**WAITING AND PERSEVERANCE**

Sunday School Lesson 7

*THE WORTH OF WAITING*

Isaiah 8:17

1/9/2022

**Introduction:** As we draw closer to a conclusion to this lesson series, we are going to spend our time this morning seeing how waiting helps us in perseverance. This lesson is going to be very harmonious to the lesson we looked at last week regarding waiting and contentment. The definition of perseverance is to be persistent in anything undertaken; continued pursuit of any business or enterprise begun; diligent alike in both good and evil circumstances. The term is actually only found one time in the Bible in Ephesians 6:18, but the principle and need for perseverance is very clearly spelled out all throughout Scripture. When it is regarding continuing despite unpleasant circumstances, we often find the word *endure* used in Scripture. When it is regarding going forward in pleasant circumstances, we have many words used such as continue, establish, stand, be steadfast, purpose, and delight. Perseverance of the saints is very important. Much of the Lord’s warning to the seven churches in the book of Revelation revolved around the idea of perseverance. Of course, as noted in prior lessons, being content and having the strength that comes from waiting on the Lord helps tremendously in building up the perseverance that we need to keep going. When we are discontent, we are much more prone to quitting. When we are weak, we are much more prone to fainting. Let’s look at some other areas as well.

1. **WHEN WE WAIT ON THE LORD, WE CAN PERSEVERE THROUGH TIMES OF SILENCE.**
2. **Notice that when the Lord hides His face from us, it is only a matter of time before we fail (Psalm 143:7; 27:9; 69:17; 88:14; Genesis 4:13-16).** The psalmist cried out on many occasions to beg the Lord not to hide His face from him. He knew that he could not continue if the Lord was not there present with him. He knew he would fail if he could not expect to get answers from the throne of grace. In Psalm 143:7, the psalmist pointed out that his spiriting was failing. He was not going to be able to make it much further. He was going to be like one who goes down into a pit. He would be trapped without any remedy. We absolutely need the presence of the Lord in our lives, and we need Him to hear our petitions. If He is silent when we call on Him, then it is only a matter of time before we fail. For some, that thought alone can be enough to make them want to quit. Cain felt that way when he had to go out from the presence of the Lord in the Garden. Despite his rebellion against the Lord, Cain was still terrified of what life would be like without the Lord there to speak with him and help him. It is hard to think of anything worse in this life to experience spiritually than to hear silence from the throne of God.
3. **Notice that when we wait on the Lord, it keeps us looking for Him even when He can’t be found (Isaiah 8:17; 45:15; Psalm 30:7; 89:46; 44:24; 10:1; Job 13:24; 34:29).** Considering the previous thought that silence from the Lord will ultimately lead to our failure, we might be inclined to question how anyone could have perseverance under such a situation. It is possible, though, for those who wait upon Him. Again, waiting speaks to our faith in the Lord as the leader and guide. Even when our failure is what has produced a deserving silence from the Lord, we can still expect for Him to forgive us and hear our petitions. We do not have to ponder on whether we are going to be given a second chance. While it is true that the Bible speaks of a scenario where the Lord will continue in silence and even laugh at calamity, this is being spoken of in regard to the simple who have rejected repeated reproof and calls from the Lord and are instead facing their destruction. This is significantly different than the Lord being in silence to remind us that we need Him and to strengthen our faith when He answers. David was given many chances despite his sin, but the Lord did provide him with several times of silence.
4. **WHEN WE WAIT ON THE LORD, WE CAN PERSEVERE BECAUSE OUR TEARS ARE SEEN.**
5. **Notice that waiting on the Lord when we are in trouble provides us with much opportunity for crying (Psalm 69:3; 57:2; 61:2; 86:3; 102:1; 141:1).** The psalmist said that he was weary of his crying. His throat was dried. His eyes were failing. This happened while he was waiting on the Lord. When we wait on the Lord during troubled times, it gives us much opportunity to cry out unto Him. After all, what else can we do while waiting but beseech and beg before His throne? Some do not persevere because they are not truly waiting on the Lord when trouble comes. They see the trouble, and they just quit. Their tears are tears of defeat. They are not still waiting for the Lord to deliver them. The person who waits cries out with hope that the Lord will hear his cries and deliver him from his hour of trouble. There are so many references to crying unto the Lord in the Bible that is seems to be the most common occurrence in the prayer of the believer. The psalmist said that he cried unto the Lord daily. What does that sound like? That sound like someone who was in the habit of waiting on the Lord for the answer.
