

## SMALL GROUP AND SUNDAY SERMON SERIES



JOURNEY WITH US AS WE EXPLORE THE TEACHINGS OF CHRIST IN DAILY LIFE

7 June - 26 July 2026

### HOME GROUPS AND CLASSES GUIDE:

1. Open in Worship and Prayer: this is to invite God into the meeting. For example, you can light a candle, sing together, or use a YouTube Hymn or song.
2. Open your Bibles and read the Bible verses for this week (take turns?) see below.
3. Reflect on the Bible verses and the reflection written by a Minister or Lay Preacher.
4. Connect with each other and take the reflection deeper by answering the Questions.
5. Works out: What have we learned that we can apply in our lives in this session? Keep each other accountable for promises made or important steps taken. Pray for and over each other (after taking prayer requests).

## Practising the Way

Week 1 — WALKING IS THE WAY

Week 2 — COMMUNAL HARMONY

Week 3 — THE WAY IS COSTLY

Week 4 — BEING AUTHENTIC

Week 5 — WALKING THE WILDERNESS ROAD

Week 6 — STRENGTH FORGED IN STRUGGLE

Week 7 — THE JOURNEY IS UNFOLDING, AND NEVER FIXED

Week 8 — ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WORLD

*Friends, according to our Christian calendar we are moving into 'Ordinary Time'. This refers to the numbered weeks outside of the major liturgical seasons, lasting about 33-34 weeks each year, and focuses on living out the teachings of Christ in daily life. It emphasizes the ongoing mission of the Church, discipleship, and growth in faith rather than commemorating a single event like Christmas or Easter. Ordinary Time in the Christian calendar is often misunderstood as "plain" or "less important", but it's **the season where discipleship is lived out in daily life**. It is about applying faith in everyday life, not just during festive seasons. Ordinary time reminds Christians that faith is not about high holy days but also about consistent practice and witness in daily life. It provides space for teaching, reflection, and mission, grounding believers in the rhythm of ordinary weeks.*

*I have titled our series "**Practising the Way**". Practising the Way means actively following Jesus' way of life, not just believing in Him. Many churches emphasize belief but neglect formation and this leads to the crisis of discipleship, "**Practising the Way**" addresses this gap. **Practising the Way is essentially about intentional discipleship – ordering life around Jesus' teachings and example, within community, to grow in faith and mission.***

*John Mark Comer wrote a book titled "**Practising the Way**" to help believers move beyond simply believing in Jesus to apprenticing under him. Comer argues that everyone is being formed by something – whether culture, media, or habits – and that Christians must intentionally choose to be formed by Jesus. The book begins by exploring what it means to be an apprentice to Jesus drawing on the ancient rabbinic tradition where disciples*

would follow their teacher closely, imitating not just their words but their way of life. Comer insists that discipleship is not passive belief but active practice, requiring rhythms that open space for God's Spirit to transform us. He frames this apprenticeship around three movements – (e, Become, Do):

- *Being with Jesus* – emphasizes cultivating presence through prayer, silence, scripture, and sabbath. This is about learning to live in constant awareness of God's presence.
- *Becoming like Jesus*: He explains that transformation of character doesn't happen overnight or through sheer willpower alone but through intentional practices – fasting, simplicity, community, and generosity – that reshape desires and habits. These practices are not ends in themselves but means of opening our lives to God's work.
- *And doing as He did*: is about living missionally in the world: serving others, pursuing justice, and sharing the good news in everyday life.

Comer's vision is that discipleship is not reserved for spiritual elites but is the ordinary calling of every believer: to apprentice under Jesus, to be transformed by him, and to live out his way in the world. The book speaks to Christians navigating distraction and hurry, offering concrete steps to integrate faith in ordinary life.

I have chosen the theme 'Practising the Way' to help us see how faith isn't just celebrated in high feasts but embodied in ordinary rhythms. It is about discipleship as a lifestyle rather than a one-time decision. So, Practising the Way is about embodying Jesus' way of life here and now – a radical apprenticeship that reshapes how you spend time, use resources, and relate to others. It is about transformation – not just believing in Jesus but allowing his Spirit to reshape our character so that we increasingly reflect his life. For us, this is a call to slow down, to be present with Jesus, and to let discipleship permeate ordinary routines. To invite believers to see everyday life – work, rest, relationships, service – as the arena where discipleship is lived out. This theme reminds us that discipleship is lived out in the everyday; in how we speak to our families, how we handle work pressures, how we respond to neighbours, and how we steward our time. It is about becoming more Christlike not just in sacred spaces but in the ordinary rhythms of life. Over time, this path produces the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control – making believers living witnesses of Jesus in ordinary settings.



