

*The Articles of*  
Ethan Longhenry

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# ~~We Are the Ones We've Been~~ Waiting For

"We are the ones we've been waiting for."

The statement makes a great foundation for a political speech. It is a call to action. It seems that every generation somehow is waiting for some sort of deliverance-- some great hero, someone who will stand up, correct what is wrong, and bring hope and renewal. Those who wait for such persons are more often disappointed than not. Time goes by, wrongs are not righted, and hope and renewal seem as far away as ever before.

Nothing takes place until action is decided and accomplished. The old adage has it that the road to hell is paved with good intentions; to this we can add "waiting for change." Generations can come and go, and if people are just waiting and watching, nothing will occur. The tragic irony is that most of the time, the very people who wait and watch are the ones who could make the changes themselves, if only they realized that they were the ones they were waiting for!

Political change is nebulous, of course, and never something upon which we can rely. Nevertheless, the statement and the concept behind it fit neatly in spiritual terms.

All too often people become part of Christ and then wait. They wait perhaps for guidance or instruction; sadly, too many wait to find someone else who will be their spiritual hero. Churches dwindle in number because the members wait for the preacher to get the message out to bring new people to Christ. Christians sit and feel too inadequate in skill to do the work God expects, and look to others to perform such critical tasks. This is especially true for Christians who are younger in age; many feel that they will be able to serve God only when they "grow up," and thus wait on "older Christians" to do the tasks that God has commanded. Perhaps it is high time for all of us to realize that we are the ones for whom we've been looking.

Once we put on Christ in baptism, we are as much a Christian as anyone else who has obeyed Christ (Galatians 3:27-28). Yes, we must grow in the faith-- the just baptized Christian is compared to an infant, and like an infant must grow to maturity (John 3:5, Romans 6:3-7, 1 Peter 2:1, Hebrews 5:12-6:4). Notice how a Christian is expected to reach maturity:

*But solid food is for fullgrown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil (Hebrews 5:14).*

Christians do not mature by merely sitting in pews and soaking up information. Christians do not even mature by just watching more experienced Christians at work. Christians mature by doing. Christians mature by working to obey their Lord! We cannot sit back and think we can learn only from watching others-- after all, we are the ones for whom we've been waiting.

Consider for a moment those who were truly waiting. We read in the Bible of the great heroes of faith in the Old Testament, men like Abraham, Isaac, Moses, David, and many others. How many times have we marveled at their faith and the works which they were able to accomplish for God? How many times do we wish that we could have people having the same faith as they in our own midst? Yet it is written:

*And these all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect (Hebrews 11:39-40).*

As great in faith as Abraham, Isaac, Moses, David, and others were, they did not receive the promise. They were not perfected without us. They, in fact, were waiting for us: the inheritors of the fulfilled promises of God in Christ Jesus. The Hebrew author's conclusion is apt:

*Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:1-2).*

We, after all, are the ones for whom we've been waiting. We are the ones who can take up the mantle of the faith and run the race set before us, having every confidence that those who came before us will cheer us on to the finish.

Let us consider ourselves. When we walk into assemblies of the saints and despair at how few there are of us, let us remember that we are the ones for whom we've been waiting, and let us strive to promote the Gospel to all men. When we consider the sinfulness of the world and the despair which sin has brought to many, let us remember that we are the ones for whom we've been waiting, and let us strive to shine the light of Christ in all the dark corners of sin. When we dwell upon how weak we are, or how much further we have to go in the faith, let us remember that we are the ones for whom we've been waiting, and that maturity only comes as the fruit of patience and diligence in hope. When we dream about the future, and wonder how it will be, let us remember that we are the ones for whom we've been waiting, and it is our time to take our stand and advance the cause of God's Kingdom.

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