

Wait !

Has become a word we really don't like to hear, let alone have to submit to. January's charge Bible study "What does the Bible say about Patience" has been a great resource, and the sessions have included thoughtful discussion.

Given our common struggle for patience, and the fact only a few folks participated in the study, I was wondering, maybe we really don't want to hear what the Bible say's about patience.

The fact is the Euro-American culture is completely counter patient. We hate to wait. The word sends chills down our backs. If you don't believe me maybe you need to reflect on just a few of these images, a doctor's waiting room, a line outside a restaurant or the supermarket.

Our Euro-American culture focus is on time, time management and production. Author Stephen Rechtschaffen in his book "Why an Empty Hour Scares Us" say's "There are cultures on this planet that have no word for minute or hour, (no clocks!). There are cultures where a moment can last all morning. We don't live in one of them. In our culture the efficient and productive use of time has become a high art. If you can balance three spinning plates on three thin sticks, you are rewarded with a fourth, and a fifth.

Our culture praises muti-tasking. The business person or parent who can juggle the most tasks is revered as the best or most productive. The question is what are they producing?

The church season of lent begins on February 25 and lasts through April 9. It is a time for self denial and reflection on the mission of Christ, our relationship with Christ and the things that distract us from that relationship, like busy schedules, the idols of wealth, pride, and status.

I invite you to wait upon the Lord in this season of lent. This waiting on the Lord is not the same as waiting for the doctor. The Hebrew translation for waiting upon the Lord means; to bind together, to collect or gather together, to expect, or look patiently. Thus some of the means by which we wait upon the Lord are; prayer, reading scripture, silence, service to others as well as daily worship and Sunday services. This should not be one more thing for us to juggle through lent, remove something from your schedule, an hour of TV, some meeting, or get up 15 minutes earlier and use that time to wait upon the Lord, through the above means. Most likely it will be more beneficial if you can try each of the means of waiting on the Lord. It may also be helpful to participate in the Charge Lenten Experience using Terry Teykl's book, "Outside the Camp", which is a guide to help us eliminate distractions and wait on the Lord. (see this newsletter for details)

Isaiah 40:31 tells us "*they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*"

Blessings -- Pastor Duane