

## Learning to Wait Upon God Part One

Acts 1:4–5 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup>And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me;

<sup>5</sup>for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

- “but wait for the Promise of the Father” - *The first instruction that Christ gave to His Church in order to be prepared to fulfill her mandate of the Great Commission was, “wait.”*
- “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” - *The Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18-20 begins with the word, “go.”*
- *The Great Commission starts with “go,” but before we can “go” we must “wait.”*
- *Waiting resulted in the Church receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit and the power to fulfill God’s will upon the earth.*
- *If the disciples had not waited in the upper room, then Pentecost for the Church would never have occurred, and something extremely important and essential would have been lost.*
- *It was at Pentecost that the gift of the Holy Spirit was given and the power of God was poured out on His Church and in that one day alone three thousand were saved.*
- *At Pentecost, the first ever evangelistic meeting accomplished more in that one event than could ever have been accomplished using man’s self effort in a thousand years.*
- *We must learn to develop the discipline of waiting in order to be able to receive all that God has for us.*

Acts 1:14 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup>These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

- *What did waiting look like for the disciples in the upper room? “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.”*
- *Waiting in the upper room took the form of prayer, intercession, and unity of heart.*

- *As the disciples waited on the Lord in prayer, God also began to place things in His Divine Order in preparation for Pentecost.*
- *As the 120 disciples waited in the upper room for those ten days, Peter arose with a revelation, “another must take Judas’ place,” and so they sought God for His choice.*
- *During those ten days they all waited in the upper room. There were times they prayed, slept, ate, and spoke about the things of God.*
- *As they continued to pray and speak of the things of God, their expectation and excitement would have continued to grow.*
- *They had no idea that the Feast of Pentecost was about to take on an entirely new meaning for the people of God and forever change the way God interacts with His people.*
- *But the important thing is that they continued to wait with expectation.*
- *The disciples didn’t know how long they would have to wait or even what to expect, but they waited with anticipation for one of the most remarkable events in the history of mankind, the giving of the Holy Spirit.*
- *The importance of waiting is clearly seen even from the very inception of the Church.*
- *Every revival and great move of God was preceded by Believers who heard the heart of God and waited upon Him.*
- *Some Christians never end up “going,” because they never start by “waiting.”*
- *One of the greatest tragedies is a believer wasting his or her entire life and never entering into the purposes and plans that God had for him or her.*
- *How many Christians have found themselves lying on their deathbed, realizing that they wasted their lives with busyness and never entered or fulfilled their calling, because they never spent time waiting on God?*

**1 Timothy 1:12 (NKJV)**

**<sup>12</sup>And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry,**

- *Paul was thankful to God because He enabled him to be faithful and to be put into the Lord’s service.*

- *Paul did not have any regrets at the end of his life. As he faced death he could say, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7)*
- *I believe one of the keys to Paul’s success in serving God was that he did not rush ahead, but knew how to wait on God even as Paul describing his conversion in Galatians 1:16-18, “...I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, not did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter...”*
- *If we are lacking purity or power or a passion for the Lord, then one of the things we may be failing in is “waiting.”*

#### Hebrews 6:12 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup>that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

- *Both faith and patience are essential for us to be able to receive God’s promises.*
- *Some Christians have faith, but do not have the patience to wait on God in order to receive His promises.*
- *Other Christians may have patience, but have no expectation that God is really going to answer their prayers and fulfill His promises.*
- *However, faith and patience together produce the quality that enables us to wait on the Lord effectively, so we are able to inherit the promises.*
- *The reason that both faith and patience are required to wait on the Lord is because waiting is not a passive attitude, but an active pursuit.*

#### Matthew 26:40 (NKJV)

<sup>40</sup>Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “What! Could you not watch with Me one hour?”

