

Acts 1:12-26

The church waits patiently together in one accord with prayerful obedience for the fulfillment of God's promises.

INTRO

What in the past week have you been waiting upon? I imagine with little thought more than **one answer has come to mind**. To ONE degree or another **there seems to be always** something we are waiting upon. **Maybe it's something** of little importance like waiting for **traffic to start moving again**...we all know how that **tests our patience**. OR, maybe **it's waiting for ME to finish telling a STORY**....*come on Schreiber*.....GET - TO - THE - POINT..... **Perhaps** it's waiting for **fairer weather** so you can **release the labor force to prune fruit trees** OR to **permit time and resources** at home to be **put towards outside projects**.

There are **those types** of waiting...BUT there is also the waiting that is of **greater significance**.

*Waiting on **engineer approvals** and the **granting of permits** to begin the **construction of a building project** that is under **increasingly rigid time restraints**.

*Waiting for **direction to be given** as to your **career course** whether that be a **vocation** or **investment property for farming**. *Waiting for an **affordable home** to become available for you and your **family to dwell in**.

*Waiting and enduring sickness...some **physical affliction** that persists. **Waiting** for God to **revive your soul** that is currently **downcast**.

*Waiting for **spiritual fruit** to be seen in your **children's lives**....WAITING for the **salvation** of that **friend, coworker, family member** you've been **praying for God to save**.

WAITING....And though **what we wait for varies greatly**.....All **waiting has in common** that that which we are waiting upon IS out of our control...if it wasn't then.....**we would act**..WHY WAIT. -----**We wait upon that which is out of our control**-----

In our text this morning (**Acts 1:12-26**) we SEE the **early church waiting**. Prior to **Jesus's ascension to heaven** HE GAVE a most **wonderful and astounding** promise. (**Acts 1:8**) **A promise to receive power from on High**. "**Power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you**..." **This astonishing promise of God's power by which they will Be God's witnesses to the whole world**.

The **indwelling Holy Spirit** who **empowers the church** FOR the **work of the ministry**..the **WORK** that **Jesus began to do and teach**...He **continues through His church**...to **SPREAD THE GOSPEL of Jesus Christ**...to **TESTIFY TO the His resurrection and ascension** FOR the advancement of God's Kingdom. **Our Lords commission** to "**go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit**...teaching them to obey all that I've commanded you....." **God's word, the word of Christ**, sent forth **through His Holy Spirit**

'empowered' Church, making disciples of all nations whose hearts come under the rule and reign of Christ the King.

JESUS gave this most wonderful promise of which we find in our text this morning.....THE CHURCH... *waiting for*.

A promise of which Jesus provides the WHEN, WHERE and HOW,...yet keeping it *very much outside of their CONTROL?* (Acts 1:5) "And while staying with them (*Jesus with the early church prior to his ascension*) Jesus ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, he (*Jesus*) said, 'you heard from me; for John (*John the baptist*) baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now'."

Okay...as ordered by Jesus...STAY in Jerusalem..that's very clear it will happen in Jerusalem...wait not many days..*not so clear.....*is that 4 days or 14? No evidence is given that the early church anticipated the Holy Spirit to come on Pentecost as we now are able to look back upon scripture and see that fulfilled...the early church didn't..what they knew is that it was not many days and that it was to happen in Jerusalem and happen in such a way unlike nothing they have ever experienced before.

"John baptized you with water but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." John the baptists states the same in (Matthew 3:11) only he adds Fire. "He (*Jesus*) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and Fire." **Something miraculous. Something Heavenly** to be UNLEASHED upon His church for the empowering of the ministry He commissioned them to do till His return... A Spiritual Baptism where **Jesus joins himself to his church by the Holy Spirit**...And they (*the early church*) are waiting for it to come.

Waiting for God's promise to come. **How do they wait?** This is what we'll see in our text this morning.

The church waiting patiently together in one accord with prayerful obedience for the fulfillment of God's promises.

- How the church should wait upon the Lord in all things.

Waiting patiently together in one accord with prayerful obedience for the fulfillment of God's promises.

We'll consider the example of the church waiting in this manner.....in 4 parts.

