

# THE JOURNEY

# TRAVEL LOG



NAZARENE YOUTH INTERNATIONAL

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# HOW TO USE YOUR TRAVEL LOG

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Welcome to your travel log guide! Remember when we used to be able to travel and go on trips? In those times that now seem so long ago, sometimes people would keep personal travel logs to help them remember the experiences they had during their trip. They could also look back on those travel logs later and see how the experiences of the journey had changed them or helped them grow.

This guide is to help you create your own travel log as you journey through these six weeks of learning about God's grace. We invite you to have a notebook with blank pages for you to write out your answers to the questions and journaling prompts for each day.

This Travel Log is just one resource we have created for you to use after The Journey online event. You can also visit [nazarene.org/NYIJourney/Resources](https://nazarene.org/NYIJourney/Resources) to access all of our resources for The Journey. Make sure you watch the 2-3 minute videos that accompany the 6 chapters of your Travel Log—they will help you launch into the topic each week.

At the end of these six weeks, you will have thoughtfully documented where you are currently at along your journey of grace... a journey that will continue for the rest of your life and will be full of some amazing adventures with God. Enjoy the journey!

# EVENT REFLECTION: YOU ARE HERE

Read: Psalm 103:8-12

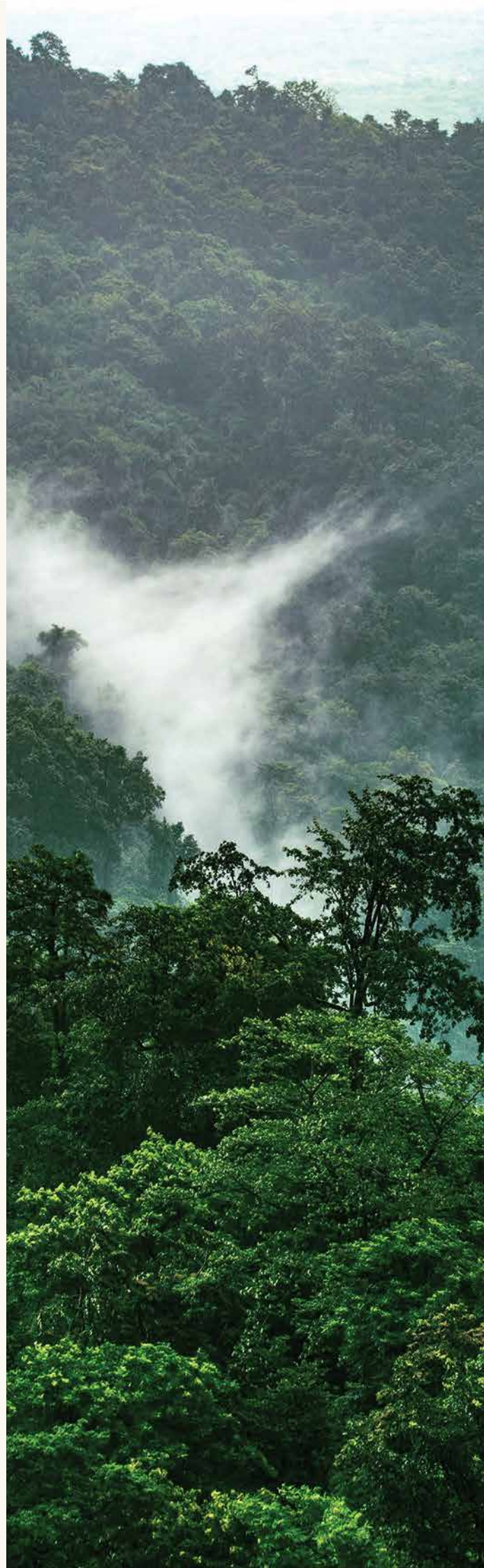
If you have ever been in an airport, a museum, or a large park, you have probably seen signs with a large map and a marker indicating where you are standing as you look at that map. Those markers that show you where you are at are incredibly helpful. Even if you could look at a map and identify where you wanted to go, you would have a hard time actually getting there if you couldn't also identify where you were starting from.

Throughout The Journey online event, we shared a lot about the friendship we can have with God, God's grace that makes friendship with him possible, and the support of our Christian community that helps us along our journey. These key ideas that we learned about and reflected on together are like directional markers on a map, indicators along The Journey. However, for them to provide meaningful direction in our lives, it is important to make sure we first establish "I Am Here" to know where we are along The Journey. Where are you starting from?

Use the following questions as a guide to help you reflect on what you heard during the event. Get a notebook and start your own travel log to document your thoughts, experiences, and growth along your own journey of grace.

- **People keep personal travel logs to help them remember the experiences they have during a trip. They might write down exciting memories, stick a postcard or picture on a page, or sketch a beautiful view. Their travel log becomes a resource to remind them of that meaningful time or to help them share their experience with others who weren't there.**
- **Whether or not you have thought about it in an intentional way, YOU are on a journey of your own: a journey of grace. This journey began when you were born and it will continue for the rest of your life. Right here at the beginning of your travel log, we are inviting you to reflect on your journey so far. Share as much as you are comfortable writing, but try to be honest with yourself. Remember to note both the highs and the lows, the victories and the struggles. Most importantly, remember there is no reason to feel ashamed. God created you. God loves you. God isn't expecting a flawless performance from start to finish. God longs for an authentic, committed, friendship with YOU, the real you, the one God created and called good.**
- **So, start at the beginning and write about your journey so far. Maybe your journey of grace begins with your parents' story or goes back further. Maybe your journey started with a friend at school. Maybe your journey began when you connected to The Journey online event. Whatever it looks like, it is your story, and it is beautiful in its uniqueness and with its cracks. God is creating something new in you.**

- Think back over your life and write out a list of circumstances you found yourself in, people you met, things you read, truths you heard, that seemed to come just at the right moment and which you can now see as being God's grace at work in your life to restore your relationship with him.
- Reflect on and write about what it feels like to know that the God who created all the beauty and good we see around us and in us wants to have a friendship with you.
- As you finish writing about what has happened on your journey so far, end by copying down the words of Psalm 103:8-12, but change it to read in first person. For example, verse 11 could read: "because as high as heaven is above the earth, that's how large God's faithful love is for me."
- During The Journey event, grace was defined as God's gift of perfect love for us. Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response, giving thanks to God for the incredible gift of his grace.



# WEEK ONE



YOU ARE INVITED



“However, God is rich in mercy. He brought us to life with Christ while we were dead as a result of those things that we did wrong. He did this because of the great love that he has for us. You are saved by God’s grace! And God raised us up and seated us in the heavens with Christ Jesus. God did this to show future generations the greatness of his grace by the goodness that God has shown us in Christ Jesus. You are saved by God’s grace because of your faith. This salvation is God’s gift. It’s not something you possessed. It’s not something you did that you can be proud of. Instead, we are God’s accomplishment, created in Christ Jesus to do good things. God planned for these good things to be the way that we live our lives.”

– Ephesians 2:4-10

# Day 1:

Read Ephesians 2:4-10

## REFLECTION:

Think of an invitation you have received that had a major impact on your life. Maybe it was an invitation to a new group of friends, an invitation to serve your community in some way, or an invitation to a certain school or job. What did that invitation mean to you? Reflect on how your life would be different if you hadn't accepted that life-changing invitation.

