

The Waiting Room

By Dr. Greg Wiens

Last week I wrote about the training room. All of us have spent time being trained in God's Training Room. There are other times we spend time in God's Waiting Room. At first glance, there is a big difference between a training room and a waiting room. I usually choose to go through training and I know I am there to be stretched and challenged to handle more. However, I usually end up in a waiting room, when things aren't going well and I need to see a doctor for help.

I have spent my share of time in a waiting room. Three times in my life, I have been rushed to the hospital in an ambulance. Two of those times I had been hit by a car and was unconscious (thirty two years apart!). The other time, they thought I had broken my neck in a football game because I could no longer hold my head up. In each of these three instances there was no wait, I was rushed right in (I was later told) and they began emergency procedures.

But I have broken countless bones, had stitches in my head no less than 8 times, have had numerous infections, shots and checkups. In each of these instances, I spent countless hours in the waiting room waiting for the doctor to fix up the situation. Many of those times I found myself in pain while I waited for the doctor.

So what about God's waiting room? We often call on God, The Great Physician, but usually we don't like waiting in HIS waiting room. Just like in the earthly waiting rooms, there is often something that needs God's attention, but we wait and wait, to see him. While reading the Psalms in my devotional, I found that there are at 11 times in these prayers that we are told that we should wait for the Lord. Most often they read like this passage from **Psalms 130** "4 *But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.* 5 *I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope.* 6 *My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning.*"

You get the feeling that they wish God would hurry up, just like the watchmen wanting morning to come. But this is why I call it a waiting room. There are times that God simply wants us to wait. In this passage we are told to put our hope in God's word, not in ourselves. In the end, we simply have to wait for God to do something. There is nothing we can do; we are against an immovable wall or person or crisis completely out of our control. Often we are in pain and suffering, but we have to wait on God.

Just as when I was unconscious and the doctors rushed me in; God takes care of us when we truly need it. That is why David tells us in **Psalms 37**. "25 *I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.*" When we really need God, he shows up. But his timing is often not our timing. He knows what we need when we need it. We simply need to wait.

I don't know about you, but waiting for God has always been difficult for me. As a younger man, too often I went out and tried to do things myself instead of waiting for God; kind of like Abraham and Sarah. He fathered Ishmael through Hagar (**Genesis 16**) because he just wouldn't wait for God. As I have aged, I have realized that I only mess things up when I do this, just like Abraham. However, waiting is different from training; and it is difficult because it feels like I am doing nothing. What I don't

realize is that some times God is working in ways that I can't fathom. David's confession came only as he aged when he finally learned God always shows up on time, and the righteous was never forsaken.

Waiting has gotten easier as I have gotten older, but it is still a discipline. It is a discipline of being honest before God, spending time in His word and under the power of the Spirit, maintaining an expectant and humble attitude. God is still God; and waiting can be an expression of that, if nothing else. If you are in God's waiting room, let me encourage you to be faithful and patient. Too often, I have seen servants of God bail out of leadership simply because they weren't willing to wait. We need leaders for God's Kingdom, but we need leaders who know how to be trained and also know how to wait.

Often, what initially appears to be a waiting room is really God's training room. There have been many times in my life when I felt I was in a waiting room, only later to find out that God had some major things to do in my life. I wasn't really waiting on him, He was waiting on me to master some skills, attitudes or gain wisdom in specific areas. So, be careful to think you are waiting only on God to move something as He may be waiting for *you* to move something in/out of your life. God will make it clear through His Spirit, Word or Body.

Next week we will deal with the Boxing Ring; which is much different than the training or the waiting room!