



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Advent Series Theme: Longing For More

Text for the Week: Isaiah 40:27-31; Galatians 6:7-10

Message for the Week: "Strength for the Weary"

Week Four
Sunday, December 18

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

What is the hardest thing that you have ever had to wait for?

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Isaiah 40:27-31](#) and [Galatians 6:7-10](#) out loud.

[Clicking this link will bring you to multiple translations.]

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

What is your “How Long?” this morning? What circumstances in your life are making you weary?

When we are tempted to conclude that God is either unable to do anything about our circumstances or that He does not care about our circumstances, what are some passages in the Bible that remind us that God is at work and we can depend on Him?

How do/can we make the move from weariness to confident expectation? How can we restore our hope in the Lord? How can our strength be renewed? (Isaiah 40:31)

How do you explain the confidence of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the face of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 3? Would you be as confident as they were? Why or why not?

What does “waiting on the Lord” look like in your life? How do you go about “waiting on the Lord?”

Can you recall a time in your life when you received supernatural or inexplicable strength from God? What were the circumstances? Describe your experience.

“Try It!”

See Missional Practice below 😊

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Father in heaven, during this season of Advent, our hearts long to be close to you. Help us this season to open our hearts so that you may draw near to us. We grow weary, God. So many things in this world make us weary. We need your strength. We need the light of Christ to come to us to strengthen us and give us peace. AMEN.

Missional/Spiritual Practice for ADVENT: Waiting on the Lord (Isaiah 40:30-31)

Each day during this season of Advent, you are encouraged to “Wait on the Lord.” Each day find, 5, 10, 15, or 30, minutes (or whatever time you need) to sit and be with the Lord. Each day, take time to wait on the Lord. What does it mean to wait on the Lord? Kristi Walker, a missionary, in her explanation notes for us that when we wait on the Lord, we “...wait on the Lord to act – to deliver, to save, to avenge, to answer our prayers, to provide for our needs, to renew our strength, to reveal His glory, to do what only God can do.” As you wait on the Lord each day, what is the Lord calling you to do? Who is the Lord calling you to be?

Isaiah 40:27-31 New International Version

²⁷ Why do you complain, Jacob?
Why do you say, Israel,
“My way is hidden from the Lord;
my cause is disregarded by my God”?

²⁸ Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.

²⁹ He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.

³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;

³¹ but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

The Message

²⁷⁻³¹ Why would you ever complain, O Jacob,
or, whine, Israel, saying,
“God has lost track of me.
He doesn’t care what happens to me”?
Don’t you know anything? Haven’t you been listening?
God doesn’t come and go. God *lasts*.
He’s Creator of all you can see or imagine.
He doesn’t get tired out, doesn’t pause to catch his breath.
And he knows *everything*, inside and out.
He energizes those who get tired,
gives fresh strength to dropouts.
For even young people tire and drop out,
young folk in their prime stumble and fall.
But those who wait upon God get fresh strength.
They spread their wings and soar like eagles,
They run and don’t get tired,
they walk and don’t lag behind.

Galatians 6:7-10 New International Version

⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

The Message

⁷⁻⁸ Don't be misled: No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants, he will harvest. The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others—ignoring God!—harvests a crop of weeds. All he'll have to show for his life is weeds! But the one who plants in response to God, letting God's Spirit do the growth work in him, harvests a crop of real life, eternal life.

⁹⁻¹⁰ So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up, or quit. Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us in the community of faith.