

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

The DEVO

JULY 4 - 8, 2022



LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

Pentecost Series
Jun 12 - Aug 7

MONDAY

Read **Romans 8:18-21; Galatians 4:4-7**

The Bible is a book of waiting.

One of the hardest lessons growing up occurred at a Cub Scout meeting one afternoon. I was so looking forward to going swimming at the close of the meeting; I just couldn't wait. The poor den mother grew so exasperated with my incessant question, "When are we going swimming? When are we going swimming?" Abruptly, I was told to leave the meeting. My mother was called, and she came to pick me up. I never went swimming that day.

Imagine a planet with serial waiting—one waiting period after another. That is the Bible's version of events. Think about it. After the Egyptian pharaohs forgot about Joseph, an extended family had become a nation in bondage. God heard the people's prayers and sent Moses to set His people free. His people had been waiting a long time.

After exiting Egypt by crossing the Red Sea on dry land, the people waited 40 years, wandering in the wilderness before entering their Promised Land by crossing the Jordan River on dry land. What awaited them was more waiting, with delays along the way.

Long after the exile to Babylon, the time was ripe for the Messiah to be revealed—the incarnation of Jesus. Simeon and Anna were working in the Temple that day when Jesus was dedicated according to their custom. By the Holy Spirit's inspiration, Simeon recognized the baby

to be who Jesus was (and is)—the promised Messiah for whom His people and the world were waiting.

Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the long-awaited Messiah; but He was killed, only to be resurrected three days later. He appeared to His disciples and others, telling them to wait in Jerusalem until the arrival of the Holy Spirit, who arrived seven Sundays after Jesus' resurrection on the Day of Pentecost.

But before Jesus had departed for Heaven to be with His Father, He promised that He would return. And we are still yet again in a waiting mode for this promise to be fulfilled.

QUESTIONS

What should we be doing during this current waiting period?
How has God prepared us for being a waiting people?

PRAYERS

For His Children-Ecuador (FHC)

Growing unrest is occurring in the capitol, Quito. The people are frustrated over current government economic and social policies. As the situation continues to worsen, key roads are being blocked and violence is breaking out. Pray that the government and protestors can reach an agreement that is beneficial to all the people of Ecuador.

TUESDAY

Read **Romans 8:18-21**; **Ephesians 1:9-10**

All of creation is waiting for something.

As a camper and a Cub Scout master, my father was a stickler for leaving the campsite in better shape than we found it. Littering was a major infraction. On the way to an outing, a boy threw a paper wrapper out the window. My Dad screeched to a halt, backed up the car, and made the boy retrieve it.

According to Paul, it isn't just people in all of history who are waiting; it's all of creation. And what is creation waiting for? I think it is more than leaving one's campsite better than one found it or leaving trails and roadways unlittered. Creation is waiting for us to come into our own. With great privilege comes great responsibility (Luke 12:48). And this privilege and responsibility is frankly too big for us—by ourselves. That is where Jesus comes in, and with Him, His Holy Spirit, to save and enable us. God has made and is making a way for the impossible to become possible. In fact, He makes it a sure thing.

*“For creation waits in **eager expectation** for the children of God to be revealed.”* (Romans 8:19, emphasis added)

Ever wonder why God went to such lengths to create all the stars, oceans, mountains, meadows, lakes, trees and flowers, plus a worldwide zoo of animals and birds? All God's handiwork declares the glory of

God (Psalm 19:1-4). “Men are without excuse, because what can be known of God is found in creation” (Romans 1:19-20).

People, too, are part of God’s creation. We are “*fearfully and wonderfully made*” (Psalm 139:14). We are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). “*Created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them*” (Ephesians 2:10). However, sometimes—too often—nature is more in tune with God than we are.

Like Paul, who says creation is waiting, Jesus provided a personification of nature when saying “... *even the rocks would cry out, if the people didn’t*” (Luke 19:40). God’s “Plan A” is us. We are to praise and glorify God. Otherwise, “Plan B” is for creation (the stones) to do it. Ideally, we both “declare His glory.”

QUESTIONS

In what ways are you “*letting your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify*” God (Matthew 5:16)?

PRAYERS

For His Children-Ecuador (FHC)

Road blockages are disrupting essential supplies. Food shortages are occurring in some neighborhoods in both Quito and Latacunga (and elsewhere), where For His Children has two orphanages that, together, house about 70 orphans and some very disabled young adults. Pray that any evil or violence at work amid these protests would be overcome.

WEDNESDAY

Read [Isaiah 40:31](#); [Romans 5:1-5](#); [James 1:2-5](#)

God helps us in our waiting.

When I finished my degree in Library School in my midlife, I told my wife it was her turn. So, she went back to Citrus College to finish her A.A. degree. One of the courses she took was Art History. She fell in love with the stories of the artists, along with the art they painted. She came alive with her new discoveries. She went on to get her B.A. degree at Cal Poly Pomona in Art History.

