

Wait on the Lord (ii) be of good courage (Quality: Very good)

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[0 : 00] To the Lord's help, I will again direct your attention to the book of Psalms, Psalm 27, verse 14. Psalm 27, verse 14.

Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord.

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The scriptures will be our enlightenment as to what the life of the believer, really is.

And we shall do well to follow closely what the scripture says. We may look at this and look at that, look at this person and look at that person, listen to what they have to say and judge accordingly, all of which things may only serve to distress us and to bring us into a place of questioning.

[1 : 36] But when we come to the word of God, there we have a clear indication of what the providence of God means, what the operation of the spirit in the soul means, what walking by faith means, what hoping in God means, and what love is felt in the heart to God and to the people of God.

God, we shall do ill to judge anything from any other yardstick.

Because people judge from other yardsticks, then many wrong conclusions are arrived at, and some are ready to score.

The people that we read about this morning in the book of Nehemiah, they laughed these men, Nehemiah and those that were with him, to scorn.

And the reason was that they did not understand the internal working of the spirit of God, which moved Nehemiah, and also moved those that were with him, to begin to build the walls of Jerusalem.

[3 : 19] And sometimes, if we should give voice to our own personal exercises of faith, let us not be surprised if there should be some enemies who will rise and laugh us to scorn.

But it is interesting to read in the book of Nehemiah and Ezra and Esther how despite all these things, the people of God prevailed.

There has never been a day when the people of God have not prevailed. But the manner of their prevailing and the time of their prevailing has often been so different to what they themselves had conjectured.

If we read the scriptures closely, nevertheless, we shall find that there is a conformity. And that conformity is anguish of spirit, sorrow at what is seen, prayer unto God, seeking for deliverance, opposition to the prayers that are offered, the trial of faith being evidenced, and the trial of faith truly being tried from all quarters.

but without any exception, the trial of faith has prevailed. And Peter speaks to us about that trial of faith and brings to our attention some of the accompanying circumstances who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time wherein ye greatly rejoice at the prospect, though now for a season if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.

[5 : 37] very important are these few words if need be. So that if heaviness should be upon your spirit through manifold temptations, then bear in mind the truth of the scriptures that God sees that it needs to be.

And the reason why it needs to be is that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

And then Peter links up faith with love, whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

And in the subject for our consideration today, we find that there is a clear line set down before us, wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart, wait, I say, on the Lord.

Our attention this morning was toward the first clause, wait on the Lord, and it is good indeed if we are attending on him as a servant to his master, often saying, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

[7 : 41] If God tells us, if God says stay, if God says be still, on the other hand, if God says go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel, then we have the assurance of scripture that God will be with you.

We find in Isaiah those important words, because they are important, strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, and say unto them that out of a fearful heart, fear not, be strong, for lo, your God will come with vengeance, he will come and save you.

But we have some of the features of the secret religion of the children of God in our text today.

Wait on the Lord. God now, this is a spiritual activity, and therefore it is not visible even to the one closest to us.

can we tell by looking at each other, by observing each other, how much we have been waiting on the Lord today, how many cries have gone up, Lord help me, undertake for me, guide me, show me thy way, teach me, silent, within the breast, but nonetheless real, wait on the Lord.

[9 : 35] And where the life of God is in the soul, and health is in the soul, this will be the delightful environment, as well as the delightful movement of the spirit, in our experience day by day, wait on the Lord.

In doing so, there will be a watching. There will also be a view to our faith of what God is. It is very good when, even whilst we pray to God, to supply our needs, sometimes we may look beyond our needs, and see the God who is able to supply them, and believe that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think.

The needs of the people of God, in one sense, may be different in their particular content, but in another sense, they are exactly the same.

And the principal need of every one of God's children is to know Christ, and to have Christ, and to have that knowledge, the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord.

Paul was willing to forego everything for that, and maybe then, waiting upon the Lord, to some, will include a desire to be entirely submissive to the will of God, and to part with all, that we may follow him.