## RESPONSE:

While we can easily look back and see how much a single invitation has changed our lives, the reality is that an invitation alone can have absolutely no impact on us. It all depends on what we do with the invitation once we receive it. If we ignore the invitation or directly turn it down, our lives continue along the same trajectory they were on prior to receiving the invitation. The invitation comes to us, but the power of the invitation to bring change into our lives lies in our decision.

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**What do you think about the invitation God is extending to you through this gift of grace described in Ephesians 2:4-10? Is it an invitation you want to ignore, or is it one you want to accept? Why?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

THE INVITATION  
THE INVITATION  
THE INVITATION

# Day 2:

Read Ephesians 2:4-10

## REFLECTION:

Think about how you feel when you receive a gift. Does the feeling change when it is not your birthday or when you aren't expecting to receive a gift? Whether a physical object or a kind act or a word of blessing, a gift is one way for someone to tell you how much they care about you. So when we talk about grace being a gift, grace is one way for you to understand how much God cares about you. God loves you with a love that never waivers. God's love for you extends beyond good choices and praiseworthy behavior, and that's really great news, but let's back up for just a bit.

Sometimes when we think about God's amazing love for us we start our story in Genesis chapter 3 and Adam and Eve's choices to disobey God. We start with our own failures and a list of times we've messed up. We see God's love starting there in that space and we are either unsure as to why God would still love us, or we believe we need to earn the right to be loved again. The truth, though, is that our story actually begins in Genesis chapter 1. In these verses, you can hear the beautiful poetry trying to capture the wonder of God speaking this magnificent world into existence, creating so much out of nothing. The silent beauty of the heavens, the powerful beauty of the oceans, the diverse beauty of the birds, fish, and land animals—all of it is awe-inspiring. But then, God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, together since before time—says: “Let us make humanity in our image to resemble us

so that they may take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and all the crawling things on earth.” (Genesis 1:26)

“Let us make humanity in our image...” These are the words of a loving parent longing to share life and love with a child. This is God as parent, anticipating the wonder of seeing one's own character traits, personality, and goodness looking back at them through the eyes of their child. After the creation, we learn that God walked in the garden with Adam and Eve during the evening, just as you might go over to a friend's house just because you want to spend time together (Genesis 3:8). God had a friendship with humanity. Then, through humanity's desire for more—their desire to know more, to have more power, to be their own god—they severely damaged their relationship with God the Creator. They broke trust, they disobeyed God, and they removed God from the place of honor in their hearts, instead, stepping up onto the throne of their own hearts. This act not only damaged humanity's relationship with God, but it damaged all relationships, including our relationship with each other, with nature, and even with ourselves.

From that moment on, God has been working to redeem and restore that treasured relationship with us and bring healing to all our relationships. God the Son even came down to walk on earth again and make his home



among us. Grace is not only a gift, it is also an invitation. An invitation back to shalom, which is the Hebrew word for peace. But it more fully means wholeness, completeness, harmony... perfect peace. Grace invites you to know true shalom. Grace invites you on a journey to a restored relationship with the God who created you, with yourself, and with others. Reflect on the meaning of this invitation.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**What is exciting and what scares you about this invitation to know true shalom, this invitation to go on a journey to restored relationship with God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





Let us make  
humanity in  
our image to  
resemble us so  
that they may  
take charge of the  
fish of the sea,  
the birds in the  
sky, the livestock,  
all the earth, and  
all the crawling  
things on earth.

- (Genesis 1:26)

# Day 3:

Read Ephesians 2:4-10

## REFLECTION:

Today, you are invited to reflect on the Scripture text for this week. Before you begin, pray the following prayer or a prayer of your own, asking God for wisdom as you come to God's Holy Word.

## PRAYER FOR WISDOM:

*Dear God, as I come to your Holy Word today, I turn my ear toward wisdom and I stretch my mind toward understanding. I long to hear what you want to say to me and to learn what you want to teach me. Open my heart and my mind to be ready to receive from you, for you give wisdom and knowledge and understanding. Thank you for being with me now, in this moment, and always. Amen.*

(Inspired by Proverbs 2:1-6)

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. Copy down the words of Ephesians 2:4-10 but change it to read in first person. For example, verse 8 could read: "I am saved by God's grace because of my faith. This salvation is God's gift. It's not something I possessed." Reflect on these verses, thinking of them as an invitation.**
- 2. What is God inviting you to?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



# Day 4:

Read Ephesians 2:4-10

## REFLECTION:

This week we have been reflecting on grace as an invitation. We have asked what you think about this invitation, if it causes you to experience any fear or excitement, and yesterday you reflected on what it is that God is specifically inviting you to. It is important to remember that this invitation is always available to us. If you have rejected it in the past, God is still extending this invitation to you. If you accepted it at one point but have since walked away from it, God is still extending this invitation to you. If you are coming to this journey in all sincerity but you still have doubts, know that God is extending and will continue to extend this invitation to you.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. How have you responded so far to God's invitation of grace to you?**
- 2. Will you accept the invitation to The Journey of a lifetime?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response. If you are ready to go on this journey, tell God all about it as you pray.



# Day 5:

Read Ephesians 2:4-10

## REFLECTION:

If you have accepted this amazing invitation, perhaps you are wondering, “What does this really mean?” We will continue to explore that in the weeks ahead. Grace has been meeting you up to this point, and grace will continue to be with you every step of your journey. In week 2, we’ll reflect more on the grace that has helped guide you to this point. And in week 3, we’ll begin to talk about the ways grace equips us for the journey. For now, just remember that God walks with you. The brokenness between you and God is being healed. So just like a new friend, spend time with God, read the Bible (which is God’s love letter to us), talk to God, and listen to him. Remember, this is an invitation to a journey. You don’t arrive the moment you start. And besides, this isn’t just about the destination. Welcome to The Journey!

What if you still aren’t ready to accept God’s invitation yet? Just remember, you are on a journey through life whether you accept God’s invitation of grace or not, but it is only through accepting God’s grace that we begin to experience the journey as it was intended: in fellowship and friendship with God. Keep being open, keep reading, and next week, consider week 1 as an example of God’s seeking grace at work in your life.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today’s date and reflect on the following question.

