

Untangled ~ Introduction Homework

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NASB)

*12 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,** ²fixing 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.*

1. What are the emotions or other things that entangle you the most?
2. How are these things affecting you? Your relationships? Your faith?
3. What is “your race?” How are these entanglements preventing you from running your race? (If you don’t know what your “race” is, no worries, we’ll help you figure that out!)
4. What makes “fixing our eyes on Jesus” so challenging? What distracts you?

Our Foundation Principles

Grace, Truth, and Time.

For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. John 1:17

Grace, Truth, and Time are three elements (“ingredients” or principles) that are essential for growth.

1. Which of these elements is the most challenging for you? Why?

2. How is it affecting you? Your relationships? Your faith?

Power of the Holy Spirit.

Read John 14:16, Acts 1:8, Philippians 2:12-13, and 2 Corinthians 12:9.

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. For what purpose did God send Him? And for how long will He be with us?
3. What is challenging about “relying on the Holy Spirit” for you?

Living with the tension.

Ecclesiastes 7:18 It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. Whoever fears God will avoid all extremes.

The tension between these contrasting images is challenging to say the least. The wretched sinner and the redeemed child of God are hard for us to reconcile.

1. What tensions or extremes about God, our faith or the world do you find yourself struggling to reconcile?

Preparing for **Untangling** from Fear

Angela Gilmour

Americans' top three fears are snakes, public speaking, and death. While I'm not a fan of any of these things, I don't have to deal with them very often. The fears with which I struggle most occur on a daily basis. For example, when it comes to my kids, I often find myself entangled in worry on a number of subjects. What if something happens to them and they get hurt? (Some days I worry about them getting kidnapped or sex trafficked—the news freaks me out!) Are they getting the right foods to eat? Are we doing enough for their spiritual growth? Should we get a tutor? Are they developing good friendships?

What about our marriage? Are we spending enough time together? Are we resolving our conflicts in a Biblical way? Are we spending more time investing in our kids than our relationship? What if something happens to one of us?

When I think about my friendships, I worry I am not reaching out enough...or I've talked too much. When it comes to my neighbors, I wonder if I am being deliberate about connecting with them and being a good witness. I am also terribly aware that I worry about what people think of me. I worry they won't like me or that they'll judge or criticize me.

When I think of my relationship with God, I wonder if He's disappointed in me and if I am doing His will. Sometimes I feel more like Jonah and Moses running away from God's plan than I feel like I am listening, trusting, and obeying. And why am I not doing what He wants? Because I'm scared! I don't feel qualified or good enough. I'm afraid I will fail.

Then I read for the one-hundredth time in the Bible, "Do not be afraid." Sigh. But I am afraid and I'm guessing so are you. So, let's start with being honest about those fears to prepare for our next chapter.

1. What fears or worries seem to invade your thoughts?

2. How do these fears or worries affect you physically, emotionally, and spiritually?

