

15 Ways to Worship and Wait



SUNDAY, January 9

A New Anticipation

Acts 1.1-2

“In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.”

Can you imagine what it was like for Theophilus after reading the gospel account of Luke knowing it was only half the story, that there was more to come? The good news of Jesus' life and death, resurrection and ascension had reached him, but what was Theophilus to make of the growing group of Christians across the Roman world?

Theophilus felt his soul coming awake, hungering for more of God's presence; not only to hear the story of Jesus but to also have His Spirit engulf his life.

Way to Worship

Invite the Holy Spirit to fill the space around you, to envelop you from the worries and wonders of the world. Call to the Spirit of Jesus to guide your time of worship over the next 15 days in a special way.

Song Suggestion:

Fall Afresh by Jeremy Riddle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=617qQdMv5z8>

Way to Wait

Take a few minutes to try and remember what life was like before you knew Jesus as your savior, before you'd heard His good news and felt His redeeming love.

Still your heart, all that concerns you, and fix your mind only on God's presence in your life. With all earnestness, sit in waiting for His presence. Find a place to be by yourself and turn off your cell phone.

MONDAY, January 10

A Living Tapestry

Acts 1.3

“After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.”

Luke picks up his story with Jesus’ suffering, presenting the Lord risen and alive before His disciples. For forty days these disciples who’d scattered from Jesus in the garden, betrayed him in the courtyard and fled into the night, were drawn back together in the loving embrace of Jesus.

Packed with kingdom purpose, they spent these new days, these renewed hours, with Jesus. The disciples listened as Jesus wove together His death and suffering with His resurrected life and expanding kingdom. His good news is built on the convincing proof He is alive, not on the ghost of past memory.

Way to Worship

Let the song of your heart resonate with the words of this prayer of James the brother of Jesus: “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you,” (James 4.8). As you cleanse your hands and purify your heart, put those words of worship to music and let them become the cry of your heart.

Song Suggestion:

Just to Be Close to You by Fred Hammond and RFC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ya3TbkAentU>

Way to Wait

Take a few minutes to be still before the Lord. Go to a place where you can be alone without any distractions. You have proclaimed your desire to be close to Him, now be quiet before His presence and wait for His voice. His Kingdom is built on His living presence. Let Him speak to you, weaving His death and resurrection through his suffering and yours, about His Kingdom.

TUESDAY, January 11

Eating and Waiting

Acts 1.4-5

“On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’”

The other day I misspelled waiting and it autocorrected to eating. What a strange leap from one word to another. In English they share many of the same letters but that seems to be where their similarities stop. One is about fulfilling hunger while the other is rooted in anticipation. It is reminiscent of the teacher’s words in Proverbs, there is a time for everything, a season for every delight under the heavens,” (Ecclesiastes 3.1)

And yet, while eating with his disciples, fulfilling their physical hunger, Jesus calls them to wait, to anticipate a greater fulfillment than flat bread and beans.

Way to Worship

Take a little more time today to savor God’s presence, to worship Him no matter the circumstances of your life. There will be times dawn is cold and bracing, but His glory still shines in those places.

Suggested Songs:

There Will Be Time by Mumford and Sons featuring Baaba Maal

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmycEKdD0b0>

I Will Wait for You (Psalm 130) performed by Shane and Shane

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8C3WQ1G1Uso>

Way to Wait

Today, as you eat each meal, take a moment to remind your soul to anticipate the gift of the Father, that gift greater than coffee or cake. Consider writing down those words of worship on a notecard or small piece of paper that you can carry with you and read to yourself at the table.

WEDNESDAY, January 12

Toward a Life Right-side Up

Acts 1.6-7

“Then they gathered around him and asked him, ‘Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.’”

It’s amazing how even in the most beautiful times we can turn things upside down. The disciples, gathered in the very presence of the living Jesus, are distracted from the world-shaking truth of His resurrection and glory to ask a very narrow, nationalistic question: “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom of Israel?” So consumed by the smallness of their world they miss the grandeur of God’s plan to restore all peoples!

Jesus’ resurrection is not about the statehood of a single nation or the restoration of self-governance of an oppressed people. His resurrection is about the redemption and restoration of all people, nations and tribes (Revelation 7.9), and together we will sing the glory of God’s greatness and the wonder of His Word.

Way to Worship

Worship with new words: Jesus, “Full of light and beautiful... God of grace and truth revealed in Jesus...Majestic God, Mighty King, Eternal in splendor!”

Suggested Song:

Vemos tu gloria by En Espíritu y Verdad

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4efcRRPnb5g>

Way to Wait

Invite the Holy Spirit to re-orient your life and concerns, even those that you hold most dearly like king and country. Seek to be still and see the glory of Jesus as greater than a political persuasion or a personal ambition. Be willing for the Spirit to move and re-arrange your understanding of what He holds as most important. Write down what you hear Him saying to you.

