**WAITING AND LOVE**

Sunday School Lesson 8

*THE WORTH OF WAITING*

2 Thessalonians 3:5

1/16/2022

**Introduction:** Thus far, we have looked at how waiting on the Lord relates to leadership, being merciful, receptiveness, strength, change, contentment, and perseverance. This morning, we are going to look at what waiting on the Lord says about our love for Him. The Bible tells us that we are to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, strength/might, and mind. Jesus reemphasized this point during His earthly ministry when He noted that loving the Lord is the very first commandment. This was the first thing that He asked of Israel as a nation. He required that the nation feared Him, walked in all His ways, loved Him, and served Him. This is the same expectation that He has for the believer today. He wants us to love Him. I believe the Bible shows us that the Lord craves our love. He knows that if we love Him, we will be inclined to obey Him, serve Him, reverentially fear Him, and walk in His ways. To help us love Him, God first showed His love toward us. The overwhelming evidence of His goodness, mercy, and grace toward all of mankind should also help us to love Him. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha (accursed at His coming). Deuteronomy 13:3 and 2 Corinthians 8:8 both speak of the proving of our love. Let’s see how waiting on the Lord can help to prove the love that we have for Him.

1. **WHEN WE WAIT ON THE LORD, IT PROVES OUR DESIRE TO SEE HIM.**
2. **Notice that when you love someone, you desire to see them (John 16:16-22; 1 Thessalonians 2:17; Psalm 40:16; 1 Peter 1:8; 1 John 4:20; 2 John 1:12).** One of the most difficult things for the disciples to hear from Jesus was that they were not going to see Him for a while. They were very puzzled and distraught when He communicated this to them in John 16. Jesus comforted them knowing that they would weep and lament over His departure. When you love someone, it is a sorrowful thing to not be able to see them. Paul had to deal with this sorrow when it came to his inability to visit in person with some of the Gentile churches that the Lord had used him to start. There is something naturally comforting about just seeing those you love. Even if there is not much to be said, you delight just in seeing them. This is one of the profound aspects of our love of the Lord. We have not yet been able to actually see Him. 1 John and 1 Peter show us how much easier it is to love and express love when you can see the individual whom you love. A person who loves the Lord should strongly desire to see Him. Have you not thought about what it will be like to finally see our Saviour face to face?
3. **Notice that when you wait on the Lord, it speaks to your desire to see Him (2 Thess. 3:5; 2 Timothy 4:8).** This passage of Scripture combines the love of God and the patient waiting of Christ together. The Lord puts these together intentionally to show us how our love is validated in waiting for the Lord. What specifically are we waiting on the Lord to do or to say? The Bible does not tell us anything in particular. Instead, we are left with the simple thought that those who love the Lord will wait for Him to show up. Why? They want to see Him. When a soldier is returning from being deployed overseas, it is reasonable for him to expect that his family will be waiting for him. His wife wants to see him, or her husband wants to see her. The kids want to see them. If his return is running a few minutes (or months!) later than expected, will the family stop waiting to see him? Of course not! They love him and will wait as long as necessary for him to return. Parents wait nine long months to see the baby they love. We should have the same attitude when it comes to waiting on the Lord. It shouldn’t really matter how long we have to wait. Our love for Him will keep us waiting as long as it takes to finally get to behold our Saviour.
4. **WHEN WE WAIT ON THE LORD, IT PROVES OUR DESIRE TO HEAR HIM.**
5. **Notice that when you love someone, you desire to hear them (John 14:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:13; Ezekiel 33:31; 1 John 2:25).** The Bible shows a direct correlation between loving someone and loving their words. Of course, this is applied first to believers and their relationship with God. Jesus said that if a man loves him, he will keep His (Jesus’) Words. When it comes to this matter of love and word, I think the easiest illustration is of a young couple that are dating each other. For those who are married, can you remember the first letter that you received from your spouse? Was it not something special that you cherished? Those who love God love His Word. It’s really not possible to truthfully say that you love Him and not love His Word at the same time. Due to technology today, we can call people we love, even when they are on the other side of the world. As noted above, we long to see them, but it is a wonderful thing to be able to hear from them. A desire to hear from someone is definitely a form of validation that we love them. The psalmist wrote of how much he loved the Word/Law of God. Why? He loved God.