[11 : 51] We may part with many things, many people that have been counterfeit in their religion, have parted with many things, and, have brought themselves into personal privations because of it, and yet, they have not parted with the main thing, and that is, themselves, and this is what we have to part with, myself, and that means, that, we can gain no salvation outside of Christ, for our flesh to be crucified is not our personal work, but it is the work of God.

And what can we say this evening? Has God crucified our flesh? If we have crucified our flesh, then our expectation cannot be very great, but if God has crucified our flesh, and at the same time has given power in our spirit, then we shall find the blessedness of those words, who so endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved.

saved. But the Lord is a great God. And as we read in the 31st Psalm, O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men.

God said, but leaving this part of the verse, with the help of God, we come to the second clause, be of good courage.

Well, none of God's words are superfluous. to say, to be of good courage, to a person that was already courageous, would surely not only be wasted breath, but would be foolish counsel.

[14 : 33] It does not mean to say that we are lacking in courage if God says to us, be of good courage. But the mountain that has suddenly risen up before us, the journey which has been set before us is very heavy indeed.

We can only see roughness. God knows when every one of his children need encouragement. after Moses had died, all the responsibility of continuing the leading of the children of Israel rested upon Joshua.

And can you begin to feel what that really meant? Joshua had been very close to Moses. he had become acquainted with the difficulties, the rebellion, the general habits of the children of Israel, and what an awkward they could be.

No, he might well have failed at the prospect of having to continue and know Moses. this. But God spoke very clearly to Joshua, Moses, my servant is dead.

Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give them, even to the children of Israel.

[16 : 21] There's no if and but, the scriptures to me are so attractive because God speaks as though the thing has already been accomplished and therefore he can speak with assurance that it will be accomplished.

Right there, God can look into the heart of Joshua, he can see his trembling, he can see his anxiety, he can see his fear, and not only see it but feel it.

And then he gives these encouraging words, there shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life as I was with Moses so I will be with thee.

I will not fail thee nor forsake thee be strong and of a good courage for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them.

only be thou strong and very courageous that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law and so on.

[17 : 53] And of a psalmist was therefore in a position not identical in its particular feature but he had a mountain before him and he needed those mountains to flow down.

Responsibility was laid upon him and he needed support in those responsibilities. The way was before him but there were enemies in the way.

Be of good courage but what did this entail? Well to Joshua it entailed giving attendance to the word of truth to the law of God as was given in those days and the same thing applies today.

there are many warnings that are issued in the gospel and if we do not pay heed to those warnings or to the exhortations then we may soon be discouraged but the Lord enjoins us here to be of good courage now we think of the time when David himself was in a most distressing circumstance it was on that occasion I think at Ziklag when the David and those that were with him had lost everything and they were ready to stone him and they wept until they had no more strength to weep what a graphic description but what do we read but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God and if any of us should ever be in that kind of situation where even our lives are threatened because people are saying you've led us wrongly you promised us prosperity and here we are in the midst of adversity we will stone you well now

David encouraged himself in the Lord his God and how did he do that it was the working of the spirit of God in him and the matter that was worked out we have before us wait on the Lord be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart now if our heart is weak then our hands will be weak and our legs will be trembling maybe our legs will not and our knees will not together as was the case with Belshazzar and our feet will not be able to move so we do need in a very special way the heart to be strengthened now God has promised this be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart being of good courage then will first of all include believing in God believing in God the people of God are believers they're not unbelievers and if we're unbelievers then we cannot be called the children of

[22 : 08] God but believers they believe because God speaks to their heart and maybe they're surrounded with doubts and even fears coming from their old nature but there is a mysterious strengthening of their faith so that they're able to believe and how does God accomplish this he accomplishes it like this you will remember the man that came to Jesus Christ and he said Lord if thou canst do anything help us now faith had to be brought forth unbelief had to be dealt with and while unbelief was present then whatever strength was put forth then unbelief would eat it up so the

