

COMPANION STUDY GUIDE

# NOT YET

Finding Freedom When Anxiety, Depression,  
and Other Crap Come Knocking at Your Door

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T O B Y   S L O U G H

*Published by Cross Timbers Community Church*

# NOT YET COMPANION STUDY GUIDE

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## CONTENTS

4	HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE
5	WEEK ONE
	<b>PLAY SCARED</b>
13	WEEK TWO
	<b>REDEFINING FREEDOM</b>
21	WEEK THREE
	<b>WE ALL HAVE THORNS</b>
29	WEEK FOUR
	<b>UNFORCED RHYTHMS OF GRACE</b>
37	WEEK FIVE
	<b>BE A GOBY</b>
47	THE 40 I AM <sup>S</sup>

## HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

### WHAT YOU NEED—

- A copy of *NOT YET* by Toby Slough
- A Bible
- This Study Guide (Journal)
- A pen, pencil, or markers
- The *NOT YET* Playlist on Spotify

### WHAT YOU DO—

It is helpful if you have completed reading *NOT YET* before your group begins. On Day Two each week, you will have some review questions related to the book. When your group meets, you will have items that you complete together as well as things for you to complete on your own. Your Group Work will include a few questions on video from Toby as well as discussion questions provided to your group leader in their Leader Kits. Your Independent Work will consist of questions and exercises you will work through on your own. Space is provided for you to answer the questions as you work through the study.

### GROUP WORK—

- 2 Group Questions from Toby's Weekly Videos
- 8 Group Questions (included in Group Leader Kits provided to Group Leaders)

### INDEPENDENT WORK—

- Weekly Scripture
- DAY 1: Bible Reading
- DAY 2: Reflection Questions from *NOT YET*.
- DAY 3: *NOT YET* Devotional
- DAY 4: Questions from Devotional
- DAY 5: Rest and Reflect
- DAY 6: Journal

WEEK ONE  
**PLAY SCARED**

GROUP WORK

Watch this week's video from Toby with your group.

QUESTION #1 FROM THE VIDEO:

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QUESTION #2 FROM THE VIDEO:

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## GROUP WORK

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## INDEPENDENT WORK

### WEEKLY SCRIPTURE—

*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

—PSALM 139:14

## DAY 1

### BIBLE READING—

Read the following verses a few times this week. Lean into what God is showing you through these words.

*Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.*

*“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.”*

—LUKE 15:11-15

## DAY 2

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTERS 1-2 OF *NOT YET*—

Think back to a time when you found yourself playing scared. Answer the following as you reflect on that time.

- What were the ways you found encouragement to play scared, even when you didn't want to?

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- What were the things you stopped doing that didn't help you as you played scared?

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- What three things would you tell someone else to do to help them as they play scared?

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## DAY 3

*NOT YET* DEVOTIONAL by Brian Hackney—

**W**orking in the Healing Place over the last 13 years, I've talked to hundreds of couples, men, women, and children that have all come into my office for one reason or another. Unfortunately, most are in crisis.

Regardless of the nature of the crisis, nine times out of ten, it all comes back to an identity crisis. Day in and day out, week in and week out, I see the same pattern over and over again. People have

identity issues. Most don't have a clue who they are. Oh, deep down, in their gut, they have this inkling of who they were created to be because God placed it there.

The problem is they've been lied to, accused, hurt, wounded, broken, sometimes literally destroyed, and they can't fathom the vision God has for their life. They've long since given up their dreams or their visions of the person they once believed they could be.

You could call this identity theft.

No, not that "identity theft," where some idiot steals some of your personal information and impersonates you, or frauds you out of hundreds or even thousands of dollars, resulting in countless wasted hours of your precious time that could have been better spent elsewhere.

I'm talking about a more personal identity, and a thief who is an insidious enemy of your state, specializing in impersonation and fraud.

If you're like most of us, like most of the men and women I see regularly, you've had your identity stolen somewhere along the way. You've either allowed the Lord to meet you in your place of wounding, in your brokenness, to return you to the scene of the crime, and meet you there to heal you, or you're walking wounded, with a false self, an impersonator, an imposter, a poser who doesn't know how to regain your identity.

