**ENCOUNTERS: ROAD TO EMMAUS**

**Week 1: April 21, 2019**

**Reading Plan**

Day 1-

READ: [Luke 24:13-15](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: Charles Swindoll said, “Like the two on the road to Emmaus, you do not travel alone. God is with you. Are you willing to see Him?”

PRACTICE: Tell Jesus that you want to see Him this week.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Luke 24: 1-34](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: There is no escape from God, who never abandons us. Jesus meets us wherever we are. Even death did not separate Jesus from his followers—but were they really followers? Are you walking away from Jesus?

PRACTICE: Allow the Holy Spirit to examine your life to reveal where your walk with Jesus is right now. Sit quietly and let Him speak.

Day 2-

READ: [Luke 24:13-16, 25](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: Oswald Chambers wrote, “*Before God can use us greatly, he must first hurt us deeply*”

PRACTICE: Allow the Holy Spirit to examine your heart and reveal to you how open you are to the teaching of Scripture.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Luke 24:1-34](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: Read this article: <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-eyes-jesus-opened-first>

PRACTICE: Read [Psalm 119:105](https://biblehub.com/psalms/119-105.htm) as a prayer. Tell the Lord that you want to be directed by Him and His Word today.

Day 3-

READ: [Luke 24:17-21](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: Identify an area of your life where you had hoped Jesus would do something in your life that didn’t happen.

PRACTICE: Surrender to Jesus any part of your life that you have felt disappointed with Him. Praise him for his love and wisdom. Acknowledge that He is God and you are not.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Luke 24:1-34](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: What are some of the dangers of expecting God to act and respond in a certain way?

PRACTICE: Surrender to Jesus any part of your life that you have felt disappointed with Him. Praise him for his love and wisdom. Acknowledge that He is God and you are not.

Day 4-

READ: [Luke 24:22-27](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: The greatest evangelist is, of course, Jesus himself, and there is no better presentation of Jesus’s evangelical technique than Luke’s masterful narrative concerning the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Bishop Robert Barron

PRACTICE: Ask the “master evangelist” to lead you to share your faith with someone today.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Luke 24:1-34](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: Spurgeon, “*From every town, village, and little hamlet in England, wherever it may be, there is a road to London and so from every text in Scripture there is a road to the metropolis of the Scriptures, that is Christ. Your business is, when you get to a text, to say, ‘Now, what is the road to Christ?’ and then preach a sermon, running along the road towards the great metropolis—Christ*.”

PRACTICE: Spend some time reviewing how you would share your faith with someone. What method of evangelism have you learned or used in the past? Have you shared your testimony or the Bridge method? If you don’t really know how to share your faith tell you small group leader and they will assist you.

Day 5-

READ: [Luke 24:28-34](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: For you to have your eyes opened to the resurrected Jesus you must first invite him in. Have you invited the Lord into your life? Is there some area of your life you have been holding back from him?

PRACTICE: Identify one area of your life you have been holding back from Jesus, confess that area and give it to Him.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Luke 24:1-34](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/24.htm)

REFLECT: CS Lewis, “*You are no longer faced with an argument which demands your assent, but with a Person who demands your confidence*.”

PRACTICE: Praise the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, as the resurrected Lord. Declare to him through prayer and song your confidence in Him. Ask Him to strengthen your faith in Him.

**ENCOUNTERS: Saul And A Come-To-Jesus Moment**

**Week 2: April 28, 2019**

**Reading Plan**

Day 1-

READ: [Acts 7:54](https://biblehub.com/esv/acts/7.htm) –[Acts 8:2](https://biblehub.com/esv/acts/8.htm); [Luke 23:32-34](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/23.htm)

REFLECT: Saul was standing by as Stephen was martyred. Stephen, like Jesus, prayed for those who put him to death. What effect do you think Stephen’s prayer had on Saul’s life?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Take some time to pray for someone who has wronged you or just someone you know who needs Jesus. Ask God to open their eyes to His truth.