**What about God’s grace, makes you the most thankful?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





# Day 6/7:

Read Ephesians 2:4-10

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

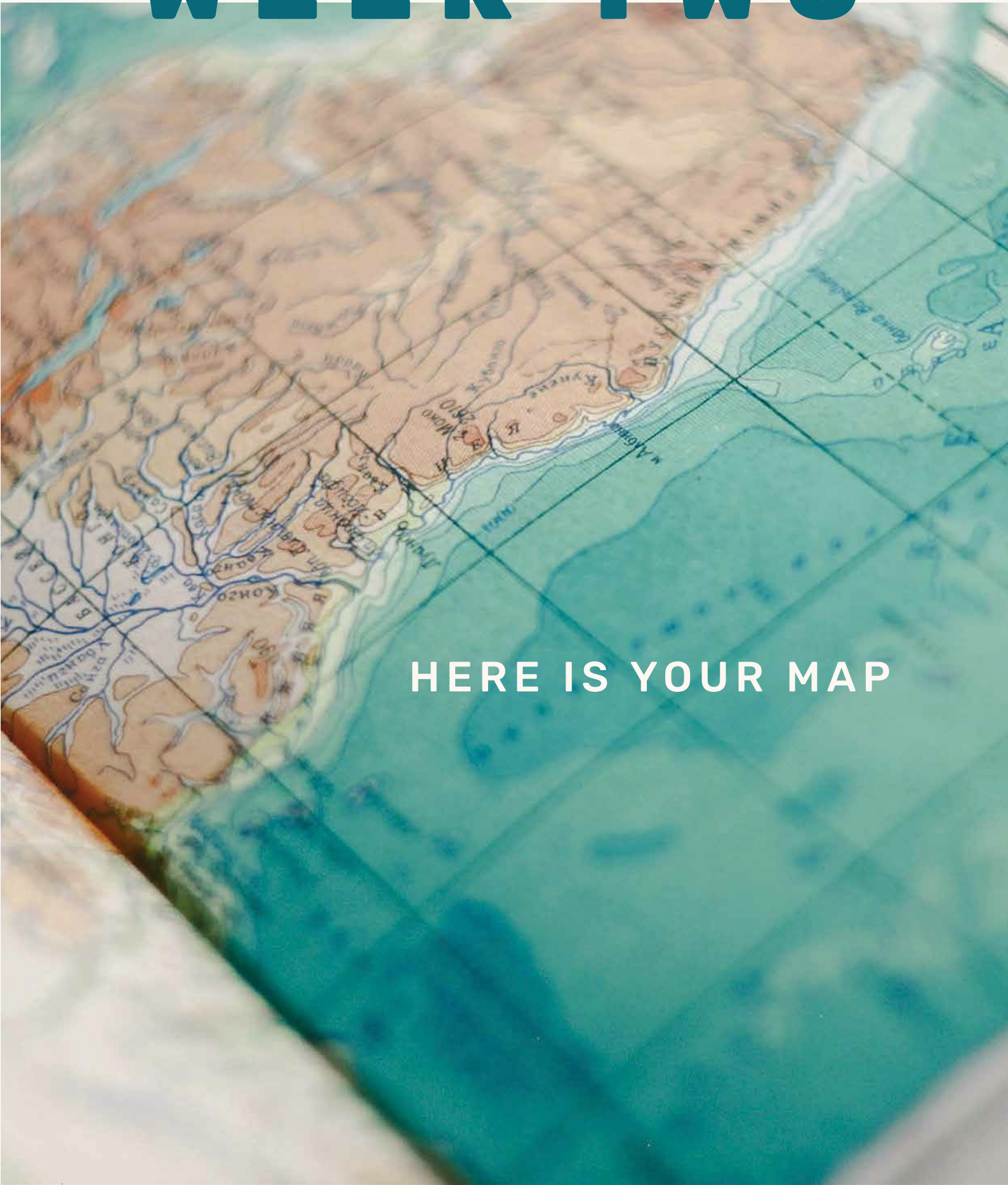
- 1. What have you learned about God this week?**
- 2. What have you learned about yourself this week?**
- 3. What have you learned about your relationship with God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



# WEEK TWO

HERE IS YOUR MAP



“I have loved you with  
a love that lasts forever.  
And so with unfailing love, I  
have drawn you to myself.”

– Jeremiah 31:3b

I HAVE LOVED YOU  
WITH A LOVE THAT  
LASTS FOREVER.  
WITH UNFAILING LOVE  
I HAVE DRAWN YOU  
TO MYSELF.

# Day 1:

Read: Jeremiah 31:3b

## REFLECTION:

In your travel log, write today's date and then draw a map of your neighborhood, village, or town. Think about what streets you add, what landmarks, or places of importance you include. Mark 1) your home and 2) another place on your map that you enjoy visiting. Reflect on the path you take to get from your home to the second place you marked on your map. How familiar are you with that path? Could you give someone written directions to follow in order to get there?

## RESPONSE:

We appreciate the familiarity of places we know well. We can almost find ourselves taking the required steps and making the necessary turns without even paying attention to where we are going. However, giving directions to someone else by words alone might reveal we know less about the path than we think or at least make us less certain about how well we can explain it. Maps provide clear guidance to get from point A to point B. Like a map, God's love is showing us the way and drawing us back to God.

In your travel log, reflect on the following question.

**What similarities do you see between a map and God's love and grace that draws us to God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

# Day 2:

Read: Jeremiah 31:3b

## REFLECTION:

Have you ever wanted to go on a really big trip? Somewhere far away, where everything is unfamiliar and different and new? As of the writing of this travel log, we continue to experience the ramifications of a global pandemic, most of us are wondering if—or when—we will ever have the chance to go on a trip like that again or for the first time. Whenever we are able to venture back into the world, maps are one of those vital tools for finding your way around a new place. A map marks important roads and landmarks; it can show you where you end up if you turn off onto a different route, and if you know your desired destination, it can help you see what roads are necessary to take or to avoid in order to get to your destination.

Last week we explored the image of grace as an invitation, an invitation to a restored relationship with God. This is an invitation that you can accept at any time. There are no tests to pass or auditions to go through; God has extended the invitation to you for you to accept or reject. However, there is something important to note. God created us, and so he knows just how much the brokenness of relationships destroys us. Even when we reject the invitation, God is still reaching out to us.

This week, we are using the image of a map to help us think about God's grace that reaches out to us (seeking grace or prevenient grace). God has given each of us a map with important roads and landmarks identified on it. Through grace, God brings people, messages of truth, and examples of his love into our lives to draw us toward the roads that will lead us back home, back to a restored relationship with God. Maybe it is a parent, a friend, or even a stranger, but someone will share God's love with us and show us an example of loving-kindness. When we feel all alone, a pastor, a song, a message from some unexpected source, will remind us of a greater truth and a greater purpose for our lives. This is seeking grace or prevenient grace at work. God reaching out to us before we are even paying attention to him.

Whether we acknowledge God or not, along our journey, God is still reaching out to us and trying to guide us towards the right roads. Until we trust God, there will be a lot on the map that still won't make any sense to us. But even before we are able to trust, the grace of God is using that map to help us find our way back to God.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question. In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**What examples of God's seeking grace have you seen in your life? What people, messages of truth, examples of God's love have been present in your life, pointing out the right path on the map, showing you the way back to God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





Whether we  
acknowledge  
God or not,  
along our  
journey, God is  
still reaching  
out to us  
and trying  
to guide us  
towards the  
right roads.

# Day 3:

Read: Jeremiah 31:3b

## REFLECTION:

Today, you are invited to reflect on the Scripture text for this week. Before you begin, pray the following prayer or a prayer of your own, asking God for wisdom as you come to his Holy Word.