If you're the former, you're very fortunate, and no doubt understand the grace that you've experienced to be on the healing side of your journey. But many of us just aren't there yet. Many things block us from beginning the healing process that we so desperately need, but the two that I've seen most often are pride and shame. Bless our hearts. We come by it honestly. The apple (pardon the pun) didn't fall far from the tree. Adam and Eve modeled it, and we fell right into it. Eating that dang fruit that we were never intended to eat. The damned 'ole knowledge of good and evil. Knowledge of good leads to pride. Knowledge of evil leads to shame. The shame that caused Adam and Eve to hide from God is still crippling many of us, tempting us to hide the very things, that if brought into the light, would heal us.

But even if we're ready to deal with our stuff, it can be a long, arduous, pain-staking process of recapturing our identity; the one that was hi-jacked somewhere along our journey; the one that you desperately need to reclaim so that you can be the man or woman God created you to be.

Here's some good news—when you learn to hear the voice of God, which usually means dialing back the noise from many sources in our lives, He will tell you the truth about yourself, your name, who you really are. God will remind you that he created you in His image, with THE blueprint for your life that he masterfully and intentionally crafted to be just YOU. Last I checked after he creates, he always says, "It is good!"

GOD WILL TELL  
YOU THE TRUTH  
ABOUT YOURSELF—  
YOUR NAME, WHO  
YOU REALLY ARE.

## DAY 4

### QUESTIONS FROM THE DEVOTIONAL—

Answer the following questions based on the devotional you read this week.

- Do you struggle with your identity? Can you recall a time in your life when you felt like a “different person?” When did that change? What caused the change?

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- Is there a work of forgiveness that needs to be completed in your life, for yourself, or someone else? Explain.

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- Meditate on Psalm 139:14. What do you hear God saying about who you are?

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- If Jesus were sitting next to you, what would you hear him saying, knowing that he sees your original blueprint, that is good?

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## DAY 5

### REST AND REFLECT—

Set intentional time aside this week to rest and reflect on what God is showing you this week. Grab your Bible, tune in to the *NOT YET* playlist on Spotify, and lean into spending time alone with God. Go to a place where you can be still and quiet. It could be a space at your work or school, your car, or maybe a coffee shop.

- Read Genesis 1:26-28 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-20. What stands out to you from these two passages of Scripture?

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## DAY 6

### JOURNALING—

Listen to the *NOT YET* playlist on Spotify. What has God shown you this week about playing scared?

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WEEK TWO  
**REDEFINING FREEDOM**

GROUP WORK

Watch this week's video from Toby with your group.

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QUESTION #2 FROM THE VIDEO:

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## GROUP WORK

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## INDEPENDENT WORK

### WEEKLY SCRIPTURE—

*What is mankind that you are mindful of them, a son of man that you care for him? You made them a little lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor and put everything under their feet.*

—HEBREWS 2:6-9

### DAY 1

### BIBLE READING—

Read the following verses a few times this week. Lean into what God is showing you through these words.

*He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. When he came to his senses, he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants."*

*So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.*

—LUKE 15:16-20

## DAY 2

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER 7 OF *NOT YET*—

- Paul walked with a limp. He asked God to take it away from him. When you think about Paul and his limp, describe what you believe his limp is? How does your idea of his limp relate to your limp?

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- What have you learned about God as you live with your limp?

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- Describe what your thorn is. If you find yourself limping, write down what is the most difficult piece to hand over to Him. If you find yourself experiencing freedom, what would you say you are most thankful for?

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- Have you ever asked God to take away a thorn? Write about how you felt when He did or didn't take it away?

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## DAY 3

**NOT YET DEVOTIONAL** by Avery Ochs—

About a year and a half ago, God gave me a glimpse of what my life in the future will be. For the past year and a half, I've been slowly moving closer and closer to that vision, but I haven't always been moving closer to this dream. There have been seasons when I feel like things are moving backwards, when I feel like I'm going crazy, when I've doubted whether God even gave me this calling. There have been seasons when I've been unable to celebrate other people's successes. I've cried, yelled, torn my hair out—all of it in this process of slowly moving forward. Trust me, while this vision and this journey have been exciting, it has not always been sunshine and rainbows.

