



JUDE: “The Acts of the Apostates”

Week 28: “Wait, For What? Part 1”

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Review:

- A. Last week was Easter Sunday, so we had a special lesson to celebrate that occasion. It's online now.
- B. The prior weekend we studied Jude's third instruction as he guides his readers into proper conduct during times of apostasy.
- C. That instruction is found in the second part of **Jude 21**. It is *“KEEP yourself in God's love...”*
- D. We had a lot to talk about, but several main points emerged:
 - 1. This is not about the issue of ‘eternal security.’ Jude makes it clear he is writing to those who are *“dearly beloved”* by God, so their salvation is not in question.
 - 2. Jude is not imploring his readers to ‘keep themselves born again’ or to ‘keep themselves ‘justified.’
 - 3. As we saw, it is Jesus Christ who keeps us eternally secure. He keeps us saved if we are true believers.
 - 4. However, we also have an obligation to keep ourselves within the bounds of faithful living. And that's Jude's point, we need to guard against making poor choices.
 - 5. We noted Jude's review of those who had made poor choices and did not keep themselves in God's love: Cain became resentful, Balaam was greedy, and Korah was envious.
 - 6. So Jude's appeal here is to have his readers be committed to obedient living, thereby demonstrating their devotion to ‘keep themselves in God's love.’
- E. **A big takeaway is our faith is tested when life is challenging and when apostasy invades. Our faith is proven to be the real deal when we respond the right way to adversity.**
- F. The faithful believer makes willful, conscious, intentional choices to keep themselves in the love of God despite difficult circumstances and times of testing.

NOTE: Now, as I shared, there is really a Part B to this prior instruction to *“Keep yourself in God's love,”* and it stands alone as its own command.

- G. We find it in the second portion of **vs. 21** where we are told *“....wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.”*
- H. So, the first part of this instruction tells us to ‘keep ourselves,’ and the second part tells us to ‘wait.’
- I. But they are linked by the two key words *‘as you.’* So, there is a direct relationship between both parts (**read all of vs. 21**).
- J. There are really three parts to this instruction in the second part of this verse, and I mentioned them at the closing of last week's lesson. They are:

1. The challenge of waiting
2. The endurance of mercy, and
3. The hope of eternal life

We will only get through the first of these three parts today. We'll deal with the others next week.

- I. **(So -- starting with that first one) The challenge of waiting – (We need to KEEP ourselves in God's love as we do...what(?) The first part of this next instruction is to WAIT.**

NOTE: For most of us, we're already sighing in frustration. That's a tall order. Waiting is something we typically do not do well, but here, waiting is instructed. It is something we need to do. It's an integral part of *'keeping ourselves in God's love.'*

A. A few comments to set the proper tone:

1. Waiting is always hard to do, especially now, because our lives are so frantic, busy, and fast paced.
2. More now than ever before, we are conditioned from infancy to expect instant gratification.
3. We loathe having to sit at the railroad tracks and watch a train crawl by us we chafe at the online commercials, and we think 'minute oatmeal' is 55 sec too long.
4. We really don't wait very well. Waiting is an onerous thing, something we want to avoid if at all possible.
5. But let me remind you, waiting is even exercised in heaven (***Cf. Revelation 6:10-11***).

"They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer...."

NOTE: In this passage concerning the Fifth Seal, there will be those who come to salvation AFTER the Rapture but BEFORE the start of the Tribulation.

- B. Many of these will be martyred for their faith. Put another way, they will be killed for making the tough choices, for being an example of *'keeping themselves in God's love.'*
 - C. And this passage makes it clear these martyred saints naturally want justice! There are emotions in heaven. They know what happened to them is depraved and wrong.
 - D. They confess to God a proper knowledge of Scripture. Don't overlook this. They know there is coming a prescribed time when *'God will judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge their blood,'* but that specific timeframe has not yet begun.
 - E. That time is called the Tribulation, and these martyred saints know those seven years of God's wrath is pending, but they want to know when it will formally start.
 - F. They are in a gap of time between the Rapture and the start of the Tribulation. They already know that, but they are crying out for justice, and they are instructed to WAIT.
1. The bottom line is waiting does not come easily, yet here in ***Jude 21*** is a tough instruction to those who are contending for the faith.

6. That instruction is to WAIT. It's part of the Christian experience. It's part of our journey. It's part of proving our faith and making us effective in it.
7. This is a challenging instruction to anyone who is persevering under apostasy and who is striving to keep themselves in God's love. Waiting is never easy.

G. Here and more specifically, Jude says to wait with an eternal perspective.

NOTE: This is not the same thing as waiting with an earthly view for earthly things.

1. Here in Jude, we are encouraged to wait for the plan of God to unfold, and for Jesus Christ and His eternal design to manifest.
2. Here, the waiting has a long-term focus. It's an instruction to be patient and to let God's timing and purpose have top priority over our own.
3. This is precisely what the martyred saints in heaven in **Rev. 6:10-11** are waiting for. They were waiting for the timing and the plans of God.
4. Whether we can appreciate waiting or not, the Bible says that waiting patiently like this has benefit to the true believer (**Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:7**)

"Therefore, you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed." (NOTE: It's easy to overlook some important points in this verse...)

