THE EHS COURSE
Session 4 Planning Pack

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THE EHS COURSE
Session 4

Section 1 - Schedule and Closing Summary
PAGES 3-6

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The EHS Course
Sample Schedule and Closing Summary

Week 4 - Journey Through the Wall

Sample Schedule:

7:00-7:10 — Welcome and Daily Office

- *Daily Office*

PP Introduce Prodigal Son Painting of Rembrandt as what we can do in silence – i.e. imagine leaning our heads against the Father's breast.

Teach **PP** "Guidelines for Silence an Stillness"

1. **Sit down, close your eyes, and take a few deep breaths to settle into the silence.**
2. **Choose a very simple prayer to express your openness and desire for God.**

(e.g. *Abba, Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Here I am, Come Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus have mercy on me)*

3. **Offer this prayer to Jesus, allowing His will and presence full access in your life.**
4. **When you become distracted, offer again your simple prayer back to God.**
   - **PP** "Do the Midday/Evening Office" on page 84

PP Review where we are in The 8 Sessions (Table Contents)

7:10-7:22 — **PP** Pg. 56, "Growing Connected" Question – LG. GROUPS

- Daily Office question - Were you able to make any progress with the Offices? If not, what was your biggest obstacle?

7:22-7:35 — DVD or You Speak

7:35-7:42 — **PP** Do question 3 in "Starter" section, groups of 3 (pg. 57-58)

- Read the first three paragraphs on the top of pg. 126 to distinguish trials from Walls.

7:42-7:47 — **PP** Bible Study (groups of 2-3)

Read the introduction and text from the workbook on pp. 58-59

- You may need to address the issue of how often we don't understand what God is doing and then reemphasize the incredible faith/obedience of Abraham.

7:47-8:20 — **PP** Bible Study

***8:20-8:30* — BREAK**

8:30-8:45 — **PP** Application and Closing Prayer Section

- Pg. 61, Application and Closing Prayer
- Read the questions and instructions from up front
- Then give them 5 minutes alone
- Followed by 10 min. in groups of 3 to share how God is speaking to them.

The EHS Course
Sample Schedule and Closing Summary

8:45-9:00 — **PP Closing Remarks and Summary:**

- Read first 2 paragraphs under "Characteristics of Life on the Other Side" on pg. 126 in EHS book.
  - Abraham at the Wall
    - This is not his first wall --- Gen. 12 (leaving all known),
      -Famine, infertility (unable to have children),
      -Tension with Lot and having to split from him -Gen. 13,
      -Marital tension with child born out of wedlock (Gen. 18) and having to send Ishmael away.
      - And now Gen. 22 with the sacrifice of Isaac!
    - He has been promised by God Promised Land and children/descendants like stars and to be a universal blessing to the world. Yet Abraham has only 1 son and lives in tent. He is perhaps 110-113 yrs. old!! God seems to be asking him to do something that would cause God's will not to happen! It doesn't make sense.
    - I would ask: "HAVEN'T I BEEN THROUGH ENOUGH?"

- **Primary Issue of the Wall – My Will vs. God's Will**
  - **Abraham does not argue, delay, or resist! He is not angry, bitter, disappointed, or not shrink back.
  - He is asked to let go of something he is clinging to – holding him back from greater intimacy with God – "your son, your only son."
- God loves you enough to strip you of that keeps you from Him – Some not bad in themselves. They only they keep us from God!
- What we think is best for us is really the worst. What we think is really the worst is actually the best!
- Refer to *The Dark Night of the Soul* -John of Cross.
  This is the ordinary way we grow in Christ and our wires/affections/DNA reworked
  - <u>Preparing</u> you for a higher degree of love for Him, to be able to commune with God more abundantly, so you can walk on your own 2 feet.
  - <u>Purging</u> your palate, your taste buds so it may feel/taste love of God
  - <u>Stripping</u> making us into new men and women we are really meant to be! e.g. Consider: David, Abraham, Joseph.
  - God is not simply correcting/restraining your flesh, but purging you of what is deeply rooted and keeping him from you.

This is not about us only externally changing through sheer force of our wills. This is God pulling out of us deep self-will, need for control and replacing it with the life of Jesus. For this reason it is often called the dark night of loving/purifying fire.

PP The Dark Night Purges us from:

- **PP** Pride – shown in condemning others (Lk. 18 – Pharisee), looking for approval of others, being impatient with other people
- **PP** Greed, i.e. you are discontent with the spirituality God gives you and envy others.
- **PP** Comparing.
- **PP** Taking more pleasure in spiritual blessings more than God Himself.
- **PP** Wrath – i.e. easily irritated, lack of sweetness, no patience to wait on God Make grand resolutions to change but have no patience to wait for it.
- **PP** Spiritual Gluttony –Don't want the cross but spiritual pleasures Childishness
- **PP** Spiritual envy – unhappy when others do well spiritually.

God is seeking to get you to lose your love for things of the world.

God is seeking to move us to follow the person of Jesus and not simply follow the good feelings that come from Jesus. How does He grow us up from such childlish, immature faith. He removes the "good feelings" of following Jesus!