- *While Jesus prayed in those last agonizing hours in the Garden of Gethsemane His closest and most beloved disciples fell asleep.*
- *Although Jesus’ disciples stayed with Him it cannot be said that they waited with Him.*
- *Just sitting and sleeping was not what Jesus was looking for from His disciples. He was asking them to wait and pray.*

- *Sitting and just doing nothing, like sitting at a bus stop and gazing around and not really expecting the bus to arrive may result in us falling asleep and missing the bus.*
- *Waiting requires expectation that will keep us attentive and active.*
- *“But imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” can be understood to mean, “but imitate those who through faith-filled expectation waited upon God and inherited His promises.*
- *Many times Christians and His Church are lacking power, victory, and the miraculous, because Believers have failed to wait upon the Lord. They are unwilling to go through the process to develop this discipline.*
- *It is essential for us to develop the discipline of waiting so our spiritual lives will blossom.*
- *The busyness of this life is one of the greatest enemies against us developing the discipline of waiting.*
- *Sometimes it is not outward sins that steal the most from us. It’s the things that in themselves are not evil, but rob us of our time waiting upon the Lord and our devotion to Him.*

#### **Ephesians 5:1 (NKJV)**

**<sup>1</sup>Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.**

- *Our primary model of how we are to act, speak, and think is God Himself.*
- *God never asks anything from us that He Himself does not do.*

#### **Isaiah 30:18 (NKJV)**

**<sup>18</sup>Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him.**

- *“Therefore the Lord will wait” – This Hebrew word that can be translated as “wait” means to “to wait, to be patient, to tarry” and is used twice in this verse, once in reference to God and a second time in reference to people.*
- *Why does God wait? So “that He may be gracious to you...that He may have mercy on you.”*
- *God waits for us and gives us many opportunities to repent, so He can pour out His grace and mercy upon us instead of judgment and wrath.*

- *God's love and compassion compels Him to be longsuffering toward us as He endures and suffers with our rebellious and evil hearts in order to give us an opportunity to repent.*
- *2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) beautifully summarizes what motivates the heart of God to wait, "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."*
- *God withholds His judgment and wrath and endures the great evils and sins of man in order to give each person a chance to repent.*
- *To more fully grasp the significance in God waiting for us, we need to see not only His great love and compassion for us, but His humility.*
- *The Great God of the universe, the Creator of all things visible and invisible, the Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Omnipotent One humbles Himself by waiting upon us, so that while we are pursuing our selfish passions He is providing an opportunity to repent.*
- *The first part of Isaiah 30:18 deals with God waiting for us, but the second half of the verse deals with us waiting for God, "Blessed are all those who wait for Him."*
- *If God, who is the Sovereign Omnipotent God, is willing to wait for us how much more should we be willing to humble ourselves and wait for Him and His perfect timing.*

**Galatians 4:4–5 (NKJV)**

**<sup>4</sup>But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,  
<sup>5</sup>to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.**

- *"But when the fullness of the time had come" - God endured the evil and sinfulness of mankind through the millennia. He meticulously step-by-step prepared the way until everything was perfectly in place for the incarnation of His Son, Jesus Christ.*
- *"God sent forth His Son, born of a woman" - But Jesus Christ did not appear as a full grown man ready to redeem mankind, but was born as a helpless baby and had to grow and develop and endure all the plight of sinful mankind until finally He was ready to die for our sins.*
- *"born under the law" – God did not exempt Himself from all that was needed to redeem mankind. He humbled Himself and subjected Himself to the same*

*Laws that He had established and He patiently waited while He went through the process to fulfill every detail of the Law, down to the last tittle of the Law.*

- *Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to this earth born as a man so that He could be that perfect example for us to follow and one of those examples is how to wait upon the Father's timing.*
- *One thing people naturally hate to do is to wait, because it goes against our natural sinful selfish self-centered egotistical ways.*
- *Waiting on God means to put aside our selfish agenda and put God's plan and ways above our own. It is another way of establishing the Lordship of Jesus Christ in our lives.*
- *Waiting on God is another expression of surrendering ourselves to the will of God.*
- *There are many facets to waiting upon the Lord.*
- *There are approximately 78 words in the Hebrew that can be translated "wait" but they all fit into four main categories.*
  - *Waiting by Watching.*
  - *Waiting by Serving.*
  - *Waiting in Hope.*
  - *Waiting in Silence.*
- *These four ways of waiting are not mutually exclusive and sometimes more than one type of waiting can occur at the same time.*
- *A picture of how these four categories interrelate can be seen in an example of someone who we would call a waiter.*
- *If one goes to a restaurant we can observe these attributes in a good waiter.*
  - *First, a waiter waits by watching. If he observes something that you need, you do not need to call him over. He comes forward voluntarily to provide assistance.*
  - *Second, a waiter waits by serving. If a waiter only took your order, but never actually brought the food, then his service is useless.*
  - *Third, a waiter waits in silence. A waiter is there to meet your needs, standing in the background. He should not be disruptive, but silent so he can be attentive to your needs.*

