

INCLUDES ACCESS  
TO EIGHT VIDEOS



A  
AN INTERACTIVE  
JOURNEY  
GUIDE THROUGH  
WITH  
THE HOLY LAND  
JESUS



BOB GOFF

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**BOB GOFF**

**150** YEARS STRONG  
DAVID COOK

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# HOW THE STOPS WORK

All are invited to join this ride. You can be a theology student, a tire-shop employee, or a Bible study group full of people from all walks of life. You can enjoy this book on your own, with a partner, or with a group. You can even do this study alone first and then invite some friends to join you and do it a second time. Everyone is welcome on this trip because God has a beautiful, whimsical, and wild plan for us all. To really get our spiritual juices flowing and jump into the locations we'll visit, you'll find introspective questions, fun activities, and group discussion prompts. Allow God to use this book to guide you through the Holy Land as both He and you see fit. Here are a few tools and handy reference points you'll discover along the way:

- **Map:** At the beginning of each stop, you'll find a map that shows where we're going and just how far we've come. Feel free to make fun notes or doodles about both physical and personal landmarks or anything else you want to remember along the way.

- **Videos:** At each stop, you'll find a video that allows you to visit that place in the Holy Land with me. We'll experience the sights, sounds, and atmosphere, and we'll learn cool historical and theological details about it. You can watch alone or with friends. Choose your journey and let's go!
- **Find Your Friends:** Have you ever used the Find My Friends app on your iPhone? It's an app that allows you to share your location in real time with other people. In this Bible study, the Find Your Friends section asks you to do the same—pause for a moment and see what you can share with others about what God is teaching you on your journey in real time. Shift from a “me” mindset to a “we” one, and use these sections to guide group discussions and spark ideas for taking the message into the world around you.
- **Read Your Map:** In these sections, we're talking about the road map for every Christian's life: the Bible. Here, we'll read what God's Word has to say about the places, events, and people we'll be learning about on our trip.
- **Drop a Pin:** Just as you might drop a pin on your phone to share your location, in these sections you're going to pause and take a good look at where you are on this journey. Take this space to reflect and get honest with God, yourself, and your group so you can keep moving in the direction you want to go.
- **Personal Travel Log:** At the end of each section, you'll find space to write or sketch about what you've learned at each stop. Dig deep. Write a few notes or a prayer. This is *your* log, so create it how you feel led to best document the adventure God takes you on.
- **Extend Your Stay:** If you're just not ready to leave yet, scan the QR code and you'll find more relevant (and fun) information for each stop. Get in on the action! Visit the links provided to explore live webcams or other fascinating videos from some of these historic spots. Take a moment to see what I saw, and put yourself into the dusty, holy, magnificent places around the Holy Land.
- **Recipes:** At the end of each stop, I'll share one of my favorite recipes from each location. Try these with your Bible study group, and eat together before or after your gathering, cook with your family and share what you've learned, or get creative and enjoy on your own. Nothing puts you into these sites like experiencing

them with your senses. While the videos provide the visuals, these recipes will bring in the delicious aromas and tastes of different parts of the Holy Land. (You can also download each recipe by scanning the QR code.)

A note about Scripture citations: The Bible quotations in this study are generally taken from the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible. As the most widely used Bible translation in the world, it is the easiest for us all to understand. However, you are more than welcome to look up any of these passages in your favorite translation.

Now ... let's get started!

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Capernaum





.....STOP 1

# INVITING EVERYONE INTO COMMUNITY IN CAPERNAUM

## Bob's Travel Log

The first stop on our trip is Capernaum. It's remarkable to be in the central location Jesus used for His ministry. I mean, Jesus walked, taught, and performed miracles right here in this town! I can almost see Him strolling on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee behind me and calling out to two fishermen, Peter and Andrew, as they cast their nets. "Come, follow Me!" Jesus shouted. And guess what? They dropped their nets and became fishers of men. I wonder if that discarded net is buried under centuries of sand somewhere close by.

