

Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

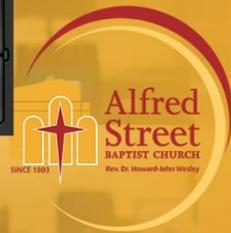
DEALING

WITH

DIVINE

DELAYS

2 Peter 3:8-14



Village Meeting Week of:

December 10, 2018

Sermon Date:

December 9, 2018

CURRICULUM
GUIDE

Notes for Facilitators:

This is the last week of official gatherings for our Fall 2018 Village session. We understand that many of you have closing activities planned. Please don't feel obligated to walk through this entire guide. Allow a few questions to launch your conversation, but focus on celebrating the growth within your Village over the past three months. Make sure all Villagers are aware of this week's very important Spirit Work assignment.





Sermon Summary

Jesus did not return within the timeframe that the early church expected him to. The second letter of Peter offers encouragement and instruction to those living under Roman persecution and experiencing a divine delay. Peter reminds all of us that God is coming back in God's time, not ours. The central takeaway is that human inaccuracy can't invalidate the truth of God's word. In the sermon Pastor Wesley walks us through the dating of Christmas. We can't be certain of the date Jesus was born, but the accuracy of the date doesn't change the truth of his birth.

Key Points

- God's Time Is Not Our Time
- Human Inaccuracy Cannot Invalidate Divine Truth

Getting To Know You Questions:

1. Have you ever experienced a delay in the manifestation of a promise or an answered prayer from God? How did that affect your walk with God?
2. Where in your life have you seen answered prayer in 2018?

Into The Bible Questions:

This sermon suggests that Christians are often divided over disputes regarding accuracy of accounts in the Bible, despite agreement that concepts in the Bible are true. An example is the ongoing debate about the exact date of Jesus' birth. The apostle Paul discussed such "disputable matters" in Romans 14-15. What are the debates you see dividing Christians today? What is the impact on the spread of the Gospel?

Life Application Questions:

1. When some of the disciples realized that Christ wasn't coming back in their natural lifetime like they fully expected, they wrote the gospels to inform others of their direct Christ experience before they died. How do you achieve productivity in the midst of disappointment?
2. The early believers wanted to preserve the stories of Jesus' life for generations to come. What stories about Jesus' presence in your life would you want to share with the generations of your family to come?
3. Pastor spoke about members of the early church struggling with the promise of Jesus' return. Peter addressed parousia in first letter, the book of 1 Peter. However, after an extended delay when doubt began to creep in, Peter wrote his 2nd letter to further encourage the church, and explain the delay in Jesus's return.
 - Have you ever had a moment where you were awaiting a promise, like the early church?
 - What did you do/use to encourage yourself?
 - What tools/resources did God use to encourage you during your delay?



"Can I Push It?"

Pastor Wesley posed the following questions, "How much accuracy is needed in order for something to be true? Can something be inaccurate and still contain truth?" When you read the Bible, what arouses your curiosity regarding accuracy?

Activity:

Facilitators will give each group member a large note card (4" X 6").

Part I: Facilitator will say to the group, "Think about your personal relationship with the Lord. What do you know to be true about Him? On one side of card, write 1-2 truths. Facilitators should give the group a few minutes to write.

Part II: On the opposite side of the card, draw a 2x2 grid. On the top left box of the grid, write one promise that the Lord has given, and in the top right box next to the right of it, list the evidence of the promise being manifest. In the bottom left box, write 1 promise that the Lord has made to you that you are still awaiting to be fulfilled. In the bottom right box, write scriptures that can encourage you while you are waiting.

Then do a round robin share - start with one group member and allow each person to share what they have written on their cards, moving from person to person around the circle.



Spirit Work:

Your homework assignment this week is to make sure you stay connected. The relationships you have initiated in this fall session are meant to last long past this week. Village won't resume until January 28th, but we want you to continue to nurture the connections you've developed. Check in on your Villagers over the coming weeks. Pray for each other. Make sure no one is spending the holidays alone. Stand in as someone's accountability partner during our January ASBC Fast. Find ways to keep the connections and remember that faith grows in community.