1. Church is obediently gathered together in unity
2. Church prays together in unity
3. Church is immersed in God's word in unity
4. Church acts in obedience to God's word in unity.

OUTLINE: The first two...Church gathered in obedience and the Church praying together in unity...are seen through passages 12-16 of Acts chapter 1 (*stop at brothers*) Let's read these passages together and consider each example separately.

BODY

1. Church is gathered in obedience -

So **they returned to Jerusalem** from which JESUS, **prior to his ascension** ordered them not to depart. **In obedience to Jesus** they return from the **Mount of Olives...not far away...**it was a **Sabbaths journey** which **constituted being just over a half mile**. Under **Jewish tradition**, *rather than explicit OT Law..it was the permitted length of walk without being considered work.*

They **returned to Jerusalem** and **would gather regularly** in the UPPER ROOM where they were staying. **Is this the same upper room where they shared the passover meal with Jesus on the night of His betrayal? Very possibly, but not certain.** Upper rooms were a common gathering place,... for they were spacious and therefore able to hold a fairly LARGE group of individuals.

It was this **nucleus of believers** regular **rendevue point** *if you will...*NOT lodging there continually but rather...**where they all would congregate together regularly to wait in one accord expectantly, prayerfully while immersed in God's word...** waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Luke records all 11 of the disciples by name...Also there with them were the WOMEN (those who ministered to their '**the disciples and Jesus's needs**' their needs during his 3 year ministry, and who were also witnesses to his crucifixion and resurrection).

Mary the mother of Jesus was also there **as were Jesus's brothers**,...YES,...**Jesus had brothers?**...*most assuredly...*(**half brothers...Joseph and Mary's other sons**) **Joseph and Mary** had **multiple children** together after the birth of JESUS. **They had other sons and daughter's** who, during Jesus's earthly ministry,...**were not his disciples** BUT when their **older brother raises from the grave** and then **ascends to heaven...that changes things**. They who once did not believe in him as the **Messiah (John 7:5)** NOW see him as **Lord**. **JAMES, one of his brothers...is** noted by **Paul** in his letter to the **Galatians (Gal 2:9)** **AS SEEMING** to be one of the **Pillars of the early church...**, HE has credited to him one of the Holy Spirit inspired letters..named after him...JAMES.

He, along with Jesus's **other brothers**, 4 in all, are **gathered with this nucleus of believers** whom **Peter at some point***while waiting in those days (verse 15)* stood up among (*about 120 at that time*) and **addressed them all** as '**brothers**'. The same word '**brothers**' used at the end of verse (14). Now **Jesus had siblings**, *as just noted...*but not **120 of them (Mark 6:3)** so '**BROTHERS**' here **signifies** NOT **earthly siblings** but **his followers, his Church** which included his siblings, **now believers in Jesus** and **witnesses to his resurrection**. **Born again christians are adopted into the family of God through Jesus Christ.**

All believers are brothers and sisters in Christ.

The CHURCH is a **family**...WE are a **family church** - Let's **take a moment and look around...**MAKE EYE contact **with those whom** God has **joined together** as the

members of the body of CHRIST in this family of believers here at Pillar Bible Fellowship.

Don't **stare** or **glare** but look **affectionately upon** the **faces of those** you are **numbered among****enrolled with**...in the **household of God**. The **faces of those you behold** are your **Spiritual**, everlasting siblings whom you will share all eternity with enjoying together the worshipping of our great and awesome God. God has made us members of one another, joined together in the love of Christ who is our head,...we are daily equipped and empowered by Him to serve one another in love that we may collectively grow, mature in our mutual Faith (**Ephesians 4:16**) to the praise of His glorious grace.

We share in ministry together. All the members of the body of Christ are equipped uniquely by God to be working interdependently together in unity for one purpose - to promote the gospel..to advance God's Kingdom..to witness..to testify to the beauty of Christ. His amazing grace by which we are saved. **It's a family endeavor. Individuals** joined and knitted together in love to build up one another in the **common faith** we share that we together would be **further strengthened** and **matured** and that the **faith would be added to**. **That others would be brought into the household of faith.**

The **christians joy** is to **magnify Christ** and that **joy is fulfilled** when **genuine faith is seen** to be strengthened and multiplied.

