

Walking Free Newsletter –November 2017

Facing Life's Challenges- Waiting Isaiah 40: 21-31 (Page 714): Acts 1:1-11 (Page 1077)

A group of travellers were being made to wait on their airplane, which was late due to another flight being cancelled. The crowd looked horrible and impatient as the time went on and on. Finally, an angry passenger pushed his way to the front of the line, slammed his ticket down and said, "I must be on this flight now and I must be in first class".

The flight attendant, trying to be nice said, "Sir, we will get to you as soon as possible, but you must wait in line like everyone else". He quickly said, "Ma'am, do you have any idea who I am?"

Without hesitation, she smiled, picked up her intercom microphone and said, "We have a passenger here at the gate WHO DOES NOT KNOW WHO HE IS. If anyone can help him find his identity, please come to gate 17."

No one likes to wait. But we wait in traffic, in car pool lines, in holding patterns, in grocery stores, for the foursome ahead of us, for the doctor, for a spouse, for a baby, for retirement, for sermons to get over, or for Jesus to return.

Waiting is not just something we have to do while we get what we want. Waiting is the process of becoming what God wants us to be. What God does in us while we wait is as important as what it is we are waiting for. Waiting, biblical waiting, is not a passive waiting around for something to happen that will allow us to escape our troubles. Waiting does not mean doing nothing. It is not fatalistic resignation. It is not a way to evade unpleasant reality.

Those who wait are those who work, because they know their work is not in vain. The farmer can wait all summer for his harvest because he has done his work of sowing the seed and watering the plants. Those who wait on God can go about their assigned tasks, confident that God will provide the meaning and conclusions to their lives and the harvest to their toil. Waiting is the confident, disciplined, expectant, active, and sometimes painful clinging to God. It knows that we will reap a reward.

The idea of waiting upon the Lord originates with David in his Psalms. It appears 25 times. It comes from his experience of waiting to be King. He was anointed by Samuel as a young man to be king but it was not until 20 years later that he became King. He spent that most of that time hiding from Saul until it was the right time, ie God's time, to be crowned King.

The only other writer in the OT is the prophet Isaiah. He uses it 11 times as he encourages the nation of Israel with its inhabitants to wait for God to release them from their Babylonian captivity which turned out to be 70 years.

In these OT waiting for the Lord is waiting for something: God might save us (Isaiah 25:9); to give them their food in due season (Psalm 104:27); for His counsel (Psalm 106:13); for God's ordinances (Psalm 119:43); for God's word (Psalm 119:81).

Then Isaiah 40:31 suggests a benefit of strengthening and power for the individual.

Those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

In the New Testament Jesus told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem. He was telling them that that this was a means of experiencing his peace, his prosperity, and his power. In waiting they would catch the wind of God's Spirit. In waiting they would see God move.

The other purpose of waiting in the New Testament was to wait for the Lord's return. Paul would write: *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ* (Philippians 3:20) and to the Thessalonians *and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

It would be fair to say that we do not like to wait.

A woman's car stalled in traffic. She looked in vain under the hood to identify the cause, while the driver behind her leaned relentlessly on his horn. Finally, she had enough. She walked back to his car and offered sweetly, "I don't know what the matter is with my car. But if you want to go look under the hood, I'll be glad to stay here and honk for you."

Why do we need to learn to wait? Why does the Lord not give what we need yesterday? Why is waiting important for us?

I. Waiting on the Lord requires patient trust and we need to learn that skill of waiting patiently.

We live by the adage: Don't just stand there, do something. While God often says to us: Don't just do something, stand there.

A. Waiting means that we give God the benefit of the doubt that he knows what he is doing

B. Waiting is God's way of seeing if we will trust him before we move forward

That trust is a patient trust. Whether it has to do with our relationships, our finances, our careers, our dreams, or our churches. We have to trust that God knows what he is doing.

II. Waiting on God reminds us that God is in control

The Psalmist in 103 suggests. "I wait for the Lord, my soul waits," declared the Psalmist, "I wait for Yahweh; I wait and put my hope in His word. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning - more than watchmen for the morning" (Ps. 130:5) During those waiting times It is important to take on the active role of a watchman. In biblical times, watchmen vigilantly guarded the city. They watched for enemies who might attack at night, and they waited for the sun to come up. They were alert and obedient, ready to respond when needed. When called upon, they sprang into action. But on the other hand, watchmen didn't make things happen. They didn't control the rising of the sun. They couldn't speed up the process of the dawning of a

new day. A watchman knew the difference between his job and God's job.