I know this may sound strange, but serving others was the only thing that could bring me out of those feelings of bitterness and impatience. See, one thing I've learned in life is that humility and patience are intricately linked. It's tough for me to trust what God's doing when I think my own timeline is better than His. Every time I get myself into a posture of humble service, God reminds me that He's working through a lot more in this world than my narrow mind cares to realize, so maybe I should trust.

Not only that, but I've found that humility and patience are vital to receiving the Gospel. In Hebrews 2:6-9, we get a picture of this relationship:

*What is mankind that you are mindful of them, a son of man that you care for him? You made them a little lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor and put everything under their feet.*

In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to them. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them. But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone."

At present, we don't see everything. We don't see every promise fulfilled. We don't see the healing we desperately want. We don't see that friend come to faith. But we do see Jesus.

We see a God who lowered himself to become a man so that we may know him. We see a God who sacrificed himself so that we may live. We see a God who is still pursuing and saving and changing the lives of those around us.

In light of Jesus, what is mankind that God cares for us? In light of Jesus, who am I?

When I let that question sink into my heart, it's really hard to still be bitter and impatient. When I remind myself that God is all-powerful and cares for me personally, and when I remind myself that I was a total mess before Jesus intervened, I no longer feel the need to question or rush God's process.

I have not yet seen this promise fulfilled. But I do see Jesus working through my life right where I am. This journey is not all sunshine and rainbows, but it is one in which I'm learning to trust God more. Sometimes I still get frustrated or impatient, but I have faith that God knows exactly what He's doing by having me wait.

## DAY 4

### QUESTIONS FROM THE DEVOTIONAL—

Answer the following questions based on the devotional you read this week.

- When was the last time you did something selfless? How did it make you feel? Would you be willing to try it today and see how God shows up right in the middle of your waiting?

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- If you feel like your season of *NOT YET* is driving you crazy, please know that you're not alone and that God has not forgotten you. Ask God what He's trying to teach you right now. What did He say when you asked?

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- Take some time to reflect on your story. Where in your past can you see God's goodness and faithfulness?

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- What is something you are facing right now that troubles you? Can you trust that the same God who was faithful in the past will be faithful in the future?

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## DAY 5

### REST AND REFLECT—

If you are not used to sitting quietly and doing nothing, it can be very difficult. The temptation to get up, do something, scroll through emails or social media, call or text someone can be overwhelming. Risk unplugging from the world, even if just for a few minutes. Sit alone and quiet your thoughts. Invite God to sit with you. Feel no pressure to hear His voice, just make room for the possibility of meaningful connection with Him.

- Have you felt far from God? Has He felt far from you? Spend some time thinking about the lies you repeated to yourself in those times. As you keep them in mind, flip the script! Below, rewrite those lies through the filter of God’s truth. Reflect on the truth of who God says you are—not the lies you have believed. Turn to the back of this workbook and recite the 40 I Ams to help remind you.

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## DAY 6

### JOURNALING—

Listen to the *NOT YET* playlist on Spotify. What has God shown you this week about your definition of freedom? Does it need to change?

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WEEK THREE  
WE ALL HAVE THORNS

GROUP WORK

Watch this week's video from Toby with your group.

QUESTION #1 FROM THE VIDEO:

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QUESTION #2 FROM THE VIDEO:

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## GROUP WORK

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## INDEPENDENT WORK

### WEEKLY SCRIPTURE—

*I would have despaired had I not believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait for and confidently expect the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for and confidently expect the Lord.*

—PSALM 27:13-14, AMP

### DAY 1

### BIBLE READING—

Read the following verses a few times this week. Lean into what God is showing you through these words.

*The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”*

*But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.”*

*So they began to celebrate. Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing.*

—LUKE 15:21-25

## DAY 2

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTERS 3-5 OF *NOT YET*—

- Unworthy—have you felt that way before? Describe a time when your thorn made you feel like you didn't deserve God's best.

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- God celebrates you even when you don't feel worthy enough to celebrate. Look back on the past year of your life. Describe a time where you felt God love you and celebrate you.