God helps us in our waiting by letting us know He knew about it all along. The themes of patience and endurance are exhorted and cultivated in the Bible. Periods of waiting build character and build up hope. *“Sufferings produce **perseverance**; perseverance produces character; and character, hope”* (Romans 5:3-4, emphasis added).

*“The testing of your faith produces **perseverance**. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything”* (James 1:3-4, emphasis added). Perseverance is what we need while waiting. God wastes nothing—not even the “down” times of waiting for His promises to be fulfilled.

As members of His Body, the Church, God assigns to us different functions with different talents. God helps us find our niche; and when we do, life is more “worth living.” We can encourage others in their talent search by paying attention, noticing, and being thankful

for others. God gives us things to be thankful for even in the most difficult situations.

Isaiah wrote, *“Those who wait on the LORD will renew their strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not be weary; they will walk and not faint”*

QUESTIONS

What things will you find to be thankful for today? Have you found God’s place for you in His kingdom?

PRAYERS

For His Children-Ecuador (FHC)

Supermarket shelves are running bare. Fresh food prices have risen significantly. Fear is that gas supplies will run out, and that water and electricity will be lost. Currently FHC has enough supplies. Pray the children and staff will continue to be properly fed and safely sheltered and that water and electricity will be maintained.

THURSDAY

Read **Matthew 6:34**

We are not waiting for eternity because we are in eternity now.

John Ortberg saw a sign in Dallas Willard's office saying, "Eternity Is Now in Session." Then he, John Ortberg, wrote a book with that title. This is a good reminder that we should live in the present. Yes, we are always waiting, it seems, but what we have right here right now is crucial and important. Jesus said this in His most famous sermon: "*Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own*" (Matthew 6:34). In other words, live faithfully a day at a time.

Other excellent Christian books address this same theme: George Eldon Ladd wrote *The Presence of the Future*; Jurgen Moltmann wrote *Theology of Hope*; N.T. Wright wrote *Surprised by Hope*. According to N.T. Wright, the reason the first disciples lived such hope-filled lives was because they had seen the resurrected Jesus. Jesus' resurrection surprised them, which led to a life of surprises. This can also be our story. Expect surprises.

It's true that our lives are filled with difficulty and challenge, but our faith is in an overcoming God. We can look for God in every situation, as Don Moen sings, "God will make a way where there seems to be no way."

Being a good listener is an excellent way of being present in the moment. Two-way conversations are the best, of course. Everyone has something important to say. What is it? In this way, we wait on each other.

QUESTIONS

What is going on in your life right now? What is going on in the lives of people around you?

PRAYERS

For His Children-Ecuador (FHC)

Due to road blockages and violence, staff are finding it difficult to get to work – some are walking nearly two hours, while others are staying onsite. Pray for continued protection over the staff, children, and the homes in Quito and Latacunga.

FRIDAY

Read [John 2](#); [John 8](#); [Acts 1](#); [Ephesians 5:15-17](#)

What did Jesus do while waiting for His “time to come”?

We know little of how Jesus lived His life waiting for His ministry to begin. We can know that He spent time in the Temple and the local synagogue, studying the scrolls of the Hebrew Bible. He had a high regard for the Scriptures (Matthew 5:17-19), quoting and teaching from them often. It’s also likely that He was a good carpenter.

We can extrapolate that Jesus trusted His Father to show Him how to live in the moment and how to leave the times and circumstances to the One whom He trusted in and communicated with in prayer. Before the Festival of Tabernacles, Jesus told His half-brothers, *“My time is not yet here; for you any time will do. The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify that its works are evil. You go to the festival; I am not going up to this festival, because My time has not yet fully come”* (John 7:6-8).

After His resurrection, Jesus told His curious disciples, *“It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority”* (Acts 1:7). We have developed schedules and schemes showing how things will unfold, but it is perhaps best to leave all of this to God. Trust the future to Him and live in the moment, trusting in and conversing with Him about today (Matthew 6:34).

Paul also had some advice about this: *“Be very careful then, how you live—not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is”* (Ephesians 5:15-17). In other translations, he says, *“Redeem the time.”* But how? Sometimes we “kill time” by playing solitaire or some other innocuous activity. God wants us to enjoy ourselves and wholesome entertainment is great. But why “waste time” while *“the fields ... are ripe for harvest”* (John 4:35)?

We can always pray for those ahead of or behind us while waiting in lines. We can assist others with a “random act of kindness,” advising that it’s for God’s glory should they ask. *“Encourage one another daily, as long as it is called ‘Today,’ so that none of you may be hardened”* (Hebrews 3:13).

QUESTIONS

How are you stewarding the gift of time God is giving you? What are you reading that might prove helpful?

PRAYERS

For His Children-Ecuador (FHC)

In addition to prayers for God to work for a positive resolution of the people’s grievances and their calls for justice and a responsive government, FHC is keeping its children and staff safe behind eight-foot tall solid walls. Pray that all who are in FHC’s charge will remain safe, fed and loved.

Sources

- John Ortberg, *Eternity Is Now in Session* (Carol Streams, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2018).
- George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974).
- Jurgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1969).
- N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008).
- Don Moen, "God Will Make a Way," released 1992.

