

Pr Mark Turner: Why Jesus Waits - Part 2 (12/10/19)

The Power of the Righteous Life

Review:

- Jesus' Promise to Return (John 14:1-3, Acts 1:10,11)
- Peter, James, John and Paul all wrote about the eminent return of Jesus.
- Jesus warned that there would be the possibility of a delay.

Jesus is waiting for:

1. The gospel to go to all the world (Matthew 24:14)
2. Sinners to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9)
3. His character to be reproduced in His people (2 Peter 3:11-12; 1 John 3:2-3; Revelation 14:14-16)
4. The inhabitants of the world to "fill up the measure of their iniquity" (Revelation 14:17-20)

Sodom & Gomorrah:

Genesis 18:16-33 - The implication of this dialogue between God and Abraham is that the presence of righteous people has the potential to delay the outcome of destruction.

1. The Identity and Actions of the Righteous Person

- The Righteous Person in the Torah:
Genesis 6:9 - Noah was a righteous man. He is the first person who is identified as "righteous" (in the practical sense of the word).
- The Righteous Person in the Writings:
Psalms 15:1-5 - The righteous person is he who: walks blamelessly, doing right, speaking truth (vs 2); does: no falsehood, no evil, no reproach (vs 3); does: despise reprobate, keeps his word (vs 4); does: no usury, no bribes (vs 5).
Do you think it is coincidence that there are ten? Or is it a subtle reference to the ten commandments?
- The Righteous Person in the Prophets:
Ezekiel 18:5-9 - The righteous person is the person who keeps God's law and does kindly.
- The Righteous Person in Jewish Thought:
The righteous person reflected the justice of God by keeping His laws and reflects the compassion of God by acting charitably.
- Righteous Persons in the Gospel of Matthew:
Matthew 1:19 - Mary's husband Joseph was a 'righteous man.'
Matthew 5:6 - "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."

2. The Mission of the Righteous Person

The mission of the righteous person is to promote righteousness and delay judgment. The destruction of Sodom serves as a 'type' in the teachings of Jesus.

Matthew 10:15; 11:23,24; 24:15-20

In Genesis 18:25, Abraham calls on the sense of God's justice as evidence that destroying the righteous with the wicked is not right.

Matthew 10:5-15

In the gospel of Matthew the second coming of Jesus is relentlessly negative. It is spoken of as a day of judgment. Of weeping and terror.

How do we increase the number of righteous in Bundaberg?

Method 1: Directly import them from outside.

Matthew 10:11-13 - In this passage, as well as in the stories of Elijah and Elisha, we see that when the righteous are in a given place, the rest are spared judgment.

Method 2: Prompt the community to extend charity to the disciples.

Matthew 25:35-40 - In this passage, Jesus says that those who have shown compassion and charity to His disciples are counted as "righteous."

Matthew 10:8-10, 40,41 - "He who receives a righteous man" will receive a righteous man's reward."

Judgment is delayed as a result of the presence of the righteous.

3. **The Fate of the Righteous Person**

What is it that speeds up the judgment? The suffering of the righteous!

Matthew 27:19 - Jesus was declared to be a "righteous man."

Matthew 24 - "I have betrayed innocent blood."

Matthew 23:34,35

- Genesis 4:10 - Blood of Abel cries out for vengeance.
- 2 Chronicles 24:20-22 - Blood of Zechariah cries out for vengeance.
(2 Chronicles is the last book of the Jewish Bible).

The bookends of the Old Testament tell us that the blood of the righteous calls out for judgment.

Conclusion:

1. We are righteous, not to save ourselves, but to save our community!
2. Delaying judgment involves making friends with the community and accepting its help.
3. Speeding up judgment up judgment involves extreme personal sacrifice!
4. We are active agents in the judgment of others. Our life has eternal significance!