## PRAYER FOR WISDOM:

*Dear God, as I come to your Holy Word today, I turn my ear toward wisdom and I stretch my mind toward understanding. I long to hear what you want to say to me and to learn what you want to teach me. Open my heart and my mind to be ready to receive from you, for you give wisdom and knowledge and understanding. Thank you for being with me now, in this moment, and always. Amen.*

(Inspired by Proverbs 2:1-6)

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question. In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

- 1. Copy down the words of Jeremiah 31:3b, but add your name to the beginning. For example: Juana, I have loved with a love that lasts forever... Reflect on these words, thinking of them as a map.**
- 2. What does seeing your name connected to these words make you feel?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



# Day 4:

Read: Jeremiah 31:3b

## REFLECTION:

This week we have been reflecting on grace as a map. We have asked you to reflect on the ways and times in your life when you can look back and see God's grace guiding your steps, sending you the right person at the right time, pointing towards the right path. We have free will to make our own choices all along the way, but God will not abandon us.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. As we have talked about grace as God's gift of perfect love for us, how does God's grace that meets us while we are still seeking reassure us of God's perfect love?**
- 2. How have you responded to God's seeking grace? or, How are you choosing to respond to God's seeking grace today?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

# Day 5:

Read: Jeremiah 31:3b

## REFLECTION:

Sometimes we are completely oblivious to these expressions of grace that God puts in our lives, but through each conversation, message, and example of God's love, our hearts are awakened to the truth that we were created for something more, for a relationship with our Creator. Even if it starts as a faint whisper, we hear God saying, "I have loved you with a love that lasts forever. And so with unfailing love, I [am drawing] you to myself."

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**After all we have reflected on this week, what examples of God's seeking grace in your life make you the most thankful?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





# Day 6/7:

Read: Jeremiah 31:3b

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

1. What have you learned about God this week?
2. What have you learned about yourself this week?
3. What have you learned about your relationship with God?

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

# WEEK THREE



HERE IS YOUR  
COMPASS

“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have more than enough food, but I’m starving to death! I will get up and go to my father, and say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son. Take me on as one of your hired hands.”’ So he got up and went to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion. His father ran to him, hugged him, and kissed him. Then his son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quickly, bring out the best robe and put it on him! Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet! Fetch the fattened calf and slaughter it. We must celebrate with feasting because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life! He was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.”

– Luke 15:17-24

# Day 1:

Read: Luke 15:17-24

## REFLECTION:

Think about a time when you got lost. When you didn't have a clue which way was north or south, which way you came from, or how you were supposed to get back. Can you remember what helped you get reoriented or how you found your way back? What did that moment feel like when you saw a familiar landmark or a familiar face? A compass can help people stay on the correct path or find their way back home. Once you have a map and can orient yourself correctly with the compass, you can start heading in the right direction.

## RESPONSE:

When we are talking about the disorientation sin causes in our lives, that disorientation can begin to feel familiar or we can even convince ourselves that it is not disorientation, but excitement. However, it is a beautiful moment in the text we read when the son gets his compass, verse 17: "When he came to his senses." True north has been found; the pigpen isn't glamorous. The independence he seeks actually comes with a lot of bondage. What he thought was north is, in fact, south.

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**What similarities do you see between a compass and God's saving grace?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



# Day 2:

Read: Luke 15:17-24

## REFLECTION:

Imagine being somewhere you've never been before. You have directions, but they tell you to "turn north" or to "continue east for 1 kilometer before turning south." If you don't know which way is north, then those directions are not all that helpful for you. While a map can still provide a lot of information, using a compass to orient the map in the right direction truly unlocks its benefits. A compass allows you to know which way is true north.

Last week we used the image of a map to help us think about grace and noted that, until we trust God, there will be some things on the map that won't make sense to us. In the corner of most maps, you find an arrow pointing north according to that particular map. This arrow helps you line the map up with your surroundings, but only if you already know which way is north from where you are standing.

This week we are using the image of a compass to help us think about God's grace that saves us (saving grace). You know you are ready for the compass when you come to the place where you are done trying to convince yourself that you prefer the brokenness you feel. When you are done living as if your own satisfaction is the highest good. When you are finally ready to discover the beauty and hope of living in a restored friendship with God, that's when you open yourself up to the saving grace of God.

When we are ready to admit we have sinned and we've been wrong, when we acknowledge our need for God to help us, then God's saving grace saves us and begins the work of restoration in our lives. This is the moment when we receive that all-important compass for our journey, and we understand which way truly is north. Our map begins to make sense. It is like Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:18, "The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are being destroyed. But it is the power of God for those of us who are being saved." There is a lot about this journey of grace that seems like foolishness and that doesn't make sense to us, but when we surrender to God, we begin to see more clearly. That is the power of God's saving grace.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**This might be hard to acknowledge, but where in your life can you acknowledge having become lost and in need of the compass of God's saving grace to point you back to God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





# Day 3:

Read: Luke 15:17-24

## REFLECTION:

Today, you are invited to reflect on the Scripture text for this week. Before you begin, pray the following prayer or a prayer of your own, asking God for wisdom as you come to his Holy Word.

## PRAYER FOR WISDOM:

*Dear God, as I come to your Holy Word today, I turn my ear toward wisdom and I stretch my mind toward understanding. I long to hear what you want to say to me and to learn what you want to teach me. Open my heart and my mind to be ready to receive from you, for you give wisdom and knowledge and understanding. Thank you for being with me now, in this moment, and always. Amen.*

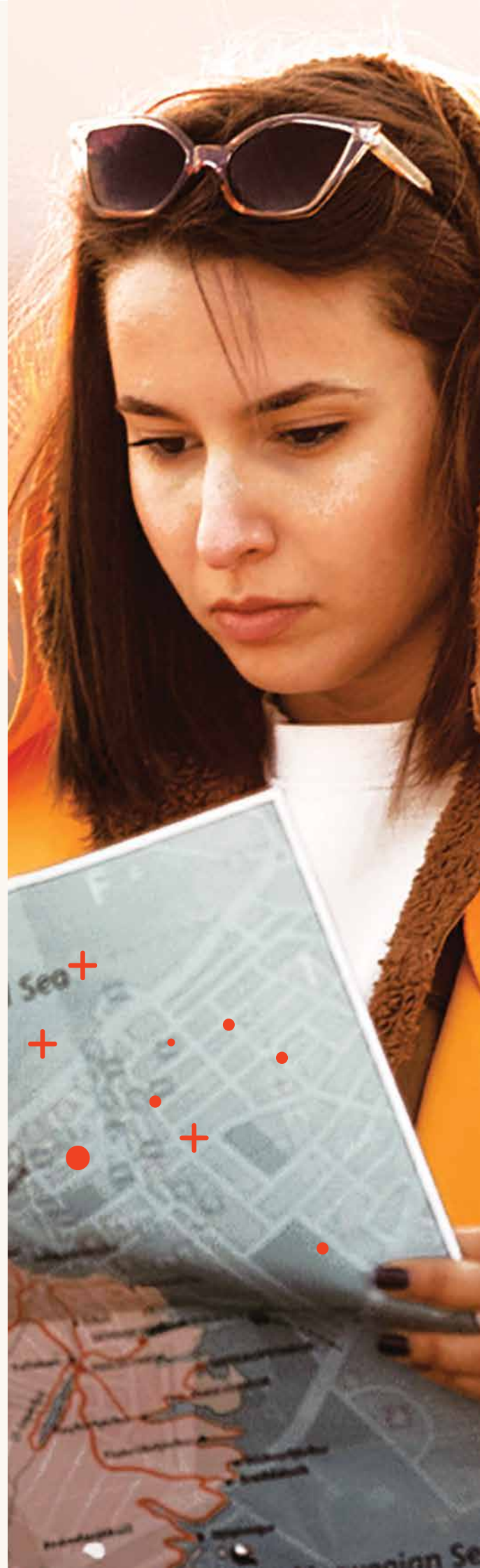
(Inspired by Proverbs 2:1-6)

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date, use the following prompt, and respond to the question.