Since Capernaum is a former trading center, there are ancient ruins everywhere. We will explore the remains of synagogues, the site thought to be Peter's house, and other archaeological sites around the village. Even before we get started on this trip, I can feel a sense of serenity in the

beach air. It's like you can tell that Jesus touched this place and its people, making Capernaum live up to its name: a joining of the word *caper* (meaning "village") and the name *Nabum* (meaning "rest").<sup>1</sup>

There are layers upon layers of evidence that Jesus made an incredible impact on this place, and I'm excited to see how He changes our lives on this trip too. Let's go!

It's time to watch the video for this lesson.

Settle in for a few minutes and scan the QR code (access code: Journey).



In the video, I'm sitting in the location of Peter's mother-in-law's house. That's amazing, isn't it? Walking in the footsteps of the people we read about in Scripture really makes the Bible come to life. I want to shout, "What? I can't believe it. This is all real!"

I hope God gives you several of these "aha moments" on this journey through the Holy Land. I hope He blows your socks off as we discover together where we're at in life and where God may be taking us. So, before we keep going, let's pause (always a good idea on a long trip) and reflect.

## Drop a Pin

- **Where are you right now in relation to what I spoke about in this section's video? Excited? Curious? Lost? Jot down your thoughts in the space below.**

## FINDING MORE THAN TREE-LEVEL FAITH



### Read Your Map

They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man's eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?"

He looked up and said, "I see people; they look like trees walking around."

Once more Jesus put his hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. Jesus sent him home, saying, "Don't even go into the village." (Mark 8:22–26)

As we begin our tour, let's think about this story of the blind man in the city of Bethsaida (near Capernaum). In ancient times, blindness would have made this man's life very difficult. This man couldn't fish like all his neighbors. He couldn't work the land to farm and provide food. He would have been fully reliant on others. Maybe he was a beggar. On top of this, his culture associated sickness and blindness with sin. People believed that hardship was punishment from God. This blind man was an outcast.

But he wasn't without support. When news reached Bethsaida that a healer and prophet named Jesus was in town, some friends scooped up the blind man and led him to Jesus.

I want friends like that, don't you? I need people in my life who, when they see me hurting, don't leave me or judge me but get me closer to Jesus. Friends can hold us, but only Jesus can heal us.

- **Take a moment to identify a few of the friends who hold you until Jesus heals you.**

## Group Discussion Prompt



Look back at Mark 8:23 and fill in the blank:

He took the blind man \_\_\_\_\_

and led him \_\_\_\_\_

Don't you love this detail? Jesus didn't make this suffering man a spectacle. He gently led him somewhere private to minister to him.

If you were the blind man, you would have felt Jesus' hand guiding you and heard the crunch of gravel under your feet as He led you out of the village. You might've questioned your hearing—and Jesus' methods—when you heard Him spit and put His hands on you. I'm sure you would've been shocked. You might have been equally astonished when Jesus asked you, "Do you see anything?" and you did!

- ▶ Has Jesus ever surprised you? Have His ways shocked you? In those times, what did He do?
- ▶ Have you ever been caught off guard by a friend giving you an incredible gift or a stranger doing something nice for you? What happened?
- ▶ Take another look at Mark 8:24. How did the blind man respond to Jesus? What did he see at first?

• Now write down any names that come to mind of friends who will bring you closer to Jesus. (If you can't think of any right now, that's okay! Write down a description of a friend you would like to have.)

Every time I've read this, I've wondered what reference this man had for trees. Maybe he had seen trees before as a child and lost his sight later in life. Who knows? What we do know is that after Jesus' first touch he could see some but not completely. He could've lied and told Jesus, "Yay! I can see!" and moved on. He had the option to accept only partial sight and say, "Good enough. This is so much better than what I had." But he didn't. He was honest, and that led Jesus to offer him a second touch.

