

Day 1
October 22



Pray | Thank God that his Son Jesus Christ is always with you!

ANYONE CAN TRAVEL TO NARNIA OR MIDDLE EARTH.

A well-written story allows anyone to travel to, and appreciate, having their imaginations captivated by beautifully intricate imaginary places. C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien are timeless examples of this as their books continue selling and generating new products. Having stood the test of time, they still transport willing readers into their complex stories. Imagine for a moment that you were a fan of either, or both, writers before you came to believe in Jesus. Now suppose after becoming a Christian you decide to pull them off the bookshelf because you've been told they have Christian themes woven throughout. After re-reading them, you likely have gained new insights as you see how God's stories are interwoven into their stories. It is not because the characters or stories are new, but when you see how God's redemption plan fits in, things become clearer to you.



Read | Psalm 139:1-16; Matthew 28:20



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

You may think you are living a life that is your own life, but that is not what the psalmist conveys. Your life has been intricately related to God since before you ever even were. What are some of the implications of God being so intimately involved in your life?

Matthew's re-assurance from Jesus is one of those "easy to believe but hard to perceive" biblical truths. What reasons do you find for why you believe it conceptually but find it hard to see in your daily life among all your troubles?

Read or pray through the verses in Psalm 139 again. Reflect on the truths about God's knowledge of you and when that knowledge began. Doing this brings greater understanding to the words in Matthew 28:20. (God has always been there, so his being there in the future is dependable.) Which other verse combinations that illuminate your understanding of Scripture come to mind?

Day 2
October 23



Pray | Every time you drive, God delivers you to his destination.

WE ALL SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON THE ROAD.

Do the math (using time or miles) to calculate how much you are on the road in a day/week/month/year or however long you've had your current job. The number will surprise you, unless you are a professional driver. In preparation for this week's look at a biblical road trip, think about what happens during the time you are on the road. What would Jesus think about how you spend your time? What do you listen to? Who do you talk to? What do you talk about? Are you praying? If you are, is it that God keeps you safe from others on the road or keeps them safe from you? Are you observant of the people around you? (You may begin noticing some of the same people day after day.) What about that homeless person there on the side of the road asking for help, saying "God Bless" on their sign?

There is nothing like a seven-mile walk to feel bad about all the recent goings on in your life.



Read | Luke 24:13-24



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

As Jesus pushes his fellow traveler's buttons, their moods seem to be equal parts of grief, hopelessness, and apparent amnesia about things they should have known. Can you think of any times where you were looking so hard for Jesus that you did not see him standing right beside you?

Jesus intentionally pushed these two travelers to share where they were so that he could come alongside and help them in their time of need. Raw emotions color our every conversation to be sure. So how can we encourage or discourage others' in their faith, even when we are down?

There is a time to ask questions and a time to listen to the answers. Jesus walks with us and became a man to live like us, only he moves us from where we are to where we need to be. We may not meet an obscured Jesus on the road, but what ways can we remind ourselves how much he is involved in our lives?

Day 3

October 24



Pray | Thank God for his patience with your unbelief.

CLARITY IS FOUND ONLY IN JESUS.

Ever notice how some of the deepest truths of the Bible do not come across as thorough Pauline appeals to logic but rather in short snippets of turbocharged goodness? Much of the biblical narrative gives insight into the nature of God, his expectations, his promises, and the punishment humankind receives for choosing to go our way. There are many sign posts from Genesis to Revelation pointing out that Jesus Christ is central to it all. Based on the Bible of their time (the Old Testament), the Jews certainly should not have been surprised at who the Messiah was and that he was not just coming to overthrow Rome and restore the glory days of David and Solomon's kingly reigns. Yet here we are in the middle of a story about followers of Jesus who pretty much had no idea who he was or what he was about.



