

KNOW BETTER
KNOW THE SCRIPTURES: WHILE WE WAIT
2 Pet 3:14-16
5.19.24

Not all waiting is equal — waiting ‘around’ is not the same as waiting ‘upon the Lord’

Three worthy struggles to engage with while we wait:

#1 WORK HARD AT PREPARATION: A DILIGENT READINESS WE CAN WORK AT (14)

Our wait for Christ’s return is not a reason to disregard sanctification, but to *diligently work at it*

Three diligent pursuits of preparation that take hard work:

#1 Make Ready for Christ’s Return: The eventual experience we’re to desire – “...Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him...” (14a)

#2 Make War with Your Sin: The practical purity we’re to develop – “...without spot or blemish...” (14b)

#3 Make Peace in Your Relationships: The biblical peace we’re to demonstrate – “...and at peace...” (14c)

#2 KEEP LOVE IN PERSPECTIVE: A COMPASSIONATE RECOGNITION WE CAN LIVE OUT (15A)

Our wait for Christ’s return is not a reason to doubt God’s love, but to *declare and demonstrate it*

Two compassionate responses that keep love in perspective:

#1 Acknowledge the difficulty of waiting: The sovereign delay we trustingly long-suffer – “...the patience of our Lord...” (15a¹)

#2 Embrace the mystery of waiting: The sovereign decree we trustingly declare – “...count...as salvation...” (15a²)

#3 STAY FIRM ON PRECISION: A DAUNTING RESPONSIBILITY WE CAN TAKE SERIOUSLY (15B-16)

Our wait for Christ’s return is not a reason to disengage from God’s word, but to *dig in deeper*

Five commitments to take the Scriptures seriously:

#1 Honor where they come from: The unique authority they assert – “...just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him...as...the other Scriptures...” (15b, 16b^{2b3})

#2 Cherish how they fit together: The sure consistency they maintain – “...as he does in all his letters...” (16a¹)

#3 **Notice what they emphasize:** The clear *specificity* they offer – “... *when he speaks in them of these matters ...*’ (16a²)

#4 **Respect what they acknowledge:** The real *complexity* they appreciate – “...*there are some things in them that are hard to understand...*’ (16b¹)

Four misunderstandings related to the complexity of Scripture:

#1 ‘Hard’ ≠ Easy: Some things in Scripture are hard to understand.

#2 ‘Hard’ ≠ Impossible: Just because something in Scripture is hard to understand *doesn’t mean it’s impossible* to understand.

#3 ‘Hard’ ≠ Unimportant: Just because something in Scripture is hard to understand is *not an excuse that it’s unimportant* to understand.

#4 ‘Some Things’ ≠ Everything: Just because some things in Scripture are hard to understand *doesn’t mean everything is hard* to understand.

#5 **Beware how they are used:** The fierce *indignity* they endure – “...*which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures....*’ (16b²)

Two warning signs of Scriptural misuse we’re to beware:

#1 **Watch out for a lack of reliability in character:** Beware people that are *ungrounded* (16b^{2a})

Two ways to assess and ensure reliability:

#1 **Grow deep:** Notice the *understanding* the ungrounded lack – “...*the ignorant ...*’ (16b^{2a1})

#2 **Stand firm:** Notice the *instability* the ungrounded exhibit – “...*and unstable ...*’ (16b^{2a2})

#2 **Watch out for a lack of integrity in teaching:** Beware approaches that are *unfounded* (16b^{2b})

Three ways to test for integrity:

#1 **Look close at the actual meaning of the verses they use:** Watch out for those who *rely on distortion* – “... *twist ...*’ (16b^{2b1})

#2 **Look close at the eventual heading of the life they live:** Watch out for those who *risk destruction* – “... *to their own destruction ...*’ (16b^{2b2})

#3 **Look close at their overall handling of the Scriptures as a whole:** Watch out for those with *repeat determination* – “... *as they do the other Scriptures...*’ (16b^{2b3})