

Waiting on Him

Isaiah 40:27-31

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Introduction:

Before we dive into God's Word together, let's **PRAY** together.

Please turn in your Bibles to the book of Isaiah, chapter 40. We'll be looking at verses 27-31 together in a message entitled "Waiting on Him".

Tonight, we're going to be learning about weariness: What do we do when we are weary and what we can do to make sure we don't GROW weary.

We often grow tired. We grow weary. We get so preoccupied with the affairs of this life that we just go go go and don't even realize that we're doing it all on our own strength and not in the strength that we have access to in the Lord.

I don't think you all need me to stand up here and tell you that this life can be hard. We all know this. I'm only 27 and even I have lived enough life in my relatively short time here to know that living this life is no easy feat.

When you factor in how God has called us, as believers, to go against the grain of this world and how He desires that our lives look *radically different* from the way everyone else lives, we can be assured that we will encounter tribulation and tough times.

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

- "Tribulation" - affliction, to be hard pressed, an experience of great pressure

2 Timothy 3:12 "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

- As we live godly lives in honor of the Lord Jesus, we must know that we will experience constant hostility, harassment, and trouble from the world that does not know the God we live for.

I want to present to you all a couple of questions tonight:

How do we live for the Lord, in a world that is against Him, without growing weary? How do we *maintain the sense of strength* that God desires for His people to walk in when we're constantly living our lives against the grain/swimming against the current of this world?

These questions lead us perfectly to the portion of Scripture that we'll be parked at tonight in Isaiah 40 as we learn what it means to WAIT ON HIM:

READ ISAIAH 40:27-31

1. Running on Fumes

(vs 27)

Running on fumes- an idiom that means "to continue doing something even when you have no energy/strength left to do it" (car that's still running right before it runs out of gas and shuts down)

- I believe that some of you here tonight are walking with the Lord just like this
 - Still moving forward, but doing so in a spirit of weariness and exhaustion

We're going to talk a lot about weariness tonight.

Weariness- to be exhausted in strength, endurance, and vigor; to have one's patience, tolerance, or pleasure exhausted/depleted

In the beginning portion of the text, we are looking into tonight, we see Isaiah direct a question towards Israel regarding some complaints they were speaking against God in their weariness:

- "Why do you say... 'my way is hidden from the Lord, and my just claim is passed over by my God'"
 - 'my way is hidden from the Lord'- God's not paying attention to me and my life, He's not attending to me as He said He would
 - 'my just claim is passed over by my God'- I'm living justly like God has called me to and He's just passing over it without rewarding me, without changing my difficult circumstance

If we are all honest with ourselves, we, like Israel here, have said/do say similar things unto the Lord. We are inclined to grumble things like this, whether it be internally or externally. This happens especially when we're living for God and obeying Him, but aren't experiencing relief from our challenging circumstances. Weariness causes us to buy into these lies that God's not paying attention.

We'll be living our lives for the Lord, seeking to please Him, and when things in life don't seem to be going our way or we can't catch a break and we're running on fumes, it's like we look at God and go "what gives Lord? Don't You see I'm being obedient down here?! Don't You SEE me?!"

God would respond to these thoughts by reminding us that *He is the God Who Sees*.

In Genesis 16 we read of the story of Hagar, Abram and Sarai's maidservant and how God ministered to her in her distress/affliction.

- God promised Abram and Sarai an heir through which He would keep His covenant with Abram but because of her barrenness and age, Sarai and Abram take things into their own hands
- Sarai (Sarah) tells her husband, Abram, to go lay with their maidservant Hagar so that Hagar can conceive and give birth to the child that God had promised Abram and Sarai since Sarai was old and saw herself as unable to bear children (what could go wrong).
- Abram does so and Hagar gets pregnant, only for Sarai to go on to be incredibly harsh with Hagar
- Hagar then flees from the presence of her mistress only to be met by the Angel of the Lord in the wilderness (God Himself) who goes on to minister to her and comfort
- The text tells us that Hagar, after being ministered to by the Lord, called the name of the Lord "The God who sees me" (El Roi)
- We, like Hagar should take great comfort in the fact that *our God is the God who sees*. He is our *El Roi (El Roe-ee)*.

