

Why Has Jesus Waited So Long to Return?

[2 Peter 3:8-10](#)

2 Peter, Day 12

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

- 2 Peter 3:8-10, ESV

My wife, Beth, and I met during her freshman year of college. Our first date was on her 18th birthday. It didn't take too long for us to realize two things: We wanted to get married, and we would have to wait until after she graduated to do so. Waiting is hard, and for us to wait three-and-a-half years to become husband and wife felt like an eternity at times. Looking back, after more than 21 years of marriage, it's easy to see it was worth the wait.

The church has been waiting for the return of her Lord and Savior for almost 2,000 years. We saw last time that He is indeed coming again, but why has it taken so long?

Even in the first century, when Peter wrote this letter, Christians felt like they had been waiting for Jesus' return for a long time. They wanted to know when He was coming back for them and why He was being so slow in keeping His promises. After all, Jesus had said all along that He would come back soon.

The first thing Peter tells us is to remember that God's concept of time is different from ours: "*with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" God is not bound by time as we are; He is eternal. So, of course, His perspective on time is different from ours. As Aslan said in Narnia, "I call all times 'soon'."

Then, Peter reminds us of the reason for the delay of Christ's return: God is being patient so that all of His people will be saved. Some take 2 Peter 3:9 as a statement that God intends to save everyone in the world, but Peter says God "*is patient toward you.*" Who is the "you"? If we go back to the beginning of the letter, we'll see it is God's elect exiles, God's chosen ones living in this fallen world.

Every believer alive today should be so thankful that God is so patient and that Jesus has waited so long to return. Just think what would have happened if Jesus had come back in the first century. None of us would exist, and so we would not be saved and be with the Lord forever. We would never have been born, much less born again! So, speaking personally, I am thankful for the patience of the Lord and the "slowness" of His coming.

God is going to wait until all of His chosen ones have been born into this world and then born again into His eternal kingdom. Once the number of the redeemed is complete, then Jesus will come again. When will that be? Only God knows, and He says it will be soon!