



the harmony way

table of contents

orientation.....	3
harmony with God.....	11
harmony with creation.....	19
harmony with others.....	27
harmony with self.....	33
coming in a good way.....	40
appendix	47
spiritual practices.....	50
spiritual direction	48
theology & embodiment.....	51
theology & story.....	53
bibliography	55
special thanks.....	56





introduction

Division. Disconnection. Disharmony. We need another way.

Welcome to the Harmony Way. Like all pilgrimages, this is a journey taken in light of a story that speaks deeply to a person's soul. A fundamental longing of most humans is that for peace, a sense of wholeness in our lives and in the world around us. Throughout the Old and New Testaments of the Bible we see a vision of this peace, of the shalom with which God created the world and all in it – and to which God longs to see the world return. However, in most times and places, such peace has seemed unattainable.

Through years of study and experience, Randy Woodley (Ph.D. Asbury Theological Seminary) a Cherokee descendant recognized by the Keetoowah Band, has shown that:

*The biblical concept of shalom, salvation, or healing in many ways can be equated directly with the Native American concept of restoration or harmony. The Creator's plan for harmony concerns all of creation, the whole community of creation, not just humanity. . . . Harmony of all creation can be understood in and through Christ, as the Creator-Restorer of shalom or harmony in the world.*¹

Over five walks we will journey through stories and scripture, in movement and prayer, seeking God's good road, the way of harmony. Along the way, Indigenous followers of Jesus from across North America and Hawaii (Turtle Island and Pasifika) will provide a window into God's shalom and peace by sharing stories and wisdom from their communities.

Blessings as you walk in this way of harmony.

¹ Woodley, Randy S. *Indigenous Theology and the Western Worldview*. Baker Academic, 2022, page 68.



how to use this journal

When embarking on pilgrimage, it is helpful to record and reflect on the places and people that you encounter, and, in particular, how God meets you along the way. This journal provides “field notes” space to reflect at the end of each session. In addition to reflecting on elements from the audio guide, there are invitations for additional Contemplation and Action practices to go deeper into the theme of each walk.

You are invited to use as much or as little of this journal as you find helpful. It is an interactive PDF, so you can use your device to type directly into it, or you are welcome to print out the pages in order to be able to hand write, draw, or color.

In the Appendix, you will find additional resources to accompany you along the Harmony Way.



first nations version

The Bible translation used for Harmony Way is the First Nations Version (FNV), a New Testament in English by Native North Americans for Native North Americans and All English-Speaking Peoples published by InterVarsity Press.

Many First Nations tribes communicate with the cultural and linguistic thought patterns found in their original tongues. The First Nations Version (FNV) recounts the Creator's Story—the Christian Scriptures—following the tradition of Native storytellers' oral cultures. This way of speaking, with its simple yet profound beauty and rich cultural idioms, still resonates in the hearts of First Nations people.

The FNV is a dynamic equivalence translation of the New Testament that captures the simplicity, clarity, and beauty of Native storytellers in English, while remaining faithful to the original language of the Bible. The culmination of a rigorous five-year translation process, this new Bible translation is a collaboration between organizations like OneBook and Wycliffe Associates, Indigenous North Americans from over twenty-five different tribes, and a translation council that consisted of twelve Native North American elders, pastors, young adults, and men and women from different tribes and diverse geographic locations. Whether you are Native or not, you will experience the Scriptures in a fresh and new way.

Throughout the FNV, the audio guides, and this journal you will find the word for God translated as Great Spirit, Creator, Grandfather, Great Chief. You will also hear some of the people interviewed use words for God from their tribal language. These all refer to the triune God we encounter in the pages of the Bible.

Learn more at firstnationsversion.com



story circles

WHAT IS A STORY CIRCLE?

Have you ever spent time around a table or fire pit sharing stories with family or friends? When we share stories, our lives weave together and community deepens. Our individual lives may even be transformed. We expect the stories you hear while walking Harmony Way will connect with your own story, stirring up emotions, thoughts, questions, and memories. It can be important and encouraging to process such experiences with others. To help with this processing, we invite you to participate in a Story Circle.

STEPS FOR CREATING A STORY CIRCLE

Talking circles are very common structures for sharing or making communal decisions in many Indigenous communities. So, we have designed Story Circles with some of these practices in mind.

1. Gather with people during the weeks of the Harmony Way in person or on Zoom. Create your own circle of friends or join one of the InterVarsity hosted Story Circles.
2. Designate a Story Circle facilitator who will invite everyone in the room to introduce themselves, acknowledging in particular the elders in the circle.
3. Determine how much time the group will meet and divide that time up equally. For example, if you have 60 minutes and 10 people, suggest that everyone has 5-6 minutes to share. Decide the manner in which the facilitator will politely indicate that a speaker has passed the time limit and needs to wrap-up the story.
4. Listening is just as important as speaking, maybe more. Affirm who just shared briefly before the next person shares with a simple thank you.
5. If you are meeting in person, consider passing an object around the circle between each person sharing. This simple action makes space for the speaker holding the object to fully finish before passing it along. Sometimes the object is ceremonial. At times it is something very ordinary, like a feather or stone. Say what you want to say and pass the object to the person beside you. You can always pass from speaking, knowing you will have an opportunity later.
6. If it's appropriate for your group, you may want to begin and/or end your time with a simple prayer, poem, or song.



