



Teach Me Lord to Wait

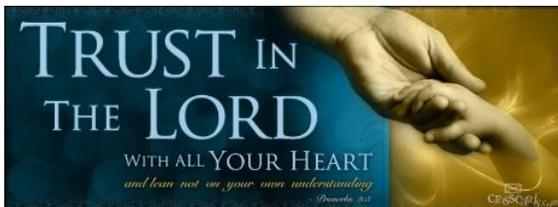
*Teach me Lord, to wait
Down on my knees,
Till in Your own good time
You answer my please;
Teach me not to rely
On what others do,
But to wait in prayer
For an answer from You.*

*Teach me Lord, to wait
While hearts are aflame,
Let me humble my pride
And call on Your name
Keep my faith renewed,
My eyes on Thee,
Let me be on this earth
What you want me to be.*

Chorus:

*“They that wait upon 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.”
Teach me Lord, teach me Lord, to wait!*

Stuart Hamblen, 1953



WALK THIS WAY

Long ago - anticipating a time when God’s covenant would reside within His people’s hearts - the prophet Isaiah wrote these words:

.... [Y]our Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.
Isaiah 30:20, 21.

How often have I been driving along a new route and come to that dreaded “fork in the road,” where I wished that an all-knowing voice would whisper in my ear, “This is the way, walk in it”! How much more do we walk through life, though, and desire explicit directions for those figurative forks in the road? Or long for guidance when we approach a tempting side street? Or strain to hear that voice when a fog obscures the very pavement at our feet?

Scripture frequently uses the metaphor of “walking” to illustrate any number of aspects about our relationship with God. Recently, though, I was reading the book of 1st John with its repeating, almost symphonic, themes of love and joy; and in the first two chapters, I noticed that John uses the walking image to drive home two specific points. The first is that “walking in the light” will result in fellowship, and John specifies here fellowship with each other.



If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. I John 1:6,7

God has called us to be a community. Walking in the light, striving to recognize and follow God's call, necessitates that we cherish that community, that relationship, that fellowship. God never intended for each of us to walk our Christian journey all alone, but to give strength and encouragement to others, and to seek that strength from others as well.

The second point is that "walking" is directly related to obedience to Christ's example.

And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments...By this we may know that we are in him; whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. 1 John 2: 3, 5b-6

We walk as He walked when we are loving, when we are submissive to God, when we are humble, when we are brave. We walk as He walked when we are committed to following God's will above our own.

So when we are tempted to judge another sister, to say an unkind word, to withhold an act of kindness, to ignore the example of Jesus, may we hear, and may we heed, that word behind us, saying:

This is the way, walk in it.

Ina McKune
Rolla, Missouri

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WAITING

Okay. My appointment was supposed to take place more than an hour ago and, yet, here I sit. What is going on? Why can't they stay on time? Don't they know my time is valuable, too? I hate waiting! What am I supposed to do, just sit here wasting my time? Waiting?

Well, I'm here for my appointment, but they haven't



called my name yet. I guess I have a little time on my hands. Thanks to my smart phone, I can send out a text message or two. There's a young Christian Sister who

just brought her twins home from the hospital and a Brother with a broken arm. I'll bet they could both use a little encouragement. Good thing I stuck those cards in my purse before I left home. I know a couple of older Christian Sisters who are struggling with serious health problems and could probably use some cheering up. Oh, and there's that young, college graduate who is headed into the job market for the first time. She might find

some scripture inspirational. I'm so glad I keep a current prayer list on my phone. I can take a little time to lift up

Patience is not the ability to wait, but the ability to keep a good attitude while waiting.

those who could really use God's hope and love right now. Was that my name they called? Wow!

Where did the time go?

"But I trust in you, Lord. I say, 'You are my God.' My whole life is in your hands."
Psalm 31:14-15b (NIRV)

Linda Roberts
Rolla, Missouri

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MO-DOT CARES

You've done this too. You've been driving down the road a hundred miles an hour trying to escape all the bad things that are happening to you and wailing about it to God. If you pull up to a stoplight and there are cars in the next lane, you knock it off until you're out of traffic. Then, when the coast is clear, you start up again right where you left off.

One of my daughters told me about her carrying on behind the wheel not too long ago. She said she was really telling God how bad things were in her life and had just yelled to Him, "Nobody cares about me!" when she saw an important message. There, alongside I-44 on a big flashing sign: "MODOT CARES." (Missouri Department of Transportation for those not familiar with MODOT. Alicia and I have laughed about this many times.



And then one day it became code for something else. It happened like this.

Alicia called me one afternoon, and I went into a big rant about some minor incident. "I can't do this anymore. Nothing good ever happens. There's no help from God. There's just more-more-more to put up with. I'm sick of it! Nobody cares! It makes absolutely no difference!" She said, "MODOT does. MODOT cares."

I've often very secretly and smugly thought that maybe I'm sort of above average in the patience area because I'm so practiced at it, and I know all the correct Christianese for sounding righteous about the waiting.

But I know better. And if you're sometimes a little smug about how patient you are, you know better, too.

Here's how it works for a lot of us patient Christians. We announce to God what we're going to do. We give Him some quality detailed instructions to spur Him on. We wait for Him to get with the program.

In a few days or weeks, depending on what our plan is, we'll brag to God a little bit about how patient and flexible we are while we wait for His perfect timing and



His perfect provision. That's how we say it when we're pointing it out to Him. "Lord," we'll say (maybe in the car and maybe someplace else) "I trust Your perfect timing and Your perfect provision on matter x-y-z." We even say to our Christian friends when asked how matter x-y-z is progressing, "Oh, I trust the Lord's perfect provision and timing." And we say it in an expansive, yet humble, manner.