THURSDAY, January 13

Hosanna in the Highest

Acts 1.8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

This verse serves as a kind of compass outline for the rest of Luke’s book. In the process of revealing Jesus’ promise that the Holy Spirit would come and indwell His disciples, he gave emphasis and importance to where they were and where they would be as they followed the leading of the Holy Spirit. This map is greater than they could imagine.

According to Justo González, the disciples “are discovering, by means of the Spirit, that the reign of God is much wider than they themselves thought or expected.” In waiting they will have their expectations of the Spirit and the mission of God widen to the very ends of the earth.

Way to Worship

Celebrate Jesus as the Lord of all creation, the King above all kings, Hosanna in the highest and over all peoples (Matthew 21.9). Lift your arms and voice in praise!

Suggested Song:

Hosanna by Brooke Lingertwood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoM0AT8fBvs>

Way to Wait

Intercede for a new generation to embrace the good news of Jesus across the globe. Name people and people groups out loud as you pray for them.

Now, be still and listen to the voice of the Lord showing you how much wider His reign is. How is He calling you to celebrate His Lordship in the lives of those around you?

FRIDAY, January 14

Two Kinds of Sight

Acts 1.9

“After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.”

While His beloved disciples listened to His words He ascended before their very eyes. Their vision so fixed that they stood there, straining against the clouds, wrapped in awe. The Bible tells us they were beholding Him, watching Him.

Much like in English this word has two meanings. The first is physical, to see or to observe. The disciples saw with their eyes Jesus ascending into the heavens. So anchored to the visible they could not take their eyes away. The second meaning of the words is non-physical, a sight not bound by material. This sight takes us to a place of response, of needed action.

Too often we confuse the two, thinking attendance to church services or acts of service fulfill the call God has placed on our lives to worship and wait in His presence. While a physical response is important, a mental ascent to God’s truth is where our first steps toward the upper room really take place.

Way to Worship

Today, choose to worship. Recognize how Jesus is worthy of all praise and adoration.

Suggested Song:

Worthy of it All by Cece Winans

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzZSrOPeolc>

Way to Wait

Now, take your eyes off the clouds, and listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Where is He calling you to wait and entrust His transforming work in your life?

Write them down throughout the day. Create for yourself a few quiet moments every few hours today to read through them again and ask the Lord to speak to you about them. Write down His response.

SATURDAY, January 15

Listen

Acts 1.10-11

“They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.’”

We, must avoid what Justo González refers to as religious escapism. “Too often, we Christians remain with our sights set on heaven, and forget that we have been placed on earth in order to fulfill a mission.”

The disciples had a command from Jesus to return to Jerusalem and wait for God the Father’s promised gift, but here they were, eyes glued to the skies. In our own days, whether eyes fixed on the future or buried in the frustrations around us, we rarely take time to wait before the Lord and listen.

Way to Worship

Be encouraged by the words of this song of worship. Prepare your heart to listen to the Spirit of God.

Suggested Song:

Listen by Marvin Sapp

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PI742pn7bnw&list=OLAK5uy_nEyqosX3Qo4WTwH_gmfuklUhVjoMqqonc&index=3)

[v=PI742pn7bnw&list=OLAK5uy_nEyqosX3Qo4WTwH_gmfuklUhVjoMqqonc&index=3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PI742pn7bnw&list=OLAK5uy_nEyqosX3Qo4WTwH_gmfuklUhVjoMqqonc&index=3)

Way to Wait

Now, quiet the waves of the world. Lower your eyes from the ethereal search for Christ in the clouds. Wait and listen to the Spirit.

Once again, write your concerns down on a paper and carry it with you throughout the day. Create for yourself a few quiet moments every few hours to read through them again and ask the Lord to speak to you about them. Write down His response.

*“True worship is open to God,
adoring God, waiting for God,
trusting God even in the dark.”*

— N.T. Wright

SUNDAY, January 16

Return to Sender

Acts 1.12-13a

“Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying.”

Luke tells us after the angels’ encouragement and seeing Jesus’ ascension, the apostles returned to the upper room. The word used for return is a New Testament word used and repeated by Luke in his gospel and history. Mary returned after her time with Elizabeth (Luke 1.56) The shepherds returned from seeing the newborn Christ, glorifying and praise God (2.20). After his baptism, Jesus returned from the Jordan where he would be tempted (4.1) and return to Galilee afterwards in the power of the Holy Spirit (4.14). Now the disciples are making their own return journey after spending 40 days with Jesus to a season of waiting together.