6. **Notice that the tears of the believer are what brings the comforting hand of the Lord down upon us (Psalm 40:1; 18:6; 34:15; 106:44; 145:19; 56:8).** The tears of the believer are very special to the Lord. He pays very close attention to them. He is inclined unto them. They resonate into the deepest parts of His never-ending love toward us. The Bible even speaks of the Lord bottling up our tears. We know that there will come a day where the Lord will be able to wipe our tears away and cause no more crying. For now, though, those tears are very important to the believer, as they get His attention. Thus, waiting on the Lord helps us to persevere because the tears that come from waiting may in fact produce the swift remedy from the Lord that we are so desperately seeking after! Even if we do not get the immediate remedy to the trouble that we face, we will be able to find comfort from the One who is ready and able to provide it to us in our hour of need. That comfort can give us the resolve to persevere through whatever obstacle or challenge we may have to face in this life.
7. **WHEN WE WAIT ON THE LORD, WE CAN PERSEVERE BECAUSE THERE IS NO SHAME.**
8. **Notice that waiting on the Lord should cause us not to be ashamed (Isaiah 49:23; Psalm 69:6; 25:3).** There is absolutely no shame in waiting on the Lord. It is the best thing that we can do. There is definitely shame to be found for the one who presses forward without waiting on His direction. Following His orders is always the right thing to do. We have an expectation from the Bible that we will not be ashamed for waiting on Him. We cannot have such perfect expectations for anyone else, as we may find that there is nothing but disappointment awaiting the end of our waiting. We have looked at this extensively already during this lesson series, but we know that the thing that makes waiting easier for the believer is the peace we have in what the future holds. We know that we will not be ashamed when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ if we waited on Him in this life. The transgressor will find shame at the end of his road. We are not ashamed of Christ, and he is not ashamed of us. That is a very simple concept for the believer to understand.
9. **Notice that shame can expedite our desire to quit, and it greatly quenches perseverance (2 Timothy 1:12; Philippians 1:20; Micah 3:7; Psalm 40:14; 6:10).** What is the attitude that we have when we are ashamed? Is it one that is likely to produce perseverance, or is it one that is more likely to produce a desire to quit? Certainly, shame lends its way to quitting. Think of what happened to Judas after the shame he found waiting for him when he betrayed the Messiah. There was only one thing left for him to do to overcome his shame. He quit on his life. This is a common story throughout history. Those who deal in great shame are often prone to such behavior. It is hard for them to find much to live for. Paul noted that his suffering did not produce shame in him. He was waiting on the Lord. Thus, Paul never had an attitude of quitting. He was going to persevere. He was going to continue in serving the Lord until he drew his last breath. Waiting on the Lord will help us to persevere because we know that there is no shame for that who wait on Him! (It does not matter how the situation may look at the moment.)
10. **WHEN WE WAIT ON THE LORD, WE CAN PERSEVERE BECAUSE THERE IS A SHIELD.**
11. **Notice that those who wait on the Lord are preserved by integrity and uprightness (Psalm 25:21).** The Bible tells us that those who wait on the Lord are trusting in integrity and uprightness to preserve us. It’s not based on any idea of perfection of the believer. It’s just simply in knowing that our principles for doing keep us doing when the trouble comes. This is why it’s so important to build the habit of waiting on the Lord. It keeps us from quitting when the hard times come. We can’t help but keep going in the things of the Lord. Our faith is not at all in our own righteousness. Yet, we do have faith in the conditional promises from the Word of God that take place through our obedience in Him. Why would we stop doing those things because trouble comes? We are expecting those very things to keep us safe during times of trouble. Again, it’s important for the Christian to understand that times of trouble will inevitably come. We have a shield, though, for those times of trouble. Our shield is obedience to Him.
12. **Notice that those who wait on the Lord have Him as their shield (Psalm 33:20).** The conclusion of the matter is that the Lord is a shield to those who wait on Him. This makes the matter of perseverance pretty simple. The Lord is there on the front lines guarding us from our enemy. He is our protector. He is our present help in time of storms. Why would we ever quit when we have the Lord as our shield? Who can possibly overcome that shield? The fiery darts of the Devil are of little use against the shield of the Lord. The only reason why those darts ever hit us is that we do not use the shield that we have. We do not wait on the Lord as we ought to. We step out from behind the shield and try to deal with the problems on our own. This, of course, leads to quitting and a lack of perseverance. I’d probably be tempted to quit, as well, if I had to fight the forces of Satan without the shield of the Lord. Let’s be people who persevere by being people who wait on God. He will lead us in the way we ought to go.