



## Stew Pot: July

Stew On This...

Baseball is tough. I mean... the whole game is built around putting pressure on this one dude in the center of a huge field to throw that perfect pitch – at least 27 times a night (and, if he’s really super good, that’s all he’ll have to do) – while 8 other dudes chew some Big League behind him and wait for someone called a batter to take a swing.

\*Time Out\* Baseball isn’t tough. There are hot dogs and fireworks and peanuts and super sweet ball caps and some really awesome times to be had at stadiums all across the nation and...

\*Time In\* Okay, I take it back. Baseball isn’t tough. Maybe it’s just the waiting that’s tough. (And there seems to be a lot of waiting in baseball.)

Yup. It’s the waiting that’s tough. Waiting is very rarely looked forward to. When I go to the doctor’s office, I try to be right on time so I don’t have to wait too long. When I go out to eat with friends, I hope they get there first, so they have to wait to be seated (and I can just sit right down upon arrival).

Think about it - the second worst word to a child (next to “no”) is wait. And we, as adults, stack our calendars so full – we don’t often have to wait. Or, in those rare moments when there’s time to fill, we pull out our handy-dandy cell phones to occupy ourselves, so it doesn’t seem like we’re waiting.

And yet, it says in Isaiah 40:31 “But those who wait for the Lord shall change and renew their strength and power... they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired.”

**Why would the Bible say that!!!!?** Doesn’t God know how *horrible* waiting can be? Doesn’t He know that it gets really frustrating sometimes to not be able to see Him or hear Him or even get some sort of sign that He’s there? So why would He think waiting on Him is something we would want to do?

And this whole King David person that lived and reigned and said God alone was his “rock and salvation”, his “fortress and refuge”, the source of his “victory and honor” (see Psalm 62:5-8). David must have been hit in the head with a foul ball! Because waiting on the Lord – waiting quietly on the Lord, as David said –seems about as exciting as the outfield in tee ball. And my strength, MY victories, have come anyway, without all that waiting.

But the question to be asked is – have they really? Have **our victories** really come in times when we’re rushing through to the next play or consumed with silly pre-game rituals, rooted in false hope? **Or** have **our greatest moments** happened when we took a “time-out”, caught our breath, considered our game plan, and paused to search the play book that was written by the greatest coach of all time? (The Bible, by God. check it out.)

1 Corinthians 1:7 reminds us we “don’t need a thing... all God’s gifts are right in front of (us) as (we) **wait expectantly** for our Master Jesus”. Such gifts that renew our strength can take us from just trudging through life with a swing and a miss to an out-of-the-park, grand slam, epic series of events not to be missed. Think about all the gifts He gives – we can talk to God whenever we want (prayer), celebrate His awesomeness with other folks that love Him (presence), share the riches with which He’s blessed us (gifts), serve our neighbors whom He calls us to love (service), or just be the children of God He designed us to be each and every day (witness). Seems to me, when we take a time-out to wait on our Lord and heed His next call, the victory in Jesus can be oh, so sweet.

- The Stewardship Team