

With Wings Like Eagles

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- [0 : 0 0] Hello, my name is Tyler Slap from Troop 47. This is a reading from Isaiah chapter 40 verses 21 through 31. Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning?
- Have you not understood since the earth was founded? He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and his people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy and spreads them out like a tent to live in.
- He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing. No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground.
- Then he blows on them and they wither, and they whirl and sweeps them away like chaff. To whom will you compare me, or who is my equal, says the Holy One.
- Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens. Who created all these? He who brings out the sorry hosts one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.
- [1 : 0 8] Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, my way is hidden from the Lord? My cause is disregarded by my God. 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 he is understanding no one can fathom.
- He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall. But those who hope in the Lord and renew their strength, they will soar on wings like eagles.
- They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not be faint. Hello, I am Nate from Troop 98, and I will be reading Mark 129-39.
- As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the homes of Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with the fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her hand, and helped her up.
- [2 : 1 2] The fever left her, and she began to wait on them. The evening after sunset, the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus held many who had various diseases.
- He also drove out many demons. But he would not let the demons speak, because they knew who he was. Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went up to a solitary place where he prayed.
- Simon and his companions went to look for him. When they found him, they exclaimed, Everyone is looking for you. Jesus replied, Let's go somewhere else, to the nearby villages, so I can preach there also.
- That is why I have come. So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues, and driving out demons. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Will you join me in a word of prayer, please?
- God, may the meditations, our mouths, the love in our hearts, and our work be pleasing in your sight.

- [3 : 20] O Lord, our God, and our Redeemer. Amen. So today we immerse ourselves in the scriptures, and we encounter the profound challenge of waiting on the Lord.
- Waiting, whether with the anticipation of children, or the impatience that often accompanies us as adults, navigating through our life's complexities.
- It's a concept that doesn't easily find a home within our hearts. Waiting is intrinsically woven into the tapestry of our lives, touching each and every surface.
- We pray, and in the quiet aftermath, we wait. We grind away at our everyday tasks, and then we wait. And in the ebb and flow of life, we find ourselves in a perpetual state of anticipation, wondering about the unfolding of the Lord's plans in our life.
- It's an inherent aspect of our existence, a recognition that we cannot manipulate God's actions, nor can we ensure visible responses to what we see as our plans.
- [4 : 34] Waiting on the Lord is an integral part of navigating this intricate journey of life, and we are constantly in that state of expectant reflection.
- Looking back on personal experiences, the word wait was not a pleasant one in my younger years, and as an adult today, the prospect of waiting is met with lingering impatience.
- But how many of you genuinely enjoyed being told to wait? Okay. See? The distaste to this idea remains.
- We find ourselves resistant to its embrace, but within the resistance lies a truth. Waiting on the Lord is not a passive state of anticipation.
- It's a dynamic and transformative journey. Waiting involves active trust and hope in God's timing and providence that transcends our understanding.
- [5 : 37] So as we navigate that intricate tapestry of our lives, let us take a look at the profound exploration of waiting on the Lord, of unraveling that richness that unfolds in that process.
- The waiting referred to in the passage isn't like the waiting that we do. The waiting describes it's a unique form of anticipation. Waiting on the Lord is not like the anticipation when you smell a cake baking in the oven, or the excitement of unwrapping presents on Christmas morning.
- It doesn't confine itself to Sunday mornings when you patiently wait for the conclusion of the sermon. Nor does it mean waiting for our personal prayers to get answered.
- The waiting that's depicted in Isaiah and Mark is far from passive idleness. It embodies an active trust, a hope, and faith in God's timing and God's providence.
- This waiting is marked by action. It doesn't hinge on conditions aligning with what we want, with our desires, but rather it recognizes God's majesty, God's power, God's ceaseless love, grace, and mercy, forever renewing everything that's before us.
- [7 : 02] This unique waiting demands that we possess spiritual eyes, ears, and bodies that intentionally slow down observing, listening, praying, and actively discerning all that folds around us.
- It requires us to stop what we're doing and wait. It's a waiting that remains rooted in the history of our faith, a constant awareness of the journey that's brought us here to this place today.
- This waiting isn't a mere pause, it's an active engagement with the unfolding narrative of how God is at work in our lives. The psalmist urges us in Psalm 27, verses 14, wait for the Lord, be strong, and let your heart take courage.
- Wait for the Lord. Indeed, waiting for the Lord becomes kind of challenging for us, but it's a transformative journey. That word wait may have been met with resentment in our childhood, and as adults, we still grapple with the impatience that it brings.

