

STAND AT THE CROSSROADS

Week 11: March 12-18, 2023

Old Town Road (pt. 4: Emmaus)

This year, we are focusing on how life brings us to "crossroads." These crossroads bring spiritual, emotional, mental, physical, and social challenges. Which way should we go? What should we do? Such questions leave us in great uncertainty on what is best for us and those we love. We are going to journey in 2023 through various sermon series on Bible passages where the characters in the story come to different types of crossroads. Here, we will find ourselves evaluating the options before them and before us. We will also explore how we can help others at pivotal times in their journeys, supporting them as they seek faith and meaning in the decisions and circumstances they face.

In this packet, you will find a few additional resources that will help you to further evaluate how to process the crossroads in your life, your family, and your faith community. These extra activities are not meant to be a spiritual formality on your weekly to do list. Rather, they are optional ways that you can consider as you walk through life. Only do what is helpful to you as you walk with Jesus each week. I'll meet you at the crossroads.



Discussion Questions

Go to Patrick Wilson's YouTube page and watch the video devotional for this week: Old Town Road (p.t 4: Emmaus). Then, consider and discuss with your family/friends the following questions:

- What did the men of Emmaus think they knew?
- What did they learn from Jesus that they didn't know?
- How was Jesus patient with them in their limited understanding?
- Why is it so important for us to remain open and seek new ideas?
- What is an area that you are striving to learn more about? What steps are you taking to grow in this area?
- How can you lean into relationships with God and others to get to know them better?

Bible Study & Prayer: Going Deeper

Read and meditate on Isaiah 55:8-9:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord.

“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The prophet is speaking of how God relates to us and how we relate to him. It is important for us to leave space for God to work in ways that we do not fully understand. We can never fully comprehend God, his thoughts, or his ways. This does not mean that we should give up on trying to understand God. Rather, we should pursue God with our whole being, but we never reach a place of self-righteous dogmatism or confidence that we know God's purposes and plans. We continue to lean into God and leave room for God to work in us, others, and the world around us. We are not God, nor are we God's gift to the world. Instead, we have the privilege to walk with the God of the universe and know him more.

Take time today to pray and ask God to reveal himself to you in ever increasing ways. Admit your limitations and spend time resting in his presence, listening to his tug on your heart.

Write about your experiences with God this week or share about them with a friend.

Family Activity

Pull out some old pictures of you or other members of your family (siblings, parents, grandparents, kids, grandchildren, etc.). Spend time looking back on these captured moments. See if others can recognize the people in the photos, especially those that are very old. Take time to laugh and remember together.

Then, stop and discuss these questions with each other:

- Who was the hardest person for you to recognize in the pictures?
- What made him/her difficult for you to recognize?
- Who was easiest for you to recognize in the pictures?
- What made him/her easy for you to recognize?
- How do you picture Jesus in your mind's eye?
- Why might Jesus be hard to recognize?
- How can you demonstrate Jesus to others by the way you live?
- How can you see Jesus in others in your life?

Connecting with Others

As spring arrives this week, find a day to go for a stroll with a friend. Sometimes it is valuable to walk briskly for exercise and health, but this week slow the pace down. Go for a walk and try to focus on observing the world around you. Listen to the sounds of nature. Watch for the signs of spring. Use your phone or camera to take some pictures. Breathe deeply. Take the air in.

As you walk with your friend, ask them (some or all of) these questions and give them uninterrupted time to answer them. You might even stop along the walk to sit on a park bench or picnic table to give them your full attention.

- What is something that is happening or has happened recently that really excites you?
- What is something that is happening or has happened recently that is causing a lot of anxiety for you?
- What is something that you are learning right now and how are you learning about it?
- What is something that you hope to learn about?
- What can I do to support you as your friend in your journey?