Lord begins his work by saying all things are possible to him that believeth all things are possible to him that believeth now we see in the first instance that he was waiting on the Lord because he had indeed come and said if thou canst do anything help us but there was that which needed to be corrected if he was to gain the day if he was to receive an answer to his prayer he had to pray in faith he had to believe that God was able to do it the Lord could see all those fluttering experiences in his heart perhaps he said oh could I but believe and all would easy be but the

Lord put him into this place where he knew that it was not a question oh could I but that I must the Lord had said all things are possible to him that believeth so then how could he go forward by the secret internal working of the spirit of God which whispered be of good courage and because of that he was able to go on and say Lord I believe help thou mine unbelief and then God answered and said be it unto thee even as thou wilt be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart and this is the way the secret way which the people of

God know they may have many oppositions but God strengthens them God brings them to the place where they believe in spite of everything and when you bring this to such an important matter as the salvation of your soul then it becomes more weighty still how many are waiting on the Lord regarding the salvation of their soul and may well be saying tell me oh thou best beloved where thou feed thy flocks at noon we have to be very careful that we are not playing in our prayers and God will not have it and maybe some of the things adverse things that have come upon us darkness that has come upon us is because we have unwittingly perhaps been trifling with

God asking for things but not with a true faith thought we'd been waiting upon God and yet wondered why we did not receive any answers the Lord will tell us in the scriptures of truth ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss that ye might consume it upon your lust and so we have to examine ourselves are we waiting upon the Lord are we presenting our petitions to him but are we not getting no answers then why is it if you really need what you ask for you will not go away and say well the Lord is not going to answer me in this but you will look within to see what's gone wrong what has gone wrong and it will always be wise to look for the fault within yourself because there cannot be any fault in

[27 : 52] God now can there he is the fullness of light he makes no mistakes so if there is any fault it must be with ourselves and then we need to be encouraged self examination will not be engaged in without some encouragement being given be of good courage and maybe some of our petitions we shall need God to give us courage to ask for the psalmist presents this petition search me and try me and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way of everlasting now do you wonder whether you could pray such a prayer does it make you grand what might come to light if

God searched you and brought to light hidden sins well let us take the whole of the psalmist petition search me and try me and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way of everlasting which is leading to Jesus Christ who is the way to God and it is the same way in which the father stride be of good courage when you have to pray for God to put you right and to search you as only he can search you and when your staggering faith gives way to doubt and your courage yields the fear and shock to the sight you straight cry out whenever God dwell here then it is that

God will say cheer up desponding souls on on Jesus on Jesus' aid he sees you when you see not him and always hears your cry now that's a word of encouragement be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart strengthen thine heart to believe because it is with the heart that we believe not the deceitful heart which is desperately wicked but the heart out of which the stone has been taken the new heart the feeling heart he shall strengthen thine heart first of all to believe to believe now with believing we shall also see that

God will strengthen your heart to hope hope in God now what is God to you is he tangible or is he intangible of course to flesh and blood he is intangible he cannot be taken hold of but there is also a hope in him and the scripture speaks about that as being something that can be taken hold of which hope we have as an anchor of the soul but what hope is that it is the hope of those that flee for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them strengthen thine heart all the motions to add other members spiritually considered will come forth from the heart and God will strengthen our hope so that we feel that we are laying hold upon hope not that which will vanish away but that which will be graspable now this must be true when you take the case of

Jacob as he wrestled with the angel and the angel wrestled with him he said I will not let thee go except thou breast me so he must have been grasping laying hold and he was laying hold of the hope that was set before him and there was a blessing in it I name to know me old boy be called Jacob but Israel for as a prince has held power with God and with man and has prevailed and he shall strengthen thine heart with a good hope through grace and hope and faith will both have an object which is Jesus Christ we can look back to the first clause again wait on the Lord the Lord must be real otherwise we're just being fanciful we're just being idolaters because we're not worshipping the true

[33 : 54] God we're worshipping a God of our own imagination but he shall strengthen thine heart and then we shall find strengthening our heart will include strengthening it in love to God and these points must recur and recur in Christian experience faith hope and love to God and what a testimony this is if we love God it is because he has first loved us and that is a great blessing to know God who has first loved us and if we can say that then we are possessors of eternal life for this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true