Way to Worship

Like Luke, we need to recognize those moments of needed return. It would be easy to stay with Elizabeth and the comfort of family, but the time comes we need to return to the life before us, pregnant with purpose. How much easier it would seem for Jesus to be baptized and head out into world-changing ministry, instead he returns from Jordan to the wilderness to be tested. Jesus set the example for his disciples of worship, trusting the Spirit and waiting for His leading.

Suggested Song:

Cry in My Heart by Starfield

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkdhumH-4gE>

Way to Wait

How do you need God to lift you up today? Lift up your voice to God again, reflecting on the two papers from the last two days where Christ is speaking transformation over your life and restoration over your concerns. Hold them together again before the Lord.

MONDAY, January 17

The Fullness of Time and the Fullness of Scripture

Acts 1.13b-14

“Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.”

The disciples saw themselves as the new tribes of Israel, like twelve new sons of Jacob. In a stunning reversal, however, instead of the eleven brothers betraying one (Joseph) selling him into slavery, this time the one (Judas) had betrayed them and Jesus, selling his own soul for 30 pieces of silver (Matthew 27.3). Surely, the disciples felt the sting of his deceit.

But beautifully Luke reminds us that God is still at work. Along with these heartbroken disciples here in Acts 1 is someone who saw the Spirit of God move through her surrendered obedience in Luke 1: Mary the mother of Jesus. God is about to do a new thing fulfilling His great promise to bless all peoples near and far (Genesis 12.1-3; see also Numbers 6.22-27).

Way to Worship

Twice, Mary experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, first with the conception of the Christ child (Luke 1.31) and soon when the great blessed outpouring on all people, young and old, male and female, will be indwelled with the Spirit of God (Acts 2.1-4).

Suggested Song:

The Blessing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58iF7wv-yMU>

Way to Wait

Where is your heart unsettled today? Are you carrying a pain like the disciples grieving Judas' betrayal? Rejoice in the testimony of Mary.

Who is God bringing to mind right now? Spend time speaking God's blessing over them.

How are you expectant for the move of God today? Bring your full self (body, mind, soul and strength) to a time of worshiping and waiting before the Lord.

For My Soul

Acts 1.15-17

“In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, ‘Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. He was one of our number and shared in our ministry.’”

The 120 disciples were joined together in prayer with expectancy (Acts 1.14). The word used for the nature of their prayer was the same used when they held the boat ready for Jesus as the crowds pressed closer and closer to hear His word and experience His healing (Mark 3.9). Through these days they bent their hearts and minds, like holding a boat against the rolling waves on the shore, ready for the promise of the Father.

As Peter demonstrates, the gathered followers of Jesus rooted their prayer in the Scripture, prayerfully seeking to make sense of their current reality in the words of the prophets and psalmists. Peter clearly felt it was time to address “the elephant in the room,” the underlying pain and confusion many felt, being in the same upper room where Judas had abandoned them to betray Jesus.

Way to Worship

In these verses we see Peter trying to reconcile the painful betrayal the disciples had felt in the actions of Judas. In the words of King David’s poetic prayers, Peter sought to hold on to Christ’s command to wait like he had with the boat on the shores of Galilee.

Suggested Song:

It is Well by Horacio Spafford

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nJ6wQpLmuo>

Way to Wait

Sit with the words of the hymn *It is Well*. Let them press against the waves that are buffeting the boat of your faith. In the tension of waiting with expectancy for the move of the Spirit, seek His healing in those places deeply effected by unresolved hurt.

What areas of unresolved pain is the Holy Spirit bringing to focus? Give them to Him once again and share that with a trusted friend.

WEDNESDAY, January 19

Holding the Tension

Acts 1.18-19

“(With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)”

This may seem an odd verse to insert in the middle of waiting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It's painful to hold the tension of waiting on God and the grief of Judas' betrayal. Can you imagine how the disciples felt!

Too often we diminish the place of lament in our worship and waiting. For the disciples to press forward to the presence of the Spirit they needed to lament the sin that grew in their midst. As Jesus' disciples we must enter into a time of reflection and lament, inviting the Holy Spirit to show us the places we've hidden from sight where we need to repent, as individuals but also as a people.

Way to Worship

Consider the places you need to lament and where our society needs repentance. Hold them before the Lord, seeking His forgiveness.

Suggested Song:

I'm Sorry (A Lament) by TobyMac

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUYCIC6vqKk>

Way to Wait

Once you've held them before the Lord, be still and listen for His voice. Hear Him speaking forgiveness and restoration over your life and His prophetic word over your people.

As you seek forgiveness, offer forgiveness. Say out loud a prayer of forgiveness over the lives of those who've hurt you.

