

COMING HOME



Returning to Where We Belong



STUDY GUIDE

*Home sweet home.
There's no place like home.
Home is where you hang your hat.
Home is where the heart is.*

Home is not just the place where you happen to be living at the time, but a very special place with very special attributes that make it clearly distinguishable from all other places.

Home is a place where you feel you belong and that in some sense belongs to you.
Home is a place where you feel that all is somehow ultimately well even if things aren't going all that well at any given moment.

I believe that home is Christ's kingdom, which exists both within us and among us as we wend our prodigal ways through the world in search of it.

(adapted from Frederick Buechner)

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*O Lord, You
have always
been our home.*

Psalm 90:1



WEEK 1:

THE STORY OF JACOB COMING HOME

Genesis 32-33



Watch Weekly Video

Start Here:

1. Describe your childhood home?
2. Is this a place you could still return to?

The Next Step

To begin the journey home to God, we must first commit to leaving where we are now. In what ways do you feel distant or separated from God right now?

Write your reflections in the house box.
Share with your group.

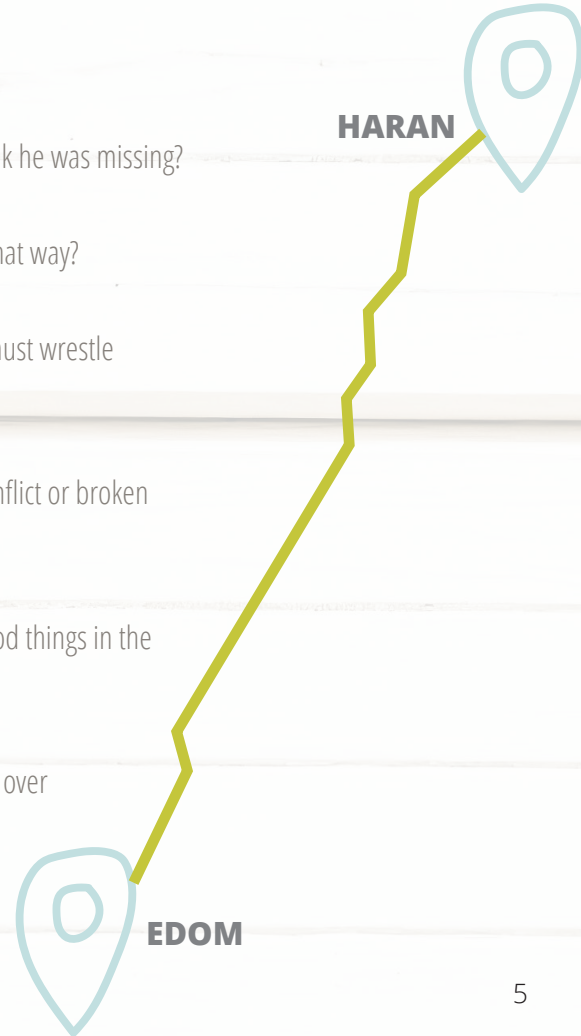


On The Road:

1. Jacob had a good life in Haran, but something was still missing. What do you think he was missing?
2. Describe a time in life when you felt distant from God. What caused you to feel that way?
3. On the way home, Jacob wrestled with God. Is there a concern or question you must wrestle with God about in order to fully return home to Him?
4. Jacob also had to reconcile with his brother before returning home. Is there a conflict or broken relationship that has become an obstacle on your journey home?
5. Jacob had a lot of good things, but it wasn't as good as home. What are some good things in the world that might get in the way of the best things God has for us?
6. What are some practical ways we can prioritize our spiritual homecoming to God over temporary worldly satisfactions?

The Lord said to Jacob, "Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you."


Genesis 31:3



COMING HOME TO GOD

- GOOD TO GREAT

Day 1: What is one good thing that you need let go of to make room for God's best for you?



Day 2:
Write a short prayer about replacing good with great.

Day 3:
Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?






