

WAITING ON GOD

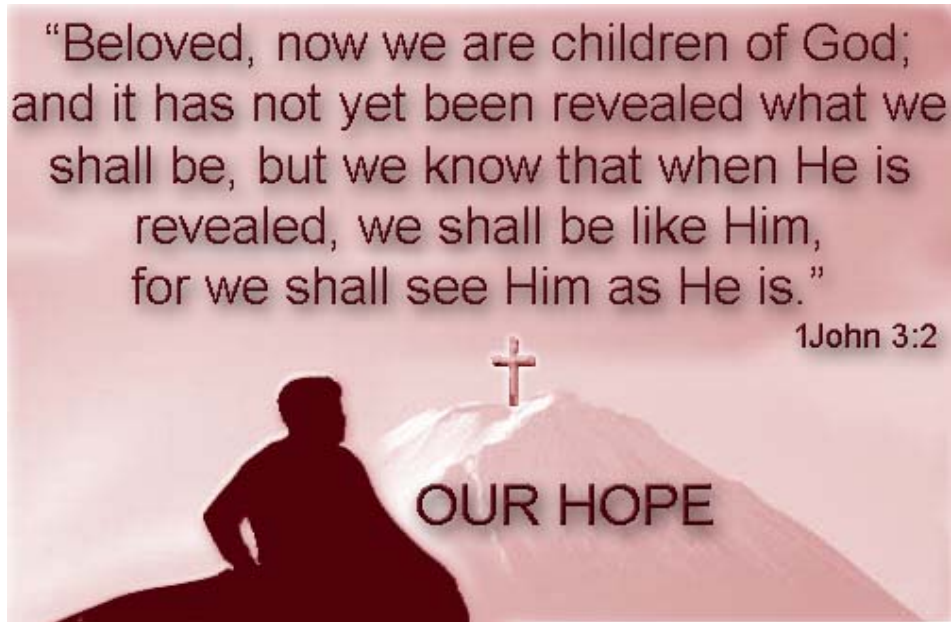


Waiting is perhaps one of the most annoying experiences of life. We wait to receive help, we wait for a deserved promotion, we wait to find a spouse, and the list could go on! In essence, we wait in the hope of obtaining what we want.

However, what does it mean to wait on God? What are God's promises to us that we should be waiting for? God through the Prophet Jeremiah said this: “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” (Jer. 29:11) In other words, waiting upon the Lord is in the steadfast hope of enjoying eternal life in His glorious presence. We sure can't hope for righteousness in this world, which gets worse by the day. The world is impatient because it has no hope of promises to be fulfilled, and rather reflects a grab as you go attitude.

As believers however, we wait for the promises of God, the reason we are enjoined to seek the Kingdom of God above all. The Prophet Habakkuk (2:3) said this: “For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” Is our hope in God or do we expect hope from this world?

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What is the hope we have as believers that motivates and compels us to live a holy life as Christ taught us? Obviously, it has nothing to do with this world. Rather, it is the promise of eternity in the glorious presence of God, a blessing that we can't even describe as none of us has ever been in the physical presence of God.

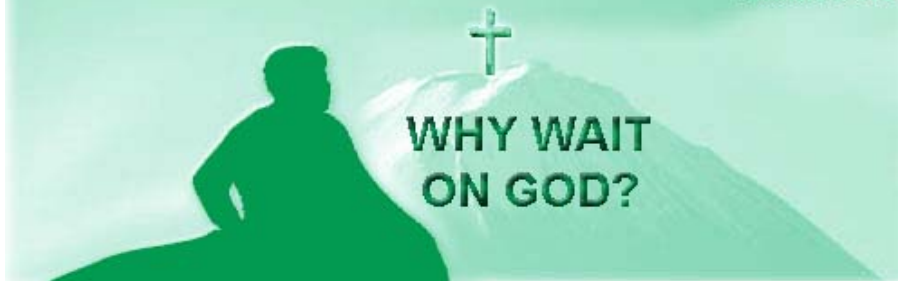
Those who witnessed Jesus' power and miracles while He was on this earth, only saw Jesus the man, but didn't see His glory. That's why Titus 2:12-13 tells us, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." Then, Philippians 3:20 adds, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

In other words, our sole purpose to follow the teachings of Christ is for the future glory of living in His presence, in the most peaceful, empowering and fulfilling life for eternity, an element we can't even understand, as we are involved with limited lifetime on this earth. And know what? It's all accomplished by faith!

