

# KINGDOM JOURNEYS

REDISCOVERING THE LOST SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE



## Kingdom Journeys: Rediscovering the Lost Spiritual Discipline

*Seth Barnes*

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## Kingdom Journeys: Rediscovering the Lost Spiritual Discipline Seth Barnes

Do you feel like you've been missing out on the abundant life? Most people do. If you take a look at the life of Jesus, you see that he called his disciples to follow him - on a physical journey, not just a spiritual one. Hundreds of books talk about our faith walk as a journey. But few delve into the subject of how a physical journey can reinvent and revitalize our spiritual journey with God. Kingdom Journeys is about the journeys we all take, presented in a series of "initiation steps" by disciples who are taking serious the call to leave everything and simply "go." This book is an exploration of an ancient spiritual discipline we must recover - if we're going to truly follow Jesus.

## Kingdom Journeys: Rediscovering the Lost Spiritual Discipline Details

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Author : Seth Barnes

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## From Reader Review Kingdom Journeys: Rediscovering the Lost Spiritual Discipline for online ebook

### Becky says

Kingdom Journeys made some really good points and had some great "highlighter" moments. The personal stories from various people were incredible. However, I felt like the writing style was a little choppy and repetitive, and many of the chapters and sub-chapters could have been condensed, absorbed into other chapters, or eliminated entirely. Sometimes there didn't seem to be an overall driving force or narrative, and I felt like I was reading a bunch of blog posts mashed together. I definitely agree with the premise and ideas presented, however, and I think it's worth a read.

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### Joe Iovino says

I found Kingdom Journeys: Rediscovering the Lost Spiritual Discipline a compelling read. I used it for my morning devotional for a couple of weeks after downloading it on the recommendation of a blogger I follow. I was not sure what to expect, but love reading about spiritual disciplines as I seek to grow in my own discipleship of Jesus Christ.

No doubt, Seth Barnes is passionate about Kingdom journeys, which he defines primarily as trips to foreign lands where one is compelled to trust God and God alone. The purpose of the journey is to have the traveler's world turned upside down as he/she learns the plight of the poor, to do without many common comforts for 21st century Americans, and to be part of a community - giving and receiving assistance.

I was inspired by some of the stories - people traveling to remote areas and giving of themselves to bring healing and hope to those in need. Other stories I found far less compelling - traveling to Texas on a bicycle to attend a worship event. I believe this is because Barnes and I are in different places when it comes to mission work. While I see the benefits to the servant, I want that as a byproduct of service, not the goal. I'm not convinced Jesus sent the disciples for their sake, which I took to be one of Barnes' premises, but rather to change the world for the Kingdom of God which had come in Christ Jesus.

That said, if you are considering a mission project, feeling restless in your faith, or if you know God is calling you to something more than what is before you, Kingdom Journeys is a great place to start exploring.

I read the Kindle edition, but that's not an option to select.

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### Mark says

I could not force myself to finish this book. So take the rating I gave with that in mind.

I'm sure this could be a useful book to many, but there are likely to be many, like me, who simply do not connect with the premise: that we must leave and go on a journey in order to experience God and to find out identities. I say this as one who chose to leave a very comfortable life, plenty of friends, to a place of unknown future. I think that at the time of my restlessness I might have found that this book resonated with me. But now on the other side, I don't think it is for everyone.

Take the biblical example of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. They were not disciples that left their homes to

follow Jesus, but they were disciples and his friends nevertheless. They remained where they were and served Jesus in that way, by being a place where Jesus could return to. We take the gospel accounts and try to use them as direct examples, but we forget that only a few incidents of Jesus' life are actually recorded. We do not have record of how he spent most of his days, and we conveniently forget that he spent some 30 years at home. We fail to realize that the 3 years of Jesus' mission were highly condensed because he knew his time was short.

I'm not saying this book is bad. What I am saying is to take it with a grain of salt. It is not for everyone and it is not applicable to everyone. The author makes it sound like everyone should really do what he writes about.

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### **Emilie Blomberg says**

Seth Barnes, founder of Adventures in Missions, explains in his book how kingdom journeys are a largely underutilized spiritual discipline akin to fasting, worship, and service. Each of us is on a lifelong journey of knowing, loving, and serving God. Barnes uses anecdotes and Biblical examples to show that sometimes it takes a physical journey to complete a spiritual one.

Jesus took his disciples on a physical journey. After discipling them into maturity, he sent them out on the first "short term mission trips." They were instructed not to take food, money, or supplies and were forced to trust God completely to meet their needs. They were also given the power to drive out demons and heal in Jesus' name. When we embark on a similar kingdom journey, we encounter challenges that enable us to discover new truths about God, the world, and ourselves. It is a chance to break free from the ordinary and to examine our identity. When we are away from distractions, we learn to focus on the present and depend on God to meet our needs. In addition, being removed from our cultural comforts helps us examine our prejudices and ignorances. In Barnes' words, we must allow God to heal what is sick and poor inside us; then he will use us to reach the sick and poor in the world. As a result, our faith grows.

According to Barnes, there are three stages of a kingdom journey (AKA How to Change the World):

**Abandonment:** We must first leave behind home, family, friends, job, security, and comfort. We are choosing to give up control of our lives to God.