Read | Luke 24:19-27



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

There is a danger in being so caught up in our own broken dreams that we miss seeing Jesus as central to our very being. We tend to forget what we ought to know. To grow our faith again, we need to be reminded of our lack of belief. Think about who has gently reminded you of what you should have known about who God is, and then pray, thanking God for them. Are you needing to seek out a mentor, or are you in a spot where God is calling you to be a mentor to someone else?

The God who made us knows we all suffer from spiritual attention deficit disorder. In his providence, he gives us his Word (the Bible) and makes it so that no matter how many times we read it, we can still learn new things. Honestly assess how much time you are spending in the Bible, and come up with a plan to increase your exposure to God's Word. Who can you share your plan with and ask to keep you accountable?

Following God is a personal decision, but one thing these verses make clear is that doing so effectively is also an activity best shared and honed with others on the same road as you. Is God impressing it upon you to get involved in a small group? There are groups for men, women, couples, and even teenagers.

Day 4
October 25



Pray | Ask God to show you Jesus as the focus of ALL Scripture.

IN THE COMPANY OF JESUS.

To the disciples on the road to Emmaus, being in the company of their uninvited guest was exactly where they needed to be. Only when we are in the company of Jesus can he speak the truth of who he is and how all of Scripture points to him as the Messiah. Likely, we will not know exactly what Jesus said to them unless we are so enlightened when we arrive in heaven, but other Scripture does provide some clues. In Acts 4, Peter points out to the religious rulers that the cornerstone in Psalm 118:22 is none other than Jesus. In Acts 8, Phillip gets a chance to share that the Suffering Servant described in Isaiah was really pointing to Jesus. In the Old Testament, there are direct messianic prophecies that point to Jesus and also the subtler archetypes of Christ that recur as we march towards Jesus' coming.



Read | *Luke 24:25-27; Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 53:1-7*



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

The Bible is circular in the sense that when you understand something you can then go apply it to bring new understanding to other passages as well. The next time you run across something in the Bible that reminds you of another story, track it down to see if Jesus (through the Holy Spirit) is leading you to new levels of understanding.

To deepen your understanding of how all of Scripture points to Jesus as you read the Old Testament, ask yourself these questions:

1. Does the passage point directly to Jesus (as the Messiah)?
2. Does any of it anticipate or foreshadow Jesus?

Matthew 5:17 says that Jesus did not come to abolish the law or prophets but rather to fulfill them. In what ways can reading the Old Testament through the lens of Jesus' life, teaching, and ultimate role as Messiah breathe new life into the stories found there?

Day 5

October 26



Pray | Ask God to teach you more about him to encourage others.

JESUS TAKES DEFEAT AND DESPAIR AND MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO US.

Think back to the beginning of the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were so drearily recounting recent events that it was preventing their belief in what they should have been prepared to expect and know. Jesus rightly expresses disappointment in the figurative road they are allowing their thoughts to take them down. For his own reason, Jesus chose to obscure his identity from them and spent the rest of their time together explaining that current events were only the expected outcome of what Moses and the prophets had been preparing them for: the Messiah's coming. Not to sound like those website teaser ad headlines, but what happened next is truly unexpected.



Read | [Luke 24:28-35](#)



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Verse 32 reminds us of the result of God speaking into our lives, especially in the midst of apparent defeats. Think of the circumstances where God has caused your heart to burn within you. How did you respond, or with your current perspective, could you have responded better to his lighting the fire?

Likely you can relate to how Jesus' followers' down moods would have added to the physical exertion required for their journey. After talking with Jesus as he opened Scripture, they were re-vitalized and made the return trip the same day! When have you relied, or where do you need to rely, on the power of the Lord to carry you through?

The disciples leaving Jerusalem for Emmaus were defeated, and their faith was struggling. The same disciples excitedly leaving Emmaus for Jerusalem had renewed faith and shared what they had seen with others who needed encouragement. How will you apply spending time with Jesus into going wherever he needs you to go? Is right now the time you need to accept Jesus as your own Messiah?

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