A. Waiting reminds me that I am not in charge

I'm the patient. I'm in the waiting room. In the real issues of life, I am not just waiting around - I am waiting on God, therefore, I can trust his wisdom and his timing. I've heard it said that the person who waits on God loses no time. I can wait with confidence. Because I am waiting for someone, and that someone is God.

B. Waiting reminds me that I am not God

As a man, I want to fix things. I want to fix my problems, my relationships, my conflicts, my career, and my church. Fixing and controlling situations and people is like trying to expedite the rising of the sun. From time to time I have to be reminded that I am not God (Aren't you glad?). My job is to be a watchman. I need to have a watchman's attitude: a confident and alert expectation that God will do what he said he will do.

III. Waiting on the Lord allows God to do his work

Not only do I want to do God's work, but also I want to speed up his process. I understand that the father of the modern missionary movement, William Carey, waited seven years before his first convert in India, as did Adoniram Judson in Burma. As a minister I want to see a church grow spiritually and numerically. And I want it to be a reality now. And I question God, "Why not now? Why not bring it to pass today?"

But He continues to say Wait! And I come to realize that it is God's work to grow the church but we must be ready to receive the new people and believe and want this will happen. But remember growth means change and you can't have growth without change.

A. God's timing is best

In the Old Testament book of Habakkuk, the prophet was asking similar questions. Using the watchtower motif, hear the dialogue between the prophet and God:

"I will stand at my guard post and station myself on the lookout tower. I will watch to see what He will say to me and what I should reply about my complaint. The LORD answered me: Write down this vision; clearly inscribe it on tablets so one may easily read it. For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it testifies about the end and will not lie. Though it delays, wait for it, since it will certainly come and not be late" (Hab. 2:1-3).

B. God is working

During those times, we wait patiently on the Lord. We know that deep down he is working - while it may be underneath, hidden deep in our character. In due time, God will reveal everything he's grown in us. Those who wait will never be put to shame. We will never be disappointed.

Remember that God is working everywhere and He is inviting us to join Him. But the key to the invitation is an intimate relationship with God where you can hear clearly from Him. This is what God wants: a relationship with you and me that is real and personal.

1V Waiting upon God causes me to pray deeper into the heart of God.

How much do we want what God wants for us? How much are we willing to pray for it? What sacrifice of prayer are we willing to put into God's dream for you and the church? We want revival but we do not get down on our knees often enough to pray for it nor are we willing to put the time in it.

The 1904–1905 Welsh Revival was the largest Christian revival in Wales during the 20th century. While by no means the best known of revivals, it was one of the most dramatic in terms of its effect on the population, and triggered revivals in several other countries. "The movement

kept the churches of Wales filled for many years to come, seats being placed in the aisles in Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Swansea for twenty years or so, for example. Meanwhile, the Awakening swept the rest of Britain, Scandinavia, parts of Europe, North America, the mission fields of India and the Orient, Africa and Latin America.

It began with good faithful men praying in the early hours of every morning crying out to the Lord in prayer.

The great awakenings began with earnest prayer as they waited for the Lord to come.

IV. Waiting on God increases my strength

Sometimes I struggle to remember that it's good to wait for the Lord. It isn't easy. It goes against the grain of our quick-fix society. But, there's a hidden benefit in waiting. In times of waiting my soul is revived and spirit is renewed. Isaiah wrote, "but those who trust in the LORD will renew their strength; they will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint" (Is. 40:31)

The time will come when those who wait on the Lord will soar.

Three methods of flight: Ornithologists say birds have three methods of flight. Flapping is keeping their wings in constant motion, like a hummingbird, to counteract gravity. Flapping keeps them in the air, but it is a lot of work.

Second is gliding. Here the bird builds up enough speed, then coasts downward a while. It is much more graceful than flapping, but unfortunately it does not get the bird very far. Reality in the form of gravity sets in quickly. Gliding is nice, but it does not last.

The third way is soaring. Only a few birds, such eagles, are capable of soaring. Eagles' wings are so strong that they are capable of catching rising currents of warm air - thermal winds that

go straight up from the earth - and without moving a feather can soar up to great heights. Eagles have been clocked at up to 80 m.p.h. without flapping at all. They just soar on invisible columns of air.