For me, I suppose I may think that my big phraseology somehow conceals the ugliness of my soul as it is bared before our Lord God and King. But the truth is, it doesn't even conceal it from the sisters in Christ who I think I'm also fooling. These words come into my mind: "Haughty waiting."

I've spent days, weeks, months, years, and decades in haughty waiting. Like a child with one demand after another, I've deceived myself into thinking I'm actually this really valuable soldier to the God of the Universe because I'm so awesomely patient and understanding while He dallies about.

Meanwhile, God watches. He sees that MODOT cares and understands that frustration. He sees an erratic driver and listens to the next chapter in a life story that is populated with traits of short-sightedness, selfishness, self-pity, procrastination, and fear. He comforts me even though my version of my life story – scant with real insight – is rife with trivial excuses and not even a mustard seed of faith.

Once, after yet another disappointment, I told our Heavenly Father, "God, maybe you don't remember what it's like down here. We have to live inside of time. You don't, so maybe you don't really understand." I was wounded and sad and didn't care about an answer.

But an answer came to me from His word. God wanted the Israelites to take the Promised Land. He had everything ready for them, and they had been assured He would give it to them. But the Israelites were short-sighted. They selfishly wished for the things that were behind them. They were filled with self-pity and fear. They gave excuse after excuse about why they could not possibly do what God asked. They were presumptuous with haughty waiting. How long would they have to eat this ridiculous food? How long would they have to live in this turmoil and deprivation? Well, it was a lifetime. Our loving God relented and gave them what they wanted and took away His astonishing opportunity. The Israelites had never really been waiting for God. God had been waiting for them.

This is how it is with me, too. God sows good seed into my life. I allow it to be choked out with thorns and weeds... thorns and weeds that I am carefully tending! And while I tend them, I get into my car and throw a tantrum for God to uproot them! And a lifetime goes by as I wait for God to remove the things I won't give up. And a lifetime goes by as God waits for me to leave those foolish things behind and come into the Promised Land.

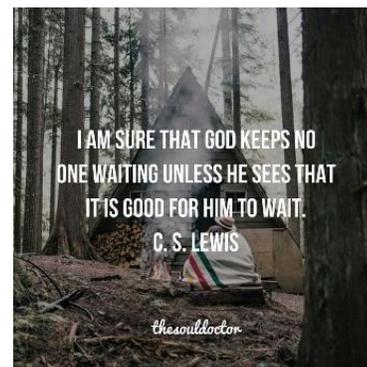
And as I accuse God of leaving me with only MODOT as a source of comfort for my disappointments in this world, our gentle Father reminds me, "*Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.*" *Be careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.*" Ephesians 5:14-17

Donna Roberts
Rolla, Missouri



SEASONS OF WAITING

Waiting. It is such an integral part of our lives. As a child, I never experienced waiting for any real length of time. My school probably had less than 100 students in grades 1-12; so lines were never long. That changed once I went to



college. My university was only about 4,000 students; but to this country girl, it seemed like the lines were endless. Sometimes it is with eager anticipation that we wait; at other times, it is a time of uncertainty and dread.

Waiting is not new to the world at all. Sarah, Rachel, Hannah, and Elizabeth all endured seasons of waiting to bear a child. To them, the wait must have seemed interminable, especially for Sarah and Elizabeth who were both well advanced in years before their dreams came true. The results of the long waits these women experienced had long-lasting impacts on the history of the followers of God. In fact, the waiting of each of these women still influences our lives today.

Sarah became so impatient for God to fulfill his promise to Abraham that she made a rash decision which still affects her descendants to this day. Rachel did not live



long enough to know what a pivotal role her firstborn son would play in history. Hannah promised her long awaited son to the

service of God before he was ever conceived. She had approximately three precious years with him before fulfilling her vow regarding him, and she only got to see him once a year thereafter. Did Elizabeth live long enough to see her son begin to prepare the way for the King of Kings? Did she know that her son was beheaded because of an evil whim of the ruler's wife? Mary did not have a long wait to become a mother, but she witnessed the excruciating death of her son, the Savior of the world.

The children of Israel endured a long season of slavery in Egypt before being delivered by God. Later they endured seasons of captivity in Babylonia and Assyria. Later still, they endured occupation and eventual destruction of their country by Rome.

The apostles experienced several seasons. The first was a season of learning from the Master during the time they walked with Jesus. After his crucifixion, they endured a season of grief and anxiety before seeing the risen Savior. It was followed by another season of intense learning with their Lord between the resurrection and his ascension. Following his ascension, they experienced a season in which they were the lead forces in establishing and growing the Lord's church throughout the world. Along with that season came a season of persecution, which eventually ended in all but one of them dying martyrs' deaths.

We experience seasons in our lives as well. We are familiar with the seasons of youth, young adulthood,

middle age, and the "golden" years. As Christians, we experienced birth into Christ followed by a season of growing in knowledge and service, which is in turn followed by a season of maturing in our faith and our ability to mentor others. Throughout the history of the Lord's church, many have left legacies—great preachers, elders, older women mentoring younger women.

Whatever season we find ourselves in at this point, we can look back with gratitude to God for the myriad of blessings He had showered on us and look forward with thankfulness knowing that He will continue to be our guide through whatever lies before us...as we wait for our passage to Heaven.

Evelyn Waite
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Writers Needed!

Do you like to write? If you write pieces about everyday life with spiritual applications, please contact me. Most pieces need to be 500-750 words or less, but there is some leeway on that. Themes of upcoming issues are available on request. Sunrise is a free publication, so there is no compensation. Articles will be edited for grammar, spelling, etc. Please contact me at: evelynwa57@gmail.com



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