• Look at the end of our passage in Mark 8. After Jesus put His hands on the man's eyes a second time, what happened?

It's as if the blind man had enough faith in Jesus to get him halfway there, but when he literally started to see that Jesus could heal, his faith needle jumped to the max. He was ready for a full healing on that second try.

- **What do you have only tree-level faith about right now?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **What do you think might be holding you back from fully believing that God will come through?**

Reflecting on this man's story of healing leads us to questions we must ask ourselves: Are we being real with Jesus? Are we telling Him what we actually need? Let's be honest for a minute.

- **In the space below, write down what you want to ask Jesus for (guidance, healing, hope, relief from anxiety and depression, something for your children or a family member ... anything at all!).**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Now jot down any areas where you need a "second touch" from Jesus. Maybe cancer has returned, your finances are going downhill again, you're revisiting that addiction, you've explored different religions but now you're ready for a relationship with Jesus, or you feel called to petition God again with a prayer you'd given up on. Let it out in the space below, because what we see in Mark 8 is that Jesus doesn't mind honesty and a second ask.**



## Drop a Pin

- To see where you're at right now in life, answer the question that Jesus asked the blind man: Do you see anything? In your relationships, thought patterns, and environment, what do you notice is going on? Is there any area where you can see God at work in your life? What is He doing? Jot down your thoughts in the space below.

## IF A DOOR DOESN'T OPEN, TEAR OFF THE ROOF



### Read Your Map

One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."  
(Luke 5:17–20)

The Capernaum/Bethsaida area must've had numerous suffering people, because we again see a disadvantaged man who was brought to Jesus by his companions. Lives were dramatically impacted by good friendships!

In our previous story, the blind man seemed to encounter Jesus outside. But in Luke 5 the paralyzed man faced the obstacle of a crowd surrounding Jesus in a house.

It doesn't take much investigating at these ancient sites to realize that a home in biblical times would have been a simple stone-and-mud-brick structure. Homes were small too. There was no giant living room for a crowd to gather in or a big backyard where people could pull up a lawn chair to hear Jesus teach. The crowd on this day would have been spilling out of the tiny home into the courtyard.

This could have discouraged the paralyzed man's friends. As soon as they realized it was going to be nearly impossible to push their friend and his mat through the crowd to get into the house, they could have said, "Oh, well, God closed the door," and justified not trying any harder. But they didn't.

While the walls of a home in Capernaum were pretty solid, the ceilings were not. They were made mostly of straw and dirt. So this man's friends decided that if the door was closed, they'd just have to tear off the roof.

That's sometimes the path for us, as well: If a door doesn't open, maybe you should tear off the roof.

Jesus, in the middle of His message, must have felt dirt hitting His face. Straw would have fallen and become tangled in His hair. As He looked up, He would have seen not only a paralyzed man descending through the torn ceiling but also the determined and desperate faces of the man's friends.

Sometimes I think we give up too easily. We look at the obstacles in our path and say, "Oh, well, God closed that door." But what if He wants us to tear off the roof? What if this is our opportunity to activate something in our lives or the lives of others and do something about what we need?

- **In the space below, write about a time you gave up on something too early.**

- **Are you tempted to give up on something right now?**

- What might it look like for you to tear off the roof and get creative about activating an answer to your prayer?

Discuss your ideas with the group.



## Find Your Friends

Look back at Luke 5:20 and fill in the blanks.

When Jesus saw \_\_\_\_\_ faith, he said,  
 “\_\_\_\_\_, your sins are forgiven.”

When Jesus saw *whose* faith? Not the faith of the paralyzed man but the faith of his friends. Can you believe that? We have so much power as friends! We can be the ones to lower someone in front of Jesus, and He will move in their lives because of the actions we took on their behalf.

As I shared in the video, the best way I’ve found to lower somebody in front of Jesus is just to be available to them. You don’t have to preach at people or come up with some crazy way to get them to come to church with you. You don’t have to have all the answers to their questions. Just become a safe place for someone. Have meaningful conversations.