7. The facilitator may begin the story circle with this prompt:

“What did you hear or experience in the Harmony Way that connected to some part of your own story?”

If additional more specific prompts are needed, the Facilitator can ask:

“Where did you go and what did you see on your walk?” (Feel free to share pictures.)

“What have you been learning about a particular walk’s theme that you want to remember?”

“Is there a next step you feel led to take in light of that walk’s theme?”

8. After everyone has shared, invite those who may have passed another opportunity to share a story.
9. Reserve time after everyone has finished sharing to reflect on what has just transpired. Ask for observations and comments.
10. If appropriate at the end ask, *“What invitation to action do you hear in the stories?”*

GUIDELINES FOR STORY CIRCLES

Since everyone will be walking at a different pace and will likely have listened to different walks as the group meets, make sure people know they are welcome to share about where ever they find themselves along The Harmony Way.

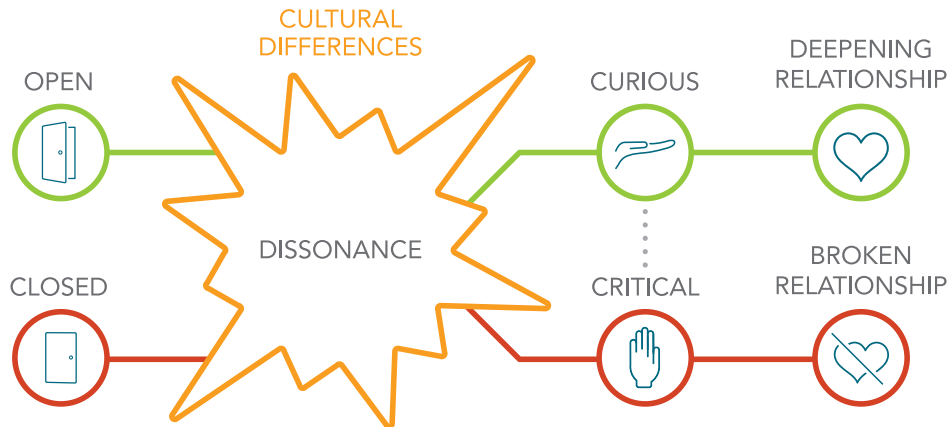
1. A story is a narrative of events drawn from the teller’s personal experience. It is not a lecture, an argument, a debate, or an intellectualization, although these elements may be part of a story.
2. Be personal. Share a way that the stories, exercises, or scriptures in the Harmony Way Walks impact your own story. It’s okay for it to be raw and unprocessed, or for you to express questions or dissonance.
3. Confidentiality. Affirm that what is shared will not be shared outside of the circle unless the teller gives consent.



4. We are here to listen and bear witness to each other's experience. We are not here to fix or advise one another.
5. Try not to distract yourself by thinking ahead about what story you will tell next. Rather, listen to the stories told, and, when it is your turn, tell a story brought to mind by the previous stories, or pass.
6. Affirm what is heard, perhaps by referencing another person's story, but don't try to debate, challenge, or disagree. There are other places for that, and toward the end of the story circle, when all have shared in an unhurried way, the group may want to have some response and with different perspectives or questions.
7. Silence is okay, even sacred. The pace of a story circle is slower than a group discussion or debate.

approaching differences

Some things in the Harmony Way experience might stretch you: walking in new places, stories shared in the audio guides, things said in story circles, some of the spiritual practices you may not be familiar with. Any time you experience this dissonance, we invite you to view it as an opportunity for growth. Ask God what he is teaching. Be curious. Build relationships.



 harmony with God



scripture reflection

PSALM 42 (FNV)

¹ O Great Spirit, like a deer panting for streams of water, my dry and thirsty soul pants for you. ² My whole being longs to drink deeply of you, for you are the true and living Great Spirit. When can I go to meet with you face to face? ³ Tears are my only food as I weep day and night. My enemies never stop saying to me, "Where has your Great Spirit gone?" ⁴ My wounded heart is bleeding as I remember how things used to be. I was the headman dancer leading a great crowd to Creator's sacred lodge, staying in step with the drum. We all whooped and danced for joy as we sang songs. ⁵ Why do I now feel like I am melting away? Why am I so troubled deep inside? I will put my hope in the Most Holy One. I will once again give him thanks for all he has done. ⁶ O Giver of Life, my heart has fallen to the ground, so I must keep you in my thoughts. I do this from the land of the river Flowing Down (Jordan), from the peaks of Sacred Mountain (Hermon), and from Humble Hill (Mizar). ⁷ I hear the echoes of your roaring waterfalls as deep calls out to deep. Your surging waves have swept over me again and again. ⁸ Each day Grandfather sends his great love my way. At night his song comes to me as my prayer to the Giver of Life. ⁹ O Great Spirit, my rock, I am asking, "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I walk a path of gloom and despair, hunted down by my enemies?" ¹⁰ Their taunts are like bone-shattering blows as they repeat over and over again, "Where has this Great Spirit of yours gone?" ¹¹ Why do I still feel like I am melting away? Why am I so troubled deep inside? I will put my hope in the Great Spirit. I will once again give him thanks for all he has done.



SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

The words of this psalm are vivid, raw, and vulnerable. The psalmist voices deep longings for intimacy and for connection with the Great Spirit, even wanting to meet face to face. However, it is quite clear, the desires are unmet. Using colorful language – a thirsty soul, a wounded and bleeding heart, and pain experienced from deep within, the psalmist describes their current state of being.

How do you react to addressing the Great Spirit with this kind of language? Are you able to approach Creator with such honesty and vulnerability? How do you imagine God receives and responds to these types of prayers?

Can you recall a time when you have felt similar to the psalmist? Or maybe you feel similarly now? Share with God what you are noticing - your thoughts, feelings, questions, longings. Then after you've fully and vulnerably expressed what you want to share, listen and be attentive to what Creator may want to share with you in response.



contemplation

There was a man with two sons. The younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me now my share of what is coming to me.'

[It was a great insult to the father, for this would not have been done until the father had crossed over to death.]

But the Father, who was good-hearted and loved his sons, divided all he had with his two sons anyway.

Not many days later, the younger son took his share and went far away to another land. He began to spend it all on wild living and soon had nothing left. The time came when there was not enough food in the land for everyone, and he found himself poor and hungry. So, he went to work for a rancher, who sent him out to feed the pigs, but no one would even give him a meal.

Soon the younger son came back to his right mind and said to himself, 'Look, here I am naked and starving, but the servants who work for my father are well fed! I am going back to humble myself to my father. I will tell him that I have dishonored both him and the spirit-world above, and I am no longer worthy to be called his son. I will ask him just to let me be a hired servant to work in his fields.'

He then made up his mind and began to go home. While he was still far away, his father saw him walking. The father's heart opened wide and he ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him.

The son said, 'Father, I have failed the spirit-world above and you. I am not worthy to be called your son.'

But the father ignored his son's words, turned to his servants, and said, 'Go! Find my best regalia and put it on him. Give him a headdress of feathers for his head and new moccasins for his feet! Go get the fattest calf and prepare a great feast for a celebration. This is my son! He was lost, but I have found him. He was dead to me, but now he is alive! Then they all began to feast, sing, and dance.'



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

The Parable of the Prodigal (Luke 15:11-24) is likely a very familiar story to you. Take a moment to recall the scene, see the younger son returning home, likely filled with a mixture of emotions, anxiety, hope, uncertainty... Imagine yourself in the scene, maybe as the younger son or as a nearby observer. Witness the father's embrace of his son, overwhelming him with affection. Hear him exclaim, "This is my son!"

Imagine Creator God, our loving Father, looking at you with great love and delight. Hear him say, "You are my son...You are my daughter." Look at him. How do you experience his gaze, how would you describe his countenance? Notice what's stirring deep within you? Rest quietly in Creator's presence.



action

"Give him a headdress of feathers for his head and new moccasins for his feet! Go get the fattest calf and prepare a great feast for a celebration...Then they all began to feast, sing, and dance."

Plan a celebration and invite some friends, family members or neighbors to gather with you. It doesn't have to be extravagant or expensive, you can host a meal in your home or go out to a restaurant in recognition of and in thanksgiving that you are loved by Creator. He longs for you to live in harmony with him. Record plans for and/or memories from this celebration.



prayer

Great Spirit of Light,
as we face East,
the direction of the rising sun,
of the beginnings of each day,
of new birth, of spring -
we give thanks to you,
God of all beginnings.

Through You all peoples and nations
have their being.
Running toward us in love,
You renew broken harmony.

As the sun rises above the horizon
filling our days with light,
May you fill our souls with light and peace.
Let there be light in our words,
let there be light on our paths that we walk.
Let us remember always that you give the gift of a new day.

walk reflections / field notes

We invite you to experience the Harmony Way with your whole self. When we tune into our breath and all of our senses, we can become more present to our bodies, our surroundings, and to God. Use the space below to write or draw anything that you would like to remember about your walk. For example, what did you see, hear, smell, touch, taste? Also note any responses you had to reflections questions within the walk.

A large rectangular area filled with a light gray dotted grid, intended for writing or drawing reflections.

 harmony with creation



scripture reflection

MATTHEW 6:26-34 (FNV)

Look to the winged ones who soar on the wind. Do they plant seeds and gather the harvest into a storehouse? No! But your Father from above gives them plenty to eat. Do you not know he cares even more for you? Can worry add even one more step to the length of your life's journey?

Why do you trouble yourself with what to wear? Have you seen how the wildflowers grow in the plains and meadow? Do you think they work hard and long to clothe themselves? No! I tell you not even the great chieftain Stands in Peace (Solomon), wearing his finest regalia, was dressed as well as even one of these.

If Creator covers the wild grass in the plains with such beauty, which is here today and gathered for tomorrow's fire, will he not take even better care of you? Why is your faith so small? There is no need to say, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' This is what the Nations who have lost their way have given their hearts to, but your Father from above knows you need these things.