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- Well-intended people say some painful things at times. They most likely mean to help us, but sometimes it just comes across wrong. We are often wounded at the very time we need unconditional love the most. Has this happened to you? How quickly were you to forgive the person after they hurt you?

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- What do you think is the best way to respond to someone who is walking with a painful limp? How would those words have helped you when you needed to hear them most?

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## DAY 3

**NOT YET DEVOTIONAL** by Wendy K. Walters—

*I would have despaired had I not believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait for and confidently expect the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for and confidently expect the Lord.*

—PSALM 27:13-14, AMP

**A**lthough this is a psalm of David, I have often pondered it as a psalm of Eve. I can only imagine what level of remorse and regret she felt after being banished from the Garden and knowing it was a consequence of her actions. How could she go on with the memory of what she had lost? How could she bear to face Adam, talk with God? Put on clothing or touch fruit without shame?

I've made some bad choices in my life—costly ones. What's worse is that my choices didn't just bring me consequences—the harder thing is that my choices brought difficulty to my children.

Our decisions coupled with things well beyond our control had our family business on the brink of bankruptcy. The financial and emotional stress which squeezed us really impacted our kids. Our situation limited their options and narrowed their opportunities. Dreams were dashed. Hope was thin, and there were too little light and laughter in our home. The weight of worry was heavy.

We had always tithed, always lived beneath our means to save responsibly, and give generously. We loved God and did all the right things—prayer, devotion, worship ... I grew bitter that God did not “rebuke the devourer” as promised in Malachi. I grew angry because the choices others had made contributed to pushing us into this low estate. Depression pulled its warm, comforting blanket around my fears, and I marinated in despair and shame—all while smiling to everyone and pretending things were fine. The effort to be around people grew harder and harder, so I isolated myself as much as I could get away with. I watched too much television, ate too much sugar, cried many, many tears—and my prayers were mostly complaint, sorrow, and sighing. Gratitude was hard.

My faith was challenged as I searched the scriptures and stood on promises, declared truths, and sang songs about my Deliverer. We worked and reworked and reworked the budget, choosing not to file for bankruptcy. We lived through every penny of our savings and went eleven months without a paycheck, propping up the business to keep it alive. We fought against the current as slowly—ever so slowly, we began making the tiniest bit of headway against our debt. Survival took all my focus. I had no energy to dream about a plausible, hopeful future. Each day, making it through that day was the grandest goal I could manage.

I began to notice small miracles. No, God didn't wipe out our balance with miracle debt cancellation, but He did make things last longer than they should and stretch farther than they ought to go. He did show up in creativity and resourcefulness inside each one of us as we made the best of what we had and gave intentionally from what we did not have. Little by little, my mind shifted from this dark place of lack to the promise of living in abundance again. My definition of abundance shifted to having enough to meet all our needs with enough left over to share. And in the waiting, before the checkbook showed one bit of difference, I began to believe that we would see the goodness of the LORD again in the land of the living. I waited in my Not Yet with confident expectation that God would

indeed, provide for all my needs. When my circumstances did not say, “God is good,” my heart held fast to the truth that He was and that He would work even this hardest of things for our good.

The climb out took years. In those years, God-shaped my character in ways that would not have been possible if everything had been smooth sailing. In that season, God bonded our family together with such close ties that the relationships we have with our adult children today are the sweetest fruit imaginable. In that dark time, we learned to be grateful for daily bread and how to celebrate the smallest thing with great respect and grand joy.

The business crisis forced my husband to engage in a career path that was aligned with his childhood desire and part of his God-given natural gifting. But starting at the bottom in the middle of life had never seemed a wise option. Now, starting at the bottom of anything was more palatable than going under. It was an answer to prayer for increase. With our income stream dried up and debts piled high, I was highly motivated to branch out into different avenues and explore gifts and talents I had never seen as having any value in the marketplace. These have proven rich in purpose as well as in provision. My mindset underwent a long, slow, painful reset in how I thought about God—as my Father, how I thought about money and resources, and how I endure times of testing and trial.