6. **Notice that when you wait on the Lord, it speaks to your desire to hear from Him (Psalm 130:5; Habakkuk 2:3; Psalm 28:1).** We learned from last week’s lesson how waiting helps us in the matter of perseverance. One of the things we noted was how the believer goes through times of silence where they have to wait to hear from the Lord. Thus, we know that waiting on the Lord may require times where we have to wait to hear from Him. A person who does not love the Lord will care little to wait to hear Him speak. Are the unbelievers in this world waiting eagerly to hear from the Lord? How often have you met someone during outreach who was so eagerly waiting to hear the Word of God? I think we know the answer to these questions. Most folks are just not interested in waiting to hear from the Lord. Sadly, this may even be true among believers. Saul did not love the Lord as he ought to, and it showed in his unwillingness to wait upon God and His Word. While we have the Word of God available to us today, do we still wait on His Word when it comes to our prayers and our decision making?
7. **WHEN WE WAIT ON THE LORD, IT PROVES OUR DESIRE FOR CLOSE COMPANIONSHIP.**
8. **Notice that when you love someone, you desire to be close to them (Psalm 140:13; James 4:8; Matthew 20:17; Psalm 38:11; 88:18; Proverbs 27:10).** We already observed how you desire to see someone whom you love, but now we must also observe that you desire closeness with those you love. You enjoy their presence. You enjoy that time that you can spend together with just them. A parent and child love that closeness that they share together. A husband and wife should love that closeness that they share together. This is a natural byproduct of the love that a person has for another. The church ought to desire that closeness with its members because of the love that they share for each other. Likewise, we understand that if we love the Lord, we desire just to be close to Him. We enjoy being in His presence. Moses loved the presence of the Lord. In Exodus 33:15, Moses expressed his love by telling the Lord that if His presence did not go with him, he did not want to be carried up from where he was at. The believer should find the presence of the Lord to be a delightful and wonderful place.
9. **Notice that when you wait on the Lord, it speaks to your desire to be with Him above all others (Psalm 130:6; 62:5; Jeremiah 2:25).** I love to read the words found in Psalm 130:6. The love that the psalmist had for the Lord is a great example for us. The psalmist waited for the Lord. He said that he waited more than they that watch for the morning. He repeated that statement a second time just to emphasize how much he waited on the Lord. It was more important to wait for the Lord than even for a new day. Each person waits for that new day that they hope will be given to them from the Lord. The psalmist did not care about the start of that day if the Lord was not there with him. That’s the thing that his soul waited for. In other words, he valued his companionship with the Lord more than life itself! What an extraordinary love the psalmist had for God! In Psalm 62:5, the psalmist says that his soul waited only upon God. Waiting on the presence of the Lord shows a great love for Him. Who is it that we would be willing to wait for? Who is it that we long to be with?
10. **WHEN WE WAIT ON THE LORD, IT PROVES OUR DESIRE FOR THE THINGS OF THE LORD.**
11. **Notice that when you love someone, you desire to share interest in the things of importance to them (Matthew 6:33; John 21:10-17; Ephesians 4:15; Philippians 4:8; 1 John 2:15).** One final thought for us to consider this morning is the common interest of things found among those who love each other. If we love the Lord, then we will learn to love those things that are important to Him. The Bible talks about the contrast between loving God and loving the world. God does not love the things of this world, so if we love Him, then we will not love those things either. We ought to love righteousness because our Father loves righteousness. We ought to love the brethren because our Father loves the brethren. We ought to love the things of God. The Holy Spirit has been given to us to show us those spiritual things that we ought to love. Our sinful flesh does not love those things because our sinful flesh does not love God, but the new man that we have helps us to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.
12. **Notice that when you wait on the Lord, it speaks to your desire for the things of God (Psalm 62:1; Jeremiah 14:22; 2:1-25; 1 Corinthians 9:13; Acts 1:4).** Those who wait on the Lord show their love for Him through their desire to wait for the things of God. That is, after all, what we are waiting on. We are waiting on His gifts. We are waiting on His timing. We are waiting on His promises. We are waiting on His Word. We are waiting on His work. We are waiting on His direction. In everything, we ought to be waiting on Him. Why? We love Him, and we ought to care deeply for the things of the Lord. What better thing could we receive than the things of God? They ought to be the most important. Have you ever been given something from a loved one that you cherished simply because it came from them? Have you ever participated in something with the loved one that you only did because you love them? Would you not wait for something that is important to someone that you love? How much more the things of God?