**Conclusion:** As we journey through this series, may we discover that practising the Way is not about perfection but about persistence – not about rigid formulas but about unfolding faith – not about escape from the world but about engaging it with Christ's love. It is not a single step but a lifelong road. So, let us go forth with courage, knowing that the wilderness will not defeat us, the struggle will not break us, and the cost will not outweigh the eternal reward. Practising the Way is walking with Christ – and in Him, the journey itself becomes our joy. Enjoy the journey, for it is the Way of Christ.

God's blessings, Zamani Sikupela.

## Week Five: 05 July 2026

**Theme: "Walking the Wilderness Road"**

**Scriptures:** Deuteronomy 8:2-10; Isaiah 35: 8-10; Hebrews 11:35-38; Mark 1:9-13

**Worship Song:** Chris Tomlin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFna4pEF7M8&t=15s>

Walking the wilderness road is a biblical metaphor for the journey of faith, through seasons of testing, struggle, and dependence on God. It means following Christ even when the path feels barren, uncertain, or difficult – trusting that the wilderness is not abandonment but preparation. The Wilderness Road is the Way – a path of testing, refining, and dependence on God. Practising the Way means embracing the wilderness as the place where faith is deepened, strength is forged, and God's presence is revealed. It means embracing the hard places of life as the forge where faith is strengthened, hope is refined, and God's presence becomes most real.

## Reflection on the Scriptures written by: LOCAL PREACHER – LULAMILE MAKASI

In Deuteronomy 8:2, Moses speaks these words – *“Remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart.”*

At this juncture, the wilderness generation that came out of Egypt had died out, their children who had not crossed the red sea, who had not stood at Sinai but grew up eating manna and wearing sandals that never wore out are now adults. As Moses addresses them, they stand on the edge of abundance, about to cross the Jordan river into the promised land - precisely the moment most dangerous for religious memory.

Walking the wilderness road is a personal reflection of what it means to be human before God. It is to travel a road you did not choose, guided by a hand you cannot see, fed by bread you cannot produce. A clear indicator that aspects of human existence cannot be separated from God’s provision. Jesus also uses this learning in his battle with temptation in Matthew 4:4.

The forty years in the desert are not a delay before the real story begins, but a story about becoming the kind of people who can occupy a good land without forgetting who gave it them. Not forgetting every hardship on the road, every hunger, heat and confusion of the desert. The wilderness is a road with a purpose, a destination, and a guide. The deepest insight of this passage is that God teaches the most important lessons through absence rather than abundance, through hunger before satisfaction, through the stripped-down road before the lavish destination. The wilderness is not the opposite of the promised land; it is its necessary preparation.

The lessons here do not expire when the promised land is entered, but the danger that comes with the abundance of the promise land produces amnesia. The forgetting of the road, the forgetting of the manna, the forgetting that you are still a traveller fed from outside yourself.

Walking the wilderness road means following Christ even when the path feels barren, uncertain, or difficult. The wilderness road, in other words, does not end. It is walked again every morning when the bread arrives and the blessing is spoken. It is walked every sabbath when the hands that could be producing rest instead. It is walked every time a person says, in whatever form, I did not make this, I received it, and I bless the one who gave it.

### Life group Questions (taking discussions deeper):

- 1) How does the phrase ‘man does not live by bread alone’ speak to a life shaped by instant gratification?
- 2) A person facing a wilderness of redundancy, illness, etc. What is the primary spiritual function of such a seasons?
- 3) A person living a relative comfort, what is the passage’s chief warning about living such a ‘good land’?

### Daily Memory Verse and Prayer:

#### MONDAY

**Memory Verse:** *“Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years.”*— Deuteronomy 8:2

**Prayer:** Lord, thank You for Your faithful guidance through every season of our lives. Help us remember Your goodness and trust You even in wilderness moments.