5. It's an unfortunate fact that many people who obsess over '*spiritual gifts*' today are often the very same people who dismiss and mock Bible prophecy and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
6. But this verse links those two things: '*spiritual gifts*' and '*waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.*'
7. This verse reinforces that our **proper spiritual performance** is related to our **proper spiritual perspective**.
8. Here, in **1 Cor. 1:7**, we are not only encouraged to wait, but we are even encouraged to '*eagerly wait.*'
9. One can only '*eagerly wait*' if they are convinced of the details of beauty, perfection, justice, and awesomeness in what is coming.
10. Till such point, here and now remains an opportunity to develop and exercise our spiritual gifts.
11. Doing this, THIS way, with THIS perspective, then becomes a faithful demonstration of what should be the most important thing to us – and that is the revealing of our returning Lord and Savior!
12. It takes our eyes off temporal things and it causes us to excitedly anticipate the things which are eternal (that's the '*eagerly wait*' thing).
13. The truth is, you cannot and you will not eagerly wait for things you don't value. So, waiting here in **1 Corinthians 1:7** is a litmus test of our truest affections. It displays our hope for eternal things to come.

H. NOW, THIS IS WORTH NOTING: Specifically, according to Jude 21 and this passage in 1 Corinthians 1:7, Christians are supposed to have a proper attitude and eagerness

as they wait for the return of Jesus Christ. So, what is the purpose of this waiting, and how does it shape our lives?

(HERE IS A VERY IMPORTANT OBSERVATION: The scoffers of **Jude 18** are the same scoffers of **2 Peter 3:3-4**. That latter passage says,

“Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. “Where is the promise of His coming?” they will ask. “Ever since our fathers fell asleep, everything continues as it has from the beginning of creation.”

- I. As we’ve noted several times in our study of **Jude** up to now, **2 Peter** has many of the very same themes – and in some cases, nearly identical language – as **Jude**. For example:
 1. They both warn of the activities and effects of false teachers
 2. They both describe the pre-flood sin of the fallen angels and the matter of the Nephilim
 3. They both talk of how apostates follow their own ‘*evil desires*’ over a path of true faith
 4. And, they both warn against mockers and what these folks are mocking

And this passage in **2 Peter** outlines that it is Christ’s return that is mocked. It’s the core themes of Bible prophecy that are scorned. There is a connection here that we must not overlook.

And that’s why **Jude 21** emphasizes the waiting for Jesus Christ’s return, that is the Rapture, as an important exercise. In fact, it is a clear display of properly “keeping oneself in God’s love.” It’s validation that one is exercising true faith!

- J. **NOW, Christians were never meant to live on earth as though this was their total experience. We were never intended to obsess over the vapor of THIS life. If these things are YOUR total fixation, then God’s Word says you have a spiritual problem!**

1. **The far greater issue is we have somewhere else to go and we have something else to do.**

- a. **Hebrews 11:9-10** describes this sort of ‘waiting’ by calling faithful followers of God ‘aliens’ or ‘strangers’ (depending on your translation). That passage reads:

“By faith he (this is talking about Abraham here) made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God....”

- b. In the Biblical sense, the term ‘*aliens or strangers*’ here means that such people are typically not welcome.
- c. And the point is **nor are we!** It’s no secret that this world we live in does not welcome those who faithfully follow Jesus Christ.

- d. And that's not going to change (Cf. martyred saints from **Rev. Ch. 6.**)
- e. So - - trying to fit in, trying to conform to, and trying to be a part of this world's values and systems is **not supposed to be** our calling.
- f. This world is 'foreign' to us. It should feel 'alien' to us. It should, in various ways, constantly remind us that we don't belong here.
- g. This world is not our home. Note the word 'tents' in that previous **Hebrews** passage. That's an important term we should not overlook.
- h. It means 'don't put down deep roots and cultivate long-term plans' on this earth. Be transient. Preserve eternal priorities over earthly ones.
- i. This means 'stay flexible.' Embrace changes and challenges. Be willing to be disrupted. Pursue a greater purpose.
- j. Be ready and willing to accept instability and discomfort here on earth as training and preparation for receiving eternal stability and comfort.

NOTE: Now...this kind of 'waiting' for the physical return of Jesus Christ comes with other responsibilities too (Cf. Luke 12:35-37)

"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes."

- II. There are four 'W' words we can extract from this passage and from **vs. 42** a bit further down...

A. First, there is 'ready' (vs. 35), and that means 'well-prepared.'

- 1. This verse says we are to 'keep our lamps burning.' This inspired that old Gospel hymn 'Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning.'
- 2. It's based on the parable of the Ten Virgins. The idea is to stay ready; stay alert. You don't know the timing, so stay well-prepared.
- 3. The faithful function of the believer is to always be a light, and to always be ready and well-prepared.