- *Fourth, a waiter waits in hope. At the end of the evening he is hoping for a good tip.*
- *Fallen human nature fosters an attitude that is hostile to the idea of waiting and specifically Western society with the advent of consumerism – the consumer is king.*
- *“The customer is always right. Don’t keep the customer waiting.”*
- *People become impatient and sometime outraged if they are kept waiting or if they don’t receive service in a timely fashion.*
- *Is it any wonder that Christians in the West tend to struggle so much spiritually?*
- *Christians need to unlearn what society has taught and understand we are not the center of the universe and we are to wait upon God who is.*
- *How many times do Christians get upset with God because they have to wait for an answer from Him?*
- *Some Christians even walk away from God, because He didn’t provide them valet service, but they actually had to seek God themselves instead of having other Believers doing the seeking and praying for them.*

**Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV)**

<sup>31</sup>But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

- *“But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength” – One reason Christians can struggle spiritually and be spiritually weak is because they fail to develop and practice the discipline of waiting.*
- *It is interesting the order given: flying, running, and walking.*
- *One may think it should be walking, running, and flying, but that would be the order of the natural mind.*
- *What takes the greatest level of spiritual maturity - flying, running, or walking?*
- *A flying eagle requires very little effort, since the winds carry it along and up, soaring above the earth.*

- *Although running expends much energy, it is usually for a short period of time and gets you to your destination quickly.*
- *Walking is a much slower paced activity and may require many to get to your final destination.*
- *It is interesting to note in Isaiah 40:31 that running may cause a person to grow weary, but walking may cause a person to faint and drop from exhaustion.*
- *God trains us in waiting, starting from the experience of flying like an eagle and then running, but the greatest level of strength, endurance, and maturity is seen in those who have learned to walk with the Lord.*
- *Even an immature Believer who has a supernatural encounter with God can wait upon the Lord during that experience.*
- *Those times when God visits us in extraordinary supernatural ways are wonderful, but they don't reflect day-to-day life.*
- *However, through these supernatural encounters God is wooing us into a deeper relationship with Him – it is not the place we can live, but is a glimpse of where we will one day live.*
- *While flying represents being caught up in those supernatural experiences with the Holy Spirit where we are not at all in contact with the earth, running represents ministry.*
- *When a person runs they are not fully in contact with the earth, but they leap from foot to foot as they fly through the air.*
- *When a person is ministering and the Holy Spirit is anointing them as they preach, teach, or pray for people, they are energized by the Holy Spirit and minister with such conviction and faith that it appears they have unstoppable faith.*
- *When a person is ministering the fully weight and pressure of life is lifted as the Holy Spirit empowers the person to speak words of life and faith.*
- *However, our lives do not consist of always preaching or ministering, but just living.*
- *While flying represents being caught up in those supernatural experiences, and running represents ministering under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, walking represents living moment by moment, day by day in the reality of the struggles, sorrows, and joys of this life.*



- *When a person flies his feet never touch the earth, when a person runs his feet are only sometimes in contact with the earth, but when someone walks their feet are firmly in contact with the earth.*
- *While some have learned to experience God in supernatural experiences, when that doesn't occur they quickly fall back into their selfish pattern of complaining.*
- *Others seemed to do well when they are engaged in ministry, but their private lives and their thought life sadly lacks the discipline of enjoying God's presence when they are not in the limelight.*
- *However, those who have learned to walk daily with the Lord, enjoy His presence, and have developed the discipline of waiting on Him daily, they are the ones who will be able to weather the storms of life and shall renew their strength and not grow weary and faint.*

**1 John 2:6 (NKJV)**

**<sup>6</sup>He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.**

- *Abiding incorporates in it the idea of waiting.*
- *If we are abiding in Him and are learning to wait upon the Lord then even as He walked we are to walk – in other words, the way Jesus lived out His life day by day and moment by moment is the same we are to live.*
- *If we learn to walk with Him then the running and flying are not going to be a problem.*