THURSDAY, January 20

The Poetry of Waiting

Acts 1.20-22

“‘For,’ said Peter, ‘it is written in the Book of Psalms: “May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,” and, “May another take his place of leadership.” Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

Peter uses the poetic words of the psalms to express the sorrow felt by his brothers and sisters regarding Judas’ betrayal. Judas was promised, alongside the other apostles, a place of service in Jesus’ kingdom, but chose to desert Jesus and the Lord’s calling in pursuit of his own wealth and way. To make sense of their sorrow, Peter turns to the worship song book of Israel, to find words to guide their waiting before the Lord.

Before Peter led them to resolve the concern of replacing Judas he sought to understand it from a biblical standpoint. Let us follow His example.

Way to Worship

Turn your heart toward the lyrics of the Psalms. Find peace and comfort in the words of the songs passed down through the church for thousands of years.

Suggested Song:

Hymn Medley by Maverick City

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fwYD1_3FdZI

Way to Wait

Invite the Lord to speak into the decisions you are making right now. Give Him the first place to lead you where He would have you go. Write down what He saying to you.

FRIDAY, January 21

The Poetry of Calling

Acts 1.23-26

"So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they prayed, 'Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.' Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles."

After remembering the words of poetry from the Psalms, the disciples made sense of their actions with a poetic prayer. They formed new words of worship built on the poems of the Psalms.

So often in our lives it can feel like we have two possible futures. We stand a fork in the road, both packed with potential, both equally deserving of life. When we face times like this, just as the disciples did in choosing between Joseph and Matthias, lean on the Lord's guidance.

Way to Worship

Share with the Lord how you need Him to lead you into the future that best serves Him and brings Him the most glory through your obedience.

Suggested Song:

I Need You Now by Smokie Norful

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJpWjv7UGqE>

Way to Wait

Compose a short poem, a song, a poetic prayer. Put your concerns on paper and reflect on it as you listen to the voice of the Spirit. What is the Lord saying to you in response?

SATURDAY, January 22

The Miracle of Pentecost

Acts 2.1-2

“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.”

The miracle of Pentecost, according to Willie James Jennings, “is less in the hearing and much more in the speaking. Disciples speak in the mother tongue of others, not by their own design but by the Spirit’s desire.” Can we imagine what that looked like? In the heart of Israel, in the shadow of the Temple, these disciples proclaimed the glory of God in the mother tongue of other peoples! It was not their own language, but the languages of others (Acts 2.11).

Can we imagine what that would look like here? Worshiping the Lord together in one place, celebrating the wonders of our God, in the 120 languages represented in the greater Richmond area? Can we imagine what would happen if the peoples who live around Cornerstone were to hear the mighty works of God in their heart languages sung from our lips!?

Way to Worship

Praise God the Father that He did not leave His mighty works in Hebrew. Rejoice that His wonders were not left in Latin and Greek, but passed to us in our mother tongues. How wonderful that fathers and mothers of the church across the millennia did not confine the good news to an ancient tongue but spoke it into our lives in words we understand.

Suggested Song:

Doxology performed by Anthem Lights featuring Selah
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQUTvMtUhw4>

Way to Wait

Today, ask the Lord how He would have you share His mighty works with the men and women around you. What languages and cultures are there in your neighborhood that are blocked because they don’t speak English? How would Jesus call you to share His glory with them?

SUNDAY, January 23

A New Israel

Acts 2.3-4

“They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”

In the Old Testament we see God moving on behalf of His people through wind and fire. He brought them out of Egypt led by a pillar of cloud and fire. He parted the sea and the Jordan by the breath of His presence. He consumed the soaked offering with divine fire defeating King Ahab and his prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18). As the people journeyed through the wilderness the cloud and fire rested above the Tabernacle (Exodus 40.38).

Now the Spirit of God is sweeping in the sound of a mighty wind and resting on each of His people gathered in unity. These disciples, men and women gathered to worship and wait, are the new Israel. And they are given a great gift: new tongues through which to intercede and celebrate.

Way to Worship

We are made in the image of God to know Him and make Him known. Raise your arms in praise. Bow low before the Lord in worship. He has made you to meet with Him, to know Him. Amen! Fix your eyes on Jesus.

Suggested Song:

Spiritual by Kirk Franklin

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPbTgKY9zAM&list=PLOWDZJe5wh3jwDKL4vPJjb3rlqytlLXUd&index=10)

[v=hPbTgKY9zAM&list=PLOWDZJe5wh3jwDKL4vPJjb3rlqytlLXUd&index=10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPbTgKY9zAM&list=PLOWDZJe5wh3jwDKL4vPJjb3rlqytlLXUd&index=10)

Way to Wait

Come before the Lord with expectancy, seeking His presence. Be still and know that He is God. Gather with family, friends and the people of our fellowship to wait on the Lord anew.



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