If you will make Creator's good road your first aim, representing his right ways, he will make sure you have all you need for each day. So do not worry about tomorrow's troubles. It is enough to trust Creator to give you the strength you need to face today.



SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

These simple but profound words from Creator Sets Free (Jesus) invite us to be free from worry. Freedom from imagining the troubles tomorrow may bring, freedom from anxiety about wondering if we will have what we need and freedom from the countless worst-case scenarios that can overwhelm and even paralyze us. Contrary to what the world may tell us, Jesus doesn't suggest that freedom from worry is making sure you have enough – enough money, enough college degrees, enough life experiences, enough friends or contacts in your social networks – no, Jesus says freedom from worry is found in trusting the goodness and faithfulness of Creator. A trust that is cultivated and strengthened by paying attention to what you observe in creation – the winged ones, the wildflowers, the moon, the stars, the things that the hands of Creator have made.

How might you pay attention to creation as a way to cultivate trust in Creator?



contemplation

PSALM 8

¹ *O Grandfather, our Great Chief.*

*Your name is highly honored in all the land!
Your shining-greatness reaches far beyond
our sacred mountains into the world above.*

² *The cooing sounds from the mouths of nursing babies
and small children have more power than your enemies.*

They are enough to silence the voice of all who fight against you.

³ *When I meditate on what your hands have made.*

*When I gaze at the night sky and into the world above.
When I see the moon and stars that you skillfully set in their places,*

⁴ *It makes me wonder.*

*Why do you think so much of humanity?
Why do you watch over human beings so carefully?*

⁵ *You made them a little lower than spirit-messengers.*

You placed a headdress of honor on their heads.

⁶ *You chose them to watch over all the works of your hands
and you have put all of creation under their loving care,*

⁷ *mindful of the sheep and cattle and all wild animals,*

⁸ *the winged ones who fly in the sky,*

the fish of the sea, and the great creatures who swim the pathways of the sea.

⁹ *O Grandfather, our Great Chief.*

*Your name is filled with beauty
and highly honored in all the land!*



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Find a place in creation where you can pay attention to what Creator's hands have made. Set aside anything that might hinder or distract you from maintaining attentiveness. What do you notice about the things Creator's hands have made in your surroundings? What do they reveal about Creator's care for you, for others, for creation? Speak with Creator about what you are noticing. Listen. How does Creator respond?



action

During our walk, Dr Randy Woodley shared some simple steps we can take to have a healthy relationship with the rest of the community of creation. In his book, *Becoming Rooted: 100 Days of Reconnecting with Sacred Earth*, he highlights how renewing, reusing and recycling lower our consumption of the Earth's resources.

The US EPA outlines a variety of actions you can take to reduce waste and help sustain the environment for future generations. These actions include reducing food waste, reusing, or repurposing items, borrowing items that you might use infrequently, and thinking green before you shop. Review the webpage <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-and-reusing-basics>, then identify and implement some practical steps you can take to live in greater harmony with the community of creation.

What are some other practical ways you can live in harmony with creation where you live?



prayer

Creator,
As we face south,
the direction of
warm and soothing winds;
Of summer,
of afternoon,
of youth.
Times of growth,
Productive and full.
We give thanks to you for creation -
land, water, and sky and the creatures that fill them.

You invite us into creation's web of life.
We are but a strand in it.
We are caretakers with you of this land.
Whatever we do to this web, we do to ourselves.

Teach us to love you through this,
Your creation which you called good.
Teach us to lay down our worry,
To look to the birds and the lilies,
Learning from our elder brothers and sisters
To trust and love You.
Teach us to care for these same brothers and sisters,
Serving as loving caretakers of all you have created.

walk reflections / field notes

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 harmony with others



scripture reflection

LUKE 10:25-37 (FNV)

There was a man walking the road from Village of Peace (Jerusalem) to Moon Village (Jericho). On the way he was attacked by thieves who beat him, stripped him of his clothes, and left him bleeding to death.

Now it happened that a holy man was on the same road, not far behind. When he saw the man, he went around him on the other side of the road. Not far behind him was another man, also from the tribe holy men are chosen from. When he saw the wounded man, he did the same thing as the holy man.

Then a man from High Place [Samaria], who was also walking the road, saw the wounded man. Even though he was not a Tribal Member but a mixed blood despised by the tribal people, he felt pity for the man. He helped him by pouring good medicine on his wounds and wrapping them in a cloth. He put the man on his own animal and took him to a lodging house to care for him.

The next day, when the man of High Place [Samaria] was leaving, he gave from his own money pouch to the keeper of the lodging house. 'Use this to care for him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will give you anything more that is needed.'

Creator Sets Free [Jesus] then looked at the scroll keeper and said, "Which one of these three acted as a fellow human being to the man who was attacked by the thieves?"



The scroll keeper answered, "The one who had pity on him."

Go. Creator Sets Free [Jesus] said, and walk in the same way.

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

The story Creator Sets Free [Jesus] told must have been shocking because it so deeply confronted his listener's narrow concept of neighbor and harmony. The man from High Place? The Samaritan? Really? Go and walk in the same way.