Be thankful for the church..church. Be thankful YOU ARE a vital member of the church. SEEK THE LORD in how **He would work through you to bless His church** for your JOY,... for your GOOD and for the GLORY of **His name**. AFFIRM one another when you are being blessed by God through His people...your brother and sister in Christ. **Embrace each other affectionately while not clinging to one another. All things in this life** we are to **hold loosely** and that **includes each other**. If **God were to call one** of us here **whom we just looked upon** and **experienced the thankfulness** for, if **He were to call them to another ministry**...to **plant a church**...to **the mission field**... to **be with him**.....*or whatever*.....**that we as a family of believers** would weep,...that we would weep like the church in Ephesus did when gathered around Paul and his companions..(**Acts 20:36-38**). to **see him off on his sail to Jerusalem**..knowing that they would **not see him again**...embracing each other....**weeping a weep** that is **filled with joy** because of our **assured hope** that this **earthly pilgrimage** will one day be over, **our sojourning with God here on earth will soon be over** and **we will once and forevermore** been **gathered together** to be with our Lord to **worship Him continually**.

To **share in unison** for all eternity the **beholding**, the **adoration**, the **worship**, the **praise**, the **uninhibited presence** of the **all consuming Fire** where there are **pleasures forevermore**...saying with the heavenly host...**Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty!** (**1 Thessalonians 4:17**) (**Revelations 4:8**) **Praise be to God for His church of whom you are, through Christ, a vital member of.**

Number 2 part. The Church prays together in unity

The **church here** is together in **one accord**, or you could say in **unity**, with **one voice**, **singular in mind and heart**. Something to always **strive for** and **pray for**...TO HAVE UNITY. **Not that everyone dresses the same, or acts the same and conforms to each others preferences, but rather, a unique unity among a diverse sect of persons.** A **unity that is rooted solely** in the **gospel of Jesus Christ**. **Sharing the same hope, the same mission, the same Spirit, the same Lord (Ephesians 4:5)** *Here we have an example of just that.* **Among the disciples..there is a tax collector, a zealot, fishermen, siblings, a doubter, an open mouth-insert-foot follower of Christ who often acted with courageous faith to only fall flat on his face soon afterward. There is a widow among them, some half brothers (siblings) of Christ, WOMEN whom had a past of immorality, demon possession....So many different back grounds...so many different testimonies and God given temperments....very diverse...yet in one accord and devoting themselves to prayer.**

Do you ever take notice of the uniqueness of your brother and sister praying? It is one of my **great delights** in the **family of God**. To **listen to my brother and sister in Christ PRAY. Everyone's prayer is unique.** I love **listening to other believers pray heartfelt prayers.** When I say **Amen with them...I'm saying I agree with them in prayer as if I myself prayed it....yet I didn't pray it....rather, I had the wonderful privilege to hear them pray distinctly from their heart which provided an insight into the new life of CHRIST in them.** And **over the years together as a family...to hear prayers mature.....develop as God's faithful work of sanctification continues...as their faith along with mine matures into the complete manhood in Christ. Prayer life develops over the course of a Christian's life.** As one's **walk with God matures..further** alongs...**grows deeper...AS more time spent in His word and in prayer with Him... meditating upon His word...as your ear becomes more attuned to hear your Heavenly Father's low small whisper speak loving words of TRUTH within yourself to minister deep within.....Your prayer life cannot but be without impact.** It is an **absolute treasure in this life** we can **SHARE** in church. **As God has uniquely fashioned you... engage with one another, in one accord, in prayer together.** **The wind of God's providence is carried along by the prayer of His saints (Philippians 1:19, Phm 1:22 through your prayers).**

In this space and time we see the early church waiting upon God...gathered together regularly...In one accord/In unity.... Gathered expectantly....Prayerfully....and as we shall soon see.....Immersed in God's word....and...Obedient to God's word.

Let's back up a tad and read verses (15 - 20) as we consider the **1st of these other two parts** of how the church is to wait.

