

**Learning to Wait Upon God
Part Two
Waiting Upon God in Prayer**

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

- *Our lives have true and eternal purposes. God created us for good works and those good works were predestined for us by God even before we were born.*
- *“That we should walk in them” – However, although we “should” walk in them doesn’t mean we “will” walk in them. That choice is ours to make.*

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

- *There are many Scriptures in the Bible that encourage us and even instruct us to do good works.*
- *The Bible offers repeated promises that God will reward us for doing good works.*

Galatians 2:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

- *However, the Bible clearly states that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but is counted righteous solely based on faith in Jesus Christ.*

Romans 9:31–32 (NKJV)

³¹but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

³²Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

- *The Bible teaches that those who pursue righteousness by doing the works of the law will stumble and be offended by Jesus Christ.*
- *The Bible makes a clear distinction between “the works of the law” and “good works.”*

- *Pursuing the works of the law result in unbelief, while doing good works result in eternal rewards.*
- *What is the difference between works and good works?*
- *Works is trying to please God or ourselves through our own self-effort.*
- *Good works is co-labouring with God because “it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” (Philippians 2:13)*
- *The difference between works and good works is that works are done without God, while good works are done with God.*

Hebrews 6:1 (NKJV)

¹Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

- *The Bible contrasts “dead works” with “faith toward God.”*
- *Dead works aren’t defined only as doing things that are outwardly sinful. Dead works can also be defined as doing anything without faith in God.*
- *Dead works are activities which will not produce fruit, and in themselves will deaden our spiritual lives, because they are devoid of faith.*
- *Many Christians have busied themselves trying to serve God in self-effort without God empowering them by His grace. Unwittingly, they are involved in dead works which result in burnout and spiritual barrenness.*
- *It is possible for people to pray prayers that are nothing more than dead works, because their prayers are not faith-filled, but are comprised of meaningless rituals, empty phrases, and false notions.*
- *If good works are defined as “God working in us and through us to accomplish His good pleasure,” then it requires us to wait on God, so we are in step with Him, His will, and His timing.*
- *If Christians find themselves struggling to find true meaning and fellowship in prayer with the Lord, it means something is missing in their spiritual lives.*
- *One of the key components for having a vibrant prayer life is to incorporate the discipline of waiting into their prayer life.*
- *The discipline of waiting and the discipline of prayer are intrinsically linked together.*

- *One cannot have a deep prayer life without having a well-developed discipline of waiting.*
- *Since the Christian faith is not a religion but a relationship with God, prayer is absolutely essential.*
- *Probably the number one excuse that Christians give for not praying more is, “I don’t have time.”*
- *What they are really saying is, “I don’t like waiting and spending time with God. I would rather busy myself doing other things.”*
- *The reason people avoid spending time waiting on God in prayer is because waiting requires effort and discipline.*
- *Waiting is not a passive attitude, but an active pursuit.*
- *Waiting requires spiritual maturity and waiting also produces spiritual maturity.*
- *So what comes first, spiritual maturity or the spiritual discipline of waiting on God?*
- *God is the author and finisher of our faith, for He is the Creator of all things and He is the Great Initiator.*
- *He sought us, He found us, and He is the One who called us to salvation and into His service.*
- *So what comes first—spiritual maturity or the discipline of waiting?*
- *God, Who awakens us.*
- *However, our response to the calling of His Holy Spirit will determine the direction of our lives.*

Four aspects of waiting need to be applied to our prayer lives.

- *Waiting by Watching.*
- *Waiting by Serving.*
- *Waiting in Hope.*
- *Waiting in Silence.*

1 Corinthians 1:30 (NKJV)

³⁰But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—

- *Each of the four ways of waiting will reveal and manifest a different dimension of Jesus Christ.*
- *Jesus Christ became wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption for us.*
- *Waiting by watching produces wisdom.*

Psalm 119:62–64 (NKJV)

⁶²At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You, Because of Your righteous judgments.

⁶³I am a companion of all who fear You, And of those who keep Your precepts.

⁶⁴The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy; Teach me Your statutes.

- *King David in Psalm 119 wrote, “At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You.”*
- *David also wrote about the wonders of God’s righteous judgments, His precepts, His Laws, His Word, and His statutes.*
- *As David would arise in the middle of the night to pray, he would meditate and consider the ways of God.*
- *If one does not develop the discipline of waiting by watching in prayer, he or she will miss the benefits of the wisdom that God would desire to impart during those times.*
- *Prayer by watching becomes part of our spiritual discipline of meditating on God’s Word.*
- *During times of prayer when we are waiting on God by watching, He will begin to impart to us wisdom and insights into His Word.*
- *“At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You, Because of Your righteous judgments.” – When David would rise at midnight and begin to pray, he would begin to give thanks for God’s righteous judgments—in other words he would rejoice in God’s Word and as he did, he was considering God’s Word.*
- *This discipline of waiting on God in prayer afforded David wisdom, so he could live a holy and fruitful life and not be exposed to the snares of the enemy.*

- *When we wait on God in watchfulness, we are constantly reminded of all His wonderful attributes. This produces a God-consciousness and the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. (Psalm 111:10)*

Psalm 69:5 (NKJV)

⁵O God, You know my foolishness; And my sins are not hidden from You.

- *There was a time in King David's life when he fell into the deep and destructive sins of adultery and murder. I believe one of the main reasons this happened was because he failed to maintain his prayer life and the discipline of waiting by watching. Instead of acting with wisdom and prudence, he strayed from God's statutes and acted like a fool.*
- *Waiting by serving produces righteousness.*
- *How is waiting by serving seen in prayer?*
- *Prayer is not just for us and not just about us.*
- *Christians who see prayer only as a way of making their needs known will never enjoy the delight of fellowship with God, nor the true multifaceted riches of prayer.*
- *There are at least two aspects of prayer where waiting by serving produces righteousness.*
- *One is when we spend time worshiping and adoring the Lord.*

Psalm 100:2 (NKJV)

²Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.