**Brokenness:** Personally seeing the needs of the world will break our hearts. We take some of the world's pain on ourselves because we are no longer ignorant of it.

**Dependence:** As our weaknesses are revealed, we become aware of areas of our lives that we need to give over to God. Self-knowledge drives us to dependence on him. We usually return to dependence on God when we have no other choice, but what can it look like to live in a state of continual dependence and trust instead of spiritual entropy?

Barnes points out that it is important to avoid the danger of a spiritual vacation instead of a Jesus-centered kingdom journey. Different from quitting or escaping, the goal of a kingdom journey is to surrender even more completely to God's will for our lives, seeking that he would use us to reach others. It is important to analyze why we are going, what we will be doing when we are there, and how our and others' lives will be changed. The central focus of a kingdom journey is on expanding God's reign in the world and in our own hearts.

Barnes has made it his life work to awaken a generation to understand that they can make a difference in the kingdom and grab hold of the abundant life Jesus offers us when we follow him wholeheartedly. He believes that kingdom journeys can show us our calling, as he has seen many World Racers go on to establish ministries, enter full-time missions, and commit their lives to making disciples.

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### **Jennine G. (Living On Purpose) says**

This book speaks of the literal, physical journeys many people have made on their path to follow Christ. There's something about seeing the world outside of your own that gives you a sense of the bigger picture. Since I have a husband, full time teaching job, and three busy children, it soon became apparent that an actual journey would be impossible right now. But as I read I began to think of close to home "journeys," such as volunteer work. The stories and ideas ruminated in my mind for a couple months and I knew that the right situation would come up if I waited for it.

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### **victoria says**

3.9!!!!

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### **Maria Keckler says**

Seth Barnes has written a needed book. It finally brings into focus the missing discipline that can transform us from the inside out like non-other. The book is rife with Aha! moments. The biggest one for me was that restlessness is a gift because it forces us to leave... to go on journeys. But there's a caveat, Barnes warns: "Restlessness is an itch that, if left unscratched, is a curse."

Seth Barnes presents life principles through the dozens of stories of people who have heeded the itch. The stories he knows are about missions, but this book is not just about missions. The examples illustrate transferable principles at the heart of the myriad of journeys we will take voluntarily -- or will be pushed into.

Kingdom Journeys inspires bravery and boldness. It invites the reader to welcome adventure and the conflict that will undoubtedly come when we are forced to let go of our comfort zone. It paints a picture of a life only available for the courageous few who are willing to depart from status quo and safety. It'll make you want to grab the boots off the cover and embark on your next kingdom journey.

I recommend it highly.

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### **Liz says**

This book grew on me. For the first few chapters I was unimpressed. *Kingdom Journeys* is a modern-day look at the value of pilgrimage in the life of a follower of Jesus. The author works for Adventures in Mission and uses examples of young adults who have come through his program (and World Race) to show how

leaving and journeying helps a person grow in their faith. I don't think short-term trips are all that beneficial for the countries/places that are receiving the short-term missionaries, but I understand the transformative value for the person who goes. I think this book is geared towards teenagers whose youth pastor hands them this book in hopes it will help them consider a more committed life of faith.

There's not a lot of scriptural back-up, but a lot of experiential stories.

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### **Amy E Patton says**

Kingdom Journey's by Seth Barnes is a must read for any parent of a World Racer and their family members. Frankly, it should also be a must read for any World Racer. Barnes explains the heart and purpose of the World Race- and any kingdom journey for that matter while also walking the reader through the process of kingdom journey. As a parent of a Racer, Kingdom Journey armed me with information that will help me counsel my daughter, it gave me information that will help me understand my Racer's experience and emotions, it also gave me information that will help me through the inevitable emotions I will face as I watch my daughter experience both the highs and lows that come with a journey such as the one she is on. Kingdom Journeys is far more than a manual on the World Race. It is an invitation to step into your own Kingdom Journey right where you are. It prompts thought provoking ideas and questions that caused me to evaluate my willingness to walk closer and more intimately with my Savior. I am grateful for the opportunity to not only watch my Racer go on a journey, I am grateful and excited that God invites me on a journey too. Seth Barnes book gave me a framework to see not only where I have been but where I am headed. I highly recommend Kingdom Journey to anyone who is wondering if there is more to this life than the status quo and the everyday mundane living. It might just spark a bit of restlessness to get moving within you!

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### **Rebekah Burder says**

Easy to read and relevant to my life. Read on a flight as I was leaving my life and moving to do volunteer work with Adventures in Missions in Europe. Very encouraging.

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### **Leigh Hudson says**

"When we abandon the things that give us comfort, God brings us to brokenness, which allows us to unpack the baggage others have saddled on us. We begin to discover our true self. Brokenness...strips away the false self. It allows God to transform us into a new creation."

When you come to the end of yourself, you are ready to surrender. Kingdom Journeys teaches you how to surrender and experience the pain and choose to stay in it as long as God is in it. As Barnes so aptly reminds us, "the cost of not surrendering is that you'll settle for a cheap substitute, never embracing God's best."

