

How Long O Lord?

Intro: (Harvest Sunday announcements. Others) Recently we invited you to write down on a card a question you would like to ask God. The response was wonderful. Instead of lumping them all together into four or five general type of questions, we have decided to answer them all. (REACH, admonitions, sermons, Connections)

One general question kept coming up: why is God taking so long?

I. How Long O Lord? (Rev.6:10)

- A.** Why hasn't Jesus come back yet?
- B.** Why is evil allowed to continue? Why doesn't he strike it down NOW? (Habakkuk 1:2)
- C.** How much longer do we have to deal with the mocking of the world, the doubters, evil men, broken hearts...?
(Psalm 35:17; 94:3,4; 74:9-11)

II. There is a "Why"

- A.** Read these three passages: Psa. 27:14; 37:34; Proverbs 20:22.
- B.** God has told us time and time again to wait on Him.
 - 1.** He has a cosmic perspective and wisdom that we can't even guess at.
 - 2.** He sees, if you'll forgive the cliché, the big picture.
- C.** Proverbs 19:11 – God's glory is wrapped up in grace and mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment (James 2:13)
- D.** Prov. 25:15 – God would prefer winning us over and forgiving us to destroying us. (the Aesop fable of which was stronger – wind or sun) Romans 2:4
- E.** Paul said it was the patience of God that saved him. (1 Tim. 1:16) See also 2 Peter 3:15.
- F.** For every person here praying that Jesus would come quickly, there is someone praying that He would delay so that a loved one would come to the Lord. One of our ladies spends at least an hour in prayer each day for the souls of Muslims. It is easy to become selfish in prayer (though praying that the Lord return soon is Biblical)
- G.** The very delay that disturbs us is sign of our hope: God is also patient with us and with those we love. Perhaps we

should go from “how long O Lord” to “take your time. May your grace reach the uttermost parts of the earth.”

III. Our Admonition

- A.** God does not intend to be the only patient one in the universe.
 - 1. Galatians 5:22 – the fruit of the Spirit includes patience.
 - 2. Col. 3:12 – clothed in patience.
 - 3. Paul told Timothy to preach the word with patience. (2 Tim. 4:2)
 - 4. James 5:10 says to take our cue from the prophets who preached with patience even though many of them never lived long enough to see results from their life’s work.
- B.** Let’s go back to Revelation 6. (6:10-7:3)
- C.** God’s patience is for you. It will, one day, end – either personally or globally.
- D.** Our response? Work for the night is coming, when no man can work. (James 4:13ff)