

Encouraging Tips for When God Places You in a Long Season of Waiting

About a year and a half ago I made a commitment to learning Spanish. (See the reasons [here](#).) Knowing that in this case I was going to need to take the slow approach and fit it in my schedule I added working with the app Duolingo to my daily schedule.

The way that Duolingo works is you learn new words and slowly move up a tree. A couple days ago I made it to the top of the tree. See picture below.

I don't tell you that to brag because as you can see even by their standards I am only just over 50%. I went a couple weeks ago to the Spanish service at my home church and I am well aware that I still have a long way to go. And I am still committed to putting in the work.

Which is why I am writing this. I made the commitment over a year and a half ago and then it becomes a day after day activity. Sometimes it seems like a long time and I don't feel like I am making much progress.

It reminds me of the verse- Romans 12:1- *"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."* There is an old saying that goes, "The problem with living sacrifices is that they keep getting off the altar."

There is a challenge of things that God calls us to do that takes time. It is tempting when it feels like a long time to want to get off the altar. Chris Guillebeau, in his book *The Happiness of Pursuit* was talking about dying for something. He

said, “...**living for something can be mundane- and therefore far more sacrificial, because seldom does anyone notice.**” I am not saying anything against martyrs because they have an important place in church history but I get what he was saying.

I am guessing this is part of why Jesus says, “*If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*” (Luke 9:23) Certain things are a daily choice to die to ourselves to walk in obedience to Jesus.

Let me suggest three things when you get in the “long” season of whatever God has told you to do:

Reconnect to your why: Why are you doing what you are doing? Maybe it is simply because God has told you. But stepping behind that you will find powerful motivation. Leonard Ravenhill’s tombstone reads: Are the things you are living for worth Christ dying for? Or as I learned when I visited the site of the Moravian revival one of their slogans was, “May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of His suffering!”

Find encouragement from a fellow traveler. -For me the last few months I have found motivation by finding another person working on the same Spanish app as I am working. I am also encouraged to work out at the gym because I am in a contest with my brother-in-law. Competition or not a friend can give you strength in your journey of obedience to God.

Celebrate the progress you do make. Even though I still have a long way to go on my Spanish journey the fact that I am to the top of the Duolingo tree is motivation to keep going. I am guessing that Noah would have been motivated when half of the ark was finally built.

I hope this helps you stay the course. For me it is back to learning Spanish. {eoa}

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