3. Church is immersed in God's word

So in the **midst of this waiting** ...Peter (*taking a leading role action*) is **prompted by God's word TO ACT in obedience to it....** **Question - What is inseparable to acting in obedience to God's word? ANSWER - Being in God's word. Taking it in daily.** "Man cannot live on bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

'Give us *this* day our daily bread.' Yes **provisions for our physical needs** but of **much greater necessity...our spiritual well being...the nourishment our souls** can only be fed by....**God's word**. A **regular steady diet of God's word**. It is in this daily feasting upon the Word of God where the child of God is prompted to act. **Blessed are those who not only hear God's word but DO**. Jesus said 'My mother and brothers (my family) are those who hear God's word and *do it*.' ...**From this undeniable truth** we may accurately deduct that **Jesus's spiritual brother 'PETER' is prompted by God's word to act**. Don't know if it was the specific passage he was in that day..perhaps...but **not for certain**. What is certain is that he, *along with the rest* **were immersed in God's word together** while they prayed together.

And he begins from this prompting *in a manner that we should look upon as an example*...he begins in addressing, the **family of God**..he says '**brothers**'...we likewise **ought to share about God's word** with one another...**this is what God's word is teaching** me right now....**this is how I'm applying scripture** to my life....**God's promises to my current situation,...my current trial**..this is how **God's word as provided COMFORT to my downcast soul**....and on and on.

Admonishing one another in sharing how **God's word is currently impacting your life**...at work in your heart.

This is what Peter does...in addressing the early church.....*at that moment the brothers congregated together* were about **120 SOULS**. Now, **we know from scripture**, specifically (**1 Corinthians 15:6**) that **Jesus appeared to more than 500 brothers 'believers in Christ'** **Jesus appeared to MORE THAN 500 of them at one time during his 40 day stay here** on earth **after his resurrection** and before **His ascension**. ALLOW ME TO SAY THAT AGAIN - **Over 500 hundred witnesses to the risen Lord**. **Our faith is faith** but it is also a **historical fact**. **Never forget that**. The **death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ** is a **historical fact**. The tomb where his body was laid is empty! **He is Risen!**. **Over 500 individuals saw him at one time AFTER his resurrection** and PRIOR to His **ascension** and we have recorded here **120 of them gathered** to whom **Peter now stands up among** to address **being compelled** by God's word to do so.....

And he does by stating one of the most profound passages in all scripture RELATING to **God's word** itself. **Number 1**. That It, "**The scriptures**", **God's word**... *had to be fulfilled*. '**Prophecy**' (**Isaiah 55:11..Ezekial 12:15**) "**For I am the Lord; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be per-formed**." ..."**so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it**."....and **number 2**. The **Holy Spirit** is the **author of all scripture**. The **Holy Spirit chooses to speak by the mouth of man**..(**2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21**) "**All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work**."..."For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." **God's word will be fulfilled...PERIOD..without fail...** the **canon of scripture..what you hold in your hands**...the **Holy Bible**..the **Holy book** is

breathed out by God...His words written down...preserved for us as the Holy Spirit carried certain chosen men along through whom God spoke His word through...And Peter, standing firm and confident in this truth...*as we should christian*...Peter, standing firm in this truth is prompted by God's word spoken through the mouth of King David.... Peter is prompted to obey. Why? Because he joyfully identifies himself UNDER the authority of God's word. That is the decisive shift in the life of a believer. They no longer see themselves as one ruling themselves. Once, born into the sin of Adam in the garden, rejecting God's rule over them to instead determine for themselves what they would call good. BUT GOD,.. by His word, fulfilling that which He sent it to accomplish has SAVED them. So now, the christian, "born again by the imperishable seed of the living and abiding word of God" (1 Peter 1:23) is awakened to see that God's ways are not like our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts and therefore as (Proverbs 3:5-8) states...the christian doesn't trust himself but rather "Trusts in the Lord with all their heart, and does not lean on their own understanding...but in all our ways acknowledges him, Him God where your trust lies..and He will make straight your path." The christian is not wise in their own eyes; but rather fears the Lord, and turns away from evil...turns away from evil...do you see the connection to evil? It's being wise in your own eyes..doing so is evil. The christian believes this whole heartily and seeks to not lean upon their own understanding but rather trusts the Lord continually who alone will lead him to the straight path...and in doing so,...it will be healing to their flesh and refreshment to their bones."