But it's as though we have formed this false understanding within us that when we obey God, that life will just be smooth sailing. This is simply not the case.

I'm reminded of the couple of verses we just looked at earlier from Jesus and Paul about how if we truly obey God and live for Him, we will experience tribulation and persecution. I'm reminded by the lives of the disciples who obeyed the Lord until the end and endured tough lives and ultimately died martyrs' deaths. I'm reminded of our Lord Jesus who lived in PERFECT obedience and was despised by the world and crucified for doing so.

Don't get me wrong, the Bible clearly teaches that God loves to bless obedience, but He does not always bless our obedience by changing our circumstances.

We would never say it out loud but, in effect, the way we're sometimes prone to think is that when we're being obedient and God's not changing our circumstances, that He's not being faithful towards us.

God's faithfulness toward us is sure regardless of our circumstances.

You could be the most obedient believer in the world and go home to a broken family that just isn't changing. You could be the best worker and never get that raise you've been praying for. We could come up with endless situations just like these.

H.A Ironside:

"It is not because of the lack of power/faithfulness that God does not give immediate release from trial and tribulation. His understanding is infinite and He is working out His own counsels for our blessing when He permits affliction to fall upon us and continue to oppress us. We must learn from the lesson put before Job, that man cannot fathom His plans, so should seek to submit without question to His providential dealings. It is easy, when distress or suffering becomes prolonged, to think that God has forgotten or is indifferent to what one is going through. But this is always wrong. He is ever concerned about His people, and in His own time will give deliverance; and until then His grace is available to sustain and strengthen the soul, that one may endure as seeing Him who is invisible"

If we're being real tonight, we would all acknowledge that it is very hard to keep trusting Him when our challenging times of life feel like they're never ending:

- Story of how I was let go and didn't know I was going to have another job until the very end of the summer, one week before the school year
 - **I even reached a point where I turned to the Lord just like how Israel did in verse 27 and was basically saying the same things that they were to Him, that "my way is hidden from the Lord and my just claim is passed over by my God"**

When the circumstances that we live in dictate our view of the attentiveness of God towards our lives, we will get all messed up.

In Psalm 42, we're given a great example of how to hope in God while walking through seasons of despair...

Psalm 42:9-11

9 I will say to God my Rock, "Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" 10 As with a breaking of my bones, My enemies reproach me, While they say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" 11 Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.

If you're navigating through a tough season of life tonight with a downcast soul like the Psalmist, maybe you're even running on fumes, where do you go from here? Or rather, *who do you turn to from here?*

This question leads us to our second point...

2. Running to Him

(vs 28)

Isaiah responds to the complaints of God's weary people that we saw in verse 27 with a couple of rhetorical questions:

- "Have you not known? Have you not heard?"

Known what? Heard what?

Verse 28

"The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable."

It's as though God tells them, "Hey I know you're all wrapped up in the difficulty you're facing, but *I want you to be reminded of who I am*. I know you're convinced I'm not watching over you but I'm "the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth who never faints or grows weary".

Illustration: My dad's Barney Fife garage thermometer that says, "not much gets by him".

- God is not some Barney Fife God that is always letting things get by Him unnoticed or unattended to!
- Rather, God is *absolutely aware* of us and takes *special notice* of the lives of His children

God is not more concerned with the brother or sister next to you! We're all too guilty of comparing our lives to theirs!

We sometimes think that God gives more attention to His other kids more than us because we look at their lives and wonder why God isn't doing that for us, but this couldn't be farther than the truth.

This is what I call death by comparison. Death by comparison is when you compare your situation and your life circumstances to others' situation and circumstances. This is such a poor decision we often make. It will quite literally drive a person mad and skew their view of God into something that He is not.