This story that Jesus told the religious leader in front of that crowd that day has been told and retold uncountable times in many languages and cultures. It is not just a story about compassion, but a story of how to walk toward an enemy. In first-century Palestine, there was much hatred between Jew and Samaritan.

Walking the harmony way with others includes seeing the pain, trauma and brokenness in others and doing something about it. It includes walking toward a real or supposed "enemy" by practicing forgiveness. And it also includes, like William Apress did, naming and confronting injustice which often will include "burying the hatchets" we carry.

How do you respond to Jesus and/or the story of William Apress?



action

What is Creator inviting you to do in response to your contemplation about moving towards rather than away from your enemy? List some specific, tangible ways you can move towards your enemy. Hold these prayerfully before God and ask Creator to help you forgive by his Spirit.

Ask Creator to give you the courage and strength to move towards your enemy in love. Then set a date on your calendar to do one action you listed. Journal afterwards about the experience.

Do you know what Indigenous nations lived on the land where you now live and work? Take some time to explore this history through the internet, libraries, or local Indigenous communities.



prayer

Creator,
As we face west, we face
The direction of the setting sun,
The end of the day,
The bearer of fall,
The season of slowing down,
The time of surrender.

We give thanks to you for bringing us here
And for being with us along the way.
We give thanks for the people in our lives -
Those we have encountered this day,
Those we will meet tomorrow,
And for our past connections,
including with those whose days on this earth have ended.

You invite us to release our anger before the sun sets,
To the difficult work of healing relationships with others.

Teach us to "bury" our weapons of war
As we see your image in each person before us.
Teach us to surrender pride and pain, anger and right.
That your justice and harmony may prevail
Among all peoples at the end of the day.

walk reflections / field notes

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 harmony with self



scripture reflection

LUKE 8:43-48 (FNV)

There was a woman in the crowd who had been bleeding in an unusual way for more than twelve winters.

[Under tribal law this woman would be considered unclean. She was also required to warn people nearby of her condition by saying out loud, "unclean! Unclean!" Instead, she pushed her way through the crowd to get to the Wisdomkeeper.]

She had spent all she had on medicine men who were not able to heal her. She came up close behind him, reached out her hand, and touched the fringe of his outfit, and right away the blood stopped flowing.

[Creator Sets Free (Jesus) stopped, turned, and looked around the crowd.]

"Who touched me?" he asked.

The ones who heard him shrugged their shoulders and began to look around also.

When no one came forward, Stands on the Rock (Peter) said to him, "Wisdomkeeper, the crowds are pushing, shoving, and touching you, what do you mean?"

"Someone touched me," he said again. "I felt power go out from my body."

[Fear took hold of the heart of this woman, for she had not announced herself as unclean, and even worse, she had touched a spiritual leader. The crowd might turn against her or even



have her stoned to death.]

The woman knew she could hide no longer. She came forward, trembling with fear, and fell down before him. In front of all the people she told the story of why she touched him and how she was healed right then.

Creator Sets Free (Jesus) looked at her with kindness in his eyes and said, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace.

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

In this healing, Creator Sets Free [Jesus] brings the woman’s physical body back into harmony. She no longer has the incessant flow of blood. But he also brings healing to her heart and soul by acknowledging and welcoming her within this community—a community from which she had been exiled because of her condition. Jesus does not allow her to hide and creep away to remain in that state of internal conflict. In her fear and shame Jesus looks at her, declares her true identity—daughter—and invites her into a place of belonging. He sees her full self and accepts her. In doing this, he opens the door for those who had marginalized her - to accept her as well.



contemplation

To have harmony with yourself, it's important to check in with yourself. What is taking place within you as you read and listen to this scripture? Do you connect in any way with the woman who reached out for healing by touching the hem of Jesus' garment? What parts of her story connect with yours or bring up emotion for you? Stay present to any emotions. Gently name them without judgement.

Take a moment now to picture Jesus looking at you in love as you hold these emotions and awareness of your connection to her story. He felt your touch. He sees you. He responds with compassion. What is He speaking to your heart? Write down what you hear/sense/feel Him saying to you.



action

Read what you have just written. What is your response to Jesus? Let your response flow to Creator Sets Free in whatever way you desire. Dance, sing, write a poem, paint or draw, go for a walk, or write out a prayer of gratitude. This is your response. Let it be uniquely yours, from your heart to God's.



prayer

Creator,
As we turn to the north,
from where the cold winds come,
Bringing the darkness and hibernation of winter,
We thank you that you are with us,
That we are never separated from you,
That darkness is as light to you

Give us courage
to face the harshness of life

Help us hear stories of hope
In the coming sunrise,
In the coming spring,
In the coming resurrection.

Surround us with your love
as we seek ourselves in You.

walk reflections / field notes

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 coming in a good way



scripture reflection

LUKE 19:1-10 (FNV)

Creator Sets Free (Jesus) was walking through Moon Village (Jericho). There, a man named Pure of Heart (Zacchaeus), who was a head tribal tax collector with many possessions, was trying to see who was coming but was too short to see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up a tall tree to get a better view.