God's word demands humility and the believer, the christian,...joyfully submits oneself under the authority of it. We don't live it out perfectly, for if we did we wouldn't ever sin. But the aim remains unchanged. We see it 'God's word', by the grace of God, we see it of which alone leads to life...And to the best of our ability...seeking God's help every step along the way...the christian joyfully submits to the rule and reign of God's word over their lives. The already but not yet. The Kingdom of God now being built as people come to the saving knowledge of Christ...they come under His rule and reign. Jesus is LORD AND SAVIOR. And Peter here, who sees Jesus as his Savior and Lord is prompted by the authority of God's word TO ACT in obedience to it.

The passages that ignites this...are the ones penned by King David in Psalms 69:25, and 109:8. Peter, along with the other disciples, apply the scripture to JUDAS "who turned away to his own place." Judas, who shared in the ministry as one of the 12 apostles chosen by Jesus...who wickedly betrayed our Lord and served as a guide to those who would arrest and ultimately crucify Jesus. Judas fulfilled the prophetic word that Jesus would be betrayed by one who shared in the ministry with him...

Judas was in the inner circle as one of the 12 apostles...and who, led by his greed, turned away to his own place giving opportunity to Satan to enter his heart...to then betray Jesus.....All of which was prophesied to take place. NOW ONE MAY object here saying...'how can we hold Judas responsible for fulfilling what God spoke would take place?' Admittedly, that is an honest question. A question that will

undoubtedly surface TIME and TIME again as one **reads/studies** scripture from **cover to cover**... Balancing the **tension** between **God's sovereignty** and **man responsibility**. **A recent article I read on this topic stated it so well...I won't try to rephrase it.** The **article states** "God is able to work out His sovereign will within the distinctive characteristics of what He has created. He moves a rock as a rock, and moves a human heart as a human heart. He does not turn a person into a thing when he brings about His sovereign intentions in a persons life. The Bible sees no conflict between divine and human activity....**now listen carefully**...No conflict exists between the two, but rather...God is *uniquely* able to bring about His purposes within human beings so that they are fully engaged and responsible for their own decisions, attitudes and actions." - repeat. **permit me to say that again..**

To **which we humbly bow** in AWE and WONDER. A **truth we can know** and **fully believe** for it is what the Bible reveals to us about God while **our finite minds** cannot **fully comprehend the reality** of it. Try as we may, we cannot,... **which ought to rightly give rise** in our **hearts** to BOW in worship of **such a great and awesome God** whose way's are past finding out.

We see an example of this with Judas who, *as John Piper stated that he* 'Judas' **while designing the sinful act** with the chief priests and officers FOR EVIL...**God was at work in the same sinful act** designing good. (Spectacular Sin and Their Global purpose in The Glory of Christ - Piper) **It's what** David Crowder sings about in his song 'A cross meant to kill,,is my VICTORY!'

God **permitting an evil** that it may be used in **His hands** to fulfill a greater good. Judas **acts in such a way** and is **responsible** for his **actions** which lead to his **horrible end**. The **money he obtained by his betrayal** of Jesus was **used by the chief priests** and **officers to purchase** the place in which **he hung himself** where eventually **his gut burst** open and **all his bowels gushed out**. So whether he hung from the noose till bloating and decay had it's end result or the branch form which he was hanging broke causing his carcass to fall and smash upon rocks.....or something along those lines **THE END RESULT left his outcome** and the **place where he lay a place to be avoided** and **cursedly named** the 'Field of Blood.'

The sad outcome of one enslaved to sin. SIN ALWAYS LEADS TO DEATH. It will **deceive you and promise you** happiness, **life**, enjoyment, **security**, power, **satisfaction**...but **it's end is always DEATH**.

