

What Have You Been Doing Lately?

For the last three months, things have changed. Many have been laid off of work or had their schedules cut back. Due to social distancing and quarantining, folks have been homebound. Without sports many found extra time for those pesky chores or hobbies they always wanted to enjoy. The shutdown of our economy and social activities created some challenges. People marked their time until things return back to normal. Their lives were put on hold.

Perhaps we can better relate to some people in the Bible. Abraham and Sarah were called by God. "Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. ***Abram was seventy-five years old*** when he departed from Haran." (Genesis 12:1-4, emphasis mine, D.T.) In Genesis 21 we read of the birth of Isaac and Abraham was one hundred years old. He and Sarah had to wait twenty-five years before they had their child. That is a long time to wait and then throw in their advanced age and one can see why Sarah suggested Abraham have a child by Hagar.

But then look at Moses and his waiting. Exodus 2 tells of Moses birth, killing an Egyptian slave master and running away due to this event. He grew up in the household of Pharaoh but escapes to Midian. This is like going to the boondocks. In Midian he lived forty years as a shepherd, married, and had two sons. In Exodus 3 God called Moses and told him to return to Egypt in order to lead the people of Israel out of slavery. For forty years, Moses took care of livestock and waited. That is a long time to wait.

Then there is Anna in the New Testament. After the birth of Jesus, his parents took him to Jerusalem to offer their sacrifices. "Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great

age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; 37 and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. 38 And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.” (Luke 2:36-38) Her whole life was in service to God and finally at the ripe old age of eighty-four she saw baby Jesus and recognized His purpose. Again, this lady wait for a long time.

Looking through the Bible one can find various times where people had to wait and wait and wait. They had to wait until God said it was time. Reminds me of the song “In His Time.” The words in the first verse are; In His time, in His time, He makes all thing beautiful in His time. Lord, my life to you I bring, May each song I have to sing, Be to you a lovely thing, in your time. The second verse says: In your time, in your time, You make all thing beautiful in your time. Lord, my life to you I bring, May each song I have to sing, Be to you a lovely thing, in your time.

But waiting is not the same as doing nothing. So, what have you been doing for the last three months? Let me suggest some worthy things to be been doing or to do in the near future.

Spend more time in prayer. Various Bible passages encourages us to pray. “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5.17). Jesus spend a whole night in prayer before selecting the 12 disciples. “Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.” (Luke 6:12) We should be a praying people. Social distancing and quarantining can actually be an aid to our praying.

Spend more time reading your Bible. Jesus toward the end of the Sermon on the Mount said, “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock”: (Matthew 7:24) In order to be a wise builder one must know His word. We are to be diligent Bible students rightly handling the word of God, 2 Timothy 2.15. One does not need a big library full of commentaries to study God’s word, just a Bible and a pad of paper with a pen goes a long way.

Finally, have you been working on you? Have you been concentrating on yourself and your spiritual growth? Now is a good time to work on things like patience, gentleness (or kindness), and encouraging others. “Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer.” (Romans 12:10-12)

The fact is our lives are never put on hold. Abraham and Sarah lived those twenty-five years serving God. Moses did not forget God during this forty year in Midian, and Anna served in the temple. So, it should be for us as we wait for life to return back to normal. We should still be growing spiritually. - -
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