#### TUESDAY

**Memory Verse:** *“And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness.”* — Isaiah 35:8

**Prayer:** Father, lead us in the path of holiness and righteousness today. Keep our hearts focused on You and help us walk faithfully in Your ways.

**WEDNESDAY**

**Memory Verse:** *“They were too good for this world.”* — Hebrews 11:38

**Prayer:** Lord, give us courage to remain faithful no matter the cost. Strengthen us to live with perseverance and hope as we follow You.

**THURSDAY**

**Memory Verse:** *“Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.”* — Hebrews 12:1

**Prayer:** Father, help us not to grow weary in our journey of faith. Fill us with endurance and keep our eyes fixed firmly on You.

**FRIDAY**

**Memory Verse:** *“You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”*— Mark 1:11

**Prayer:** Lord, thank You for Your love and acceptance through Christ. Help us live each day secure in Your presence and guided by Your Spirit.

**SATURDAY**

**Memory Verse:** *“At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness.”*— Mark 1:12

**Prayer:** Father, when we face testing and difficult seasons, remind us that You are with us. Strengthen our faith and lead us safely through every challenge.

**Family Devotion: Walking the Wilderness Road:** Compiled by: Jenny Blake

**Scriptures**

- Deuteronomy 8:2–10
- Isaiah 35:8–10
- Hebrews 11:35–38
- Mark 1:9–13

**Worship Song**

**"Way Maker"** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJCV\\_2H9xD0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJCV_2H9xD0)

This song reminds us that even when we cannot see what God is doing, He is still working and guiding us through difficult seasons.

**Opening Question**

Ask everyone: **"Have you ever been lost, or walked on a path where you didn't know what was around the next corner?"** Allow everyone to share.

Then ask: **"How did it feel when someone helped guide you?"**

Explain that sometimes life feels like walking through a wilderness - a difficult place where we feel unsure, tired, or afraid. But God promises to be with us every step of the way.

**Short Devotion**

The Bible often talks about the wilderness. It was not a place people chose to visit for fun! It was hot, dry, and difficult. Yet God used the wilderness to teach His people to trust Him. In Deuteronomy 8, Moses reminds God's people that during their wilderness journey, God provided food, protection, and guidance. The wilderness was not punishment, it was preparation. Even Jesus spent time in the wilderness. In Mark 1, after His baptism, He was led into the wilderness where He was tested. Before Jesus began His ministry, God used that time to strengthen Him.

Sometimes our wilderness looks like:

- A disappointment

- A difficult friendship
- A family struggle
- Feeling lonely
- Waiting for answers

The wilderness can feel hard, but it is often where we learn to trust God the most.

Isaiah reminds us that God makes a highway through the wilderness. He does not leave us lost forever. He leads us safely home. Walking the Wilderness Road means trusting God when the path is difficult and believing that He is using every step to grow our faith.

### Discussion Time

#### Younger Children (Ages 4–8)

1. What is a wilderness?
2. Who helped God's people in the wilderness?
3. Who was with Jesus in the wilderness?
4. What can we do when we feel scared or worried?

#### Older Children & Teens

1. Why do you think God sometimes allows wilderness seasons?
2. What can we learn during difficult times?
3. How does Jesus' experience in the wilderness encourage us?
4. When have you seen God help you through a hard season?

### Family Activity

#### Wilderness Survival Kit

Give each family member a piece of paper and draw a backpack. Inside the backpack, write or draw things that help us on our faith journey:

- Prayer
- Bible reading
- Worship
- Family
- Church
- Faith
- Hope
- Trust in God

Discuss: **"Which of these do you need most right now?"**

Remind everyone that just as travellers need supplies, Christians need spiritual tools to help them follow Jesus.

### Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for being with us on every part of our journey. When life feels difficult, help us to trust You. Teach us to depend on You in the wilderness and remind us that You never leave us alone. Strengthen our faith, fill us with hope, and guide our steps each day. Amen.

### Family Challenge for the Week

Whenever something difficult happens this week, pause and pray: **"Jesus, help me trust You on this part of the journey."**

At the end of the week, share one moment when you saw God helping you through a challenge.

**Remember:** The wilderness is not the end of the journey. It is often where God does His deepest work in our hearts.