Day 4:

Read Genesis 32:22-32.


What stands out to you in this story?



Day 5: Write a short prayer about one thing you've been wrestling with God about.



Day 6: Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?



Day 7: What might it feel like and look like for you to fully return home to God?



WEEK 2:

THE STORY OF MOSES COMING HOME

Exodus 3-4



Watch Weekly Video

Start Here:

1. When was the last time you went “home”?
2. Why did you go?

The Next Step

Moses went home for a purpose.
Why do you want to commit to
coming home to God during this study?

Write your reflections in the house box.
Share with your group.



On The Road:

1. Moses was comfortable living in Midian and working for his father-in-law, but God had other plans. How does being comfortable keep us from growing closer to God?
2. God had a specific purpose for Moses. How do you understand your purpose in life?
3. As we grow closer to God, we gain clarity on our purpose. How can we know our purpose? Do you believe you know your purpose?
4. Moses didn't return home for his own sake. He returned home to help people who were hurting. Who else could benefit from us growing closer to God?
5. Living out his purpose involved risk. How does a desire to play it safe hold us back from fulfilling our purposes? Share about a time when you chose safety and missed an opportunity God put in your path.
6. Our purpose can be a lifelong task or a daily opportunity. What purpose might God have for you this week?
7. Moses' purpose was not to free the Israelites from slavery by himself but with the help of God. Are you trying to accomplish your purposes in life alone? How will you invite God to help you? Who else could help you?

God said, "The cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt. But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" And God said, "I will be with you."

-Exodus 3:9-12



MIDIAN

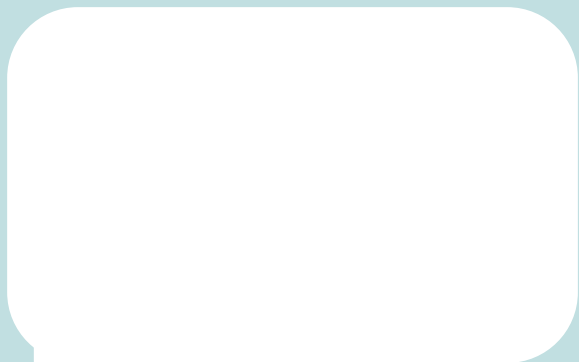


EGYPT

COMING HOME TO GOD

- HOME FOR A PURPOSE

Day 1: What do you need to leave behind in order to embrace your purpose more fully? Why?



Day 2:

Write a short prayer about one thing that is preventing you from growing closer to God.

Day 3:

Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?







Day 4:

Read Jeremiah 1:4-10.


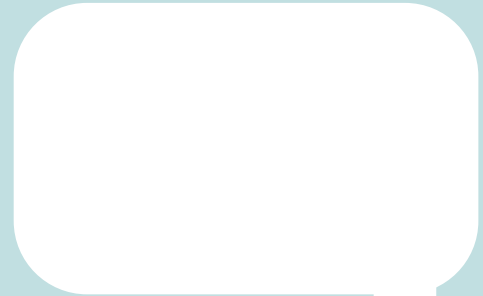
What stands out to you in this story?



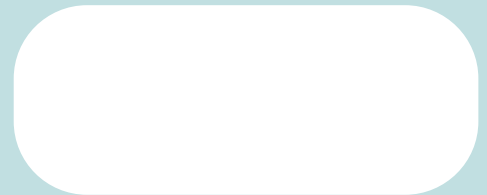
Day 5: Write a short prayer about one thing you need today to better live your purpose.



Day 6: Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?



Day 7: What purpose or purposes do you think God has for you in this season of your life?



WEEK 3:

THE STORY OF NAOMI COMING HOME

Ruth 1



Watch Weekly Video

Start Here:

1. Would you rather be on a road trip by yourself or with somebody?
2. What are the advantages of having a companion?

The Next Step

Naomi's husband was her provider, and her two sons were her retirement plan. All three of them died, and she was alone. Naomi left Moab and went to Bethlehem, her home, where she heard God was feeding people. She took the trip with her daughter-in-law, Ruth. Who is a person in your life who points you to Jesus and helps lead you home? Write your reflections in the house box. Share with your group.