- *When we spend time in prayer with a glad heart and worship Him, we are serving God and delighting His heart.*
- *This produces righteousness (a right relationship) with God and strengthens our bond of fellowship with Him.*
- *The other way of waiting by serving in prayer is seen as we intercede for the needs of others. Our prayers are an act of service for others as we seek God on their behalf.*
- *When we serve others by interceding for their needs it produces righteousness (right relationships), and also brings them into right relationship with God if they are not already.*

- *When we serve those who hate us or have hurt us by interceding for them, it produces righteousness, because we are fulfilling Christ's commandment, "bless those who curse you and pray for those who spitefully use you." (Luke 6:28)*
- *Sometimes people spend many hours struggling to forgive someone for what they have done, when that time could be spent much more effectively by praying for them.*

Romans 12:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸**If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.**

- *All God asks us to do is live peaceably with all men as much as it depends on us.*
- *If for whatever reason, someone does not want to be peaceable to us, we can still maintain a righteous attitude by praying for them.*
- *We are serving those who oppose us by praying for their needs, their salvation, and for God's blessing on their lives.*

Daniel 9:2–5 (NKJV)

²**in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.**

³**Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.**

⁴**And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,**

⁵**we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.**

- *While studying the Book of Jeremiah, Daniel understood that the seventy years of Israel's captivity would soon be coming to an end.*
- *Daniel's response was to humble himself and seek God in fasting and prayer for the restoration of Israel.*
- *Daniel understood that once we know God's will, we need to pray into His will in order to see it fulfilled.*
- *As Daniel waited in prayer, interceding for the restoration of his people, he was serving before God to see God's will accomplished.*
- *Daniel was bringing forth God's righteous will as he waited on God in prayer.*

- *Waiting in hope produces sanctification.*
- *Hope gives us perseverance to continue to wait on God in prayer.*
- *Many people fail to see the fulfillment of God's will in their lives, because they grow weary in prayer when they fail to see immediate results.*
- *Hebrews 6:12 teaches that through faith and patience we inherit or receive the promises that God has given us.*

Habakkuk 2:3 (NKJV)

³For 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.

- *Though the vision tarry it will be fulfilled in the appointed time.*
- *The world and the devil try to wear us down, so we will stop waiting on God in prayer for His promises to be fulfilled.*
- *Waiting in hope overcomes this discouragement, so we will be able to receive all God has for us and for those around us.*
- *There are many reasons why God's timetable is different from ours.*

1 John 3:2–3 (NKJV)

²Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

³And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

- *“everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” –
When we wait on God in hope it purifies us, so we will become as pure as He is.*
- *When a person waits without hope it produces discouragement, disappointment, and perhaps even bitterness.*
- *However, when a Christian waits in hope, it produces purity.*
- *When we spend time before God in prayer waiting on Him in hope, He does a marvelous work of sanctification.*
- *Christians who fail to spend time waiting on God in hope, never experience liberty and freedom from their sin and their old habits.*

Psalm 37:7 (NKJV)

⁷Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

- *Although this world is filled with injustice, we are to continue to pray and wait on God in hope for the salvation of many millions of people, and ultimately the judgment of all unrighteousness.*
- *Waiting in silence produces redemption.*
- *Waiting in silence acknowledges that our salvation and even the fruitfulness of our lives are ultimately from God Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ by the power of His Holy Spirit.*

2 Chronicles 20:17–22 (NKJV)

¹⁷You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!’ Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD is with you.”

¹⁸And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD.

¹⁹Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high.

²⁰So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.”

²¹And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: “Praise the LORD, For His mercy endures forever.”

²²Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.

- *“You will not need to fight in this battle.” – There are some battles we can fight, but there are some battles only God can fight.*
- *Jesus Christ alone had to face all the powers of the devil, all the evils of mankind, and all the sins of the world. He carried them all to Calvary, and then to the depths of Hell.*
- *Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD” – We are to position ourselves, stand in silence, and behold the salvation of God. As John the Baptist said as he pointed to Jesus Christ, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)*

- *What does waiting in silence through prayer look like?*
- *Waiting in silence in prayer is not so much an outward experience as an inward one.*

¹⁸And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD.

- *In this verse, waiting in silence took the form of all the people bowing down silently and worshiping God.*
- *Their outward silence as they worshiped God reflected an inward peace.*
- **Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.” – As the people were preparing to stand still as they faced their enemies the next day, the king exhorted the people to trust God.**

²¹And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: “Praise the LORD, For His mercy endures forever.”

²²Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.

- *As Israel faced her enemies their “waiting in silence” in prayer looked like shouting, singing, and praising God.*
- *Waiting in silence in prayer demonstrates an inward peace and confidence in God, and allows Him to deliver us from impossible situations and the result is redemption.*
- *Sometimes that quiet confidence will manifest itself in outward silence as we in awe contemplate all that Christ has done for us at Calvary.*
- *Sometimes that quiet confidence will manifest itself with loud shouts of joy and thanksgiving.*

Job 42:1–2 (NKJV)

¹Then Job answered the LORD and said:

²“I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.

- **“I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.” - In the midst of Job’s terrible suffering and losses, he**

finally came to a place of quiet confidence in the sovereignty and faithfulness of God which resulted in God's redemption being manifested.

- *When we are confronted with overwhelming circumstances, we need to silence our inner turmoil by considering all that God has done for us through Jesus Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection.*
- *Waiting by Watching.*
- *Waiting by Serving.*
- *Waiting in Hope.*
- *Waiting in Silence.*