

A. WEIGHT OF WAITING

- In a long season of waiting, we are likely to pick up some heavy things such as weariness, doubt, disappointment, disobedience, or distance from God.
- This weight can become heavy and hinder our attempts to turn the page on a new day or a new year. The book of Hebrews deals with the weight of waiting.
- This letter was written to Jewish Christians who were suffering. The weight they felt caused them to return to old, familiar ways vs. embracing their new life in Jesus.
- After many chapters grounding the believer in the truths of the Gospel, the author then addresses how to live when we've grown weary or discouraged: Heb 12:1-3 NAS
 -- Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.³ For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.
- The phrase “lay aside” in the original language means to put away (literally or figuratively), to put aside, or to put off from oneself. (Strong's G659)
- The Greek word for encumbrance means a burden or a weight that causes bending or bulging because of its load. (Strong's G3591)
- The sin that entangles means to offend, to err, to be mistaken, or miss the mark (G266)
- LISTENING EXERCISE:
Lord, what am I carrying that is weighing me down and needs to be laid aside?
 -- Weariness

-- *Disappointment*

-- *Doubt or Unbelief*

-- *Regrets*

-- *Guilt or distance from You due to disobedience or sin*

-- *Something else*

Will you give your weighty things to Jesus and let Him carry them instead?

B. ENDURANCE

- When Waiting on God for a long time, our life journey can feel less like a race and more like a series of detours and pitstops. That's why we are called to endure: Hebrews 10:36 NLT -- Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.
- The Greek word for endurance means:
 - Patience
 - Steadfastness
 - Constant
 - The characteristic of a man who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose and loyalty to faith by even the greatest trials and suffering (Strong's G5281)
- God is calling us to endure as we wait on Him for each day's challenges and for the long-term struggles that are yet to be resolved.
- Yet we must be keenly aware that no human being is able to endure like Jesus did by simple imitation. This endurance must come from Jesus living His life through us: Gal 2:20 NLT -- My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So, I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
- Remember that Jesus lived His life on earth as a man. His obedience and endurance were the result of His humble dependence upon God by faith. (Phil 2:6ff)
- Let's work to believe that God is perfecting our faith as we wait and that He will fulfill His purposes for our lives as He has promised: Gal 6:9 NIV -- Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.
- Insights:

C. FIXING OUR EYES

- In the original language, "fixing our eyes" means to consider attentively; to turn the eyes away from other things and to fix them on something else. (Strong's G872)
- Jesus did not fixate on the shame or hostility that He faced. Instead, He was focused on the purposes and promises of God that far surpassed His temporary pain. (v.2)
- He taught this principle in the Sermon on the Mount: Matt 6:22 AMP -- The eye is the lamp of the body; so if your eye is clear [spiritually perceptive], your whole body will be full of light [benefiting from God's precepts].
- A powerful strategy for turning our eyes away from other things and fixing them on God's truth is found in the practice of Scripture journaling required of Israel's kings: Deuteronomy 17:18-20 NLT -- When he sits on the throne as king, he must copy for himself this body of instruction on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.¹⁹ He must always keep that copy with him and read it daily as long as he lives. That way he will learn to fear the LORD his God by obeying all the terms of these instructions and decrees.²⁰ This regular reading will prevent him from becoming proud and acting as if he is above his fellow citizens. It will also prevent him from turning away from these commands in the smallest way.

- Reliable scientific studies have proven many benefits of handwritten journaling. These findings are backed up by the principles of Scripture!
- Expressive journaling about suppressed painful emotions held in the amygdala allows the rational brain to join in and make sense of them (Baikie and Wilhelm)
- The best example we have in the bible is found in David. He journaled his heartache to the Lord even as he was composing Scripture: Ps 142:2 NLT -- I pour out my complaints before him and tell him all my troubles.
- Neuroscience has found that gratitude journaling impacts the part of the brain that regulates mood and motives. It impacts our focus, attitude and wellbeing (M. Madeson)
- David practiced gratitude throughout the psalms in order to connect to the truth of who God is even in the midst of waiting and weighty, long-term issues: Ps 92:1 NLT -- It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to the Most High.
- Reframing journaling renews your mind about life events by quieting emotions and engaging the “executive brain.” Write your thoughts about the answers to these questions: 1) what happened, 2) how you felt about it, 3) what message you’re believing 4) what is God’s truth, and 5) how you want to respond in the future (N.Balboa)
- This type of journaling, when HS is invited to speak, enables us to process events, own our feelings, repent if needed, and receive God’s truth – better than ruminating: Eph 4:22-24 NIV -- Put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.
- LISTENING EXERCISE:

Jesus, what does it look like for me to fix my eyes on You in my day-to-day life?

-- Slowing down to keep a written record of something meaningful in Your Word

-- Journaling to You about unresolved painful emotions?

-- Expressing gratitude on days when I am feeling disconnected from Your love?

-- Allowing You to renew my mind about life events with the reframing steps?

What do You want me to remember when my mind returns to the struggle, the disappointment, the regrets, or any other heavy thing that's captured my attention?

- Journaling helps us lay aside unresolved issues, reframe life events, and reconnect to the Author and Finisher of our faith when we are feeling the weight of waiting: Romans 12:2 NLT -- Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

D. PERSONAL APPLICATION

- ONE THING
- The One Thing that I'd like to take away from today's class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

- PONDER THE TRUTH

Which verse or principle stood out to you this week? Write it below taking some time to review it often. Be still in God's presence, alert for new insights. Record them here.

- PROCESSING THE TRUTH

Prayerfully consider the Listening Exercises from this lesson. Ask the Spirit to guide you into a deeper understanding of the truth and to reveal any specific faith steps He is calling you to take. Write down your insights.