

Saturday Devotional - Longing

Yesterday we spent time remembering and reflecting on the crucifixion and burial of Jesus. Today is Saturday. Jesus is in the tomb. He has not been resurrected yet and who knows what his disciples were thinking or feeling. For today's devotional we want to talk about longing. I believe the disciples were probably longing for something to happen. Longing for Jesus to come back. Longing for the events of Friday to not have happened. Much like the disciples were in this "in-between" time on Saturday, between Jesus' death and his resurrection, Christians today live with a similar longing.

Read the following passages that talk about longing:

John 16:16-24 - **16** "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me." **17** So some of his disciples said to one another, "What is this that he says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'; and, 'because I am going to the Father'?" **18** So they were saying, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We do not know what he is talking about." **19** Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, 'A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me'? **20** Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. **21** When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. **22** So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. **23** In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. **24** Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Romans 8:18-25 - **18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. **19** For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. **20** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **22** For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. **23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. **24** For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

(questions on reverse side)

Questions:

1. Have you ever longed for something to happen? What was that experience like? Was there sorrow or sadness attached to the longing?
2. Jesus compared his going away to a woman giving birth - there is sorrow and anguish, but once the baby is born there is joy. Have you experienced a time of sorrow and anguish but then joy? What was that like?
3. Ultimately, Christians today have a longing for the return of Jesus. The Easter weekend reminds us of this longing. Romans 8 talks about us groaning inwardly as we wait for the return of Jesus. Have you experienced this? A longing for Jesus to return that feels like your body is groaning?
4. How can we as Christians live in this in-between with patience and hope? How does the longing for Jesus change the way we live?

Spend some time in prayer together. Be honest about the longing you feel for the return of Jesus. Is it something you think about often or not at all? Thank God for the hope we have that Jesus will return one day. Our longing is not in vain. Ask God for patience and hope as we wait.