Upon bringing this **to the brother's**..the CHURCH'S attention...**they all agree to act in obedience to God's word**. Judas turned aside.. '**Let another take his office**'

The **act of obedience is placed before** us in the **closing verses of this opening chapter (21-26)**

4. The Church acts in obedience to God's word.

In obedience to fulfilled prophecy, Peter **instructs the church that they MUST choose one from among them to take the office as one of the 12 apostles in place of Judas**.....And so....*they do so*. Now,...**they don't just choose anyone** from among them **but one who met certain requirements**.

The Requirements being: It had to be one who was with them from the time John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan river until he ascended into heaven. **In short..the full length of the Spirit empowered ministry of Jesus Christ.** One who was a **first hand** witness to it all.

And so, 2 qualified men were put forward..**perhaps the only two** among the **120 present.** Don't know..**but two are put forward** who meet the requirements. One with a **multitude of names** - *Lets use the last one for simplicity sake* - **Justus** and the other - **Matthias.** The apostles then, **acting in one accord** *as best as they are able...***still waiting together in unity for the promised filling of the Holy Spirit...prayed..they prayed that God,** who knows the hearts of men, would show which one of these two men he has chosen to fulfill the ministry of apostleship. **I can't help but wonder how the 11 apostle's came up with the decision to then cast lots** so that it would be made know in that moment. (It's Biblical - **Proverbs 16:33**) **Let's give them that.**

They were doing their best to be obedient...**committing a decision to prayer** and **applying God's word** in the **working out of the decision.**

They had yet to receive the full outpouring of **Holy Spirit** whom **is the one** who will lead them into all truth. **The Holy Spirit is the Christian's guide.** The **child of God** is to **commit decisions to be made into prayer** and **TRUST the Holy Spirit** to guide you to **what that is.** It may be **all doors close save one...**walk thru **the one.** It may be that their are **multiple paths** you could take but only one clearly has abiding peace.....**take that one...or perhaps none** have **peace** and the **option is to wait longer...**then **wait longer.**

The Holy Spirit is not limited **in the means by which he leads** the believer. **The Bible instructs** us to ask for wisdom from above...to pray for discernment...to ask for the Holy Spirit to guide us...believing in faith that He will...and to **make plans while knowing all along it is God's purposes that will stand** (**Proverbs 19:21**) God will direct his children...**we are to seek Him in His leading.**

What is certain in regarding the account of this decision is that **no where in scripture** is their act condemned....**NO WHERE....and furthermore...** Paul acknowledges the **12 apostles** which *would include Matthias.....***And that no where else** in the **New Testament** do we see the church casting lots as a means to discern God's will, **THEREFORE...**though this account is provided in scripture it should **not be our practice.** Should I move...should I sell our house...make this purchase...do this or that and so on..time to flip a coin...**No! This is not the instruction** or the example we have in scripture of the early **Spirit filled church** through the pages of the New Testament. **This account in Acts 1:26** was a **unique moment in the life of the church** **PRIOR to receiving the fullness of The Holy Spirit.** They acted in this **SPACE and TIME while waiting prayerfully** for the promised **Holy Spirit** to come and **empower them for the ministry given to them** by the **Lord Jesus to be His witnesses,** they acted in obedience to **God's word** and **God determines the outcome OF THE LOT** which fell to **Matthias.**

Matthias - who we know nothing more about. HE WAS a witness of the ministry, the death and the resurrection of Jesus and he fulfilled the ministry as one of the 12 apostles. He is not mentioned anywhere else in scripture. Does this mean that he was ineffective in his ministry? I don't think so. I praise God for the mighty men of Faith who were faithful to the ministry entrusted to them and how they fulfilled it faithfully to the GLORY OF GOD and to the good of the church. Men listed in scripture like David and Paul, Moses, Peter, Daniel, Joseph and so on..and ALSO those saints gone before us, who are not in scripture...men whose work we still benefit from today such as Jonathan Edwards, John Owen, Keith Green, Martin Lloyd Jones, Martin Luther, Richard Baxter, Billy Graham...and those still living...John Piper, Matt Chandler, David Crowder, Greg Lorey, Wayne Grudem and others...Faithful saints whose ministry God has entrusted to them reaches great expanse and into multiple generations and IS STILL going BY the POWER of the Holy Spirit.

