

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, October 29, 2024
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“Hurry Up and Wait”

READING: II Peter 3:3-4, 8-10 - First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.”...But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

If you have had some experience with chronic or serious illness, then you know ALL ABOUT waiting, right? Your doctor’s appointment is at 11:00. They want you there at 10:45. You arrive when you are supposed to, then you sit in the waiting room until 11:30. Finally they invite you back to an examination room, take your vitals, then they lie to you, right? They say, “The doctor will be right with you.” Ah-huh! 40 minutes later the door opens to reveal your doctor. His first words may be, “Sorry for your wait.” Ah-huh! Sure.

If you have a procedure at the hospital, it’s even worse. I had a heart catheterization a couple of weeks ago. It was scheduled to take place at 9:00 A.M. They asked me to be there at 7:00 A.M., N.P.O. since midnight. I sat in registration for a bit, then got registered, tagged, and given a sheet full of stickers with my name and all my vital information in a barcode. Next I went to Cardiac and Pulmonary, and I waited. Then they took me back to a room, got me to get naked and robed in a most handsome surgical gown, and I waited. Then they started an I.V., got me shaved up, and I waited. At five minutes to nine they rolled my bed out of the room and into the surgical theater, made me crab-crawl onto the surgical table, and I waited. Finally they covered me with warm blankets, put a sterile sheet over all, gave me some “happy juice”, and I waited. Finally the doctor entered the room, and the rest is sort of hazy. When it was done, they took me back to the room I’d been in and made me lie flat of two hours, allowed be to sit up for 2 ½ more hours, and most of those four and a half hours were spent...you guessed it, WAITING!

We hate to wait, right? At least I hate to wait. I don’t like waiting in line. I don’t like waiting for stoplights to turn green. I don’t like waiting for vacations, parties, celebrations, deer hunting, ice fishing, grandchildren’s birthdays, or most other stuff. Come on already! Let’s get to it!

St. Peter knows how people are when it comes to waiting. He addresses this in our lesson for today. He says “...that is the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.” They are going to say, “Where is this Jesus? He said he was coming back SOON, so where is he? The Christians have been waiting and watching for over 2000 years now, and still he hasn’t come. What a crock of baloney!” They equate the length of the wait with the value of the promise. They figure that the longer the wait the less likely the promise is of fulfillment. To them, 2000 years of waiting means nearly zero chance of Jesus coming back to usher in the Kingdom.

St. Peter knew people and how they are when it comes to waiting: no patience, no *sitz-fleisch* (that’s “sitting-meat” – a German term for the ability to sit and wait for any particular length of time). He knew the doubters would come. And, after a while, the scoffers would show up. They would cast aspersions at Jesus for promising us he would come again, and then not showing up. “If he hasn’t come by now, he’s not coming!” they say.

But you and I are patient in our longing for Christ to come. Whenever I say the table prayer, “Come, Lord Jesus...”, I mean it! I want Jesus to come – today, this morning, right this minute! The sooner the better. That would mean no more funerals, ever. That would mean no more sorrows, no more illnesses, no more losses. That would mean seeing Ma and Pa, my brother Kurt, my grandparents, aunts, uncles, and hundreds of people I’ve ministered to here at Grace who have already gone to be with the Lord. And NO MORE political ads, advertisements for “whole body deodorant” (Take a shower, for Pete’s sake!), men’s clinics, and “Get paid when YOU want to get paid!” commercials.

HE IS COMING! That’s the bottom line according to God’s word and St. Peter. HE IS COMING! And he is not slow in the way the world understands slowness. He made us a promise, and when the Lord makes promises, he keeps them. Always has. Always will. One of these days, when he is satisfied no more can be saved because of the hardness of human hearts, he will come. Until then, his grace continues to be poured out on those who repent and seek him. His Word continues to do its gracious work. And you and I, as his people, continue to serve him by serving others, always with one eye peeled, watching, waiting, and asking for his blessing. We hurry up to do his will, and we wait on him in hope and faith. Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 1) TURKEY SUPPER, TURKEY SUPPER, TURKEY SUPPER – this Saturday, 4-7 PM. Come eat, get take-out, send friends and family, too. If you are able, come help me and my team cut up and slice 1000 lbs. of roasted turkey on Friday, starting at 9:00 A.M.**
- 2) DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME: Don’t forget to turn you clocks BACK one hour on Saturday night. No Saturday service this week because of the Supper. Into November!**