



“The Everlasting God”
Isaiah 40:28-31
Sermon Date: January 24th, 2016

Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon

**** (The Sunday morning Scripture reading this week will be Psalm 19 if you would like to read and prayerfully consider it in advance) ****

Prayer

As you begin your study this week, spend some time praising God for being everlasting, the Creator, and the God of all power and understanding (Isaiah 40:28-29). Thank Him for being the God who strengthens the weak and renews those who are faint and weary (40:30-31). As you pray, consider the following words of this prayer taken from Everyday Prayers by Scotty Smith and make them your own before the Lord.

“Gracious Father...This passage from Isaiah reminds me that you’re not like me, in so many ways. You never get tired or weary. I do and I am. Accepting limitations, finiteness, and weakness has never been one of my strengths. But I must. Since youths grow tired and weary and young men stumble and fall, why do I think I’m exempt from ‘running on empty’ and hitting a wall?”

Father, I’m not asking to soar like an eagle, as fun as that might be, and I’m not seeking to run like a sprinter or marathoner. Just walking upright with a renewed heart, a steady gait, and a replenished energy will be enough.

My hope is in you, Father – merciful Abba, who brings refreshment into the wilderness; generous Lord, who promises sufficient grace every day; mighty God, who raises the dead. Right now I look to you for all the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical strength I’ll need to live out the implications of the gospel just today. I’m not depleted, though heading there, but I have no doubts about your great compassion for me in Jesus.

Because Jesus embraced the ultimate weakness and weariness of the cross, I’m confident of your burden-bearing love. I may be weary in my servanthood, but I’m thriving in my sonship. Nothing can separate us from your love. I pray in Jesus’ tender and triumphant name. Amen.”

Scripture

Isaiah 40:28–31 – (English Standard Version)

- 28 Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.*
- 29 He gives power to the faint,
and to him who has no might he increases strength.*
- 30 Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted;*
- 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.*

Handling the Word

1. To understand the significance of the words contained in our passage this week, it is important to understand a little bit of the context in which it is written. The prophet Isaiah is writing to the Jewish people who, as a result of their unfaithfulness to God, were living as exiles and captives in a foreign land. As such, they were despondent, broken-hearted, and finding it difficult to maintain their trust in Him. Isaiah records the words of chapter 40 to remind the people of who God is and why they must look to Him and maintain their trust in Him alone. Read through Isaiah 40:1-27 and list all the reasons, according to those verses, why God alone is to be the object of His people's trust.

Understanding and Applying

1. In verses 28-31 of chapter 40, Isaiah continues His wonderful description of the God who is to be trusted. Read through those verses several times and make a list of the ways Isaiah describes God. Then compare and contrast that list with the way Isaiah described mankind earlier in verses 6-8. What are the differences? Why is it necessary for all believers in every generation to understand those differences?

2. One of the descriptions of God in this passage is that he is “everlasting” (v. 28). To be everlasting, or eternal, means that “God has no beginning, end, or succession of moments in his own being, and he sees all time equally vividly, yet God sees events in time and acts in time” (definition taken from Wayne Grudem’s Systematic Theology). What are some reasons it is important to understand that God is eternal (refer also to Psalm 90:2 and Revelation 1:8)? What implications does this truth about God have in your life as a follower of Jesus Christ?

3. We are told in verse 28 that God is the “Creator of the ends of the earth.” This coincides with Isaiah’s words back in verse 26, where he declares God to be the creator and sustainer of all the stars in the universe, “calling them by name, by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power not one is missing.” Take a minute to really reflect upon the reality that the God who created and sustains everything by the power of His word is also the One who upholds and strengthens those who grow weary (Psalm 147:3-6). What thoughts or feelings do you have when you consider this truth?

4. How do the words of this passage challenge many people’s conception of who God is and how He relates to man? What, if any, of the ideas in this passage challenge your own conception about God and how He relates to you?

5. It is abundantly clear in this passage that God is the One who supplies the strength we need in all circumstances (Philippians 4:11-13). Despite knowing that, what are some other things (or people) we can be tempted to look to for strength in this life instead of Him? What is the result when we look to them rather than God?

6. Describe a situation, or situations, in your life where you have felt weary and without the strength to continue on (v. 30). What about the situation made you feel weak and weary? Do you feel as though the Lord strengthened you? Why or why not?

7. We are told in verse 31 that those “who wait for the Lord” shall have their strength renewed when they are weary (Isaiah 33:2). What does it mean, or what does it look like, when God’s people patiently wait upon Him for strength? What are some possible results when we are impatient with God rather than waiting upon Him?

8. According to 2 Corinthians 12:5-10, what must be true of God’s people before we come to realize that we are in need of God’s strength? Describe the relationship between our weakness and His strength?

9. What truth in this passage has stood out to you most profoundly or encouraged you the most this week? How are you going to apply this truth to your life specifically?

“Whenever our strength fails, and we are almost laid low, we may remind ourselves that the Lord stretches out his hand to the weary who are sinking through lack of help...Human strength fails easily but God’s strength never fails.”

John Calvin

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. The greatest heroes of faith are not always those who seem to be soaring; often it is they who are patiently plodding. As we wait on the Lord, He enables us not only to fly higher and run faster, but also to walk longer. Blessed are the plodders, for they eventually arrive at their destination.”

Warren Wiersbe