But what about those faithful brothers and sisters in the Lord who served faithfully without recognition. Whose names and ministries we are not aware of. Those who labored and served faithfully in Christian love and have received little *if any* recognition. What about them. **Is their labor in vain?** Most assuredly not,.... for the Lord God knows every selfless act of love shown for the sake His name. (Jesus said you served me when to the least of my brethren you visited in prison, when you fed them, when you clothed them it was the same as doing it to me.). He is keeping record and He more than recognizes your acts of christian faithfulness, He who enables it and empowers it to be fruitful, keeps an account of it and will reward your faithfulness. Every good work prepared from eternity past for you to walk in he will reward you for your faithfulness in walking through it **unrelated to whether it is recognized or not here in this life.**

For all eternity you will rejoice and worship Him who granted you the great privilege to be a useful instrument in His hands as the means through which His Kingdom is BUILT.

CONCLUSION:

This pattern of waiting continues today as we the church wait for Christ's return and WAIT UPON him *in the waiting*..fully surrendered to Him and trusting Him...NOT ourselves. We wait upon him in all the various things in life we find ourselves waiting UPON HIM for. It's a quiet '*confidence in God*' type waiting, a patient waiting but NOT a passive waiting. The early church TRUSTED and waited for the fulfillment of God's promise *as they were told to do so*. God's promises are TRUE and absolutely trustworthy while NOT to be presumed upon. They waited patiently together in one accord with prayerful obedience for the fulfillment of God's promises. We likewise, TRUSTing GOD for the fulfillment of His promises...wait patiently together IN UNITY, fully engaged with God, we wait prayerfully, expectantly, Immersed in HIS word and obedient to it....

Communion

He who **came the first time as promised**, BORN as a babe, **in poverty**, in MEEKNESS...**grew to be a man** who walked this earth in **perfect humility** and **obedience to the Father**... speaking and teaching about the **Kingdom of God** with affirming works of **miracles all along the way**. **And He**, *as prophesied*...the **God Man Jesus Christ**,... was **crucified**, dead and **buried** and rose on the **3rd day** *in accordance with the scriptures*. This **same Jesus who ascended to heaven 40 days** after his **resurrection** will one day RETURN IN GLORY. Until then. **His church**, under the **rule and reign** of him **wait expectantly** and **partake** of 'the Lord's supper' the **bread representing his body** that was **broken for you** and **drink of the cup** holding the fruit of **the vine representing** the new **covenant in his blood** that was **shed for you**...We,..**the church**.....do this in remembrance of Him and proclaim his death till He returns. The **table is open for the believer to come**...confessing any **sins the Holy Spirit** has **brought conviction** to that you may **receive forgiveness** of which you **can be assured of** because of His life **that was laid down of His own accord** as a sacrifice to ATONE for your sins. YOU are invited to come to the masters table.

Benediction:

Isaiah 40:25-31

God doesn't understand...if He did he would act.. God answers...my understanding is infact unsearchable...wait upon me and trust.

Family

Table Talk



March 11, 2018

Family Discussion ?s

1. With those who you are with, take a turn in sharing at least one thing you are waiting upon the Lord for.
 - Are any of them the same?
 - Who has been waiting the longest?
2. Read Luke 2:8-38
 - What promise was fulfilled in verses (8-21)
 - What was the man's name at the temple who was righteous and devout?
 - What was he waiting for?
 - What was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit?
 - What was his response to seeing God's promise fulfilled in his lifetime?
 - Who else was at the temple who spent most of her life there worshipping the Lord?
 - What was she sharing with all who were waiting at the temple for the redemption of Jerusalem?
3. Read Romans 8:22-25 and 1 Thessalonians 1:10 as a reminder to what the Christian ultimately waits for.

GOD'S TRUTH

Blessed are those who wait for The Lord who fulfills all His promises!

Key Verse

"The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him."
Lamentations 3:25 (ESV)

TABLE READING

Lead your kids further into God's Word...

2. Luke 2:8-38

3. Romans 8:22-25; 1 Thessalonians 1:10

Scripture Memory Acts 2:22-23

"And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." - Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (ESV)