Day 2-

READ: [Acts 9:1-10](https://biblehub.com/esv/acts/9.htm)

REFLECT: God allowed Saul to murder many Christians before He encountered Jesus and his life was changed. Saul later called himself the “chief of sinners”. Why do you think Saul needed this physical encounter with Jesus? Everyone who meets Jesus doesn’t experience Him in such a physical way but how and why is every person’s encounter with Jesus dramatic?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Think back to the time you first met Jesus and thank Him for choosing you. If you haven’t had an encounter with Jesus yet and would like to, just tell Him that. He wants nothing more than to meet you now.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ/ WATCH/ LISTEN: Read this short article, “Why Did God Let Paul Become a Murderer?” by John Piper from DesiringGod.org: <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/why-did-god-let-paul-become-a-murderer>

REFLECT: How did Saul’s (Paul’s) continual awareness of his sin affect his life and ministry?

PRACTICE: Pray and ask God to remind you of specific ways He forgives you and shows His grace in your life then thank Him.

Day 3-

READ: [Acts 9:11-16](https://biblehub.com/esv/acts/9.htm)

REFLECT: What risks did Ananias take in order to obey God and go to Saul? What would Ananias have missed if he decided not to obey God?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: What could you do today to obey God? It might be praying for someone or doing an act of service without complaining or maybe something as risky as telling someone about your life with Jesus. Determine now that you will obey and then ask God to give you an assignment today and watch for that opportunity.

Day 4-

READ: [Acts 9:17-19](https://biblehub.com/esv/acts/9.htm)

REFLECT: What were the steps that allowed Saul to regain his physical sight? How did he gain his spiritual sight? Derek gave 6 steps to an encounter with Jesus: 1) Begin with obedience; 2) Recognize the depth of your sin; 3) Accept support from others; 4) Receive your new assignment; 5) Receive the Holy Spirit; 6) Get baptized. Where are you in these steps?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Whether you are a new follower of Jesus or you have been following Him for decades, pray and ask Jesus to move you forward to the next step in your walk with Him.

Day 5-

READ: [Acts 9:18](https://biblehub.com/esv/acts/9.htm)

REFLECT: What is the first thing Saul did after he regained his physical and spiritual sight? Why do you think he decided to be baptized right away?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: If you have been baptized as a believer take some time to remember that joyful event and thank God. If you have not been baptized since you made the decision to follow Jesus ask God to give you the strength to obey Him and take that step.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ/ WATCH/ LISTEN: Watch this 42 second video, “Heroes- Apostle Paul,” from Right Now Media -- <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/illustration/98021> [If you do not yet have a FREE Right Now Media account, you can register for one here: <https://whoisgrace.com/rightnowmedia/> ]

REFLECT: God chose Saul for a special mission and he has a unique mission for you also. Spend some time thinking about how God can use your past history and your present gifts and connections as opportunities to serve Him and bless others?

PRACTICE: Pray and tell God you’re willing to accept the assignment He has for you today and each day.

**ENCOUNTERS: Job and the Affirmation of God**

**Week 3: May 5, 2019**

**Reading Plan**

Day 1-

READ: [Job 10](https://biblehub.com/esv/job/10.htm)

REFLECT: In the book of Job, we read the story of a man who is facing some of the harshest sufferings possible. Throughout the book he’s crying out to God in hopes of understanding why he’s suffering as he is. In thinking about your life and times of suffering (or maybe someone close to you whom you’ve walked with during suffering), how can you relate to Job’s words to God?

PRACTICE: Throughout scripture we are encouraged to go to God in prayer about our fears, worries, concerns, etc. Is there something you need to cry out to God about, or on behalf of someone else? Take a moment in your quiet time today to lay it all out at His feet.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: “The Sufferer I Want to Be” from DesiringGod.org- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-sufferer-i-want-to-be>

REFLECT: After reading this article, what kind of sufferer will you be?

PRACTICE: As you pray today, pray that God would be glorified through your life – in times of suffering, and in times of peace.

Day 2-

READ: [Psalm 30](https://biblehub.com/esv/psalms/30.htm)

REFLECT: King David’s life is another that was sprinkled with times of suffering. But in his suffering, God revealed Himself in mighty ways. David’s songs of lament and praise show both sides of what he’d experienced. As you read through this Psalm, what are some key phrases that stand out to you about what happens with you suffer with God and not against him?

