



**"No Cross,
No Crown"**

The Cross and Crown

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One of the things I like about the Spanish language (as someone who doesn't really speak Spanish) is that the word for "to wait" (*esperar*) is the same as the word for "to hope." "*Esperar*" also shares its roots with the English verb, "to expect." Waiting, for us as Christians, is not just an idle pursuit. We wait in hope for what God has promised. Further, that hope isn't a blind hope, like a child hoping for a favorite toy for Christmas, but a hope rooted in the expectation of that which God has promised.

This was the kind of waiting that Jacob knew. His days were long and hard, working in his future father-in-law's field. As he described that period, "the heat consumed me in the daytime and the cold at night, and sleep fled from my eyes." (Genesis 31:40) And, yet, the seven years that Jacob toiled to earn the hand of Laban's daughter, Rachel "seemed like only a few days, because of his love for her." (Genesis 29:20) It was that hope – a firm expectation based on a promise – that sustained and motivated him, making the days fly by.



As followers of Christ, we often find ourselves in seasons of waiting. Sometimes, God has us wait because he's protecting us from something. Sometimes, he's

preparing us for something. Often, we never find out the reason for the wait. If we follow Jacob's example and concentrate on God's promise rather than our current state, we will sail through those waiting periods.

So, how can we keep our focus on the promised future rather than on the present? We need to stay in God's Word! Read God's wonderful promises about Heaven (I Corinthians 15:51–58) and his promises to be with us (Deuteronomy 31:6; Matthew 28:20) Whenever you read about waiting, think of it in the context of expectant hope.

And we need to do what Paul and Silas did, when they, chained and imprisoned, were forced to wait: We need to sing! There are so many wonderful hymns to remind us of God's presence and his promises. Let them be a shot of adrenaline to your faith.

Send us the names of some hymns and Scripture passages that stimulate your faith!

But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. (Romans 8:25)

Thanks for Praying!

We are so grateful for all that God is doing among us in response to your prayers! This is going to be a pivotal summer. Please join us in praying







Friday Family Nights are back in full swing! Pray for our youth!

- for the moms and young children who have recently begun fellowshipping with us,
- for the participants in this month's baptism and membership classes, and
- for our new intern, Jennifer, a student at Temple who's joining us for the summer.

We're praying with you!

If you're on our mailing list*, you're on our prayer list! If there's anything specific that we can join you in praying about, please let us know.

We love hearing from you! Please do keep in touch!

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* **Important:** If you'd rather not be on our mailing list, we understand! Just call or drop us a note, and we'll remove you. (We'll still keep you on our prayer list!)

If you'd rather receive this letter via e-mail, please let us know!

Did you know?

Charles Wesley, who wrote an unbelievable 6,500 hymns over the 80-year span of his life, was outdone by the blind hymn writer, Fanny Crosby, who has more than 8,000 hymns to her credit.

“In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.”

(Psalm 5:3)



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