

Waiting Together

Acts 1:12-26

“And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to **wait for the promise of the Father**, which, he said, ‘you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.’”

Acts 1:4-5

“For I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.”

Philippians 4:11

“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!”

Psalms 27:14

“I am sure that God keeps no one waiting unless He sees that it is good for him to wait.”

CS Lewis

Waiting is clearly intended by God to be a crucial part of the life of faith.

Waiting together plays a vital role in the unity, growth, and mission of the church.

I. Waiting is Praying Together. Acts 1:12-14

Waiting is clearly intended by God to make space for prayer.

God intends His people to prioritize prayer together.

“All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers.”

Acts 1:14

“It is striking that at almost every important turning point in the narrative of God’s redemptive action in Acts, we find a mention of prayer.” David Peterson

- **When the Holy Spirit is given to the Samaritans:**

“Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down **and prayed for them** that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.” Acts 8:14-17

- **When Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles:**

Acts 10:1-2 “At Caesarea, there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and **prayed continually to God.**”

Acts 10:44-45 “While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because **the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.**”

- **When Paul and Silas are being sent out on mission:**

Acts 13:1-3 “Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ **Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.**”

“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.”

Romans 12:12

Create space to pray.

Mark 1:35 “And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed to a desolate place, and there he prayed.”

Create a community of prayer.

Acts 2:42 “And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

Create consistency in prayer.

Luke 18:1 “And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought to pray and not lose heart.”

II. Waiting is Learning Together. Acts 1:15-21

Waiting is clearly intended by God to make space for diligent biblical reflection together. God intends that we would go deep and in order to gain His perspective for our situation.

“Brothers, the Scriptures had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.”

Acts 1:16-17

“Luke assures and comforts his readers: nothing – not even the most wicked of actions – stands outside the reign of Christ and the plan of God.” Patrick Schreiner

- **Jesus' crucifixion by lawless men was a necessary part of the plan of redemption.**

Acts 2:23 “This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.”

- **Paul's imprisonments and sufferings were necessary for taking the gospel to everyone – Gentiles, Kings, and the children of Israel.**

Acts 9:15-16 “But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.’”

- **Natural disasters were opportunities for building unity between Jewish and Gentile Christians:**

Acts 11:28-29 “And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). So the disciples determined, everyone according to their ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea.”

- **Opposition cannot stop God from saving His chosen people in difficult places:**

Acts 18:9 “And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, ‘Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, **for I have many in this city who are my people.**”

- **Future imprisonments and afflictions would give direction for Paul fulfilling his ministry:**

Acts 20:22-24 “And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. But I do not count my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”

The Way of the Cross: The message of the Bible is that God frequently works in very hard places with deeply broken people to rescue, to save and to sanctify His people.

III. Waiting is Preparing Together. Acts 1:15-21

“Brothers, the Scriptures had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.” Acts 1:16-17

Readiness: The posture of believers in waiting is to be preparing to move when the Lord says move. This was how Israel was to live and this is how the new Israel was to live.

“...one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.”

Acts 1:22b

- **The significance of the “twelve”** – Peter understood the plan was to fulfill the plan of God to bless the nations through Israel.

“You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, and I assign you, as my Father assigned me, a kingdom that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Luke 22:29-30

“Their formation was a symbolic way of saying Jesus was leading a reorganization of Israel. This was an indication that a new era had come and that the old Israel was not responding to God in a proper manner and needed restructuring under the direction and ministry of Jesus whom God had sent.” Darrell Bock

- **The mission is a collaborative enterprise!**

Waiting is a time for getting ready together for the mission to which God had called us.

Matthew 16:18 – “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my **church**, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

“...evangelism is more than me going out solo to tell my friends about Jesus. My community of Christian friends also needs to live among my non-Christian friends and become their friends.”

Sam Chan, How to Talk About Jesus