PRACTICE: In your journal or on a scrap piece of paper, write down the words from the end of verse 5, “but joy comes with the morning” as a reminder that God has promised us an end to our suffering and we can place our hope in Him.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: “The Joy We Know Only In Suffering” from DesiringGod.org- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-joy-we-know-only-in-suffering>

REFLECT: Do you live like God is your “sanctuary in the wilderness”? If the answer is no, what needs to change?

PRACTICE: Write your own song of praise to God – even if you’re currently in a time of suffering, write about how you’re encountering and experiencing Him in the trial. If you’ve overcome a trial, write about what it’s like now knowing how God carried you through.

Day 3-

READ: [1 Peter 1:12-19](https://biblehub.com/esv/1_peter/1.htm)

REFLECT: We know from reading scripture that suffering came into play when sin entered the world in Genesis 3 when Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden tree. We also know from scripture that our suffering is meant to draw us closer to God and show us who He is, and ultimately to glorify Him. How does this passage address that? What does the author of this scripture say we need to do in the midst of our suffering?

PRACTICE: As you pray today, ask God to show you the areas of your life and heart that you need to entrust to Him.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: “Five Purposes for Suffering” from DesiringGod.org- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/five-purposes-for-suffering>

REFLECT: According to this article, what are the five reasons that suffering happens? How do these five reasons help you better understand the suffering you have faced or watched others face?

PRACTICE: The next time you find yourself in a time of suffering or watch someone you care about suffer, thank God that He has a plan and purpose for our lives and He alone offers the Hope to make it through the hard times.

Day 4-

READ: [Romans 5:1-5](https://biblehub.com/esv/romans/5.htm)

REFLECT: According to this passage, how is our suffering different because of our knowledge of Jesus Christ? What does this scripture say happens as a result of our suffering?

PRACTICE: As you pray, turn this scripture into your prayer. Thank God for His grace poured out for you. Thank Him for the ways He uses suffering to mold us and grow us, and ultimately glorify Him.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: “Two Verses Held Me Through Suffering” from DesiringGod.org- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/two-verses-held-me-through-suffering>

REFLECT: How did scripture help the author in His time of suffering? Have you relied on the word of God during your own suffering?

PRACTICE: This week, memorize the two passages mentioned in the article: [Matthew 28:20](https://biblehub.com/matthew/28-20.htm) and [Joshua 1:5](https://biblehub.com/joshua/1-5.htm). As you’re learning and meditating on the words, take note to how the peace of the Lord fills you up.

Day 5-

READ: [John 16:33](https://biblehub.com/esv/john/16.htm)

REFLECT: Jesus’ life and death and resurrection changed the course of history. In his death, he faced the ultimate suffering on our behalf. Because of his death and resurrection and the grace upon grace we are given, we can have great hope even through suffering. In this passage Jesus gives two very important statements about suffering. What are they? How do these words shift or change your perspective on following Jesus and suffering.

PRACTICE: As you go about your week, focus on the latter part of this scripture where Jesus reminds us that we can trust Him because He’s overcome the world. As you pray, thank Him for this incredible gift.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: “A Living Hope Through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ” from DesiringGod.org- <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/a-living-hope-through-the-resurrection-of-jesus-christ>

REFLECT: According to this article, what are the three questions the Bible answers about the “living hope” found in Jesus?

PRACTICE: How well do you know Jesus, the “living hope” – what do you need to do or stop doing to know him more intimately?

**ENCOUNTERS: HAGAR and the God Who Sees**

**Wee 4: May 12, 2019**

**Reading Plan**

Day 1-

READ: [Genesis 12:1-5](https://biblehub.com/esv/genesis/12.htm); [Genesis 16:1-15](https://biblehub.com/esv/genesis/16.htm)

REFLECT: What are the three components to the promise God makes to Abram in chapter 12? Which component of the promise is Sarai trying to make happen in Exodus 16?

Make a list of everything you learn about the characters in chapter 16 (Sarai, Abram, Hagar, God)

PRAY: In what area of your life are you trying to make God’s plan happen for you by your own wisdom/strength? Confess that to him. Surrender control. Praise Him that He is God who sees you, right where you are now. Thank Him that you can trust Him to lead you to His best for your life.

Day 2-

READ: [Psalm 139:1-24](https://biblehub.com/esv/psalms/139.htm)

REFLECT: Remembering the name Hagar gave to God, “El Roi- the God who sees me”, what do you learn about the God who sees you in Psalm 139?