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“For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD.
“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are My ways higher than your ways,
and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

Isaiah 55:8



Even from early childhood, we're inclined to question authority with the simple word "WHY"? And this is all based on our limited understanding of life's demands, or lack of it. Obviously patience is a virtue that is not received at birth but developed through time.

Does God have a purpose to make us wait on whatever we ask Him? Ecc. 3:11 says this: "God has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end." In essence, God sees the whole picture while we see only as far as our circumstances permit.

A frequently asked question is, "why do bad things happen to good people?" Romans 5:3-4 says: "We also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope." In other words, waiting has for purpose to get us grounded in God, and to glorify His Holy Name. Then Peter added; "The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." Shouldn't our wait then translate into hope in seeking God more earnestly?

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“Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”

James 5:7-8

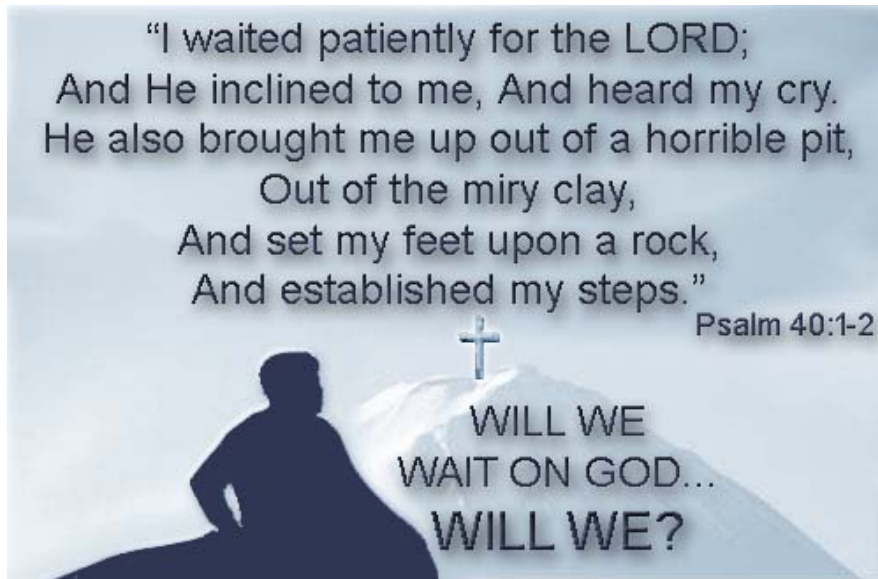


What could we define the process of waiting on the Lord? Is it to simply be in neutral and wait, or is there more to waiting that will produce blessings from God? The featured scripture gives an image of patience based on both knowledge and hope. In Rom. 12:12 Paul said, “Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer.”

In other words, all waiting requires faith in God that whatever He promised will happen, in His time, right? But waiting as well must be done with forward action, in prayer, and a steadfast walk towards God’s will, and until such time that we see God’s promises revealed. In Rom. 8:18 Paul added, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Yes, waiting might not be pleasant, but we must always have our eyes on the promises found in God’s Word.

Which brings one more important element; what are we waiting for if we have no clue as to what God’s promises are? Just as in life, we need food and drink, and one without the other will never sustain us. As well, prayer and the study of God’s Word go hand in hand, and are crucial to feed our souls and spirit, in order to produce growth in Christ for our lives.

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One of the greatest examples of waiting on God is King David. At God's request, the prophet Samuel anointed the young man David as king, and from that day on, the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power. (1Samuel 16)

While having been anointed as king, David honored Saul, served him and even played the harp to soothe his troubled spirit. All the while, Saul wanted David dead and eventually pursued him with his armies. David nonetheless remained submitted to God and would not try to usurp power through force. Rather, he chose to wait on God's time for him to officially become king, even if he once had an opportunity to kill Saul. It actually took 22 years for David to become King.

Jesus taught us that our decision to follow Him must come from a total and deep commitment of the heart, and not deceive ourselves into thinking we can believe superficially, without taking the step to totally commit and surrender our lives to Him. Jesus brought a warning that is best described in the parable of the 10 virgins. Are we going to commit to seek God each and every day and be steadfast in our faith, or are we going to be shallow with God, live foolishly like the world, and be taken by surprise to find the door closed?

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