

# The God Of Delays



***Wait for the Lord; be strong,  
and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the Lord (Psalm 27:14)!***

Lying flat in the bottom of a rocking rowboat, I wondered what would happen if the boat and its five passengers began to sink into the Tyrrhenian Sea. In addition, this small rowboat's entrance into a tiny opening of a cave was dependent on the motion of the waves, with the guide pulling us through using only a single chain. Much to my surprise, the view — and the fears — changed dramatically upon entering the cave. While the sparkling waters outside the cave were beyond description at Capri, Italy, the view inside the cave was even more striking. The crystal clear waters radiated the small amount of brilliant white light spilling in from the mouth of the cave. As red colors of light were filtered out by the water, the remaining waters and the roof in the cave glowed with blue light, leaving one in awe.

The experience at the Blue Grotto Cave boldly reminds me of our Baptism, as the power of an awesome God pulls us into an incredible, abundant picture of His grace and mercy. Through the Word and Sacraments, the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to His truths and enables us to receive the full of view Christ through the eyes of faith. Our delays and

challenges in life often cause us to depend on others, but God's greatest desire is that we fully depend on Him to see the view on the other side.

Even though beauty surrounds us daily, it can often be hidden by the obstacles that block the beauty. One of the most confusing and difficult obstacles is that of dealing with delays. We set our agendas and schedules. We make goals, hoping to meet them in a timely manner. The hopes and dreams for our children are planned in our heads, and we are devastated when they change course. The jobs we desired upon receiving the college degree, the return of a loved one from military duty, or the dream of purchasing a home fall into the category of desires that can frustrate and initiate stress when delayed. Crying out to God, we may ask, "What are You thinking?" We forget that our future plans in life do not always depend on us and our intricate design. Rather, the God who orchestrated the universe desires to beautifully and masterfully design His own direction. His eternal plan is not that we discover things in the created world, but rather cherish treasures even more beautiful and memorable inside our inner being.

**Prayer: Lord, I hate to wait. Help me to learn that in Your waiting process, there remains a blessing for it is how I will learn to trust. Thank You. Amen.**

# IT ALL DEPENDS ON...

A preschool song was once taught in public schools called “I am Me and I am Enough.” A huge highway billboard revealed these words, “It’s all about you.” TV and social media encourage us to believe that our future depends only on us. To many, our goals and agendas are summed up in this quote: “If it’s going to get done, it all depends on me”.

***But does it,  
even though  
that is  
the worldly  
mindset?***

There is nothing wrong with agendas, schedules, goals, and dreams. Even our service to the Lord includes important planning. However, God desires that we make plans with His guidance and, when completed, promises to bless them.

**Refer to the following:**

**Psalm 20:4–5**

**Psalm 145:16–19**

In this lesson, we will not only learn the misconception of assuming it all depends on us but also discover how true dependence on God and His wisdom can lead to a peaceful, unforgettable outcome, even in the midst of delays.

## **It All Depends On... Faith In And Through Baptism**

For the Christian, hope in the midst of delays is sealed in our Baptism and our dependency in faith is granted through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. When the challenges of our task-filled lives cause doubt and confusion, God’s presence, wisdom, and guidance are offered, as we fix our eyes on Him and trust His leading in the steps we take.

Our hope, our salvation, and our honor depend on God, who is our solid rock on which to stand. As we pour out our hearts to Him, we discover that He is our refuge and strength in the planning process (Psalm 62:7–8). And delays are often part of that process. Although inevitable, the Christian’s faith is shielded during these difficult times because of the grace and mercy He offers.

What are the benefits of Baptism to us in our world of busy schedules and occasional delays? Refer to the following and determine how Christ’s death, resurrection, and abiding presence within us are the foundation of how we perceive what’s happening and where we can receive strength to endure.

**Read Romans 6:3–11. Write down the many results of Baptism in this section.**

***What other blessings are ours in Baptism?***

**Galatians 2:20** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Galatians 3:27** \_\_\_\_\_

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**1 Peter 1:3–5** \_\_\_\_\_

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**1 Peter 3:21–22** \_\_\_\_\_

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**What is our reaction toward Him and others for this amazing gift?**

**John 15:12**

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**2 Corinthians 5:14–15**

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What Jesus did for us through His death and resurrection, no man can take away. It becomes part of us when we are baptized, for we also receive His Spirit and the forgiveness of sins. His Spirit reveals it to us in the Word and opens our hearts and minds to understand it, for it all depends on Him! See 1 Corinthians 2:9–12.

**Read also:**

**John 1:12–13**

**Acts 2:38–39**

## **It All Depends On ... Christ's Hold On Us**

Hectic schedules can often make us feel drained, encountering feelings of hopelessness. Errors in judgment, delays in answers to concerns, and misguided opinions challenge our perspective of God and often weigh us down with negative thoughts and emotions. It is then that we need encouragement from Scripture and peace in the struggle. Peter is an excellent example of how the redemption

of Christ brought him strength and comfort to serve the Lord with gladness. A favorite way to remember him is: Peter caved; Jesus saved.

Jesus knew it was coming. He even predicted it in Luke 22:32 and 34 — *“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers...I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”* Of course, Peter’s over-confident response to this was, *“Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you”* (Matthew 26:35)!

Has over-confidence in our abilities been a roadblock to achieving God’s creative design for us and the lives of others? Have we yielded to ego rather than to God’s love and guidance? Have delays tightened the grip of fears and caused us to make errors in judgment? It did for Peter when he caved and denied Christ. Yet we receive the confirmation that before and after, Jesus declared His loving forgiveness and renewed Peter’s faith in several ways. First, He prayed for him in advance. Second, His death and resurrection proved it. Third, Jesus’ words after the resurrection confirmed it when they were at the lake (John 21:15–17). And fourth, the Holy Spirit empowered him for mighty acts after Pentecost, fulfilling Christ’s prediction in Luke 22 (Acts 2:14–41). Peter, who made a huge error in judgment, was restored to even greater works of service, not because it depended on him but because of the powerful hold Christ Jesus had on him. So even though Peter caved and Jesus truly saved, the miracle Peter discovered within him far surpassed the shame encountered without Him!

**And so it is, and will be, with us!**

## It All Depends On ... God's Plan For Something Better

Like my entry into the cave at the Isle of Capri, God has something more amazing and more beautiful in His planning that we can ever imagine. We see only the small opening of the cave, but He sees the beauty of the big picture, offering us a trusting relationship with Him. Delays play a part in the results, for we also discover our desires in Him also change. We no longer view the delays, the challenges, or even our personal goals as the main event. Rather we say with Isaiah,

***“The path of the  
righteous is level;  
O upright One, you  
make the way of the  
righteous smooth.  
Yes, Lord, walking  
in the way of your  
laws, we wait for  
you; your name and  
renown are the de-  
sire of our hearts”  
(Isaiah 26:7–8 NIV).***

Like the radiant blue light that flows into caves, 2 Corinthians 4:6–7 reveals the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Christ. Rather than relying on ourselves to understand God's delays, we focus on Him and His brilliant path that leads to beautiful revelations never experienced before. We discover that focusing on ourselves leads to despair, while focusing on God leads to hope. God always has a divine purpose for every delay and will use it to prepare us for the work yet to be done here on earth.



**Prayer: Dear Father in heaven, You have much to teach me through my delays in life. Give me the courage and strength to maintain a trusting faith in You. In Jesus name and for His sake I ask this. Amen.**