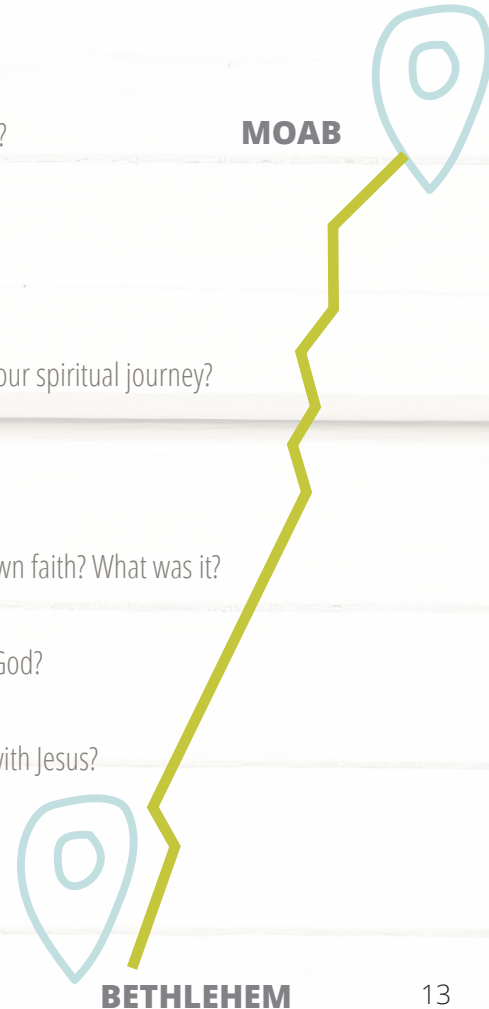


On The Road:

1. How does Ruth's decision to stay with Naomi reflect the commitment God desires from us?
2. Naomi tried to push Ruth away, but Ruth clung to her; are there times when pride or pain make us resist the help of others?
3. What does Ruth's famous declaration in verse 16 tell us about the role of relationships in our spiritual journey?
4. In what ways does the church serve as a 'home' to believers returning to Jesus?
5. Have you had an experience where someone else's faithfulness helped strengthen your own faith? What was it?
6. In what ways do friendships and community impact our journey toward coming home to God?
7. What is one step you can take this week to help someone else feel at home in their walk with Jesus?

*Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay.
Your people will be my people and your God my God.*

-Ruth 1:16



COMING HOME TO GOD

- A TRAVEL COMPANION

Day 1: How have people pointed you to a closer relationship with Christ?



Day 2:
Write a short prayer about how community can help you experience God more deeply.

Day 3:
Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?







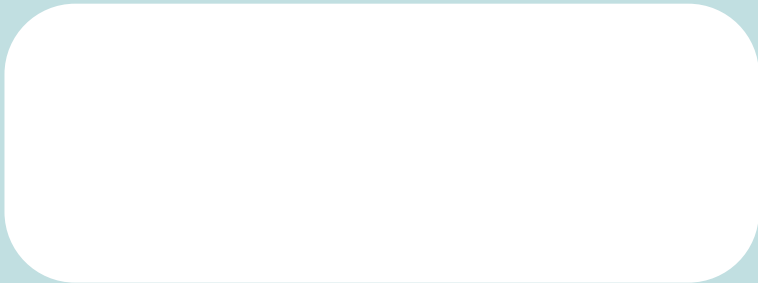
Day 4:

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.