But the waiting that's depicted in our scriptures today distinguishes itself as an act of trust in God. In Mark, chapter 1, verses 29 through 39 that you heard read today, we witness Jesus embodying the distinct form of waiting.

[8 : 39] After a day filled with healing and ministry, Jesus intentionally withdraws to a quiet place before dawn to wait on God. Despite the noise of the crowd, the demands for continued healing, and those expectations that were placed upon him, Jesus takes a deliberate pause to connect with his Father.

His waiting isn't a passive delay, but a purposeful time, a quest for renewal, and divine guidance. Consider the scene we heard where Jesus tends to Simon Peter's ailing mother-in-law, restoring her to health.

She could have gone and started her household duties right away, but her response is a selfless service, a different way of serving that goes beyond her usual role.

And as the word spread about her healing, more and more people gathered seeking Jesus' healing touch. And even after that day of miraculous events, Jesus, just before the break of dawn, slips away to commune with the Lord, to actively wait to be replenished and offer thanks for the miracles and healing that have happened that day.

The narrative paints a vivid picture of a different kind of waiting, a waiting that rejuvenates and prepares Jesus for the ministry that he was called to do.

[10 : 16] in those quiet moments of seeking clarity from God, we are challenged to recognize Jesus as the true source of healing in our lives.

His intentional waiting underscores the importance of connecting with our divine God to allow us time for renewal and direction and to serve with a selfless spirit, much like Simon Peter's mother-in-law.

Amidst Jesus' quiet waiting on the Lord in his solitary retreat, seeking that respite from the crowds, people, including Simon Peter and others, track Jesus down.

Their message is urgent. Everyone is looking for you. But Jesus waits and he listens to that still small voice of God and he responds by redirecting their course.

Instead of returning to Capernaum, he declares we are going over here. We're called to leave and go and preach the good news. In the midst of all that noise, Jesus exhibits healing and restoration, showing the profound depth of his compassion and the mighty power of God at work within him.

[11 : 39] when we reflect on these interconnected elements, let us consider what is it that you're waiting for in the Lord? What is your personal hope in waiting on God?

What sights, sounds, and experiences is it that you desire, both as an individual and us as a church community? what things need attention?

Maybe we need that assurance of being recognized as God's beloved children, a beloved people summoned to this moment precisely for a time as this, to serve the church embodying the identity of God's people.

And this is the second plug today, Mary. Fish fries are coming up. Sign up to help. As we wait, let us persist in fulfilling God's will in this community, embracing the journey with that anticipation and that dedication to God.

In Isaiah, the prophet encourages the people to recall the rich history of their faith. The verses just before this address the weariness and doubt that can infiltrate our hearts.

[13 : 01] the Israelites felt forgotten and they were questioning whether God even saw their struggles. And Isaiah redirects their attention emphasizing that the Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth, the call to patiently, patiently wait on the Lord, placing your trust in God's understanding and the timing that surpasses our own.

God. Isaiah initiates this reflection by asking, do you not know? Have you not heard? And that prompts us to contemplate that greatness of God, the creator of the universe, of everything.

God is positioned, enthroned above the circle of the earth. He's not a distant deity, but an intimate, all-powerful God governing our cosmos with wisdom and love and understanding.

Isaiah's message challenges us in that established waiting mode. He doesn't teach us to wait for God to act in our lives. Instead, there's a call to recognize who God is.

Have you not known? Have you not heard? Isaiah invites us to return to the fundamental understanding of the nature and presence of God.

[14 : 31] It grounds us in the reality that God is an essential part of all creation, the source of everything, including ourselves. Isaiah's use of wait is distinct.

It's an invitation to pay attention to what already exists, urges us to acknowledge that God is already among us, around us, and at work within us.

Waiting on the Lord entails trusting, relying on, and having a confidence in God. It involves leaning into the reality that God equips us as disciples, shaping us and molding us into those who have heard and know God.

God always equips who he calls. We witness God's active presence in our lives through encounters and relationships within the community of other believers.

And as we wait on God, we wait in those who are around us. Jesus' teaching resonates. Serving others is serving him. Then the righteous will answer him, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and gave you something to drink?

[15 : 48] When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothed you? when did we see you sick or in prison and go to you?

The king will reply, I tell you the truth, whatever you did for the least of these brothers, you did for me. There's transformative power in such service, seen in testimonies and mission reports, where strength beyond ability and endurance comes from the desire to serve collectively in our church community.

