

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

“By your patience,” the Lord said, “possess your souls.” Patience requires faith. The one who lacks faith is impulsive, impetuous. Waiting requires patience. So it is to faith that our Lord speaks when He says “In a little while, you will not see Me.”

His Words must have seemed quite mysterious to the disciples in the Upper Room. They had been with Him for three years. They saw Him. They heard Him. They touched Him. They saw Him do miraculous things no mere man could do.

But now His Words to them, Words that precede His High Priestly Prayer, speak of His absence. “A little while”, He says. And although He has already told them plainly, they do not understand that the “little while” to which He refers are the three days He will spend in death, the three days He will spend in the tomb. They will not see Him because the stone seal and the armed guard will prevent it.

They will have to wait. Waiting requires patience. Patience requires faith. It is by faith that they will possess their souls, for believing in His Words His Promise will also be theirs: “...again, a little while, and you will see Me.” The Lord did go away. He went the Way of Suffering. He went the Way of the Cross. The Promised Seed fell from the tree and was buried deeply in the ground. Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies it remains alone, but if it dies, it produces much grain.

So for a little while, for a bitter time, they did not see Him. It was a time of denial, a time of fear, a time of hiding, a time of doubt. But the crucified Lord kept His Promise. In a little while, they did see Him. The women at the tomb saw Him. They reported His resurrection to the Eleven.

Peter and John had a footrace to the tomb. They saw the evidence. The Eleven saw Him as He miraculously entered the Upper Room. He bid them peace. He did it again that Thomas believe, and that His confession “My Lord and my God!” be recorded for the ages.

They saw Him again as He preached, taught, and did miracles. But there was more to the Lord’s Promise. Yes, He said “again, a little while, you will see me”, but then He said “...because I go to the Father.” So for a little while, 3 days, they would not see Him. Then they would see Him, for a little while, for 40 days. Then they would see Him ascend into heaven, and for a little while, they would not see Him.

They would not see Him until they were ushered by spear and sword and saw an arrow to His nearer presence. Now they see Him forever. And now His Words “A little while, and you will not see Me” are Words for you. He fulfilled Moses and the Prophets when He took on Flesh. He fulfilled all Prophecy as He lived a sinless, perfect life.

He fulfilled His Promise when He suffered and died for the sins of the world. He fulfilled His Promise when He took up His life again, rising from the dead. And He fulfilled His Promise as He ascended into heaven.

So now, for a little while, you do not see Him. “Blessed are those”, the Lord said, “who have not seen and yet believe.” The first “little while” was three days. The second “little while” was 40

days. He has gone to the Father. So you for a little while, you don't see Him. You live in a "little while" that is a bit longer. But you have the Lord's Promise no less than the Eleven had it. And you have His Word in it's fulness, you have the Prophetic Word confirmed. So you wait. Waiting takes patience. Patience takes faith. Faith is born of Promise. And you have His Promise. In a little while, you will see Him.

So you live for a time not seeing. That's hard. Perhaps you have felt like the men of Isaiah's time. Perhaps you have felt that your way has been hidden from the Lord, that because you can't see Him He can't see you. Perhaps you have felt that your prayers have been passed over by God because it seems that you don't receive an answer to your prayers.

Perhaps this "little while" has seemed long to you, too long to wait. Perhaps you have felt that your suffering, your afflictions, your doubts, your fears, your temptations, are too much to bear. Perhaps you have been persuaded by the slander of the fallen world, as it mocks God in His Kingdom of Grace, teaching that there is no God, and that He is not coming back, that you should put your trust in men. Perhaps you know all too well what the Lord means when He says "Now you have sorrow..." It is to you that St. Peter writes "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul."

To you the Prophet asks "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength... those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength..."

The risen Lord gives you the strength you need. He empowers you, by His Spirit, to wait in faith for this "little while" until you see Him. He gives you power to do as the Chief of the Apostles bids: "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." He fills you with His Spirit, that you conduct yourself honorably, and that by your good works which men see God be glorified in the Day of Visitation, on that Day when this "little while" ends, on that Day when you stand before your Lord.

Now you wait. But you wait in hope. You wait in faith. You wait trusting that the Lord will, as He always does, keep His Promise. That you be strong as you wait, that you endure this "little while", the Lord gives you His Word, which works and strengthens faith.

He baptizes you, that you be forgiven, that you receive His Spirit, that you have comfort and hope and consolation. And He feeds you His Body, and gives you His Blood to drink, that you be strengthened and preserved steadfast in faith until He comes again, that you, by your patience, possess your soul.

And the Lord that died for you, the Lord that rose for you, the Lord that ascended to the Father to open heaven to you, makes you another Promise as you wait in this "little time": To you He says "...I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you."

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