You and I, and the church, will catch a gust of the Spirit. It was this gust of the Spirit that the disciples in Jerusalem were instructed to wait on. It is that same gust of the Spirit that we need to wait on. And when it comes, hold on. We will be soaring.

God is the great mover. And if we wait, in patient trust, remembering that God is in control doing his work increasing our strength, we will experience the move of God on our lives and in our church.

Today we as a church face a huge challenge. We have seen how touching the heart of God for Kenya saw God move and the money was raised. We had to do our little bit but God did the rest.

But we have a bigger challenge. Do we want to exist until we die viz when the money runs out or do we want something bigger and better? To what extent are we willing to earnestly pray as an individual and as a group to God for revival? To what extent will we trust in the Lord and be open to do what He asks us so that He can bring the people in?

We can wait until the drama of the same sex marriage plays out in the Uniting Church and so sit on our hands. Or do we wait upon the Lord for His next assignment for our church.

Let us remind ourselves again.

1. God is always at work in and around the local church
2. God pursues a continuing love relationship with His Church that is real and personal.
3. God invites the church to become involved in His work.
4. When the church sees where God is at work, that is the invitation to join Him.
5. God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances and the church.
6. A church will face a crisis of belief when God invites it to become involved in a work

that only He can accomplish. Faith and Action will be required.

7. A church will have to make major adjustments to join God in His work.
8. A church is totally dependent on God for accomplishing tasks of Kingdom value.
9. Apart from God a church can do nothing of Kingdom value.
10. As a church obeys God, it will come to know Him by experience as He does wonderful things through it.

Walking Free: We continue to pray for clients on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We have seen some significant breakthroughs and healing by God. We are grateful to Diane for coming one day a week. We are now praying for 15-20 clients per month again. We are amazed and how God leads people to our doorstep.

Bible Studies: On Monday afternoons we have been studying the book of Philippians. On Wednesday nights we have been studying Experiencing God by Henry Blackaby. These have been challenging studies as we refocus on what God is doing.

Finances: We have been blessed by our clients donating for their ministry. We have also had some large donations from individuals that will help us to pay for our insurance that comes in August.

We are looking for more sponsors to support the healing and teaching work of Jesus through Walking Free. No matter how small the donation, we welcome new donors. Remember that each donation to the gift fund is tax deductible. If you would like to become a sponsor, it is a matter of a one off or regular donation to the following:

Walking Free Renewing Ministries Gift Fund

BSB 084-961 ACC 82-215-5845.

Use your name if you would like a tax receipt at the end of the financial year.

Praise God for His provision.

- **Thank God for the healing and restoration He is bringing to our clients.**
- **Pray for more finances to support Walking Free Ministry**

- **Pray for team in Adelaide who pray for the ministry: Margaret, Lesley, Diane, Valda and Tim.**
- **Please pray for team at Toowoomba: Hal and Debbie.**

Family Life. Family has been busy supporting our children and grandchildren. It is fantastic that our grandchildren want you to be there in their lives. We continue to look forward to sharing Jesus and being His example to them. We continue to pray for them all.

Pray for Naomi, Jonathan, Jennifer and Emily; David, Maddy and Elijah and Gabriel; Jess

Church: The Uniting Church is being caught up with same gender marriage issues as has the country. While the community has voted Yes, there are 4,000,000 people who voted No. There is a great concern about our religious freedoms in the future. The Uniting Church has had many who voted Yes from its ranks and now we are facing a challenging time as a church. July 2018 is when the Assembly will decide whether it will change its traditional position of marriage between a man and a woman.

This will affect many ministers and people if the church changes its position on marriage.

India: Our friends continue to proclaim the gospel in India. I have been sending my sermons to teach and encourage them and their local pastors.

A group of Hindus came to Devadas' village to stir up trouble against him and the local Christians. They threatened to burn down the church. Thankfully the police and villagers intervened.

Pray for the work of the gospel in India with Pastor's Devadas, C H (his brother) and Rev Sambabu.

Kenya: WE have now built the church with toilets and an office. During the election a number of people were hurt and displaced. We have sent money for food and medical treatment. 28 people have become Christians and joined the church. We have sent money to give them bibles and writing materials.

The political situation is still unsettling!

Pray for Pastor Newton , his pastors and people in Homa Bay and Garissa.