As someone who has been on several short-term mission trips and come back completely wrecked, I can tell you Kingdom Journeys is like water to a parched soul.

Kingdom Journeys is a great book for everyone wanting to live out their faith in Christ. Seth reminds us, "God sent every major hero in the Bible on a journey so they could be broken."

Do you need to be broken?

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## Russ says

I enjoyed this book. It is a fairly quick read, and very engaging. At its best it is a call for us to embrace our discontented restlessness and step out in faith, away from our comfort zones, and avail ourselves to Christ to be used as agents of transformation in the world. However, at its worst, it may be (mis)understood by some readers as a call to embrace an irresponsible, narcissistic venture into thrill-seeking and slum tourism that ultimately serves vain self-glory rather than the glory of God. Undoubtedly, the author intends for this book to speak to followers of Jesus, and that is why it is called KINGDOM Journeys. But I do not think the prerequisite of personal faith in Christ is clear enough star to finish. Though he uses Alexander Supertramp (of "Into the Wild" infamy) as a negative example, I'm afraid that some readers who have not fully surrendered to Christ, or who have but have not matured to a point of distinguishing our wishes from God's leadings, could come away from this book with the wrong idea. Discontent and restlessness are no sure signs that God is calling us out on a kingdom journey. They may be indicators that something is afoul in our souls -- something that needs to be remedied long before we would ever set out on a journey like this. The author seems to suggest that the journey could be the remedy for the ailments of our souls. He does not entertain the notion that those soul-ailments could be disastrous if they are not remedied before departure. But where a foundation of maturing faith in Jesus Christ is found, this book will challenge us to give ourselves fully to His mission without fear, reservation, or hesitation.

From my own experience with kingdom journeying, I have learned that it is one thing to embrace and endure the hardships that arise on journeys such as this, and to allow those adversities to produce brokenness and dependence in us; it is something altogether different to have a fool-hearty martyr complex that seeks hardship as an end in itself, as a thing to glory in. Some of the hardships of kingdom journeying are necessary and unavoidable. But where relief from those hardships (or prevention of them) can be easily found, it is foolish to ignore prevention or relief for the sole purpose of making things harder on yourself. Not all journeys are kingdom journeys, and it takes more than calling it a kingdom journey for it to serve kingdom ends. I don't think that the journey of a pair of restless students biking empty handed to a conference is worthy of comparison with other examples of those in the book who selflessly followed the call of God to the hard places of the world to serve "the least of these" in His name.

I was also a bit uncomfortable with some examples of following a subjective, "voice of God" experience without the important grounding of those experiences in the objective revelation of His word in Scripture. We must come to depend, not on our own inklings of what God may be saying to us, but on the things that He has undoubtedly inspired for us in His written word.

The book could be improved, from a literary perspective, by some helpful editorial critiques regarding redundancy, transitions, and resolution. Some stories are dropped without resolution, while the author moves off on a divergent path that is sometimes not clear to follow.

All that said, I think the overarching message of the book is one that needs to be heard by young and old alike. The book's moments of brilliance far outweigh its less-than-stellar moments. I recommend it for the benefit of "he who has ears to hear," and will be personally making use of it as I prepare myself and others to engage the nations on Kingdom Journeys.

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### **Christopher Taylor says**

Feel the yearning to travel? Has your life become mundane wanting more? Do you want to bring value and purpose to your life? If you have answered yes then you need to read this book. Kingdom Journeys is written with a personal touch and experience. Get ready to be charged with an inner desire to do something for the Kingdom through a personal relationship and walk with the command of the Lord. Read this.

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### **Brit says**

This book is simply jam packed with wisdom, insight and truth from the life experiences of those who were restless and went out seeking more. Incredibly relevant for a generation that has a lot of potential to be irrelevant. This book speaks to the restless soul who knows there is something more but just not sure what that is. A call to passion, a source of empowerment, it breaks down the practical pursuit of passion. An easy read but I would encourage everyone to slow down and really think about each chapter. It's easy to move on in the book without really grasping the challenging truth of what Seth Barnes is communicating. If you slow down, it could change your life. That is NOT an over-exaggeration.

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### **Marti Wade says**

Jesus called his disciples to follow him on a spiritual journey, but also a physical one. Seth Barnes asserts that there's something missing from a typical list of spiritual practices and disciplines. We've forgotten about pilgrimage. Kingdom Journeys promotes embracing "the gift of restlessness," leaving God's call to leave everything behind to go on a literal journey with God. It tells the stories of people, especially youth, who saw their lives transformed by mission trips and other faith-stretching adventures.

Discussion of ministry strategy or outcomes is limited. The author explains, "A kingdom journey is usually more about your own internal growth than the outward good you do. Of course, there is a balance here - you're the primary beneficiary of the journey, but the journey shows that you aren't the center of the universe. What you do - otherwise known as 'ministry' - teaches you that others have needs greater than you do. It helps put God in the driver's seat and compels you to go to him for answers to your questions and process."

Seth Barnes is the founder of Adventures in Missions, a discipleship-oriented mission organization. This book includes but it is not limited to the stories of participants in AIM's unusual 11-month program, The World Race.

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