



Prayer walk in the Caledonian Forest, Northern Scotland

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Special Edition—Prayer Pilgrimage 1

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Prayer Pilgrimage



A Mountain Path in the Cairngorms

“Blessed is the one whose strength is in You, whose heart is set on pilgrimage.” - Psalm 84:5

Pilgrimage – With God in search of God.

Friday, September 27, 2024

Dear Praying Friends,

Greetings from Siem Reap, Cambodia

It has been hard to formulate words to describe how God led us and how we experienced His presence and interaction in our lives since we returned from our Desert Pilgrims prayer pilgrimage in Northern Scotland. It may take a bit more time to process, but I thought I would begin by sharing a few thoughts and some resources with you. I do want to thank all those who prayed for us while we were in Scotland. I had never attempted something like this, and I don't think any of the four of us had a clear idea of what to expect. Imagine, unplugging for 21 days and being still enough to listen to God's still and quiet voice for that long. No email, no surfing on the phone, no work except the business of living... cooking, cleaning up and chopping wood.

So upon arriving, it took a few days to settle and allow our distracted minds and wandering hearts to begin to anchor in God and His Word. But right away, God began to do things we neither asked for or imagined. For me, it was an amazing, transformative experience. “In what way?” would be the next question. Through spending time in personal and collective prayer, through our walks in the Caledonian forests and traversing Highland mountains, through meeting God's people, through spending time in community together and sharing what God was saying to us through His Word, through seeking to worship Him in spirit and truth and through the Lectio 365 podcasts and devotionals we listened to each day, we found ourselves experiencing God's presence and yet longing for more. I call this experience “On Pilgrimage.” With God in search of God.

Perhaps what God used to speak most deeply to me was spending time in the Psalms and walking in His creation. But also, the Lectio 365 21-day podcast on Pilgrimage, exploring the lives of the Celtic saints Columba, Aidan and Cuthbert, probably impacted me the most. The lessons the producer experienced on his 300 mile pilgrimage from the Scottish island of Iona to the holy island of Lindisfarne in Northumbria, England in the footsteps of Aidan of Iona, spoke deeply to me about what God is waiting to do with us as we endeavor towards a lifestyle of prayer-fueled mission.

In the next month or so I will continue to share some of the lessons I learned and what I experienced, but in the meantime I would passionately challenge you to join on a pilgrimage of your own. Perhaps you can't take 3 weeks, but we asked ourselves the question, “What can we do?” On the next page you will find some resources to help you start your own journey. I believe we all need to experience more of God in this turbulent world where we are distracted and bombarded by so much noise and so many voices. His presence and peace await those who will diligently search for Him in stillness.

A fellow Pilgrim,

Joel

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Resources for your Pilgrimage Journey

Are you overwhelmed with the cacophony of the “Kingdom of Noise”? I found this quote on the internet:

“In C.S. Lewis’ The Screwtape Letters, the “senior demon” Screwtape reveals one very interesting plan of the devil. In order to drive us away from God Satan chooses to distract us with “Noise.” He knows that if we are overrun by countless distractions that we will be unable to hear the voice of God in silence.”

God is waiting to teach us His rhythms of grace, to help us on this pilgrimage as we journey through the kingdom of noise. We can experience His peace and assurance when we meet Him in the secret place of His presence. But we must first “be still and know that He is God.”

After arriving in Nethy Bridge, we met some believers in the local Church of Scotland who introduced us to a 21-day series from Lectio 365 (This is a devotional and prayer app from 24/7 Prayer available for free from your app store). We were immediately impressed by how it meshed beautifully with where we were and what the Lord was preparing to show us. Each daily devotional is around 10 minutes. Here is the description from the series:

Join Pete Greig as he travels 300 miles in the footsteps of the seventh-century Celtic saint Aidan, all the way from the Holy Island of Iona in Scotland to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne in England.

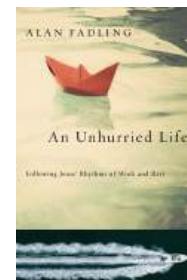
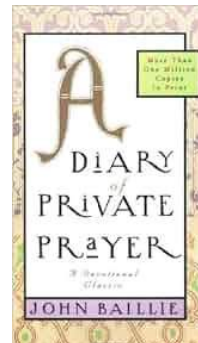
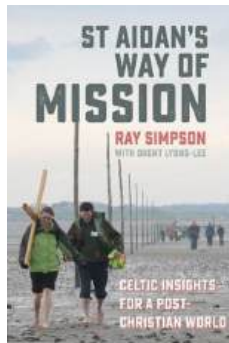
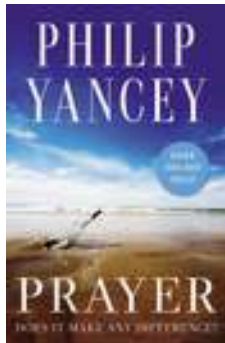
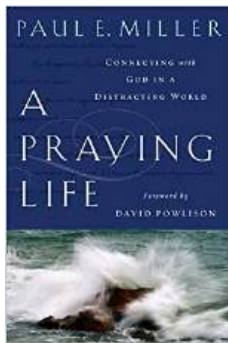
‘Pilgrimage | A Lectio 365 Series’ is a 3-week series of daily devotionals recorded on the road throughout this prayer adventure, immersing you in the sights and sounds of some of the oldest and most beautiful Christian sites in Europe.

Pray the Bible along with Pete as he shares insights and reflections from Aidan’s Way and explores how, in a contemporary context, we can know Christ and make Him known today.

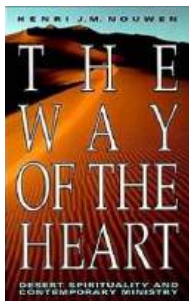
Take a break from the “Noise”. Here are 4 resources which will provide you with the full experience:

- [Pilgrimage | A 21-day Lectio 365 Series](#) with corresponding PDF files which can be downloaded before listening
- A [21-day video log playlist](#) on YouTube with a video from the Pilgrimage Way featuring Pete Greig and Rich Dawson as they travel together on the Pilgrimage Way.
- A YouTube playlist of [Pilgrim Songs by Rich Dawson](#) with songs from the journey
- A [24/7 Prayer Course](#) as a video-podcast, 8 sessions around 20 minutes each, with Pete Greig. An excellent exploration into the many facets of prayer, including adoration, petition, intercession, unanswered prayer, contemplation, listening and spiritual warfare.

Here are some of the books which might help you on your journey. Happy Pilgrimage! *Joel*



A page from the Lindisfarne illuminated gospels



“Bear not a single care thyself,
One is too much for thee.
The work is Mine, and Mine alone,
Thy work is to rest in me.”
~Hudson Taylor

“I am not in control.
I am not in a hurry.
I walk in faith and hope.
I greet everyone with peace.
I bring back only what God gives me.”
~ A Franciscan prayer