**Copy down the words of Luke 15:17-24, but change it to read in first person. For example, verse 17 could read: "When I came to my senses, I said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have more than enough food, but I'm starving to death!"**  
**Reflect on these verses and imagine yourself holding a compass.**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



# Day 4:

Read: Luke 15:17-24

## REFLECTION:

This week we have been reflecting on grace as a compass. We have thought about how the saving grace of God reorients our lives and helps us understand north from south and up from down. It helps the map we have been given make more sense, too. We can now walk in confidence with God toward his purposes for our lives.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. Scripture tells us there is no greater love than the love of Jesus who laid down his life to save us, even while we still had our backs turned to him. As we have reflected on grace being God's gift of perfect love for us, what words of love do you hear the Father speaking over you as he embraces you, just as the father in our text this week embraced his son?**
- 2. Have you picked up the compass and accepted God's saving grace in your life? If so, what about this journey of grace with God makes more sense to you now?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



**There is no  
greater love than  
the love of Jesus  
who laid down  
his life to save  
us, even while we  
still had our backs  
turned to him.**



# Day 5:

Read: Luke 15:17-24

## REFLECTION:

This is a beautiful stop along the journey when we begin to see more clearly, when we are ready to accept the absolute forgiveness and the unconditional love of our Heavenly Father. We begin to recognize the lies of the enemy for what they are, and we remove the blinders to sin. The compass is steadily pointing north and keeping us oriented for the journey.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and use the following journaling prompt.

**Using the setting of the parable from Luke 15 that we've been reflecting on this week, write a letter of response and gratitude to your Heavenly Father who has just received you with open arms.**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

Reach out to a parent, pastor, or trusted Christian friend and share your encounter with God's saving grace with them.



# Day 6/7:

Read: Luke 15:17-24

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. What have you learned about God this week?**
- 2. What have you learned about yourself this week?**
- 3. What have you learned about your relationship with God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



# WEEK FOUR

HERE ARE YOUR  
HIKING SHOES



“Now, may the God of peace himself cause you to be completely dedicated to him; and may your spirit, soul, and body be kept intact and blameless at our Lord Jesus Christ’s coming. The one who is calling you is faithful and will do this.”

– 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

# Day 1:

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

## REFLECTION:

Think of a time when you have tried to do a task without the proper tools. It usually takes longer, is much harder to do, and is much more frustrating than it needs to be. What was the most frustrating part about completing the task that came to mind?

## RESPONSE:

Our walk along this journey of grace can be like that. Sometimes, even when we have asked God for forgiveness and we are following Jesus, we are still trying to complete this journey with our own strength and in our own way. It's like we insist on hiking barefoot, all while God is offering us a perfect pair of hiking shoes in just our size.

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**Have you ever felt like you were missing out on something connected to your relationship with God? That, somehow, it still all depends on you? Write about that feeling and the struggles that you've faced.**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

THE ONE WHO IS  
CALLING YOU  
IS FAITHFUL  
AND WILL DO THIS.



# Day 2:

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

## REFLECTION:

As children, many of us loved when the weather was warm enough to go outside to play. It comes with the feeling of freedom in running barefoot in the grass. However, that feeling could change in an instant whenever your foot would unexpectedly land on a sharp rock hidden in the soft grass. Running in the grass or soft dirt was usually fine while barefoot, but certain activities were much easier with shoes. For those of us who use braces or wheelchairs, the same can be said. The journey is possible as we are, but specialized gear will unlock a different level of freedom and appreciation of the journey.

Last week we explored the image of grace as a compass, looking at how God's saving grace orients us to where true north is, opening up the journey ahead. We continue along with a new confidence, knowing we are headed in the right direction and able to more fully read and understand the map we have been given, but often we remain convinced that we can keep following this new path in our own power and in our own way.

This week we are using the image of hiking shoes to help us think about God's grace that sanctifies us (sanctifying grace). If you plan on climbing a mountain or hiking through a forest, you will usually pack according to those plans, but you can never truly prepare for the journey we go on through life. Whenever you come to the place of accepting God's saving grace, you can begin journeying with a new sense of direction and greater purpose.

However, along the journey, you eventually begin to notice an internal struggle. It can take many forms. Maybe you begin to think the journey should be more rewarding. Maybe you begin to think the journey is requiring too much of you. Maybe you start looking back and thinking the old life wasn't all that bad. These are signs that you are still trying to do this journey in your own strength and in your own way. Sanctifying grace enters our lives when we are ready to step down off the throne of our own hearts and allow God to fully occupy that space. When we finally surrender everything and hand our past, present, and even our future over to God, it is like putting on hiking shoes mid-hike or finally utilizing the right gear made specifically for us and for our journey. We are able to rid ourselves of all of the old ways of approaching the journey, and we begin to enjoy and appreciate it in new ways. Through sanctifying grace, we begin to discover true freedom as the Holy Spirit transforms our hearts.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**What areas of your life are you still trying to control, do in your own strength, or hang on to?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





Through  
sanctifying  
grace, we  
begin to  
discover true  
freedom.





# Day 3:

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

## REFLECTION:

Today, you are invited to reflect on the Scripture text for this week. Before you begin, pray the following prayer or a prayer of your own, asking God for wisdom as you come to his Holy Word.

## PRAYER FOR WISDOM:

*Dear God, as I come to your Holy Word today, I turn my ear toward wisdom and I stretch my mind toward understanding. I long to hear what you want to say to me and to learn what you want to teach me. Open my heart and my mind to be ready to receive from you, for you give wisdom and knowledge and understanding. Thank you for being with me now, in this moment, and always. Amen.*

(Inspired by Proverbs 2:1-6)

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date, use the following prompt, and respond to the questions.

- 1. Copy down the words of 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, but change it to read in first person. For example, the beginning of verse 23 could read: "Now, may the God of peace himself cause me to be completely dedicated to him and may my spirit..." Reflect on these verses, and imagine putting on hiking shoes to continue a journey you've been trying to do barefoot.**
- 2. The verse reminds us of God's faithfulness to provide what we need to remain committed and whole. What is it that God is offering you? What are you needing to lay down in order to be better equipped for the journey?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

# Day 4:

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

## REFLECTION:

This week we have been reflecting on God's sanctifying grace as a perfect pair of hiking shoes. We have invited you to reflect on the ways in which you have struggled in your walk with God and the areas of your life where you have tried to cling to control, rather than releasing it to God. The truth is, when we cling to old baggage or try to do this journey our way, it will be harder. God is still with us, guiding and helping, but we are resisting all along the way. Sanctification is when we are finally ready to lay everything down and trust the God who created us to know what we need and what we are made to live into.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. Keeping in mind that grace is God's gift of perfect love for us, what is it that is keeping you from trusting this God who is continually offering this gift to you?**
- 2. How have you responded to God's sanctifying grace? or How are you choosing to respond to God's sanctifying grace today?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

# Day 5:

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

## REFLECTION:

It is a relief to come to the point when we are finally ready to surrender everything to God. But it is also true that our tendency will be to repeatedly try and go back and pick some things up again. Don't worry, just talk to God about it. It is also true that there are things ahead in your life you can't fully grasp right now what it means to surrender them because they are not a part of your present reality. Maybe it will be a job offer or acceptance into a university or trade program. Maybe it will be a relationship or a loss. Whatever it is, when those new things come, you will choose again to remain faithful to the posture of surrender and you will lay that down too.

