

## Directing Your Hearts

Written by David Wise

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*“And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.” – 2 Thess. 3:5*

God providentially leads, guides, and directs his children every single day. However, God is not abstract or flippant in the direction that he will guide our hearts. Here we are taught that God will direct our hearts unto two conditions that are vital for the child of God: into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

Here in this verse, “direct” means “to straighten fully, to guide and direct, the removal of the hindrances of coming to one”. That is a very apt definition for God’s providential guiding of our hearts into paths of righteousness here in this life. God will fully straighten our walk; he will guide and direct our path; and furthermore, God will providentially remove any hindrances that stand in our way of coming unto Christ. However, God’s direction is not general and vague. God has a will and works everything after the counsel of his own will. God has a plan and he carries it out.

First, God will direct and guide our hearts “into the love of God”. God is love (1 John 4:8). God placed his Spirit in our hearts in the new birth and first fruit of that Spirit we are told about is love (Gal. 5:22). God’s Spirit that dwells within us will always direct and lead us into the love of God. Now that God has placed that love in us, and showed his love towards us in the offering of his Son for our sins, now we are called upon to love one another. The greatest commandment is to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, and mind – but the second commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:37-40) is a natural expression and outpouring of our love to God, to agape, self-sacrificially love others around us who stand in need. God will not guide our hearts to ignore the suffering of others around us, but God will direct our hearts to show the love of God to others and relieve their affliction. John drives the point home very starkly; if we say

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that we love God but ignore our brother who stands in need, how can we say that the love of God dwells in us (1 John 3:16-18). Why? Because God will always direct our hearts to show unconditional love towards others, to express the nature of God in the public way to others, because God is love.

Secondly, God will direct our hearts “into the patient waiting for Christ”. I believe (and I trust scripture affirms) that God answers every prayer by either: a) yes, b) no, or c) not now. When the answer to our prayers are “not now”, it’s very challenging to “patiently wait for Christ”. In our immediate satisfaction, fast food, American culture we want it, and we want it now. However, oftentimes it’s in our best interest to wait patiently on the Lord; to let God work things out that we can’t handle or might irreversibly mess up. God will never direct our hearts to plunge ahead with no consideration of the Lord. Instead, God will consistently not only tell us to wait for the Lord’s timing, but will strengthen our hearts to not become discouraged as we wait upon the Lord.

However, I think the more applicable direction of God to our hearts, is not just patiently waiting in the midst of trials, but to patiently wait for the second coming of the Lord. In the new birth, our Spirit is taught to look for that *“blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ”* (Titus 2:11-13). Our Spirit groans within our natural bodies looking for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our bodies (Rom. 8:22-23). Our Spirit is directed to look expectantly, but also patiently, for the second coming of our Lord. While we are told to redeem the time since the Lord could literally return at any moment, we also know that it has been thousands of years since his first advent and there will come scoffers who will doubt the validity of his second coming (2 Peter 3). When we hear those scoffers doubt the Lord’s adherence to his promise to return, the Lord will direct our heart to patiently wait upon the Lord’s second coming. We have a sincere hope and desire for it here in this world, but we also know that we might pass away before it comes. Thus, we continue to patiently wait on the Lord.

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God's direction of our hearts will always point us back to him, never to the things of this world. God will direct us to live and walk in the love of Christ. God will direct our hearts to patiently wait on the Lord, both in our walk of discipleship and in our hope for the Lord's second coming.

God's strength will always uphold and direct our weary hearts. *"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait I say on the Lord."*

(Psalm 27:14)

*"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."*

(Psalm 31:24).

*"My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."*

(Psalm 73:26)