn't seem like God really cares."

Digging In: *Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- Read John 12:20–33: Jesus Predicts His Death.
- How are the words of the Greeks in verse 21 both normal and unique? (*Greeks are Gentiles who converted to Judaism. They didn't have the family or historical connection to all the Words and works of God. Yet they wanted to see Jesus. Jesus had gained lots of popularity and for people to want to see him is not unusual.*)
- "We would like to see Jesus" is a noble request. Create a list of other things that can steal our attention from seeing Jesus on Sunday morning. What about throughout the week?
- Read John 10:16. How does this verse help understand the timing of Jesus' words in John 12:23? (*Part of the fulfillment of Jesus' plan was to draw Gentiles unto himself. Now this was happening, he was getting closer to his final sacrifice.*)
- How do Jesus' words in verses 24-25 apply to Jesus? How do they apply to us?
- What aspects of life is Jesus calling his people to hate? (v. 25) (*Anything that is contrary to his will or leads us away from our Savior.*)
- Agree or disagree and tell why. As true God, Jesus didn't suffer like you or I would in the time leading up to his death. (*Disagree: As true man he was tempted in every way you and I are. Agree: As true God he didn't sin. Also, he suffered more than the physical anguish of the moment but also the spiritual torment of hell of all people as true God.*)

Conclusion: *Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the “connecting question” above.*

- Which aspects of today’s reading reminded you of just how much Jesus cares for you? Why?
- In the group, make a list of some people who really need to see Jesus through our words and actions this week. Spend time in prayer over the list.