When Creator Sets Free (Jesus) came to the tree, he looked up and said, "Pure of Heart (Zacchaeus), come down from there and take me to your house, for I need a place to rest."

He quickly climbed down the tree and with a glad heart welcomed him into his house. But when the people saw this, they shook their heads. "What is he doing?" they grumbled out loud. "Why would he go into the house of an outcast?"

Pure of Heart (Zacchaeus) stood up to the crowd and said to Creator Sets Free (Jesus), "Hear me, Wisdomkeeper. I will give half my possessions to the ones who have none. If I have cheated anyone, I will give them back four times as much."

Creator Sets Free (Jesus) smiled and said, "This is a good day, because this man and his family have finally been set free. For he also is a descendant of Father of Many Nations (Abraham) who had lost his way. The True Human Being has come to find the ones who have lost their way and guide them back again to the good road."



SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

Creator Sets Free (Jesus) looked at Pure of Heart (Zacchaeus) with eyes wide open. He knew exactly who Pure of Heart (Zacchaeus) was, and who Creator Sets Free (Jesus) saw was a kinsman, a member of his tribe, a family member to whom he belonged. Creator Sets Free's (Jesus) decision to call Pure of Heart (Zacchaeus) down from the tree and to invite himself over to his house is the same way Creator Sets Free (Jesus) turns toward every person.

This is harmony: everything becoming kin, everything becoming family. This is possible because Creator Sets Free (Jesus) is Creator. He became a human, lived a human life, experienced the death that all of creation experiences, and came back to life again in order to welcome us into a family where we are all related and where all are beloved.



contemplation

Reflect upon the above scripture as you hold your own story before God. How does Jesus' interaction with Zacchaeus speak to your past, present, and future story? How have you experienced Jesus coming in a good way with you? Or maybe you long for this to be true in your life, but haven't experienced it?

Share with God your unfiltered thoughts and feelings as you contemplate these questions and any others that arise.

This is a safe space, a brave space, in which you can attend to your story within God's story. What do you want Creator to know? What does Creator want you to know? As in this story of Zacchaeus, Creator Sets Free asks to come into your home. Give unhurried grace for this vulnerable conversation, noticing your thoughts and feelings, including where those feelings reside in your body. Write down what you notice and experience. Give it all to God in prayer. Then be still and quiet, resting in God.



action

In the story of Zacchaeus, we see how he completely changed his worldview and how he treated his kinspeople after he became a member of Creator's family. He gave away half of all he owned and repaid those he defrauded four times as much as he took! Following the Good Road of Creator Sets Free means taking initiative in this world to repair what is broken, and that is exactly what we are sent out by Creator Sets Free to do.

As we "walk the road of love with each other," how is Jesus inviting you to come in a good way with his vision of friendship? You may want to reflect on the following questions and then take one next step in walking the Good Road to the people and places you care about.

- How is Creator Sets Free here already, and at work? How can I discover that work?
- How does the way I come reflect who Creator is?
- How am I hearing the Good News of Creator's Good Road, in this place at this time, in a way that is new to me?



blessing

“To walk the road with me, you must love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater way to show love to friends than to die in their place. You are my friends if you walk in my ways and do what I say. I no longer see you as my servants but as friends. Masters do not share their hearts and plans with their servants, but I have shown you everything I have heard from my Father.

“You may think you chose me, but I am the one who chose you. You are my new garden where I will grow a great harvest of my love—the fruit that remains. When you bear this fruit, you represent who I am—my name. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask for. I am telling you this so you will walk the road of love with each other.

John 15:12-17 (FNV)

walk reflections / field notes

We invite you to experience the Harmony Way with your whole self. When we tune into our breath and all of our senses, we can become more present to our bodies, our surroundings, and to God. Use the space below to write or draw anything that you would like to remember about your walk. For example, what did you see, hear, smell, touch, taste? Also note any responses you had to reflections questions within the walk.

A large rectangular area filled with a grid of dotted lines, intended for writing reflections or field notes.



appendix



spiritual practices

VISIO DIVINA

Visio divina — divine seeing — is an ancient prayer practice inviting us to use our eyes to lead us in contemplation about God and enter into prayer with him. Visio divina invites us to engage with God using our minds, our imaginations, and our hearts. Many of us “live in our heads,” so it’s helpful to be led into exercises which engage all of who we are.

Following each walk of the Harmony Way you are invited to use this practice with a piece of art from an Indigenous artist - maybe directly after you walk or later in the week. Any time that works for you. Though we are using art, it can easily be adapted to use whenever you observe something of beauty, whether on a trip to the art museum, a day at the beach, or a hike in the Grand Canyon.

Whether this practice is new to you or very familiar, our prayer is that it will be life-giving.