- This is where my generation falls so short because of the way social media works
 - Nobody is honest about their real lives on social media. Everyone wants to come across to their followers like they have it all together when in reality, no one has it together!
 - *Illustration: couple fighting right before taking a nice picture only to go right back to fighting*
 - *Family fighting in the car all the way then making sure they look like the picture-perfect family when they walk in*

When we're tempted to grow weary or when our soul within us is downcast, we must remember who our God is! We do not worship some small god, but we worship the very everlasting God who created the ends of the earth! The one who never faints or grows weary! The one who's understanding is unsearchable!

Several verses of this awesome chapter of the book of Isaiah consist of God reminding His people of how majestic and great He really is!

Look back with me at verses 12-14 and 25-26.

Isaiah 40:12a

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span

- The God we know personally is the same God who can measure out the oceans and waters in the cup of His hand and can span the universe with the width of His hand

Isaiah 40:12b-14

And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance? 13 Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, Or as His counselor has taught Him? 14 With whom did He take counsel, and who instructed Him, And taught Him in the path of justice? Who taught Him knowledge, And showed Him the way of understanding?

- No one has taught God anything. He is the one who possesses all knowledge and power. We do not serve a small, weak, or unaware God.

Isaiah 40:25-26

25 "To whom then will you liken Me, Or to whom shall I be equal?" says the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high, And see who has created these things, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name,

- Host- sun, moon, and stars
- Astrologists have tried to guess how many stars there are in the known universe. Their estimation is 200 billion trillion. He has a name for every star.

By the greatness of His might And the strength of His power; Not one is missing.

Psalm 19:1-4

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard. 4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world.

God's will for us when our weariness has convinced us that He's not there is that we would be reminded of His greatness and majesty.

Our problems can seem pretty big to us when we have a small view of who our God is. When we take the time to meditate on the greatness of the God we get to know personally, our problems and difficulties get a whole lot smaller.

When we're weary and tired from the hardness of life, we run to our amazing God...

Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

- *Labor*- to grow weary, tired, exhausted
- *Heavy laden*- carrying too much
 - Carrying too many groceries up and down the stairs recently after Sam's club trip when they didn't have any boxes
- *Rest (vs 28)*- a refreshed spirit
 - He wants to refresh your tired spirit
- Jesus invites you tonight to bring all of what you're carrying to Him. His desire is that you would allow Him to relieve you of the exhaustion you're experiencing in your very soul.
- In these powerful 3 verses, it's as though there is this exchange that is described:
 - We give Him what is weighing us down
 - He gives us His easy yoke and light burden

The One we run to never faints nor is He ever weary. He's never too tired for the needs of His beloved children.

If you're weary tonight, run to Him.

If meditating on the greatness and majesty of God is the remedy for weariness, HOW exactly do we not GROW weary? What must we do to prevent weariness from overtaking us as we navigate through the challenges of this life?

3. Running on Him (vs 29-31)

What I mean by running on Him is *RUNNING ON HIS STRENGTH*.

“29 He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, 31 But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.”

Are you feeling weak tonight? God wants to give you power. Are you without might? God wants to impart to you a strength that only He can give: a strength you cannot muster up from within yourself, a strength that triumphs over weariness.

As we learned in verse 28 of Isaiah 40, our God neither faints nor is weary. He does not desire for His children to walk in weariness but rather in STRENGTH.

What condition must we be in order to receive the strength of God? Believe it or not, it is a condition of *weakness and dependency*.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

“And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

- It is when we are in a state of dependency and weakness that God will impart to us HIS strength to carry us through whatever we may be facing

God will let us walk according to our own strength so that we may learn to depend on His strength. He’ll let us realize how weak we truly are because it causes us to run to Him.

We see this described in verse 30 of Isaiah 40 when he says that “even the youths will faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall”

- Young men are some of the hardest people to instruct because of how strong they think themselves to be. They don’t think they need God, but even the strength of the mightiest of young men will fail.
 - Look at the great bodybuilding legend Arnold now (even the strength of young men shall fail)
- God gives a strength that will fail us.

This life is constantly seeking to drain us of strength. The enemy wants us to be weary all the time like a bunch of sad-old-Eeyores because if he can get us to live this way, he knows that we’ll be robbed of the abundant life that God desires for us! If that sounds like you, it doesn’t have to be that way! We don’t have to be weary and without strength!