- **Identify someone or a few people in your life you can carry to Jesus; write their name(s) in the space below.**

Here are a few ideas for meaningful conversation starters (you can also use the video for reference). Fill in the blank lines with your own questions.

- What was it like to grow up being you?
- What were the stories you made up to explain why life is sometimes complicated or painful?
- What are the rules you made up then that you still live by today?

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Jesus Christ has made every believer a new creation. He is taking us on a terrific adventure of walking as new creations. And the thing about being a new creation is that you have to do stuff differently, because, as I say, “If you just keep doing the same thing, there ain’t nothing new about that.” And no one displayed this better than the disciples.



## Drop a Pin

- Has there ever been a time when you had to help carry a friend through a hard season? Has anyone had to support you as you healed? What happened? What impact did it have on your life? Discuss your answers with the group.

## Group Discussion Prompt



If you’re doing this Bible study with a group, you can start talking about these questions with each other. Also, you can go back through the list of names you just wrote down and start building trust and having meaningful and powerful discussions.

- ▶ Look up 2 Corinthians 5:17 in your Bible and write down what it says.

## PUT DOWN YOUR NETS; PICK UP NEW LIFE



### Read Your Map

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” At once they left their nets and followed him.

Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. (Matt. 4:18–22)

It’s wild that in a split-second decision, Peter and Andrew went from fishermen to fishers of men. They became entirely new creations the moment they decided to follow Jesus. And the same thing happens to us.

Look at our Scripture again and fill in the blanks:

\_\_\_\_\_ they left their nets and \_\_\_\_\_  
 him.... Jesus called them, and \_\_\_\_\_  
 the boat and their father and \_\_\_\_\_ him. (vv. 20, 22)

These disciples reveal that we are radically in charge of our lives and decisions. This means that you and I too can immediately decide to drop our nets (all those lackluster things we have been chasing in life, like success and money and careers and earthly satisfaction) and begin to pick up hope, love, grace, faith, and wonder. We can go from moving in one direction to pivoting toward Jesus and never looking back.

- **What nets have you been carrying that are weighing you down?**

- **What do you think it would look like for you to set them aside and make the radical decision to start following Jesus?**

Now, following Jesus is going to take some determination. I'm sure these men had their doubts and questions. They didn't even fully know who Jesus was yet, after all. However, they decided to take this journey with Jesus just one step at a time. And that's what we're doing here today: walking with Jesus one step at a time. Through Capernaum and beyond.



## **Personal Travel Log**

Reach deep. In Capernaum, God is calling us into being honest with Him. He's calling us into healing relationships with friends. And He's calling us into new life by urging us to let go of our old habits. As you reflect on all you have learned, consider these questions:

- **Where do you see yourself in relation to these Scriptures? Do you need to be carried by friends right now? Do you need to pick up someone else's mat and bring them to Jesus? What net do you need to cast aside to pick up all that God has for you?**
  
- **Where do you see God at work in your life and in the lives of others around you?**

- What is God calling you to do in light of our time in Capernaum?
- What direction do you think He wants you to go next?



## Pray

Jesus,

You are the One who opens every blind eye. I don't want to settle for "tree-level faith"; I want the fullness of what You have to offer. Will You please offer me a second touch in the areas where I need it?

Thank You for the friends who carry me to You when I can't walk. Teach me to be that kind of friend too. May my faith help someone else find the healing and hope they need.

If, like the disciples, I need to leave something behind, please help me have the faith to let it go so I can walk freely in You.

You've already met me here in this journey—through Bethsaida, Capernaum, and the pages of Your Word. Now send me forward—changed, honest, healed, and ready.

Amen.



## Extend Your Stay

If you want to spend a little more time at this stop, scan the QR code here (access code: Journey). You can take a tour through Capernaum, download a digital recipe, and find cool links.