I don’t know what *NOT YET* you are in the middle of right now, but I promise God is in there with you. He is at work even when it seems like He has forgotten all about what you are going through. His purpose will be performed in you His way and in His time. You can count on it! *“Yes, wait for and confidently expect the Lord.”*

## DAY 4

### QUESTIONS FROM THE DEVOTIONAL—

- Can you be honest about your disappointment with God in this circumstance? Can you bring Him your frustration and admit you are pretty mad about it?

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- Will you let your heart believe you will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living? What would that look like to you?

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- Will you allow yourself to believe that He is at work in this and that He will work this for your good? Will you let that knowledge bring you peace and kindle hope that His purpose is greater than this present pain?

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## DAY 5

### REST AND REFLECT—

Rest is a strategy. Reflection is a powerful discipline. Time alone where you intentionally remove yourself from distractions will help you connect with God to feed your soul. If you make this a priority, it will pay huge dividends in emotional strength and clarity of mind.

- Read Ecclesiastes 3:1, Proverbs 3:5-6, and Isaiah 40:31. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you about His timing?

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## DAY 6

### JOURNALING—

Listen to the *NOT YET* playlist on Spotify. What has God shown you this week about your thorns?

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WEEK FOUR

# UNFORCED RHYTHMS OF GRACE

## GROUP WORK

Watch this week's video from Toby with your group.

QUESTION #1 FROM THE VIDEO:

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QUESTION #2 FROM THE VIDEO:

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## GROUP WORK

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## INDEPENDENT WORK

### WEEKLY SCRIPTURE—

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.*

—HEBREWS 12:1

### DAY 1

### BIBLE READING—

Read the following verses a few times this week. Lean into what God is showing you through these words.

*So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.*

*“Your brother has come,” he replied, “and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.”*

*The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, “Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!”*

*“My son,” the father said, “you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.”*

—LUKE 15:26-32

## DAY 2

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER 6 OF *NOT YET*—

- How do you practice regular rhythms of grace?

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- What spiritual disciplines seem easy for you to practice? Which ones are more difficult? Why?

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- In your own words, define what Sabbath means to you.

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- Pick a date no more than two weeks from now to set aside time for a day of rest. Write it in your calendar or add it to your digital calendar. Commit to keeping that a day of rest.

## DAY 3

*NOT YET* DEVOTIONAL by Chase Trimmier—

**M**y wife and I went through a season where everyone was asking us the same question, “When are you going to have children?” The first couple of years in our marriage, the answer was, “Not yet.” This was probably for the best since we were in a 1-bedroom apartment and had almost no money. We hit that third year, and the same question would come again: “Hey, you two, when are you going to have babies?” and of course, the answer was the same. “Not yet.” But this time with

a hint of perplexity. When would be the “right time,” or when would we feel most ready? So, we started the journey ... journey you might say? Well, what turns out to be easier for others in the world of fertility, for us was much longer and more difficult than expected. We hit that fourth and fifth and even sixth year of marriage and you guessed it—that question would come back again and again.

The answer: the same, the tone: much different.

Our “not yet” responses felt like an old dog snipping at a puppy. People weren’t intending to be hurtful or rude, we knew, but it was still an inescapable reminder that it hadn’t happened yet. We went to the doctors, spent the money, experienced loss, and still found ourselves without.

At this point, in the middle of prayers from us and others, I found myself separating what felt like humanness and what was spiritual. Sure, God could show up and give us a magical baby, but I could also explain why it wouldn’t happen from the medical side. I found myself living in two houses. One house was the “normal”—faith-filled, Jesus loving house where we would give our offerings, serve those around us, and listen to worship music in the car. The other house was very practical, logical, almost unchangeable, but with a skylight—just in case the sun did want to shine in though it hadn’t yet. A mentor reminded me of a passage that I had heard a thousand times before but now it agitated me. If a passage ever agitates or offends you, it’s probably worth another read. The passage was in Romans where Paul writes, *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”* To offer my body, my life, as a living sacrifice, hmm. It was asking me to put everything on the metaphorical altar and say, “God, here is my life, every part of it, enjoy it. Use it to tell your story, for that is the best way I could glorify you.”