PRAY & PRACTICE: Use verse 23 and 24 to journal your own prayer to God. What is El Roi saying to your heart today? What word of encouragement can you share with someone else who needs to know that God sees them?

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WORSHIP: Watch this [spoken word performance](https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/illustration/105384) of Psalm 139 by Amena Brown through Right Now Media. [If you do not have a *free* RNM account, sign up for one today at [www.whoisgrace.com/rightnowmedia](http://www.whoisgrace.com/rightnowmedia).]

Day 3-

READ: [Genesis 21:1-21](https://biblehub.com/esv/genesis/21.htm)

REFLECT: Consider this story from the different perspectives of each of the characters (Abraham- father; Sarah- new mother; Ishmael- teenager; Hagar- slave, mother). Where do you see brokenness in this story? How does God restore the brokenness?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: In Genesis 16:13 Hagar called God, “the God who sees me.” Here in 20:19 El Roi opens her eyes to see a well which will save both her and her son. God sees you. Ask Him to open your eyes to see your salvation and praise Him that Jesus is that salvation.

Day 4-

READ: [Isaiah 43:1-3a](https://biblehub.com/esv/isaiah/43.htm)

REFLECT: The Lord is speaking to His chosen people while they are in captivity. What is the tone of His words? What hope does He give them? The Lord knows your name and He knows where you are. What do you hear Him say through His words?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Praise God that you have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus! Consider re-writing these verses in your own words as a prayer of response to the what God is speaking to you.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WORSHIP: Choose a favorite worship song or hymn to play while you pray. [Need a suggestion? Check out the “What Was that Song” on the homepage of the whoisgrace app or find the LENT2019 playlist from whoisgrace on spotify or itunes.]

Day 5-

READ: [Genesis 14:18](https://biblehub.com/genesis/14-18.htm); [Genesis 15:2](https://biblehub.com/genesis/14-18.htm); [Genesis 17:1](https://biblehub.com/genesis/17-1.htm); [Genesis 21:33](https://biblehub.com/genesis/21-33.htm)

REFLECT: What are the different names for God that are found in these verses? What do they reveal about who God is? Consider again the name Hagar gave to God, El Roi- the God who sees me. How is this name different from the others? Why do you think there are so many names for God?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Write down each of the names of God from these passages and praise God for who He is. What does this mean for your life if God is who He says He is?

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: For an in-depth study of the Names of God, check out [Knowing God’s Names](https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/Series/906) from Dr. Tony Evans on Right Now Media. [If you do not have a *free* RNM account, sign up for one today at [www.whoisgrace.com/rightnowmedia](http://www.whoisgrace.com/rightnowmedia).]

**ENCOUNTERS: Sarah and the Laughter of God.**

**Week 5: May 19, 2019**

**Reading Plan**

Day 1-

READ: [Genesis 12: 1-5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+12%3A1-5&version=ESV)

REFLECT: When Abraham was 75 and Sarah was 65 when they left their home land and family to follow God’s plan for them. How do you think they might have felt? What fears might they have had? What might have excited them?

PRACTICE: Spend some time in silence allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal anything he wants to do in your life.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Genesis 21: 1-7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+21%3A1-7&version=ESV)

REFLECT: Read the article, “Abraham and Sarah: Faith and Promise”. <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/wiersbe-be-bible-study/abraham-sarah-faith-promise-21-1-7>

PRACTICE: The next time you feel defeated and discouraged, remember Abraham and Sarah, and remind yourself that *faith* and promise go together.

Day 2-

READ: [Genesis 16: 1-5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16%3A1-5&version=ESV)

REFLECT: Sarah doubted God and tried to “help” God fulfill his plans. What painful consequences did she pay for her unbelief?

PRACTICE: Spend some time in silence allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal any area in your life where you are following your own path rather than His perfect plan.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Genesis 16: 1-5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16%3A1-5&version=ESV).

REFLECT: Read “Get There-IT IS” by Ron Hutchcraft. <https://hutchcraft.com/a-word-with-you/your-hindrances/get-there-itis-6714>

PRACTICE: Consider what you need to leave in God’s hand. Give it over to Him today and let go.