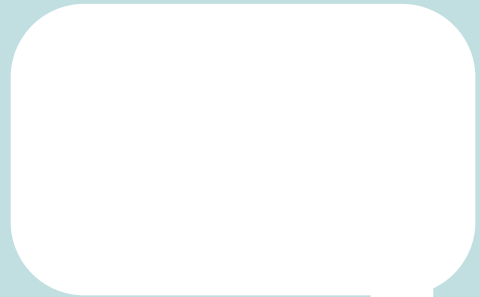
What stands out to you in this passage?



Day 5: Write a short prayer about what God is teaching you right now.



Day 6: Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?



Day 7: How will you respond to God's invitation to partner with others to come home to a renewed relationship with Jesus?



WEEK 4:

THE STORY OF THE ISRAELITES COMING HOME

Amos 9:11-15



Watch Weekly Video

Start Here:

1. What is the biggest home renovation project you have done?
2. Do you prefer to hire somebody or do it yourself?

The Next Step

The physical rebuilding process in Jerusalem was symbolic of the spiritual repairs and restoration the Israelites needed as they returned to their home. What spiritual repairs and restoration do you need?

Write your reflections in the house box.
Share with your group.



On The Road:

1. The Israelites thought their home was broken beyond repair. But God can restore.

Share about a time when you experienced God's restoration in a broken part of your life.

2. What are some ways God restores people?

3. Before rebuilding, the old had to be torn down. What needs to be torn down in your life to make room for the new?

4. Israel helped to rebuild their city. How can we actively participate in the restoration God is doing in us?

5. The temple would not just be repaired but would be better than ever. How might the best be yet to come in your relationship with God?

6. The Israelites believed God didn't keep His promises because they had been in exile for so long. How can we practice patience and trust when God isn't acting on our timeline?

"They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them," says the Lord your God.

-Amos 9:14-15

EXILE



JERUSALEM

COMING HOME TO GOD

- REPAIR & RESTORE


Day 1: What in your life needs to be torn down before the restoration process can begin?



Day 2:
Write a short prayer about the restoration you hope to experience.

Day 3:
Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?


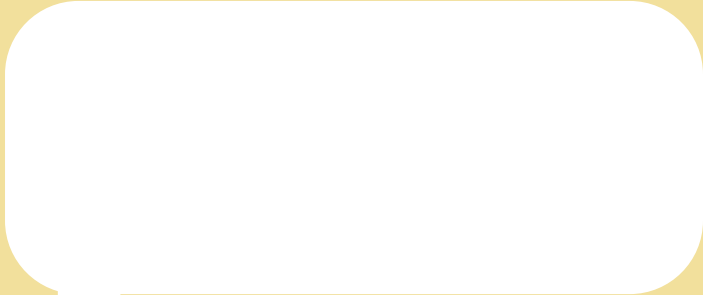





Day 4:

Read Haggai 2:1-9.


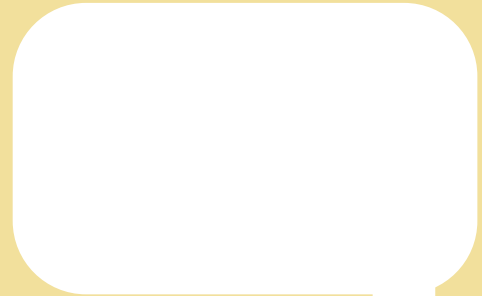
What stands out to you in this passage?



Day 5: Write a short prayer about what God is teaching you right now.



Day 6: Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?



Day 7: What is being restored or repaired in your life right now?



WEEK 5:

THE STORY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

RETURNING HOME

Luke 15:11-32



Watch Weekly Video

Start Here:

1. Have you ever been homesick before? What was that like?
2. How did you get well from being homesick?

The Next Step

The Prodigal Son was physically and relationally distant from his father. He needed healing in that relationship. How do you need healing in your relationship with God? Write your reflections in the house box. Share with your group.