That experience of mounting up with wings like eagles is shared by those who report receiving more than what they gave and being blessed beyond their blessings to give to others.

This strength is the fruit of waiting on the Lord, of being attuned to the Lord's presence in our work, in our giving, in our acts of love. When the people of God unite to partner with God in building his kingdom, there's an abundance of resources that we don't have on our own.

It reveals the power of collective waiting on God. These passages underscore that insignificance of worldly powers and idols compared to the sovereign might of God.

[17 : 15] As life challenges confront us, Isaiah urges us to trust in the one who holds the universe in his hands. Simon's mother-in-law exemplified this trust.

Although sick, she rises at the touch of Jesus' hand, demonstrating her response to be focused on serving others rather than celebrate her personal blessings of being healed.

The imagery of soaring on wings like eagles symbolizes the renewal of strength and a fresh perspective on life's challenges through waiting on God.

Isaiah's message also resonates within our contemporary lives where challenges, uncertainties, and weariness may lead us to question whether God is even there, if he cares.

But the enduring truth remains. Those who wait upon the Lord will find their strength renewed. The call is to remember our faith narratives amidst the distractions of the world.

[18 : 24] It's so easy to get caught up in those worldly matters, desiring control over our own lives. But the challenge is to call the power and majesty of God.

As we acknowledge our small role, it says we are like a grasshopper compared to God's vastness. We teach this from our children from when they're very small.

Nancy and I had a discussion on Facebook about VeggieTales. VeggieTales teaches our children because God is bigger than the boogeyman. He's bigger than Godzilla or the monsters on TV.

God is bigger than the boogeyman. And he's watching out for you and me. And it's a simple concept. In times of worry, anxiety and routine, Isaiah promises us to take stock in that reality around us.

That actively waiting on God to speak new words, to direct our mission, to guide our ministries, the heart of our passage lies in the promise of profound transformation and renewed strength that transcends all of our human limitations.

[19 : 42] nations. The image of soaring on wings like eagles has a supernatural divine empowerment. We draw parallels with scouting.

The term eagle scout aligns with ideas of strength and courage and freedom symbolized by that eagle. The scouting journey runs parallel to Isaiah's message.

message. It emphasizes service, community, and authentic leadership grounded in humility. Just as Isaiah highlights God's compassion, the scout's service project mirrors God's call to love and to serve your neighbors.

Isaiah's promise of renewed strength through active waiting correlates with the enduring trust required to receive the rank of eagle in scouting.

calling. So as Lent approaches, a season of waiting is proposed. A call to focus on God individually and collectively as a community and discern where God is moving, living, and breathing within our church and in our lives.

[21 : 00] The promise echoes Isaiah's proclamation, those who wait on the Lord will be lifted up with wings on wings like eagles, infused with a new energy for mission and for ministry.

So I invite you to take some time to be uncomfortable because faith is uncomfortable and to wait on the Lord. Please pray with me.

Lord, we thank you for the promise of renewed strength that comes from waiting upon you. may this strength propel us forward in our journeys of faith, enabling us to face each day with unwavering hope and confidence in your unfailing love.

In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen. Announcements are in your bulletin for this week. It is Super Bowl Sunday, like we could forget, so we are collecting canned goods.

You can make some donations to go to the Pendleton Food Pantry. Beginner Pickle Ball is on Wednesday night, so if you want to learn how to play, come and join. I stopped by and they had a great time.

[22 : 14] We had the Red Blazers concert on Friday, and there is a photo area set up in the back if you want to take some pictures on your way out. So I'm going to ask that you stretch your hands forward and reach out to our scouts as we offer them a blessing today.

God, your will is that your children should grow into the fullness of life. We lift to you the ministry of scouting that's been part of the United Methodist Church for 104 years.

We give you thanks for camping and outdoor adventures to teach us that the world is our great home, for study and for work to build character, for service to see our responsibility to those in need, for encouragement and genuine patriotism and faith.

Bless the work of scouting in this place and all around the world that through its efforts these young men and women may like our Lord increase in wisdom and in stature and in love with you and all people.

We pray for continued safety and growth for scouts and their leaders, their families, their friends, and all who are influenced by the scouting program. We pray for continued support from this congregation here so that each and every scout may consider this community a place of welcome and love.

[23 : 42] We thank you for your calling to serve the least of these and in so doing discover ourselves at your image of grace and love. And all of God's people said, God bless you and you guys are building you.

You.