

# Journey

Pocket guide



# Welcome to Journey

The bible is full of metaphors that talk of journeys, paths and races. They each have their own message, but what is clear is that **journeys are important and we are all travelling them**. But we don't have to travel them alone, we walk them with God and can choose to share the journey with others.

'Journey' groups give you an opportunities to intentionally walk the journey God has for you, together. To support each other and **to grow in relationship with one another and with God**.

Journey groups are not intended to be open ended, but they are long term. There is a significant commitment involved **in walk alongside the others in your group, both physically and spiritually**. As a group, you will commit to an initial six months journey together, which is followed by a time of reflection and an opportunity to either recommit to another six months, or cross the finish line and complete this part of the journey together.

# Forming your group

Over the next six months, **decide as a group how you would like to grow together**. This is not a 'one size fits all' model, you won't be told what you should or shouldn't be doing. It's up to you, in your groups, to **decide together what this journey will look like**. But to help get you going, we've made some suggestions, and developed a helpful format that you can choose to follow.

Before you begin, we encourage you as a group to decide to up to four things together (You might just want to pick one, and that's OK!) :

1. Agree a rhythm to pick up
2. Choose something to lay down
3. Pick a theme to learn about
4. Go on an adventure together

*(If you choose option four make sure to also choose an another goal as well.)*

We have unpacked each of these areas on the following pages.

# 1. Pick up a 'Rhythm'

We look at the life of Jesus and there are constant markers in the story which demonstrate to us **what it looks like to live a life of rhythm**. Sabbath. Fasting. Feasting. Scripture. Prayer. Retreat. Travel. There are many other helpful practices that we see throughout the bible, and that we can adopt from other Christians who have gone before us.

As a group **choose a practice that you would like to adopt, and build into your rhythm of life**. You could choose one of the suggestions below, or agree on a different practise you feel will help you become closer with God and practise your faith.

- Prayer
- Reading the bible
- Mission and evangelism
- Generosity
- Hospitality
- Sabbath
- Retreat
- Fasting \*
- Spiritual gifts
- Creativity
- Justice
- Worship
- Stewardship

\* This practise might not be right, healthy or possible for everyone.

## 2. Lay something down

There's **always something that's distracting us**, that's competing for our attention or getting in the way of us being able to live freely and in **right relationship and partnership with Jesus**.

It doesn't have to be a big thing, but is there something that as a group you would find helpful to forego?

**Jesus lived simply, yet lacked nothing.** Jesus prepared himself for his life of ministry not by gaining and taking in as much as possible, but by withdrawing and fasting to become closer to the father.

You might choose to each individually decide on one thing that you would find helpful to lay down, or agree to take on the task of laying something down together.

What ever you decide, make sure it's both healthy and realistic!

# 3. Learn about a 'Theme'

Jesus could have chosen to change the world through any role, surely a king or a high priest would have been a more suitable option? Yet he chose to become a teacher, why? We see that **learning is important to Jesus**. Where ever he travelled, the people who encountered him, even for the briefest moment, would leave changed and with a greater understanding of who God was and is.

The same is true for us today, **God is always wanting to teach us something new**, to show us a new side of his character, or to challenge beliefs that we have that aren't quite right.

As a group choose a theme that you would like to learn about. Ask the question '**is there something about God, his character, or his kingdom, that we would like to learn more about?**'.

Once you've decided on a theme, it can be hard to know where to begin. Why not choose a **book or a podcast** series on this theme and commit to reading/listening over the next six months and discuss what you're learning when you meet together.

## 4. Go on an adventure

'Come away with me. Let us go alone to a quiet place and rest for a while' (Mark 6:31). Jesus and the disciples had been going about their daily lives, teaching, travelling, meeting with people along the way. But **Jesus knew that in amongst the daily rhythms, they needed to stop**, reflect, be with God and with each other, and most importantly, rest.

Retreat and pilgrimage have been part of the spiritual lives of Christians for centuries, but the practice has faded from the church today. We encourage you to consider what it might look like for your journey group to 'get away with God'. This might look like a retreat, a pilgrimage, a day trip, a long walk, or something different.

We know not everyone will be able to afford the time or money to go on a formal retreat or travel far for a pilgrimage, but flashy, spendy 'get aways' aren't really the point. The point is to put **yourselves in a position, away for the daily stresses** and distractions of every day life, **to hear from God**, individually and together.

Where might you go with God and with each other?

# Journeying together

Spend the first few weeks each sharing your stories. Challenge yourself to allow the group in, to hear what's really going on for you at the moment and to pray for you. You do not have to share anything that you do not want to share or don't feel comfortable sharing.

If you don't know where to start you might want to answer some of these questions:

- Where is God at work in your life right now? o What area of your life do you most need God's
- help/guidance/presence?
- Is there anything heavy that you are carrying right now?
- Do you feel you have a sense of God's calling / a vocation for your life?
- What are you hoping to get out of this experience?
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As a way of honouring and respecting each other, keep everything that is shared confidential.

Open up this pocket guide to find out what the following sessions might look like.



You should now have met with your group a few times, listened to each other, and prayed for one another.

**Now the next part of the journey begins...**

Every time you meet together spend some time reflecting on, and discussing, these three areas:

# Journey Sessions

Some helpful tips for your time together

## Direction

**Question: Are we going the right way?**

Find out how each person is doing, catch up and encourage each other. During this time, try and be honest and open. Share what's going well, as well as what's challenging at the moment.

Specifically reflect on your faith journeys, as well as the ups and downs of daily life.

## Devotion

**Question: Are we spending time with God?**

Spend time together growing closer to God.

You might want to:

- Read the bible together
- Pray for one another
- Invite the holy spirit to meet with you
- Share encouragement or words of knowledge

If you don't know where to begin, why not choose a book of the bible to explore together, or follow a bible study plan as a group.

## Disciples

**Question: Are we living out our faith?**

Intentionally grow and move forward together. Revisit the commitments you made together when you first formed your journey group.

- Rhythms you have picked up
- Something you've laid down
- A theme you're learning about

Explore what other ways God is calling you to follow him, and put your faith into action this week.

After six months, you will have the opportunity as a group to reflect on whether you will **recommit** to a further six months, or whether to **cross the finish line** and complete this part of the journey together.

The Lord your God is with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9

Your word is a lamp to my feet, the light to my path. Psalm 119:105

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean on him and in all ways acknowledge him, and he will make your path straight. Proverbs 3: 5-6

Train your child up in the way they should go, even when they are old they will not part from it. Proverbs 22:6

Carry each others burdens and so you will fulfil the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

So continue encouraging each other and building one another up, like you are already doing. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Hebrews 12:1

I run in the path of your commands, for you have broadened my understanding. Psalm 119:31