Instructions for Visio Divina come from Karen Guzman, Director of Women Scholars and Professionals

<https://thewell.intervarsity.org/spiritual-formation/prodigoal-son-visio-divina-2021>

Questions

1. What do you see? As you begin, take a few deep breaths. While we know God is always with us, invite the Holy Spirit to be present and to speak to you afresh in these moments. Spend some time looking at the image. What do you see? Does this image evoke any emotions? Similar to doing Bible study, make as many observations as you can. What do you like or dislike? Why? What questions do you have?
2. What stands out? How does the artist use color, light, style, composition, and material? What do you think the artist wanted to communicate? What stands out to you? Why do you think this is so?
3. Is there any scripture that comes to mind? How does this image relate to the scripture and stories from the walk today?
4. What is God’s invitation? Spend some time reflecting on any Scripture and looking again at today’s image. What is God’s invitation to you? What might you need to see, understand, or believe? How does your current life experience intersect with what you are seeing and reflecting on? How might this image help you pray today? What do you want to say to God? Ask from him?



LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio Divina—divine reading—is an ancient spiritual practice for listening to or reading a passage of scripture in a way that is different from Bible study as most of us are familiar with it. Instead of a more intellectual approach, Lectio Divina invites us to alleviate some of the effort that we might normally put in, and allow ourselves to lean more into a posture of receiving the words of scripture as we are in that moment. As Paul says in Hebrews 4:12, “the word of God is alive and active,” and Lectio Divina is another way to experience that. We look and listen with the eyes and ears of our heart, as if we are in conversation with God, and God is suggesting the topic of discussion.

Here are four contemplative movements you can use with artwork or a scripture passage:

1. LECTIO - Reading

Gently let your eyes move through the passage or listen to a recording.

What catches your eye or ear? Where do you notice Christ? Focus on that and sit with it for a minute.

2. MEDITATIO - Reflecting

Breathe in and out, and let your body and mind slow down as you meditate on the scripture passage. Invite the Lord to speak to you about what you noticed.

What feelings does this image or passage evoke? Why might a certain word/phrase be resonating with you today?

3. ORATIO - Responding

What kind of prayer rises from within you as you ponder it?

Enter into dialogue with God. Listen for what God might be saying to you.

What do you say to God?

What is God’s invitation to you?

4. CONTEMPLATIO - Resting

Finally, when your prayer is finished, rest quietly in God’s loving presence, allowing the prayer to be absorbed into your heart.



spiritual direction

InterVarsity Press author and spiritual director, Beth Booram, says that “Spiritual direction helps us integrate our splintered lives.” These are people who are called and gifted in listening for the movements of God as they accompany you and listen to whatever seems important to you. All have been through a training program for spiritual direction.

For everyone:

You can locate and interview a potential spiritual director through websites like:

<https://sdi.companions.org/>

<https://www.graftedlife.org/spiritual-direction/find-a-spiritual-director>

<https://inthecoracle.org/spiritual-direction/#getting-one>

For InterVarsity Staff:

A growing number of seasoned staff are available to accompany you in your spiritual journey. Find a list of InterVarsity spiritual directors at <https://learningandtalent.intervarsity.org/resources/spiritual-formation-support-list>



theology & embodiment

René Descartes famous saying “I think, therefore I am” has had a significant influence on how we understand ourselves and our bodies in the Western world since the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment prioritized rational knowledge or belief and deprioritized experience that was not explainable by science. But this prioritization of the mind for our humanity has not been the case throughout all of history, nor is this the practice in every culture. In fact, this focus on right belief and deprioritization of the body was one tool used by colonizing powers to suppress other cultures and can be used to dehumanize people due to bodily differences.

The entire biblical narrative affirms the goodness of our embodied reality and anchors an embodied Christian anthropology. In the beginning, God called his creation good, including human beings made in the image of God. Jesus’ incarnation—the one who is the perfect image of God—dramatically affirms our human existence as God came to be with us, to suffer with us, and to interact with us in a tangible way to show us what God is like. Scripture also attests that our bodies will be resurrected in the new creation. Collectively, this counters platonic and gnostic tendencies toward a mind/body or soul/body dualism, a tension we still experience in many ways. We do not need to pit knowledge and bodily experience against each other but learn to value them and hold them together, discerning how God is at work in Scripture, our lives, and community.

Our bodies matter to our worship and knowledge of God. Romans 12:1-2 urges us to present our entire bodies as we worship God. Paul links our minds, bodies, worship, and discernment of God’s will. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul also indicates that the Spirit gives and reveals gifts through concrete bodies, and part of our discernment of the Spirit involves uncovering our social and cultural constructions that suggest what bodies the Spirit speaks through. In Scripture and history we see that God has chosen to reveal Godself and communicate with us as creatures through language, Christ’s incarnation, and physical practices like the eucharist and baptism.

We need to reclaim the body and our experience as a site of knowledge and worship of God. We need our bodies to interpret even what we think of as head knowledge; our bodies orient and enable us to perceive the world. Similarly, the way that our families and communities form us shapes how we interpret information. Stories, emotions, and practices shape our imagination and subconscious before we begin to think and act. Thus, James K.A. Smith has argued that our worship should give attention to shaping the narratives and imagination that orients our bodies, belief, and action in the world.

