



Up Words # 15

WAIT WATCHERS



Some of you, like me, need to take off a few pounds (or maybe more than a few) so you start dieting and exercising and maybe join one of those organizations like "Weight Watchers." Good for you if you are watching your weight go down. That's a great thing. Another great thing that God recommends as the duty of all who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ is that of "wait watching." There are two obvious elements: waiting and watching. I Thessalonians addresses both.

In I Thessalonians 1:10 Paul commends the believers as those who "wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus who rescues us from the wrath to come." (NASV). I think it is easy for us to sometimes lose perspective on things. We get very busy doing and going and being that we fail to practice holy waiting. The Thessalonians were busy about the work of God and successful witnesses to the world around them. (See I Thessalonians 1:5-9). Yet, after reviewing all of their good deeds Paul instructs them to wait for Jesus. We should be excited when we are influencing our world, but no matter how successful our influence there is still something better yet to come. Our Lord is one day coming from heaven to remove us from the earth, we call that the rapture. (See I Thessalonians 4:13-18 as well). The reason He is coming is to rescue us from the wrath He will unleash on the earth. We call that the Tribulation. (See Revelation 6-19). We need to beware of focusing only on making a difference in our world to the neglect of reflecting on God's plan to deliver us from this world.

Toward the end of I Thessalonians Paul addresses the watching issue. "... so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober ..." (I Thessalonians 5:6 - NASV). That word "alert" is translated "keep awake" in the ESV and "watch" in the NJKV and KJV. You will recall that Jesus rebuked his sleeping disciples for sleeping when they should have been praying. He exhorted them to watch so as to avoid temptation. (See Matthew 26:41). In Acts 20:31 Paul warns the Ephesians to be watchful lest false teachers infiltrate their congregation. Furthermore, I Corinthians 16:13 reminds us of our duty to watch and stand firm in the faith. We need to be watching out for temptation, false teachers and sound doctrine.

It might be easy to conclude that waiting and watching are boring. I think that is fair, these are not easy disciplines, but then weight watching is not easy either. It is boring when you can't have your favorite snack. It is boring when we can't overindulge, yet it is essential if we are to successfully diet.

Ask yourself today, "Am I a successful Christian?" "How am I doing at wait watching?"

Looking Up!

Pastor Chuck Circle