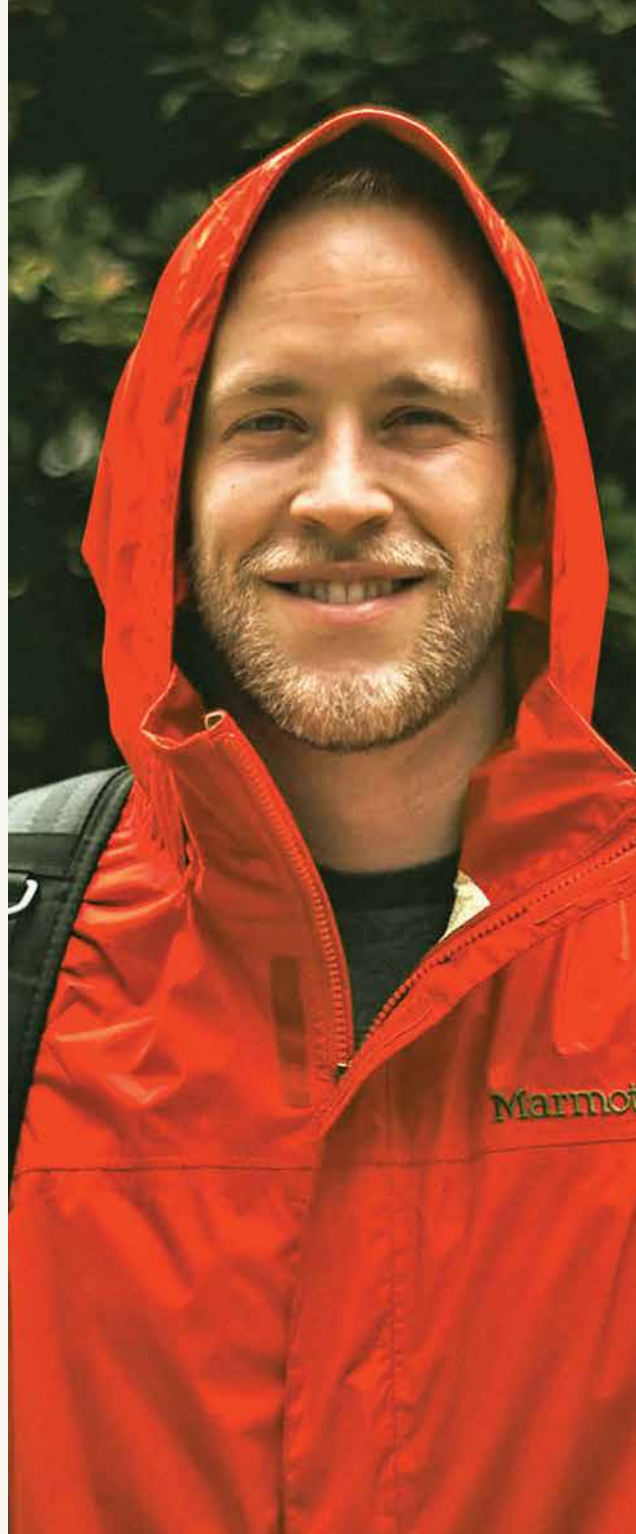
## RESPONSE:

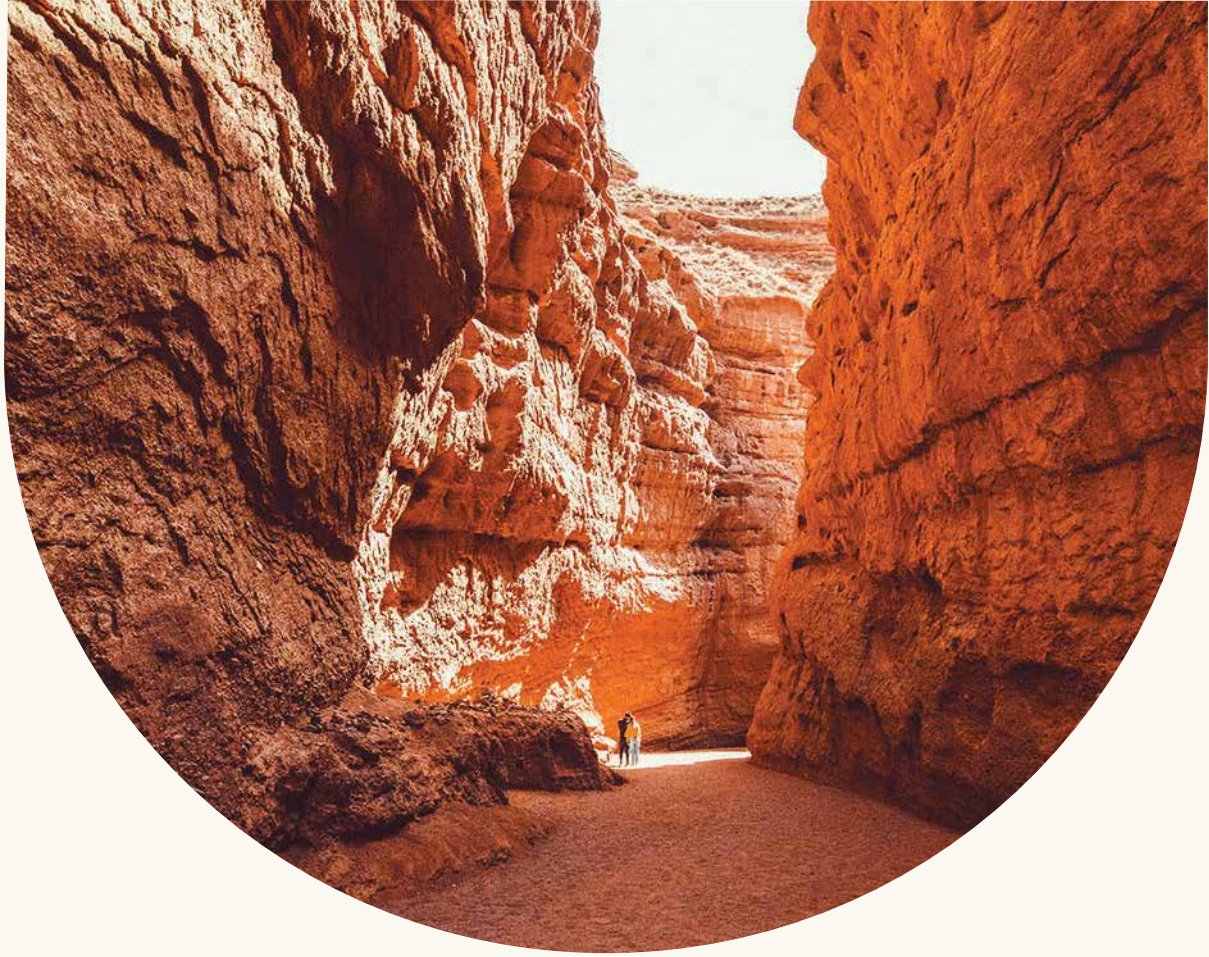
In your travel log, write today's date and use the following journaling prompt.

**Write out your prayer of surrender to God.**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

Reach out to a parent, pastor, or trusted Christian friend and share your encounter with God's sanctifying grace with them.





