



## myth of self sufficiency

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There was a season of my life when as much as I *intended* to read my Bible regularly, I just kept failing at making it happen. My schedule would get too full, I'd get distracted, Netflix would be too alluring, or I'd open my Bible and find myself falling asleep, you name it. I was sharing about this struggle with a friend who immediately said, "SAME!" and so we decided this was going to be the birth of a Bible reading group. We started gathering once a week simply to ensure that *at least* once a week we were sitting with our Bibles open and letting it speak into our lives. Sometimes we would read out loud with each other, sometimes we would just sit in the same room and read on our own. Quickly, more and more people joined us and we found communal ways to read with, to, and at times, for each other. Some of my favorite encounters with the Bible happened in that group.

It seems like most of my favorite stories in life include the element of community - journeying together: Hansel and Gretel, Frodo and Sam, the Pevensie children, Christian and Hopeful from *Pilgrim's Progress*. The beauty of the Christian life is that we were never meant to do it alone, and especially in the times when our strength fails us. Reaching out to those who are on the journey with us can be the very place we encounter God and learn what He has for us. Sometimes our faith can feel like an act of foraging for food, looking under rocks and in bushes for nutrients to sustain us; it's surprising how much more effective that effort is when we have someone to do it with.

### read

Luke 24:13-35

Hebrews 10:23-25

### reflect & journal

1. As you read the Luke 24 passage, circle (or make note of) all of the communal words (together, us, they, each other, etc.). What do you notice? Use your imagination to put yourself in the shoes of one of the companions. How would the experience have been different if you had been alone? What were the two able to do together (or for each other) that they couldn't have done on their own?
2. What is the encouragement of Hebrews 10:23-25? What function does it claim Christian companionship serves? Depending on your translation, you may have any number of words used to describe how we are to "spur" or "prod" each other to love and good works (yes, think cowboy spurs). The original Greek word means: stimulation, provocation, irritation, angry dispute, and it comes from the idea of not letting up. Why do you think this particular word is used?
3. How might Christian companionship help "spur you on"? How might you be called to be that same force in someone else's life? How does that kind of spiritual companionship have the power to hold each other to our faith through practice?
4. When you think of spiritual practices in your life, would having someone to practice with help or hurt? How so? Who has, does, or could be that kind of companion to you as you engage in spiritual practices? Maybe it is a mentor, a friend, a sibling, or a peer you have yet to get to know very well. How can you build into that/those relationships to develop the fellow forager you need?

### pray

- Pray that God would continue to direct the relationship(s) you thought of. If it is difficult to think of someone, pray that God would give you eyes to see His provision for you in this area.
- Pray for the courage to seek out or initiate where you may need to.
- Perhaps you've made attempts at doing this in the past but for whatever reason it has gone poorly or been difficult. If this is the case, pray that God would give you healing and courage to try again.