My mentor said, “The problem with a living sacrifice is that it tends to crawl off the altar.” It was easy to offer the good to God, to celebrate the great things and let people see the positive, but how could this desire for a child that hadn’t happened yet be worship? How could I crawl up on the altar with my whole life and say, “God, it is all yours”? Through some time thinking through this and talking with close friends I realized, it was more worshipful for me to bring my doubts, anger, and unanswered longings to the altar. This was a greater testament to the faith I did have. It’s easy to stay close when things are going well. It is much harder to stay when times are tough, but it is in these times where the supplements are stripped away, and what is real and raw are left.

I figured out that God was not upset at me, withholding from me, or angry that I was angry. I realized that the most intimate times in Scripture are when people are angry, sorrowful, and dying.

GOD CALLS THE  
DOUBTER TO COME,  
THE SURRENDERED  
TO STAY, THE  
HURTING TO NOT  
HURT ALONE.

Jesus on the cross shows the greatest compassion for the thief who was dying next to Him. God wrestles through the whole night with Jacob who was mad, frustrated, and scared and at the end of it reminds Jacob that He is the God who brings new life, new destiny, and new blessings—especially when are willing to be authentic and lay it all out there. God was more honored, and people were more baffled that I chose to get on the altar with all my pain and anger. This season brought a new level of faith and a reminder that there is still hope for a living sacrifice that can’t be found with the disappeared doubter. God calls the doubter to come, the surrendered to stay, the

hurting to not hurt alone. It was time for my pretty and perfect faith to die, and for my happy and hurting self to live on.

There is never an answer to why God does something or allows something. What I have chosen to do is to mourn when its time to mourn, and celebrate when its time to celebrate. Our day comes shortly after that moment of realization. Daisy James was born on a cold February night and is the joy of our life. Even with her birth, God had already shown me the choice I had. To choose to hope in the not yet, to choose to bring my hurts and hopelessness to Him and not hide it. That is my prayer for you in your search for whatever you are waiting for.

## DAY 4

### QUESTIONS FROM THE DEVOTIONAL—

Answer the following questions based on the devotional you read this week.

- When was the last time you talked to God about negative feelings such as sorrow or anger?

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- What if the *NOT YET* never happens? Could you still climb on the altar and say, “God, I am yours”? Why or why not?

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- Why do you think Paul calls a living sacrifice proper worship?

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WEEK FIVE  
**BE A GOBY**

GROUP WORK

Watch this week's video from Toby with your group.

QUESTION #1 FROM THE VIDEO:

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QUESTION #2 FROM THE VIDEO:

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## GROUP WORK

Use the space below to answer the questions shared when your small group meets. These questions will be provided by your group leader.

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## INDEPENDENT WORK

### WEEKLY SCRIPTURE—

*Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

—ROMANS 12:2

### DAY 1

### BIBLE READING—

You have read this story in pieces. This week, read and reflect on the whole narrative.

*Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.*

*Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.*

*When he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.”*

*So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.*

*The son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son."*

*But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."*

*So they began to celebrate. Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.*

*"Your brother has come," he replied, "and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound."*

*The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, "Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!"*

*"My son," the father said, "you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."*

## DAY 2

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER 8 OF *NOT YET*—

- What are the ways in which you “renew” your mind?

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- How has your life been transformed in a *NOT YET* moment?

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- Think back on a time when you lived through a trying season. What were some of the ways you were transformed?

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- Yesterday you read over the story of the Prodigal Son. Which person do you relate to most in the story? Why?

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## DAY 3

**NOT YET DEVOTIONAL** by Raine Kenney—

*Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

—ROMANS 12:2

*We have the mind of Christ.*

—1 CORINTHIANS 2:16B

**S**ome years ago, a friend greatly disappointed me. I felt betrayed. I felt my trust was broken. I was hurt. I could hardly think of anything else. Every day the thought of the hurt that person had caused kept coming to the forefront of my mind ... many times every day!

That was when I began to learn how to “take thoughts captive.” It has been a lifelong process. That was when I learned that I could choose the next thought I would have. That was when I began to learn to train my mind to think about Jesus!

Does your mind (and your heart) tell you ...

“It’ll never happen ...”

“It will always be like this ...”