# Day 6/7:

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. What have you learned about God this week?**
- 2. What have you learned about yourself this week?**
- 3. What have you learned about your relationship with God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

# WEEK FIVE



HERE IS YOUR ROPE



“To the one who is able to protect you from falling, and to present you blameless and rejoicing before his glorious presence, to the only God our savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, belong glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time, now and forever. Amen.”

– Jude 1:24-25

# Day 1:

Read: Jude 1:24-25

## REFLECTION:

Have you ever been in a situation where you were completely unprepared? Either you forgot something you meant to bring, or you didn't imagine the situation would require more preparation? You probably started looking around quickly to see what other resources might be at hand. Reflect on that feeling of helplessness or panic that begins to creep in during those moments.

## RESPONSE:

A rope might not be the solution for every situation, but it often can be as you go along your journey. This week the rope represents all the "tools" God provides to help strengthen our faith, prepare us to resist temptations, and keep us on the correct path. A rope doesn't always seem necessary for a journey, but when the need arises, we can't deny our need for it.

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**What similarities do you initially see between a rope and God's grace that help sustain us along the journey—a grace that, as Jude 1:24 says, will protect us from falling?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

To the one who is able to protect you from falling, and present you blameless and rejoicing before his glorious presence, to the only God our Lord through Jesus Christ our Lord, who belong glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time, now and forever. Amen.

# Day 2:

Read: Jude 1:24-25

## REFLECTION:

This probably isn't a surprise, but journeys are generally long and often have moments when they are unsafe. There are pitfalls, crevices, cliffs, and washed-out bridges all along the way, especially when we turn off the marked path. For many adventurers, the versatility of a strong rope makes it a crucial resource to have with them at all times. A rope can help you climb out of a hole, scale a steep cliff, keep you tethered to a partner, or keep you steady as you cross a river.

Last week we used the image of hiking shoes to help us reflect on the difference God's sanctifying grace makes on our journey. When we accept this gift of sanctifying grace, it is like we trade walking barefoot for wearing proper hiking shoes; we put on gear made just for us, and we discover a new kind of freedom. A freedom where we are no longer bound by our former desires, but instead our desires begin to align with God's.

This week we are using the image of a rope to help us think about God's grace that sustains us along the journey (sustaining grace). Sometimes we can incorrectly think that sanctifying grace means we will never sin or fail again. If we truly surrender everything to God, then we are good, right? However, as we

go along the journey with God, there will be much for us to learn and unlearn. There will be old prejudices, plans, habits, and views of power we will need to set aside as well as new habits we will need to form.

The healing that grace brings helps us be able to see through more of the lies of sin. The Holy Spirit gives us strength to resist temptation, but in the end, we are still humans with free will. Even with our map and compass, sometimes we will still try to do things our own way, or we will choose to take the wrong path. God's sustaining grace is like a rope and other hiking tools that will help us navigate the rough places with wisdom. Through reading our Bible, spending time with God in prayer, through fasting, serving others, participating in discipleship, and having relationships with other believers who we are accountable to, God's sustaining grace transforms us along the journey and helps familiarize us with these tools to help us continue safely. Through sustaining grace, we are equipped for the long journey.

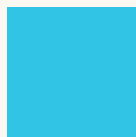
## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

**What temptations or challenges have you faced and felt unprepared for in the past? Is there anything in your life right now that feels this way?**

**What spiritual disciplines or practices have you incorporated into your walk with Jesus that you have found to be life-giving?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



# Day 3:

Read: Jude 1:24-25

## REFLECTION:

Today, you are invited to reflect on the Scripture text for this week. Before you begin, pray the following prayer or a prayer of your own, asking God for wisdom as you come to his Holy Word.

## PRAYER FOR WISDOM:

*Dear God, as I come to your Holy Word today, I turn my ear toward wisdom and I stretch my mind toward understanding. I long to hear what you want to say to me and to learn what you want to teach me. Open my heart and my mind to be ready to receive from you, for you give wisdom and knowledge and understanding. Thank you for being with me now, in this moment, and always. Amen.*

(Inspired by Proverbs 2:1-6)

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date, use the following prompt, and respond to the question.

- 1. Copy down the words of Jude 1:24-25, but change it to read in first person. For example, the beginning of verse 24 could read: "To the one who is able to protect me from falling." Reflect on these verses and think about the strength of the rope that can support a promise like this.**
- 2. How does the certainty of the promise in these verses make you feel?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



# Day 4:

Read: Jude 1:24-25

## REFLECTION:

This week we have been reflecting on God's sustaining grace as a rope. We have asked you to be honest about those times in your faith when you have experienced temptations or challenges that you felt unprepared to overcome. We don't like to admit it, but our weakest moments usually come during those times when we are not giving time to reading our Bible, spending time with God in prayer, fasting, serving others, or participating in intentional discipleship. We want to experience the fullness of the journey, but we don't want to worry about preparation or carrying rope and other gear. Our Scripture text this week has reminded us that God is "able to keep us from falling," but many times we have rejected or set aside the very things that will help us be steady along the journey.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**What spiritual discipline is God inviting you to start practicing to help protect you from falling?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

# Day 5:

Read: Jude 1:24-25

## REFLECTION:

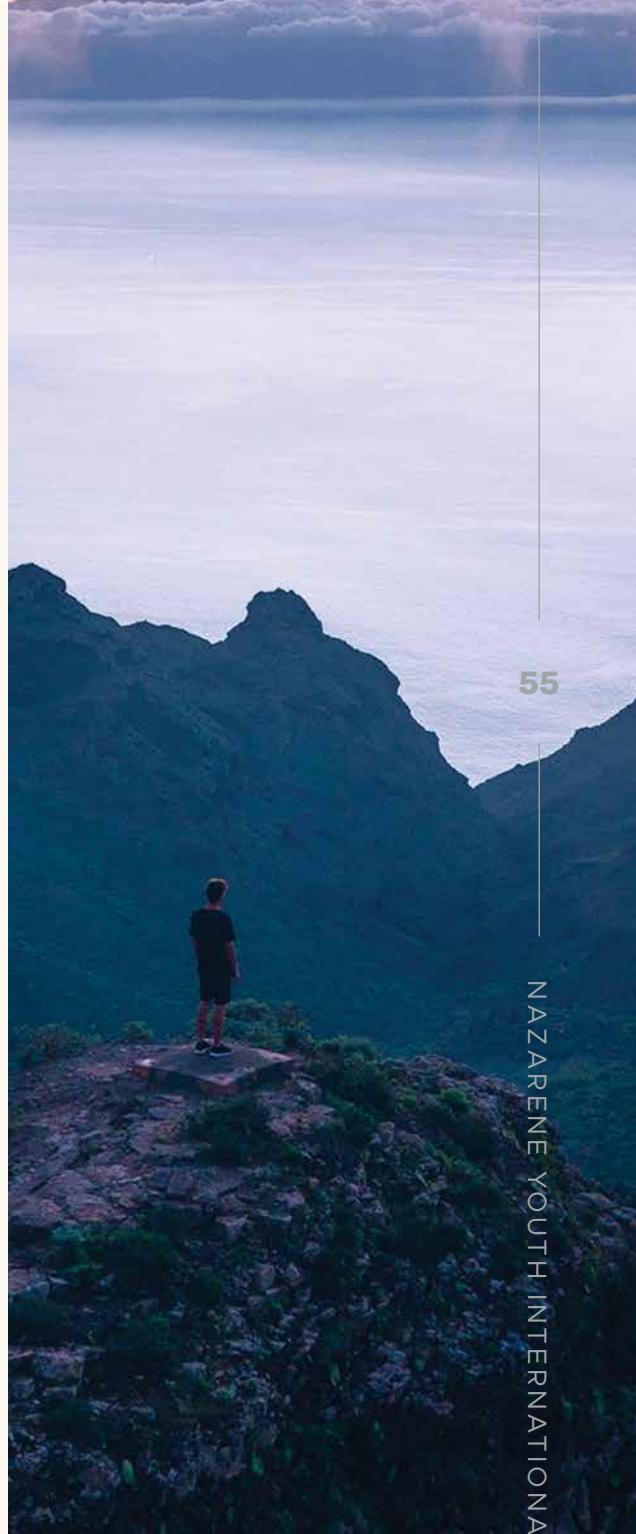
As much as we long to remain in relationship with God, the enemy longs to put doubts and lies in between us. Lies that lead us off the right path and down into dangerous valleys. The rope of God's sustaining grace reminds us of the truth, reminds us that God is always by our side, and keeps us connected to the source of our strength.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. How do you most long to grow in your relationship with God during the next year?**
- 2. What practices are you going to commit to in order to make room for that growth in your heart and life?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





