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**A STUDY IN HABAKKUK**

As a child, I was fascinated with trains. I'll never forget the small set I received one Christmas. I never grew tired of setting up the tracks, loading the cars, then sitting and watching it circle around the track countless times. With a little help from a bottle of liquid, smoke steam would pour out from the engine, making the experience seem perfectly real.

When I grew older, I realized trains were a very real part of life where I lived, as the train tracks literally went through the center of our small town. You could hear the train's clickity clack on the tracks and the sound of the whistle from almost anywhere.

I don't recall ever being bothered by the train until I learned to drive. My fascination quickly turned to irritation when I was in a rush and inconveniently forced to stop and wait for the train to pass. Sometimes my destination would not be far away, but because it was on the other side of the tracks, I couldn't make any progress.

Have you ever been stopped in your tracks, trying to get to a specific *somewhere* in your life? Do you ever feel that your desired destination is so close, but an unexpected delay interrupts your progress and fills your heart with frustration, confusion, and perhaps even fear that you'll never get to where you want to go?

Even though we would rather God deal with our complicated situations, He would rather develop our character. Despite our wanting Him to change our circumstances; He wants to change us—from the inside out. Being forced to wait doesn't mean that God isn't aware

of our circumstances, or that He is not at work in our challenges and desires. On the contrary, God is always at work. Although understandable, when we are anxiously focused on our desire to move forward, we risk the possibility of missing the gift of growth God wants to work inside of us.

In Habakkuk 2:1-4, we find God’s prescription for spiritual growth in those times when God seems unresponsive and we are forced to wait. They consist of four simple, necessary components. The first step is to silence the anxiety of waiting by removing all competing distractions, then taking time to be still. It’s only in the silence that we are truly able to **listen**. As you listen, God will speak. And when He does speak, take time to **write it down**—because it’s important! If we fail to do this simple step, we are in danger of forgetting all too easily.

After you write down what you’ve heard God say, continue to **wait**. Waiting for God’s perfect timing is one of the best investments you’ll ever make. Although I dislike waiting, God’s timing is always much better than mine, as He sees the bigger picture when I am greatly limited in my forward vision.

The final required bold step is to **believe!** It’s easy to let doubt seep in during times of waiting. Don’t give up on God. He hasn’t given up on you!

## QUESTIONS

Read Habakkuk 2

How do you typically respond when forced to wait?

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What have you learned about God in times of waiting?

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Of the four steps listed above, which is most challenging for you? Why?

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