“It’s hopeless ...”

“I will always have this pain ...”

... when, God is saying ...

“I love you ... “

“I want good things for you ...”

“It is not hopeless ...”

... the answer is not no, it just may be ... **NOT YET!**

The thoughts of our minds, or our “self-talk,” is a critical step in helping us learn and believe in the Goodness of God—ALL the Time! We can choose our next thought! Our rational minds can deflect the negative thoughts. When one pops into our minds (i.e., “it will never be any better”), it can be deflected with “Jesus, I choose You.” “I choose Your Way, Your Truth.”

It is a matter of choosing to “*set our minds on things above, not on earthly things*” (Colossians 3: 2).

When our thoughts overwhelm us, remember: “*We take every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ*” (2 Corinthians 10:5b). We can make a decision to turn our thoughts to Jesus! Say His Name! Call on Him! He is near! He wants us to know that He is ready to help us—every time! We can train our minds to consciously choose our next thought. That next thought might be:

“I know You are faithful.”

“I can trust You.”

“You are with me.”

“You are my refuge.”

## DAY 4

### QUESTIONS FROM THE DEVOTIONAL—

Answer the following questions based on the devotional you read this week.

- What affirmations can you make to keep your mind on Jesus?

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- When your thoughts spin out of control, how can you better take them captive? How can you renew your mind?

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- To train your mind to be set on things above, not on earthly things takes practice. Choosing your next (best) thought is a great way to do this. List some “next best” thoughts below so you’ll be ready!

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THE 40 I AM<sup>S</sup>

1. **A child of God.** *Romans 8:16*
2. **Redeemed from the hand of the enemy.** *Psalms 107:2*
3. **Forgiven.** *Colossians 1:13-14*
4. **Saved by grace through faith.** *Ephesians 2:8*
5. **Justified.** *Romans 5:1*
6. **Sanctified.** *1 Corinthians 1:2*
7. **A new creature.** *2 Corinthians 5:17*
8. **Partaker of His divine nature.** *2 Peter 1:4*
9. **Redeemed from the curse of the law.** *Galatians 3:13*
10. **Delivered from the powers of darkness.** *Colossians 1:13*
11. **Led by the Spirit of God.** *Romans 8:14*
12. **A son of God.** *Romans 8:14*
13. **Kept in safety wherever I go.** *Psalms 91:11*
14. **Getting all my needs met by Jesus.** *Philippians 4:19*
15. **Casting all my cares on Jesus.** *1 Peter 5:7*
16. **Strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.** *Ephesians 6:10*
17. **Doing all things through Christ who strengthens me.** *Philippians 4:13*
18. **An heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus.** *Romans 8:17*
19. **An heir to the blessing of Abraham.** *Galatians 3:13-14*
20. **Observing and doing the Lord's Commandments.** *Deuteronomy 28:12*

21. Blessed coming in and blessed going out. *Deuteronomy 28:6*
22. An heir of eternal life. *1 John 5:11-12*
23. Blessed with all spiritual blessings. *Ephesians 1:3*
24. Healed by His stripes. *1 Peter 2:24*
25. Exercising my authority over the enemy. *Luke 10:19*
26. Above only and not beneath. *Deuteronomy 28:13*
27. More than a conqueror. *Romans 8:37*
28. Establishing God's Word here on earth. *Matthew 16:19*
29. An overcomer by the blood of the Lamb and the word of my testimony. *Revelation 12:11*
30. Daily overcoming the devil. *1 John 4:4*
31. Not moved by what I see. *2 Corinthians 4:18*
32. Walking by faith and not by sight. *2 Corinthians 5:7*
33. Casting down vain imaginations. *2 Corinthians 10:4-5*
34. Bringing every thought into captivity. *2 Corinthians 10:5*
35. Being transformed by renewing my mind. *Romans 12:1-2*
36. A laborer together with God. *1 Corinthians 3:9*
37. The righteousness of God in Christ. *2 Corinthians 5:21*
38. An imitator of Jesus. *Ephesians 5:1*
39. The light of the world. *Matthew 5:14*
40. Blessing the Lord at all times and continually praising Him with my mouth. *Psalms 34:1*