God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent wait wait on the Lord be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart now the saints of old were encouraged with words like this I will go before thee I will go before thee and therefore the Lord will make the crooked thing straight and the rough place is plain all these things will I do unto you and not forsake you temptations arise at times that you will be forsaken it's not according to the scriptures the Lord has said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee now that will have its application if we have been persuaded that

God is with us Jacob had those words as he went forth I will be with thee in all places with us whoever they will go rest and therefore what God had begun he will surely continue with and in consequence the Lord would never forsake Jacob did Jacob always know it he did but not always at the time my mind just goes to that occasion when he packed his bag so to speak and he left Laban who had been so troublesome to him and after he had gone several days journey Laban became aware that Jacob had escaped him but

Jacob had only taken that that was his own there was no question of robbery and so Laban began his journey to bring Jacob back but you see God hindered Laban God spoke to Laban and it is worthwhile dwelling upon because we don't always know how God will speak to this person and that person we may not always realise that they're our enemies and he will speak to them conclusively and powerfully sometimes we may find it out not always not always now God spoke to Laban that he should not touch Jacob be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart an experience like that in your life will surely in itself be a means of strengthening your faith strengthening your hope and certainly strengthening your love as you see the goodness of

God I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of God in the land of the living in other people but also in my own life surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever and he shall strengthen thy heart we read in the new testament of being strengthened with all might in the inner man we also read in the Ephesians about the armor that is to be taken on when we are engaged in battle we are told that we fight not against small things but against principalities and powers against the rulers of the darkness of this world against spiritual wickedness in high places and various details of the armor set before us and then we come to this above all taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit which is the word of

[40 : 10] God praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints about all we need to be conscious of so many things but at the same time conscious that there are some things which have to be concluded under this heading above all taking the shield of faith which is able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked there are fiery darts from the wicked from the devil himself and this will be an individual experience because the devil plays upon the weaknesses of the people of

God indeed it's the only way that he can gain an advantage what may be the weakness in one may not be the weakness in another but God will strengthen thy heart James tells us this resist the devil and he will flee from you and it's not a vain exhortation it's not a vain exhortation but how are we going to resist the devil the scriptures tell us first of all on one side of that phrase submit yourself to God submit yourself to God and that is something which the devil knows nothing about and therefore because of his inexperience he's nonplussed he will not know what to do with you if you resist the devil by falling down before

God and saying the will of the Lord be done but on the other side of this phrase in James we read this draw near to God and he will draw near to you and here again is a matter which in which the devil himself is quite nonplussed because he will never draw near to God in humility in suffocation in feading for mercy so if you should fall upon your knees in the midst of temptation and call upon God hide me oh my savior hide till the storm of life is past safe into the haven guide oh receive my soul at last you're resisting the devil and you're overcoming the devil so if temptation should arise be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart and we shall be made aware of this it is not ye but the spirit of

God in you that brings about the exercise of faith and hope and love now so emphatic is has this point been laid in the psalmist heart wait on the Lord that he repeats it wait I say on the Lord now this little expression I say we use in our own order of things sometimes and what do we mean well we really mean this now listen to me listen to what I am saying this concerns you this will be for your good this will be for your benefit wait on the Lord and wait I say on the Lord does the psalmist then just get a glimpse of some a person wavering to and fro and is the psalmist so imbued with the importance of what he is saying that he introduces these additional two words wait

I say on the Lord the Lord of whom it is written this God is our God he will be our guide even unto death the Lord who has said through the apostle he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ who has said many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord delivereth him out of them all wait upon the Lord who has said I will make all my mountains away all of them you see sometimes we think that we can only walk on the flat ground maybe in the valley but God says I will make all my mountains away so then wait

[46 : 06] I say on the Lord if the way does look mountainous God is able to make it a right way a profitable way a way of instruction David's life will testify to his own experience of a rough way a bitter way a way of opposition way to the way to the end of his life as a whole r way through but heavenly core Seth