As we mentioned in the beginning of the study, we are all too often running on fumes. God’s desire is to fill our tank with His strength!

How exactly does He do this?

It is as we wait on Him that we will have our strength renewed.

What exactly does it mean to wait on the Lord? We say it all the time! What does it mean though?!

To wait on the Lord is to have a settled heart that believes in confidence and faith that in GOD'S TIME and GOD'S WAY, He will act.

- It is not a passive, sitting around doing nothing
- It is *actively hoping and trusting* in the living God with eager anticipation and patience

We are not very good at waiting on the Lord. We may start waiting on Him but all too often we grow impatient when He doesn't move according to our timeline and how we think He should.

H.A. Ironside:

"Mere natural and physical powers will not avail in the hour when one is called upon to face great mental and spiritual emergencies. But they who have learned to refer everything to God and to wait quietly upon Him will be given all needed strength to rise above depressing circumstances, thus enabling them to mount heavenward as eagles facing the sun, to run their race with patience, and to walk with God with renewed confidence and courage, knowing that they are ever the objects of His love and care."

The believer is called to wait on Him. If you want to learn how to wait on the Lord, spend some time in the Psalms

Psalm 27:14

14 Wait on the Lord;

Be of good courage,

And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!

- "Wait"- waiting in faith
- Our hearts can be full of vigor, courage, and strength as we wait on the Lord

I want to leave you tonight with just a portion of the Psalm that God used in my life to get me through one of the toughest seasons of my life as I waited on Him.

Psalm 37:1-8

Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.

- Don't worry and be so concerned about the lives of those who don't know the Lord!

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb.

- Their end is destruction

3 Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.

- God wants you to give yourself to trusting in Him
- He wants you to dwell in the land (live your life) and feed on how faithful He is to you

4 Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

- Delight- experience great pleasure in Him and the things that please Him

- God longs to give you the desires of your heart but He desires that you first trust and delight yourself in Him

5 Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

- Place all of your life in His hand (challenging circumstances and all) and He will take care of your every need

6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.

- In times where you feel like Israel, that your obedience and just claim is being overlooked by Him, be reminded that God will bring your righteousness and justice forth

7 Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

- Don't let your rest be taken from you because of the schemes of the wicked
- Rest in Him, Wait for Him

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret—it only causes harm.

- Fret- to burn inside with worry
 - Worrying/fretting only causes harm

• Matthew 6:27 “Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?”

- It only causes harm

I would HIGHLY encourage you to read the rest of the Psalm in your time with the Lord if you are in a season of waiting on Him.

Conclusion:

If you are weary tonight, if you're running on fumes, if you're living your life for the Lord obeying Him but just feel like you're exhausted, there is a rest and strength available to you from God.

Tonight, God's plea to you is that you would both run to Him, and you would wait upon Him.

- Jesus is waiting for you to exchange that heavy burden that is causing you to be weary for His light and easy yoke.

As we wait on Him, we can be assured that we will SOAR as eagles, we will RUN and not grow weary/tired, and we will WALK and not faint.

- Have you guys ever seen an eagle fly? God has specifically engineered them so intricately that even in the most turbulent conditions, they can soar with ease.
 - God says He wants your life to be like that. When the turbulence of life arises, He wants you to continue soaring as you choose to wait on Him and put your absolute trust in Him

We often think of seasons of waiting on the Lord as trying seasons that are very difficult to go through, but it doesn't have to be this way. We can wait in strength because of Him.

Maybe you're waiting on Him to heal you of an ongoing health problem: you can soar because of Him. Maybe you've been praying for years for your backslidden child to come back to Jesus: God can give you a supernatural strength to keep going and keep praying for them as you wait on Him. Maybe you and your spouse keep trying and trying to have a child and it's just not working out: wait on Him and He'll supply the strength you need to endure that challenging season.

There's so many examples that I could say right now. But will you wait on Him?

If any of what I have said has resonated with you, I'm not going to have you come forward, stand or raise your hand but I will ask that you take a moment just right now to connect with your heavenly Father who longs to give you His strength as you wait on Him.

PRAY