Actually to be tested by God is a complement and a privilege. Abraham is called the father of us all in Romans 4. In other words, his journey of faith is similar to what we will all go thru in following Jesus. There are times we don't know where God is, what He is doing, where He is going and how we are going to get there!

- **Our Work at the Wall**
  - Persevere in patience. Keep still, be quiet and listen for His voice
    - GOD IS INVADING YOU! EMPTYING YOU TO FILL YOU.
    - Persevere in spiritual exercises when there is no pleasure.

    Why? There are rich treasures in the WALL.
    - You will not recognize yourself on the other side. You become the extraordinary human being God intends
    - We end up in places we never dreamed with people, that we never imagined!
    - God has an incredible future for you – that you too would be a blessing like Abraham… the way He is going to get you there is transform you through Walls He will send/allow
    - There is revelation that comes through Walls. For Abraham it is in v. 14 "The Lord who provides." He really knows it knows it now. So there are truths about God's love, faithfulness, goodness that can only be known deeply through dark nights.

    Note: John of the Cross notes there are a few people, very few actually, that are entrusted with great suffering, almost violent that if not for the grace of God, they would not survive. He calls it "the dark night of

senses." But to those whom He has entrusted such suffering, God has profound revelation of Himself and a tremendous calling on their lives.

So this session is about letting go and trusting God – even when we can't see how it will work out. Hebrews 11 tells us "Abraham by faith, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice… because he reasoned God could even raise the dead" (v.17). It seemed impossible. It was unheard of at that time. But He knew God was good and God would fulfill His promises for him. So he let go of control of trying to run the future and trusted God. May you and I do the same tonight?

- Let's fix our eyes on Jesus that we too might know say like David:
  "I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory.
  Because your love is better than life.
  My lips will praise glorify you and I will praise you as long as I live." Ps. 63

- Homework –**PP** Stay with *EHS Day by Day* (God is forming/shaping you for a life with Him) Read the next chapter

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THE EHS COURSE
Session 4

Section 2 - Power Point Slides
Pages 8-29

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EHS Course Session 4:

"Journey Through the Wall"

WELCOME

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Emotionally Healthy Spirituality

Day by Day

A 40-DAY JOURNEY *with the* DAILY OFFICE

Peter Scazzero

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Silence and Stillness Guidelines

Sit down and take a few deep breaths to settle into the silence.

1. Choose a very simple prayer to express your openness and desire for God.
   (e.g. *Abba, Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit,, Lord Jesus have mercy on me)*

2. Close your eyes and offer this prayer to Jesus, allowing His will and love full access in your life.

3. When you become distracted, offer again your simple prayer back to God.

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Growing Connected:

1. *EHS Day by Day* (Daily Office).
   - Were you able to make any progress with the Offices? If not, what was your biggest obstacle? Progress?

2. Pg. 56, "Growing Connected" Question

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Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Course

1. The Problem of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality (Saul)

2. Know Yourself that You May Know God (David)

3. Go Back to Go Forward (Joseph)

4. Journey Through The Wall (Abraham)

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Metaphors of the Christian Life

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Christianity as a Journey

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6 Stages of Christian faith

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Stage 1
Life-Changing
Awareness of God
Stage 2
Discipleship
(Learning)
Stage 3
The Active Life
(Serving)
Stage 4
Journey Inward
Stage 5
Journey Outward
(From my inner life)
Stage 6
Transformed into Love
Stages of
Faith
THE WALL
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adapted from
Janet Hagberg/ Robert Guelich

Starter Question

Question 3 on page 58

Groups of 3

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Bible Study

Page 58-60

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Application

Section Pg. 61

1. Five minutes to journal

2. Groups of 3 to share

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Closing Summary

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Primary Issue of the Wall – My Will vs. God's

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Dark Nights Purify Us from:

- Pride
- Greed
- Comparing
- Wanting pleasures more than God
- Wrath (easily irritated, impatient)
- Spiritual Gluttony
- Spiritual Envy

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Jesus teaches us what faith is: trusting God even when we do not feel him.

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Our Work at the Wall

Persevere/Abide/Remain

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<u>Homework</u> – *EHS Day by Day*

- Read chapter 7

  Enlarge Your Soul through Grief and Loss

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THE EHS COURSE
Session 4

Section 3 – Sample Follow-up Email
Pages 31

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EHS Course Sample Emails

Email Sent Prior to Week 5

Dear EHS Course Participant,

Thank you for another great week this last Tuesday night as we looked at Abraham and the Wall together. I am excited about our time this coming week as well as we dive into chapter 7 "Enlarge Your Soul Through Grief and Loss."

This is one of the most important, neglected truths in Scripture that, once rediscovered, has enormous potential to release a deep work of God in our hearts. It is truly a life-changer!

So read chapter 7 before arriving and continue pressing into the Daily Office each day, giving God room to strengthen that spiritual muscle of paying attention to Him.

Blessings to you.

Pastor Pete

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