On The Road:

1. In what ways do you relate to the younger son in this parable? Have you ever experienced a time of wandering away from God?
2. What motivated the younger son to leave home, and what does this reveal about the human heart?
3. How does the younger son's realization in the pigpen reflect the moment we recognize our need for God?
4. What emotions do you think the younger son felt as he returned home? Have you ever experienced similar feelings toward God?
5. The son planned to ask his father to take him back as a servant, but the father restored him as a son. What does this say about God's love for us?
6. What do you think prevents people from coming home to God? Have these same barriers affected you?
7. In what ways do you sense God calling you to come home today?

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

-Luke 15:20

**NON-JEWISH
DISTANT LAND**



**JEWISH
PALESTINE**

COMING HOME TO GOD

- WELCOMED HOME

Day 1: What area(s) of your life do you find yourself living in a distant land?



Day 2:
Write a short prayer about the forgiveness and restoration you hope to experience with God.

Day 3:
Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?







Day 4:

Read John 8:10-11.


What stands out to you in this passage?



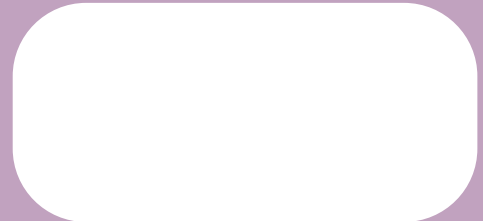
Day 5: Write a short prayer about what God is teaching you right now.



Day 6: Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?



Day 7: How will you respond to God's invitation to come home to a renewed relationship?



WEEK 6:

THE STORY OF JESUS COMING HOME

Matthew 21:1-11



Watch Weekly Video

Start Here:

1. Is it easy or hard for you to travel home?
(childhood home or wherever 'home' is)
2. If it's a long journey, what makes it worth the trip?

The Next Step

Jesus knew that the path ahead of Him would not be easy. What has been hard or challenging for you about coming home to God? Write your reflections in the house box. Share with your group.



On The Road:

1. The people shouted "Hosanna," praising Jesus.
What is something you need to praise Jesus for today?
2. The crowd cheered for Jesus but later condemned Him.
How has your faith and commitment to Jesus fluctuated over time? What caused these changes?
3. Jesus knew the journey home would not be easy.
What are some challenges or obstacles you have faced on your journey of coming back to God?
4. Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice so that we could return to God. What might we need to sacrifice to return fully?
5. Our journey home does not happen overnight.
How can we persevere when progress is slower than we'd like?
6. How can the difficult moments in our spiritual journey, similar to Jesus' challenges during Holy Week, ultimately lead us to a deeper connection with God?

7. Which of the Coming Home stories in this series has been most impactful for you? Why?

JERUSALEM

The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

-Matthew 21:9-11



CROSS

COMING HOME TO GOD

- THE HOME STRETCH

Day 1: What must you do to be prepared to welcome Jesus as King in every area of your life? What is one step you can take this week?



Day 2: Write a short prayer about an obstacle keeping you from growing closer to God.

Day 3: Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?


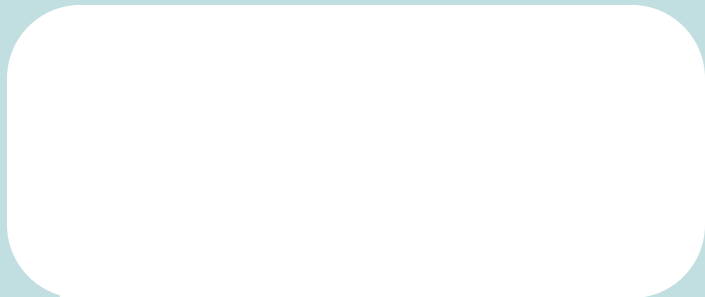





Day 4:

Read Matthew 11:28-30.



What stands out to you in this passage?



Day 5: Write a short prayer asking God to help you continue to come home to Him.



Day 6: Spend 5 minutes in silence, intentionally listening to God. What did you experience?



Day 7: How has this study brought you closer to God? What changes have you experienced?



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