

## The Exchanged Life! – Part 5

### The Lord Waited

Sunday Morning, August 27, 2017

In the last few weeks we have considered what the phrase, “The Exchanged Life” means. This Sunday will be our final message viewing what the marvelous truth of “The Exchanged Life” entails. But before we look at this last message, I want to share with you how God introduced this particular message for this series to me. In our Tuesday night Bible Study group, we’ve been studying the book of Isaiah. Just this week, we came across a captivating verse that weaves itself into this last message on “The Exchanged Life”. Turn with me to **(Isaiah 30:18)**...the first line says,

Therefore the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you;

And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you.

For the Lord is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him.

Why is this important regarding, “The Exchanged Life”? The answer to this question has been revealed in the individual lives that we’ve quoted from over this series of messages.

The Lord waits to bless us when we are ready to receive it!

In the lives we’ve considered, and in many other Christian lives, “The Exchanged Life” only takes place when these individuals were ready to receive what God has desired to give them. For example, we will look at 19<sup>th</sup> century Pastor Rev. J.A. Wood, who felt that the blessing of God did not come into his life until the last barrier or hindrance was broken down. In the following quote Pastor Wood explains the moment he experienced “the Exchanged Life”:

*“A willingness to humble myself, and take a decided stand for holiness, and face opposition to it in the church, and take the odium of being an advocate of holiness in Binghamton, where the doctrine had been trailing in the dust for year, constituted the turning-point with me. After I reached that point of complete submission, I had no consciousness of making any special effort in believing; my whole being seemed simply, and without effort, to be borne away to Jesus.”*

Look at what Paul wrote in **(Philippians 3: 7 – 10)**.

**7** But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

**8** Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

**9** and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

**10** that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Dr. V. Raymond Edman said of a 1900's military soldier and soldier for Christ by the name of Major Ian Thomas,

*“after receiving Christ into his life at the age of thirteen, preached immediately in the open air arena on the streets of England. For seven years he sought every opportunity to teach, preach, and share the gospel of Christ, but with little response for Christ.”*

I want to read you a quote from Major Thomas when he was twenty years old. He was about to give up on ministry, with a broken heart and “tears of bitterness”, but God said to him:

*“You see for seven years, with upmost sincerity, you have been trying to live for Me, on My behalf, the life that I have been waiting seven years to live through you...you have been trying to do for Me only all that I can do through you.”*

Ian Thomas told us in his biography what God also told him:

“This is now the thing you have to realize; you cannot have My life for your program. You can only have My life for My program!”

In other words, we cannot use God for our plans. We must let God use us for His plans.

Major Thomas goes on to say,

*“This is the secret; it is so simple! Just to related (give) everything to the Lord Jesus and take our hands off.”*

It's difficult for us to take our hands off a situation in our life or in ministry, but we must, if we want to see God do His work! For example, when the prophet Jeremiah was imprisoned, he called out to God for help and God promised him that He was going to do a great work, a work beyond his imagination! Look with me at **(Jeremiah 33:3)**.  
'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'

Do you suppose that many Christians are imprisoned in their own power, their own resources and still need to call on the power of God to work through their situations, for His purpose in their lives?

Let us hold onto what God told Zechariah in **(Zechariah 4:6)**.

So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel:

'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord of hosts.

And look what God told the Apostle Paul about who we are and who He wants to be in us in **(II Corinthians 4:6)**.

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Consider also the following verse in **(II Corinthians 3:17)**.

Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

God wants us to realize that we have freedom in Him, He is waiting for us to embrace the riches of freedom in Him.

God wants us to rely on Him, the Holy Spirit who abides in our lives, waiting for each of us to let Him live through us! Remember, Major Ian Thomas worked for seven years to serve the Lord in his own strength without much success, until he came to this

conclusion:

*“I am going to thank Thee that if thou art my life, and this is true, then Thou art my victory, Thou art my strength, Thou art my power, Thou art my future! Thou art the One Who is going to go out now, clothed with me to do all that I have so hopelessly have been trying to do in the past seven years!”*

God waited for the proper time to reveal to Ian Thomas that He from the very beginning of his conversion had all the power he needed to be God’s vessel for His purpose.

Look at **(Acts 1:8)**

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

**(2 Corinthians 4:7)**

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

So when Ian Thomas came to this understanding, he was then embracing the adventurous life God intended for him to live. Ian Thomas went from being in college and preaching on the streets and dreaming of becoming a Doctor and serving as a missionary in Africa to evangelism to young people throughout Britain and the world after he served bravely all over Europe during the War. He travelled millions of miles preaching for God. He founded Torchbearers International to help equip men and women all over the world for service in Christ’s Church. The key is to let God live the life He intends for you to live through Him. God intends for us to live a life that is adventurous and successful in Him!

Years ago, while serving God as a Home Missionary in Tennessee, I was asked by a deacon there: “What do you think success is?” I believe he asked me this, not to test me, but to answer or affirm this question for himself. I answered, “Success to me is living my life obediently and faithfully to God.” But “the Exchanged Life” that becomes so adventurous by our living by faith in Him, is always successful in the eyes of God,, but not necessarily by the judgment of man.

Dr. Edman, the fourth President of Wheaton College had this personal testimony:

*“Death to my own plans and desires was almost deliriously delightful. Everything was laid at His nail-scarred feet, life or death, health or illness, appreciation by others or misunderstanding, success or failure as measured by human standards. Only He mattered...Life with this divine companion becomes an adventure.”*

Consider this verse in **(2 Corinthians 5:7)**.

For we walk by faith, not by sight.

The Lord is waiting for you to take that next step of faith! I want to leave you with this concluding quote by Dr. Edman:

*“Just as salvation is by faith, so also is the Exchanged Life”.*