B. The second 'W' is again, 'waiting' (vs. 36).

- 1. They are waiting *"For their master..."* We are instructed to be waiting for the return of Jesus Christ. That's the faithful posture.
- 2. Most believers treat their lives and their decisions as though THEY are the master.
- 3. They are not waiting for the plans of another; they are not even waiting for His arrival.
- 4. Instead, they are waiting for the plans they have for themselves. They are focused on 'what is' rather than on 'who is to come.'

C. Third, there is watching (vs. 37).

- 1. This is an active process, not a passive one.
- 2. This takes daily effort. We are to be 'watching' / 'looking for' the return of our Master, Jesus Christ.

3. Faithful living includes looking far down the road, contemplating His return, and being prepared for it.

D. ***Then, last of all there is wise (seen down further in vs. 42).***

1. The Bible makes the case that how we prepare while we wait and we watch is an indication of our wisdom.
2. Jesus states that our real efforts in life should be focused on getting ready for the things that count the most.
3. That means we ought to be focused on things in heaven rather than on things on earth. This perspective and focus demonstrates a truly faithful heart.
4. It's true wisdom because it is "knowledge that is properly applied."

a. **(IMPORTANT FOR US): It is THIS posture – this patient demonstration of ‘keeping yourself in God’s love’ – this kind of ‘waiting’ - that trusts God fully for the actions of people in the world today (Cf. 1 Cor. 4:5)**

*“Therefore, judge nothing before the appointed time; **wait** until the Lord comes (NOTE: Here is that same connection again between ‘waiting’ and ‘the Lord’s return.’). He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.”*

- E. This is tough for some of us, but the bottom line is we are not to pass judgment on one another.
- F. We are not to obsess and fret and rant over darkness and what is hidden and done within it.
- G. We are not supposed to get too worked up over the motives of the globalists, over the agenda of the progressive left, and over the behaviors of a fallen world.
- H. God’s going to deal with it. It’s His problem – not ours. Our obligation is to wait for the Lord’s return and rest in the confidence that He will make everything hidden to be known.
- I. God will work out full justice, not Amy Coney Barrett, not Pam Bondi, and not Kash Patel. A third term for Trump won’t do the job either.
- J. You see, our obsession with seeing justice in the world today is grossly misdirected. It’s not going to happen. We might get a slight reprieve here and there – maybe a small victory – but it’s all still going to go downhill.
- K. The church is NOT going to rise up and change this world for the better. Things are not going to improve, and there is NOT going to be a ‘restoration of all things’ prior to the Lord’s return.
- L. That’s taking Bible passages entirely out of context and willfully misinterpreting what God’s Word says - and unfortunately many churches teach this and many ‘Christians’ believe this.
- M. The Bible is very clear: we must be waiting for the Lord to execute justice. Remember, this is what the martyred saints in **Revelation Ch. 6** recognized.
- N. They KNEW God would be the one to dispense proper justice, but they just wanted to know ‘When?’ If they are asking that question at a future point from now, then I think we know we need to be patient in the present.

O. The Bible says we need to remain faithful, and we will be rightly rewarded.

1. **(We've touched on this a time or two already, but....) It is commendable for us to wait with a proper perspective - - with a PROPER interpretation (Cf. 1 Thess. 1:10).**

"....and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath."

NOTE: Here is that wait theme again, and in context, Paul is comparing their past lives in this passage with their present one.

2. But again, Paul commends them for waiting with the right perspective and interpretation.
3. **First of all, they are waiting for his Son FROM heaven** – Jesus is coming FROM there to here. And He is coming FOR us!
4. **Second, Paul says they have the right interpretation. They are waiting for the rescue that is pending** – this is about the "coming wrath"
5. Paul is NOT saying here that Jesus is coming to rescue us from the wages of sin. We've already been rescued from our sin at the time of our salvation.
6. Paul is saying there is another 'wrath' that is yet to come and we will be rescued from THAT.
7. This is not hard to understand, especially when we consider all the other passages of God's Word that speak to this same issue.
8. It is the judgements of the Tribulation from which true believers have been rescued.
9. That means we will be removed from this earth BEFORE that point. This is a key PRE-Tribulation argument.
10. **Over and over, the Bible encourages us to WAIT for the return of Jesus Christ, and event to WANT this joyous event. We've seen several such passages, and here are more:**
 - a. There is **Philippians 3:20** where Paul reminds us that our true citizenship is in heaven, and he adds *".... we are eagerly waiting for Him to return as our Savior."*
 - b. In **Romans 8:23, Galatians 5:5, and 1 Thessalonians 1:10**, we continue to see these same themes repeated. We are to *"eagerly await,"* and *"await His Son from heaven."*
 - c. As I said at the start: "Waiting is tough." But the bottom line is the God's Word is seasoned with reminders that we are to faithfully remain in a WAITING mode.
 - d. And with these reminders, it is often repeated that we are to stay in this space eagerly. That's the WANTING part. Together, waiting and wanting show a faithful heart.

NEXT WEEK: We will unpack 'the endurance of mercy' and 'the hope of eternal life.'