Day 3-

READ: [Genesis 17: 15- 17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+17%3A15-17&version=ESV)

REFLECT: Abraham laughs not because he didn’t believe God but because only God could help a 99 year old man and an 89 year old woman have a child that would bring blessings on the whole world.

PRACTICE: Pray a prayer of praise to God for his greatness and power that when you see what He has done and is doing in your life you laugh with faith in Him.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [John 15:12-15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15%3A12-15&version=ESV) and [John 17:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17%3A13&version=ESV)

REFLECT: Read the article, “Laughter Is the Sound of Joy” from Desiring God. <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/laughter-is-the-sound-of-joy>

PRACTICE: What is God doing in your life that you and He can laugh for joy about?

Day 4-

READ: [Genesis 18: 9-12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=genesis+18%3A9-12&version=ESV)

REFLECT: Sometimes when God reveals his plans for us we doubt not him but his ability to work in and through us.

PRACTICE: Confess your weaknesses before God and declare his faithfulness.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Hebrews 11:11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+11%3A11&version=NKJV).

REFLECT: Read the article, “The Faith of Sarah”. <https://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/encouragement-cafe/encouragement-caf-march-17-2017.html>

PRAY: Dear Lord, You are such a merciful Father to us. We know our faith fails at times. Please increase our faith! Help us to have the hope that Abraham and Sarah had in a hopeless situation. Thank You Jesus! Amen!

Day 5-

READ: [Genesis 18:13-15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+18%3A13-15&version=NKJV)

REFLECT: Sarah was afraid when God identified her doubts. How open would you be to this kind of revelation from your heavenly Father?

PRACTICE: Acknowledge the things you doubt about God. Let his grace fill you with his presence. Ask Him to help you with your unbelief.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Proverbs 31:25-30](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+31%3A25-30&version=NKJV).

REFLECT: Read the article, “Strong Women laugh at the Days to Come.” <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/strong-women-laugh-at-the-days-to-come>

PRACTICE: Identify what is in your future that you need to laugh about.

**ENCOUNTERS: Isaiah and the Unclean Lips**

**Week 6: May 26, 2019**

**Reading Plan**

Day 1-

READ: [Isaiah 6:1-8](https://biblehub.com/context/isaiah/6-1.htm)

REFLECT: We see in verse two that Isaiah sees the seraphim in this vision. What is the significance of having the seraphim in this passage? Why is the seraphim’s reaction to God so much of a learning for us?

PRAY: Use verse 3 to start your time of prayer and praising God.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: Watch the following Bible Project video on the first part of Isaiah: <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/VideoElement/204153>

Day 2-

READ: [Matthew 12:33-37](https://biblehub.com/context/matthew/12-33.htm)

REFLECT: In Isaiah 6 we see Isaiah say *“…. for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of people with unclean lips*”. As we read through this passage in Matthew, what does Jesus say is the reason for unclean lips?

PRAY: Take time to examine your heart. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to light where your heart is not where it needs to be, and for change to take place.

Day 3-

READ: [1 John 1:6-9](https://biblehub.com/context/1_john/1-6.htm)

REFLECT: There are distinct steps in these verses that we should take while dealing with are sin. Write those steps out in order to be better familiarized with them.

PRAY: Take time to ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind sins you are struggling with, and then go through the process stated in this chapter to deal with them.

Day 4-

READ: [1 Samuel 3](https://biblehub.com/bsb/1_samuel/3.htm)

REFLECT: Here we find a young Samuel that doesn’t recognize God’s voice when he calls out to him. When God calls out to you, do you recognize His voice? How can you tell it is God calling you?

PRAY: During your time today pray “Speak, for your servant hears.”

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: “Listen” from Chuck Swindoll on Right Now Media- <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Training/Post/View/51231> [If you don’t yet have a FREE RightNowMedia account through Grace Church please sign up for one at [www.whoisgrace.com/rightnowmedia](http://www.whoisgrace.com/rightnowmedia).]

Day 5-

READ: [Isaiah 6:1-8](https://biblehub.com/bsb/isaiah/6.htm)

REFLECT: As you re-read this passage, in light of the other scripture you read this week, what are some new insights the Holy Spirit is telling you?

PRAY: Praise God for who He is. Make a list of the attributes of God that you find throughout the Bible and praise Him for each individual one specifically.