The rope of God's sustaining grace reminds us of the truth, reminds us that God is always by our side, and keeps us connected to the source of our strength.



# Day 6/7:

Read: Jude 1:24-25

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. What have you learned about God this week?**
- 2. What have you learned about yourself this week?**
- 3. What have you learned about your relationship with God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.



# WEEK SIX



HERE IS YOUR  
WATER BOTTLE

“He said to me, ‘My grace is enough for you, because power is made perfect in weakness.’ So I’ll gladly spend my time bragging about my weaknesses so that Christ’s power can rest on me. Therefore, I’m all right with weaknesses, insults, disasters, harassments, and stressful situations for the sake of Christ, because when I’m weak, then I’m strong.”

– 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

# Day 1:

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

## REFLECTION:

Think of a time when you were in desperate need of a drink of water. Maybe it was a hot day and you were outside longer than you had planned. Maybe you didn't have access to water because of a storm or a drought. Reflect on how desperate you felt to get a drink of water.

## RESPONSE:

A water bottle filled with water, especially when you are thirsty, is one of the simplest and most refreshing and satisfying experiences. After going a long time without a drink of water, it is almost hard to think about anything else you might need. This is true about God's grace along the journey as well.

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**In what ways do you think a water bottle is like the sufficient grace of God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

POWER IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS  
POWER IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS  
POWER IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS

# Day 2:

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

## REFLECTION:

Throughout these past five weeks, we have used the images of an invitation, a map, a compass, hiking shoes, and a rope to help us explore different aspects of God's grace in our lives. Beginning prior to us having any interest in God, to the ways God works to transform us as we become totally surrendered to him.

This week we are using the image of a filled water bottle to help us reflect on the sufficient nature of God's grace (sufficient grace). You don't have to go very far on a long journey before you are reminded of the value of water. Water is literally a life-giving substance. We know that the human body can survive weeks without food but only a few days without water. When the journey begins to wear us out, we need something to revive us and renew our strength.

While we can recognize how God's grace brings healing, restoration, and transformation into our lives, we must also recognize that there is still much brokenness in this world. Throughout Scripture, we are warned that following Jesus does not mean that we are transported out of this world and away from all brokenness. Our own sinful choices have consequences, and the sinful choices of others have consequences that often affect us. There are times when the journey feels like it is a struggle to just take even one step along the right path before we become exhausted and discouraged.

Like our Scripture text for this week says, God's power remains perfect even in our weakest moments. When we are at our weakest, it is important to remember that our God is still strong. This God who is journeying with us also promises to sustain us daily. This doesn't mean that we have a reservoir of water floating along beside us. We don't get the provision for months all at one time, but we can trust God to provide us exactly what we need. As we remain connected to the source of all living water, our water bottle will never be empty. This does not mean we won't ever feel tired or scared or even doubtful. God has invited us to partner with him in the work of bringing healing and restoration into this broken world. That work is difficult and challenging, but the sufficient grace of God meets us without fail. Like a refreshing drink of water, we continue on with God—the God who created us out of love, saved us out of love, and journeys with us each step of the way because of love. This journey of grace is a journey of accepting, growing in understanding of, and enjoying God's perfect love for us.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following question.

**At some point, most of us long for a stored-up amount of grace rather than the grace sufficient for today. What wisdom and benefits do you see in God's provision of sufficient grace for today?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





# Day 3:

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

## REFLECTION:

Today, you are invited to reflect on the Scripture text for this week. Before you begin, pray the following prayer or a prayer of your own, asking God for wisdom as you come to his Holy Word.

## PRAYER FOR WISDOM:

*Dear God, as I come to your Holy Word today, I turn my ear toward wisdom and I stretch my mind toward understanding. I long to hear what you want to say to me and to learn what you want to teach me. Open my heart and my mind to be ready to receive from you, for you give wisdom and knowledge and understanding. Thank you for being with me now, in this moment, and always. Amen.*

(Inspired by Proverbs 2:1-6)

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date, use the following prompt and respond to the question.

1. Copy down Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10. Reflect on these verses, thinking of them as a bottle of water.
2. In what ways do you identify with Paul as you imagine what he felt while writing these words?

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

# Day 4:

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

## REFLECTION:

This week we have been reflecting on sufficient grace as a water bottle. We have been honest about our tendency to prefer a cistern filled with water, rather than the amount needed for today. However, we have also reflected on the wisdom of God to provide us just what we need. We come back to our definition of grace, which is God's gift of perfect love for us. This perfect love will never leave us without grace. It will never run out. It will never be used up. The grace sufficient for the day keeps us trusting that God will go with us.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. In what area of your life do you most depend on God's grace to be sufficient for you for each day?**
- 2. How do you see God's grace showing up for you in that area each day?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





Grace is God's gift of perfect love for us. This perfect love will never leave us without grace. It will never run out. It will never be used up. The grace sufficient for the day keeps us trusting that God will go with us.

# Day 5:

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

## REFLECTION:

We are reminded daily that we are not immune to the difficulties that arise from the brokenness that continues in our world. However, going on this journey of grace reminds us that we do not need to navigate the brokenness alone. The power of the Holy Spirit is within us, God has provided us the fellowship of other believers to journey together, and God's grace is meeting us at the point of our need each day. These six weeks have taught us that God's love is present before we are aware of our need for it every single day. God's love is endless and unconditional. Therefore, as we reflect on the sufficiency for each moment, we trust our water bottles will be filled right when we need more grace.

## RESPONSE:

In your travel log, write today's date and use the following journaling prompt.

**Write a prayer to God, giving thanks for God's gift of perfect love for us.**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.





# Day 6/7:

Read: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

In your travel log, write today's date and reflect on the following questions.

- 1. What have you learned about God this week?**
- 2. What have you learned about yourself this week?**
- 3. What have you learned about your relationship with God?**

Close this time of reflection in prayer and talk to God about your response.

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