



Who are You in Line for? | Charlotte Gambill | 10.14.17

LG Weekly

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

What is the longest line you've ever waited in? What was it for?

SHARE

Have you ever been woken up out of a dead sleep?

In the Bible, we read of God speaking to people in their sleep and the people waking up to follow through on what they heard. He wakes a young boy, Samuel, who learns to intimately know the voice of God. An angel of the Lord wakes Joseph up to tell him to flee to Egypt and escape Herod. Numerous people experienced death to life resurrection by the power of God. Imagine waking up from that kind of sleep.

Our guest speaker this week, Charlotte Gambill, based her message to us on a phrase she heard from God that woke her up out of a dead sleep. It is a question with which we will continue to wrestle in our study today.

Who are you in line for?

At first glance, the question requires a bit of consideration. While we do spend a good portion of the day waiting—whether at stop lights, on the customer service line on a phone or for that movie to start—we don't usually wait in a literal line. When we do wait in a physical line, they are usually at the grocery store, the bathroom at a sporting event, school pick up, or the drive-thru at Starbucks.

On a daily basis, where and for what do you spend the most time waiting in line?

Still, there are times when we venture out to do something fun where lines are just part of the experience. In order to enjoy the concert, the speaker, the roller coaster, or the big game—we have to wait in line.

Yet, in a culture of instant gratification where we enjoy things like Amazon Now, instant macaroni and cheese, and streaming media, lines are not something for which we have much patience. Maybe we're the first ones at Costco when the doors open or we wait for a weekday to ski, but generally, we will go to great lengths to avoid lines.

Attractions too have become aware of our impatience as a culture—and this is why Disneyland and other magical places have created the “single rider” option. If we are willing to risk riding the ride alone, we can hop in the shorter, single-rider line and ditch the people we came with in the process. We become consumed with our personal experience and choose to leave the group behind. In our attempts to see more and do more ourselves, we often forget our God-given responsibility to start new lines, stay in lines, and get across lines.

How else have you seen the “single rider” option present itself in your life...what about in the church?

G R O W

Rather than looking for ways to avoid a line or choosing to ride as a single-rider, Charlotte challenged us, as the church, to be a community known for starting new lines. Since it's easy for us to be settled in our single file lines as long as our own needs are being met, we forget other people need urgent help and their line is only getting longer.

Read Mark 2:1-5

What was the friends' motivation for starting a new (and in this case literal) line?

What stands in your way today from starting new lines for the people around you who need to be brought to Jesus?

Once we start new lines that benefit the community around us, we have the next challenge of staying in line. And this is where we see people struggle the most. We look to the left and the right and see everyone around us at a standstill. People keep cutting in front of us and our attitude gets worse and worse. But because we've taken the single rider approach no one's there to prop us up or offer a shoulder when we feel like tapping out. We reason what's at the end of the line couldn't possibly be worth the inconvenience of being confined to the line itself.

When have you taken the single rider approach and been unable to stay in line?

When you think back to times of waiting, what helped you persevere? How did you feel when you finally got through the line after all the waiting?

Read Luke 8:40-42

Here we learn Jairus, the ruler of the local synagogue, has been waiting in crowds to see Jesus. He's a learned man, a man of political and religious power, who never has to wait to speak with anyone. Yet—here he is, waiting for Jesus in hopes that he could save his daughter's life. When Jesus finally arrives, Jairus, tired and scared, falls at Jesus' feet to ask for a miracle. Jairus got in line, and he stayed in line on behalf of his daughter.

In regards to your faith, what line do you feel like you're standing in now? For what miracle—big or small—are you waiting?

Once we've started a line and stayed in line...eventually...we will get across the line! And it's then that a new challenge presents itself. Remember the attitude of the Israelites when they finally left Egypt? Because the desert was new and unknown territory, they actually longed for the predictability of slavery again. They lost their hope in the midst of their wandering and actually asked Moses to take them back to Egypt.

Though the Israelites made it across the line when God brought them out of slavery, they kept wanting to go back. They feared the future, didn't want to change, and as a result were tempted to revert to the past and their old ways.

How are you tempted to go back into a line you've already crossed? Why is it such a temptation?

M O V E

With all this talk about lines, chances are one particular stage (starting, standing, or crossing) resonates with you.

Which of the line stages most challenges you in your current season of life and why?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

God has specific people around you for a reason. He may have equipped you to meet the needs of your co-worker that no one else is equipped to meet. Keep your eyes open. Look for where to start a new line for someone in need or support others standing in line around you. You have been given unique strengths and talents that are not meant to be kept to yourself or used for your benefit alone.

Wherever God has you right now (work, school, parenting, unemployment, etc.) and in whichever line you find yourself, how can you be a contagious leader in that line?

Are you in line to benefit yourself or are you looking to meet the needs of the sick and hurting around you?

P R A Y

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to share more freely.

T O G O

Matthew 20:16

“So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

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