DAY 1

SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 40:31
“but they who wait for 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.”

OBSERVATION
Isaiah was writing to Israel who was exiled (once again) to the land of Babylon. God allowed them to be defeated by an invading pagan army and forcibly relocated to a foreign land. Even though their personal sin and choices had led to this, God was still working in their midst. Isaiah, being the prophet, was able to speak forcefully and powerfully into their situation and encourage them that although they were under the discipline of God, He was not through with them.

APPLICATION
Waiting can be one of the hardest things we ever do. This is especially true when life is not going the way we want it to. When things start to slip out of control we usually find ourself grasping for straws. Our desire for control can lead to us making decisions we eventually will regret. Have you ever gotten fed up waiting and decided you were going to take matters into your hands? Was the result positive or negative? What are you waiting on right now? Do you struggle letting God remain in control instead of taking matters into your own hands?

PRAYER
Lord, help me to trust that You have a better timeline when it comes to my life and problems. Teach me to wait on You so that I will soar instead of backslide. Father, regardless of how I got into the situation I am in, help me to surrender control and wait for You.
DAY 2

SCRIPTURE: LAMENTATIONS 3:25

“The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him.”

OBSERVATION

The book of Lamentations was written shortly after the temple was destroyed in Jerusalem. The temple was the social and religious center of life for Israel and with its destruction the people’s identity was nearly destroyed as well. The author understands that God is in control and after expressing the immense sorrow and grief, returns to the truth that God is in control and that waiting on Him is good for the soul.

APPLICATION

When life gets hard many of the good habits we have in our life tend to get discarded. We can assume a new identity that lacks any trace of healthy interactions or thoughts. Knowing that God and the pursuit of Him is a good thing is easy to say when life is going well. When things are not so good God can became an object of frustration and bitterness. Have you ever been through a time where turning to God or relying on God was difficult? How did you move past these feelings? Do you have any past hurts that you are still waiting on God to heal? What are some of the good habits you need to begin in your life now, especially if you're currently NOT in a time of waiting or trial, so that you're better prepared when those times come? (Scripture, journaling, accountability with other Christ-followers, etc.)

PRAYER

God, I ask that You uncover the hurts and hang ups in my life that I still carry. Help me to recognize that my past has meaning and that You want to heal me. Show me what it looks like for my soul to wait for You. Examine and cleanse my soul so that I can be a whole person who faithfully follows You.
DAY 3

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 130:5-6

“I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.”

OBSERVATION

This psalm is called a “song of ascents” which were sung when the Israelites were traveling to Jerusalem for different religious ceremonies and celebrations. Israel is located in the mountains of Judea. As they were moving higher and higher up the mountain they would sing these songs. The spiritual imagery of starting low and climbing higher to worship God is found throughout the Old Testament. Through Jesus though we see this relationship inverted. Christ came down to us because we could not work our way up to Him.

APPLICATION

Our society has developed to the point that we fill any inkling of time with harmless or useless junk. As Christ-followers we are called to fill the gap by waiting on God. We must fight to fill our minds with God’s word so that in our waiting we can make ourselves ready to hear from God. What is your go-to time waster? How can you be more intentional about filling your time with God instead of junk?

PRAYER

Jesus, help me to want to wait for You. Make my soul want You especially when my flesh is weak. Help me to know that You are with me in my waiting. As I wait, Father, help me find hope in Your everlasting word.
DAY 4

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 4:20-21

“No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.”

OBSERVATION

Abraham had several reasons to question and doubt if what God said would actually come true. In that extended waiting time, he leaned into God’s promise to be faithful and for that, Abraham was blessed. Abraham’s faith is remarkable because though he didn't know how the promise would be fulfilled, he knew he could trust the Promise Maker.

APPLICATION

It is very easy to look at our external circumstances and fall into despair. The temptation to give into hopelessness grows stronger the further from God we are. We have to lean into God especially when our thoughts run counter to the truth. We are invited by God to lean into His character and power when life gets difficult. The only way to grow your faith is to put it into practice. What situation in your life right now has you tempted to give into despair? How can you fight the temptation to harbor disbelief? How can you foster an environment where your faith will grow and thrive?

PRAYER

Father, when I look at the circumstances of my life I am tempted to despair, so I ask that You give me faith to believe. I want to glorify You and I know to do that I need to grow strong in my faith. Jesus, make me fully convinced that You are able to do everything You have promised. Help me to bring a smile to Your face by growing my faith even when I am waiting.
DAY 5

SCRIPTURE: GALATIANS 5:6
“For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope.”

OBSERVATION
Paul was addressing the issue that some of the new Christ-followers thought that they could earn their salvation through good works and the keeping of Old Testament law. If we could somehow earn our salvation then Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection are pointless. Paul countered their bad theology emphasizing that if part of the law saves you, then you have to try and keep the entire thing. Ultimately, this is impossible thus Paul makes it clear you have to choose between the old religion of law or the new way of grace through Jesus.

APPLICATION
It is human nature to try and fix our own problems. This was true when the religious leaders expanded the ten commandments into well over 600 additional rules. We can work ourselves up into a frenzy trying to control every aspect of our lives, but this isn't the way God wants us to live. Our desire for control will only serve to edge God out. Waiting is never easy but it is a posture we need to assume to allow God to have full access and control to our life. What area have you given up hope on God ever fixing/helping, and you need to commit to praying in hope and waiting expectantly again? In what area of your life have you given God least control right now (finances, sex life, dating life, parenting, work, etc.)? What is one step you can take to give Him more control in that area this week?

PRAYER
Jesus, teach me that waiting on You is better than trying to always be in control. Lord, I know the burden of rule and law keeping is too much to bear. Help me to surrender my burden for the easy and light burden You have promised. Father, make eager to wait by faith for the righteousness found in Jesus.