

1st Thessalonians 5:1-9, "What to Do While We Wait, Part 1"

- ✚ 1st Thessalonians is a letter about waiting, and we should always be a waiting people. We need to be very careful in this process as we look forward to a new pastor, and since the Lord is going to bring that person in His timing and not ours, we need to know how to wait and what to do while we wait. The whole of the Christian life can be understood as a waiting game, we are not to be settled here but waiting for things to change and our lives to be changed, **1st Thessalonians 4:13-18**.
-
-

1. Watch as Paul describes the first elements of what to do while we wait.

- ✓ Waiting isn't just doing nothing. Waiting is doing the right things while you wait. God knows how we are, better than any analyst does, because God made us the way we are, and the way we are is that we have to have something to do. God created Adam and a perfect world, and then he did this: **Genesis 2:15**. In the perfect world, Adam had a job, we were created to work. What was wrong with the functioning of the Garden that it needed Adam to work on it? Nothing was wrong with it, but it only worked correctly if Adam worked correctly. The Church doesn't work correctly without us working correctly.
-

2. What to do while we wait, 1st Thessalonians 5:4-8.

- 1) Don't sleep through it. This isn't a spectator's sport.
 - 2) Stay off the Juice, be sober, or be self-controlled, is said twice here: And there is nothing more intoxicating than emotions, watch yourself when you are emotional. Sorrow, fear, anxiety, etc. can lead you to do things you would not do otherwise. We need to be sober in our thinking. "The church is in trouble, we haven't been without a pastor in 22 years, it can't be good." Why can't it be? Isn't Jesus in charge here? Doesn't He know how to lead His church to victory? Jesus has never been caught off guard like the rest of us and He always has a plan in place. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." It becomes a mind game before anything else, stay sober!
 - 3) We must be properly dressed, **1st Thessalonians 5:8**. One of the best indications that we are waiting for something with readiness is that we are dressed for the occasion. Waiting properly for us means being properly dressed for what's coming. What's coming is what's been going on all along. Notice that these are not swim clothes that Paul is prescribing here, it is battle gear. The battle has been won overall by Jesus; our salvation is secure, and our home is in Heaven; therefore, this battle isn't for us directly, it is for those who don't have those assurances. So, in the worst-case scenario, if things were to fall apart here, it will not affect your eternal destination.
 - 4) If Island Baptist Church and its members do not do what is right and do not listen to the Lord as He guides them, they could lose the many blessings that their obedience would have resulted in bringing others to Christ. The worst thing you can do in this process is make it about yourselves. Jesus didn't create the church for believers to have a home and comforting words, that's what Heaven is for. Jesus created the church for the sake of those who are not in it. For the believer, it is a rallying point, a place where we are to be prepared for the battle that is still raging for the souls of men. The battle for our souls is over, but it is not over for the lost. This battle has to be fought not for our sake but for the sake of those who have only the light of this fellowship and the disciples it produces as the source of light for them and for hearing the truth. It has to go well for them, not for us, not for our sakes.
 - 5) "I just hope we get a pastor that I like and who preaches good stuff." Me too! Here's a bigger hope, that we stop thinking about ourselves altogether; and that we dress for the occasion. The occasion will not work with swimwear, casual wear, or dinner wear. It will only work with battle wear.
-
-

3. This is where mature believers have to rise to the occasion.

- ✓ It will take maturity, but all of us need to make a special effort to put on the armor of love. Uncertainty breeds short tempers and immature actions, so it's time to suit up in the only armor that defeats the enemy. Love and faith are what you do while you wait. We also hope, but not for a new and better pastor; our hope is in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Hope can only ever be in one thing: **1st Thessalonians 5:8-9**. Hope for a new pastor or a better future for Island Baptist just for the sake of it is misplaced and will wind up in disappointment.

When we start each day with a grateful heart, we know that the things that really matter have already been taken care of and that, since God has already done the greatest thing for us, lesser things like a new pastor and the direction of our church are a given. Then and only then will we be waiting in true readiness.