In addition to our ecclesial practices, decentering the Western approach to spiritual formation (focused only on right belief) means rediscovering God at work in our cultures. 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Revelation 21:26 reveal that our ethnicities and cultural heritage are brought together in the body of Christ and in the New Jerusalem. As Cindy Lee notes,



“In the Scriptures, the presence of God is not abstract. Our interactions with God are located on land, in places, in bodies, in practices. This is why our cultural traditions, stories, histories, celebrations, and rituals matter. They form us as physical human beings. They help us connect to the tangible presence of God through movements, art, and storytelling.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What relationship do you see between our minds, bodies, worship, and discernment of God’s will in Romans 12:1-2?
2. How does your faith tradition practice the Eucharist? How does that shape the way you experience and understand Christ’s death and resurrection for us and for you?
3. In your family and culture, what practices help you experience God through your senses?
4. Go for a walk. How does walking affect your thoughts and emotions?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Ryan A. Brandt and John Frederick eds., *Spiritual Formation for the Global Church: A Multi-Denominational, Multi-Ethnic Approach*

Cindy Lee, *Our Unforming: De-Westernizing Spiritual Formation*

James K.A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*

W. David O. Taylor, *A Body of Praise: Understanding the Role of Our Physical Bodies in Worship*

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theology & story

Have you ever spent time around a table or fire pit sharing stories? Perhaps with family or with friends? As you share lives intertwine and the stories weave together, community deepens and you sense even a small transformation in your soul. Stories—those narratives that connect events in a character’s life with a thread of meaning—are an essential part of being human. Mark Yaconelli writes that “the practice of storytelling, particularly when sharing the real stories from our own living, tethers us to what matters most - our families, our friends, nature, the hearts we carry, the wondrous mystery of life itself.”

We are always living in and creating stories, whether we are aware of them or not. In our contemporary culture we’re told the ultimate freedom is to write our own stories, and the economy is happy to give us consumeristic resources to do that. But what feels like freedom is actually tyranny, an attempt to create ourselves apart from the source of life and the truest true story. Freedom without knowing what we are free for, is slavery.

To know who we are as individuals and communities, we must know what story we are part of. From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture invites us into the story of God and the people of God. For example, the writer of Hebrews calls the reader to faith and perseverance in following Christ by retelling the story of the faith of the people of God who have come before. This is the people and the story that we are invited into and grafted into by Christ. We are surrounded by this cloud of witnesses; those who experienced God and responded in faith.

This story is also powerfully portrayed in Psalm 136 where we see the many actions of God on behalf of God’s people, from creation to deliverance and provision of daily bread. Interspersed among God’s acts is the refrain, “his faithful love endures forever.” As we recite these words and this story, we build our worlds. That truest story is one where God is steadfast, loyal, and loving—and his actions demonstrate this. Other stories and words that compete for our loyalty tell us there is not enough, that we need to provide for ourselves at all costs, that we need to keep reinventing ourselves.

Eugene Peterson writes: “The biblical story invites us in as participants in something larger than our sin-defined needs, into something truer than our culture-stunted ambitions. We enter these stories and recognize ourselves as participants, whether willing or unwilling, in the life of God.” As we learn to inhabit God’s story and follow the footsteps of those who have gone before, we are invited to investigate and become aware of other stories shaping us and the idols of those stories that falsely promise life. We are invited to return every day to the God whose faithful love endures forever as we are freed to love God and love our neighbor in our own particular contexts, with our own unique gifts and callings.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How does the story of your family and cultural ancestry shape your life, identity, and actions? How does your family story relate to the story of the people of God?
2. What stories do you sense present in our contemporary culture?
3. What stands out to you about God's love and action in Psalm 136?
4. What inspiration do you draw from being part of the great cloud of witnesses in Hebrews 11? How does that shape your own story?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Karen Lee-Thorp, *Story of Stories: A Guided Tour from Genesis to Revelation*

Richard Lischer, *Our Hearts Are Restless: The Art of Spiritual Memoir*

Eugene Peterson, *Eat this Book*

Mark Yaconelli, *Between the Listening and the Telling: How Stories Can Save Us*

"The Story of the Bible" video from The Bible Project, Bibleproject.com

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NATIVE INTERVARSITY

We're about following Jesus and his ways. We believe that the Jesus way is to honor our cultures, our land, and our peoples because these are gifts of the Creator. You are welcome to follow Jesus with us, learn more about Jesus, or just hang out as part of our friend group! Learn more at <https://native.intervarsity.org>

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InterVarsity Study Abroad exists to support and equip students to keep Jesus at the center of their study abroad experience. We offer digital discipleship groups, leadership training, local community connections and in-person pilgrimages - Journeys - along with Via Divina. Alternatively, we also have summer and semester study abroad programs with our partners.

Journeys with InterVarsity Study Abroad

We welcome students, staff, and ministry partners to join our in-person pilgrimages in Europe. Visit <https://studyabroad.intervarsity.org/get-involved/european-journeys> to learn more and email studyabroad@intervarsity.org if you'd like to be notified about upcoming for Journeys.

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Faculty Ministry in partnership with Study Abroad is hosting in-person Journeys for Faculty and Friends, including Journey Ireland and Journey Italy. If you would like to be notified of upcoming journeys, email faculty@intervarsity.org