

# Pr Mark Turner: Why Jesus Waits (22/6/19)

Scripture Reading: Revelation 14:14-20

## Introduction:

When Pr Mark was learning to drive he had an experience that has shaped his understanding of the value in waiting. He was driving through a small town in New Zealand, along a road that had single lanes in each direction. It was a township, so the speed limit was quite slow and he was driving with sufficient caution. The car in front of him began to slow down, eventually coming to a stop in what looked like a double park. Mark, as a young driver, had to make a judgment call. He thought the car was double-parked, so, checking that there was no cars coming from the other direction, he proceeded to pass the parked car. As he went past the car, however, he realised, to his horror, that the car wasn't actually double-parked, but was stopped at a pedestrian crossing. Marks heart skipped a beat as he realised how close he had just come to wiping out the little old lady that was crossing the pedestrian crossing. And why? Simply because he had misunderstood the reason for the wait. Today, Pr Mark believes that it is similar with us. We can believe some terrible things if we misunderstand the reason for Jesus' waiting. So, let's reflect on the reason for the wait, so that we don't make any fatal judgment calls due to a misunderstanding.

## Why Jesus Waits:

*"I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the Most Holy Place was nearly finished, and that time can last but a very little longer"* Ellen G White, Early Writings (1851), pg 58

*"I was shown the company present at the Conference. Said the angel: 'Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus.'" Ellen G White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1 (1856), pg 31*

*"As the subject was presented before me, the period of Christ's ministration seemed almost accomplished. Am I accused of falsehood because time has continued longer than my testimony seemed to indicate? How is it with the testimonies of Christ and His disciples? Were they deceived?" Ellen G White, Selected Messages Book 1, p. 67*

For Example:

- Acts 2:15-17 - "In the last days..."
- 1 Peter 1:18-20 - "These last times..."
- 1 Peter 4:7 - "The end of all things is near..."
- James 5:1-9 - "The Lord's coming is near... the judge is standing at the door..."
- 1 John 2:18 - "This is the last hour..."
- Revelation 1:1-3 - "The time is near..."
- Revelation 22:7,12,20 - "I am coming soon..."
- Romans 13:12 - "The day is almost here..."

- 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 - "Time is short..."
- 1 Corinthians 10:11 - "The fulfilment of the ages is has come..."
- 1 Timothy 6:13,14 - "Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ..."
- Hebrews 1:1,2 - "These last days..."
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 - "Who are still alive... who are left till the coming of the Lord..."

*"The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. Thus it has always been presented to me. It is true that time has continued longer than we expected in the early days of this message. Our Saviour did not appear as soon as we hoped. But has the word of the Lord failed? Never! It should be remembered that the promises and threatenings of God are alike conditional."* Ellen G White, Selected Messages Book 1, pg 67

### **Conditional Prophecy:**

Jeremiah 18:7-10 - According to Jeremiah - prophecy is conditional and so are promises.

Jonah 3:4-10 - This time prophecy was conditional - although it didn't say it was.

Daniel 9:1-3,19 - Daniel knows that this time prophecy was conditional. He asks for corporate forgiveness.

Matthew 24:34,48; 25:5 - Jesus approaches the second coming as both imminent and yet possibly delayed.

*"It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached, went not in 'because of unbelief' (Heb. 3:19). Their hearts were filled with murmuring, rebellion, and hatred, and He could not fulfill His covenant with them. "For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years."* Ellen G White, Selected Messages Book 1, p. 68-69

Jesus didn't want to be so long! It was because of the unfaithfulness of His people.

### **Jesus is waiting for:**

1. The Gospel Preached Everywhere (Matthew 24:14).

*"By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord's return. We are not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the day of God. 2 Peter 3:12, margin. Had the church of Christ done her appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would before this have been warned, and the Lord Jesus would have come to our earth in power and great glory."* Ellen G White, The Desire of Ages, pg 633.

2. Sinners to come to Repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

*"In mercy to the world, Jesus delays His coming, that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning and find in Him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out."* Ellen G White, The Great Controversy, pg 458

3. His Character to be Reproduced in His People (2 Peter 3:11–12; 1 John 3:2–3; Revelation 14:14–16).

*“‘When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.’ Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. “...It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.” Ellen G White, Christ’s Object Lessons, pg 69*

4. The Inhabitants of the World to fill up the Measure of their Iniquity (Rev. 14:17–20)

*“More and more the world is setting at nought the claims of God. Men have become bold in transgression. The wickedness of the inhabitants of the world has almost filled up the measure of their iniquity. This earth has almost reached the place where God will permit the destroyer to work his will upon it.” Ellen G White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, pg 141*

Genesis 15:13-16 - God's people had to wait for the wickedness of the world to become irredeemable.

*“With unerring accuracy the Infinite One still keeps an account with all nations. While His mercy is tendered with calls to repentance, this account will remain open; but when the figures reach a certain amount which God has fixed, the ministry of His wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases.” Ellen G White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, pg 208*

Jesus is waiting for us!!!

What are we waiting for?