

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

A Corner Shelf Book Club

Compiled by Madelyn Canada

“And yet, old friend, books do not age as you and I do. They will speak still when we are gone, to generations we will never see. Yes, the books must survive.”

- Corrie ten Boom

The (Suggested) How To Use Guide

Hello there, friend! I'm so glad you decided to join me on this journey (or shall I say pilgrimage) through *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

The Corner Shelf Book Club is designed to make it easy for you to invite a friend, a sibling, a child, or a parent to sit down with you and *enjoy* this book together while being mutually *encouraged*. Books are a treasure. They sweep us off on adventures while we sit in the comfort of our own homes beside the people we love. They are also powerful. Books tend to spark questions, that spark conversations, that change lives, and give us opportunities to share the love of Christ with our families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. They enable us to relate to one another's struggles and better encourage and sharpen each other. Books do *so much more* than distract us for a certain amount of time. They open doors to relationships and conversations that might just change the world for someone.

So that is my mission with The Corner Shelf Book Club: to encourage spiritual growth, mutual encouragement, and deep friendships over rich, Christ-centered literature.

I'm so glad you're here to join me.

This is simply a *suggested* guide on how to use the Corner Shelf Book Club Kit. The beauty of it, is that you can adjust and change and add to your hearts content to do what is best for *your* book club. If the kit isn't helpful to you, then ditch it. If you only want to use parts of it, toss the others in the garbage. This is designed to be a help to you as you seek to start your own book club. If it isn't a help, then please, don't feel guilty to just leave it alone and do your own thing.

You'll find in this kit

- a suggested schedule for your book club
- discussion questions for each week
- a memory verse for each week
- the tools to start your own Literary Journal

For this particular book club, I also have discussions and parallels for the two hymns being sung by the Happy Hymnody families for the summer of 2019. If you don't already participate in the Hymn of the Month Community, now is the perfect time to join. You can follow on Instagram @happyhymnody or search for the hashtag #hymnofthemoth to learn more.

The suggested schedule is to meet once a week, for a time of discussion, a selected reading together, and singing of the hymn. However, if you are doing it with just your own family, maybe reading and discussing a little each day would be better! Whatever works best for you!

As you learn what is best for your club, post online and share with the rest of us using the hashtag #thecornershelfbookclub or tag @the_corner_shelf! We would love to be able to glean from each others wisdom and experience! But I will strongly suggest *during* the actual meeting, please, put all the electronics somewhere else and focus on being with the people that are sitting across from and around you. These are moments you don't want to miss. Let's focus on remembering what we loved and learned, not necessarily what it looked like.

I hope this kit is a blessing to you as you embark on your own adventure. May hearts be encouraged, souls be strengthened, truths be taught, love be lavished, and God be glorified.

In Christ,

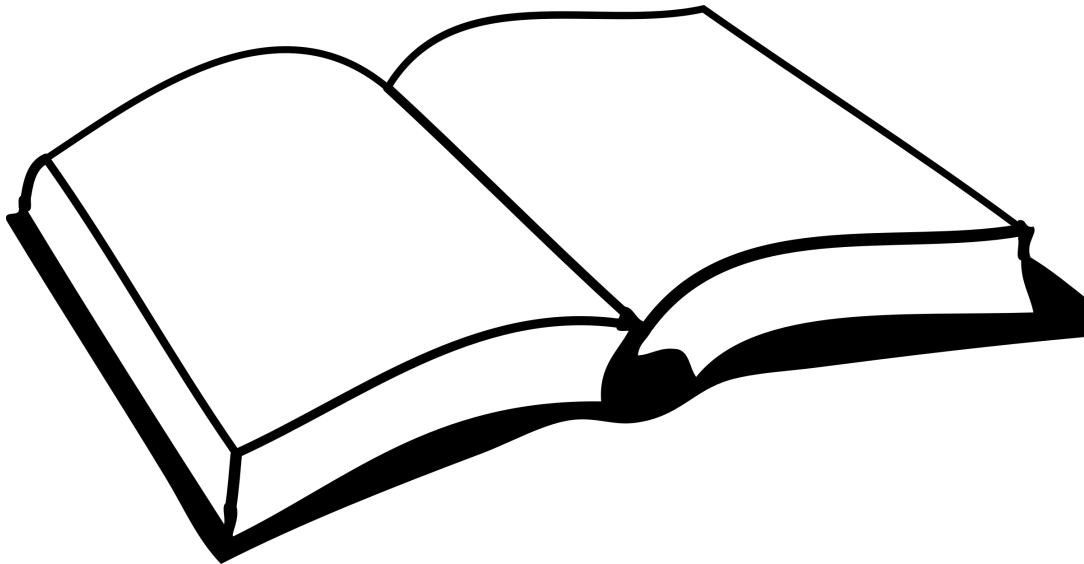
Madelyn

What Is a Literary Journal?

Have you ever read a book, and upon completion remembered there was a quote in there that you had absolutely loved, but now you can't remember what it was, or where in the book it was? Me too. It stinks.

A Literary Journal is a binder that you start and as you read through books, you can document your favorite quotes, parts, characters, thoughts, and questions. It's a keepsake of sorts, just for your reading adventures. With each book club kit, there will be Literary Journal pages to go along with the book and add to your binder.

Get a cheap binder, color a page for the front that makes you happy. Then insert Literary Journal pages as you read, and before long you'll have a treasured keepsake. You could do this as an individual, or as a club, or as a family. The possibilities are endless.



Week One: *The Pilgrim's Progress* Book Club

To read this week....

“To Live Upon God Who Is Invisible: The Life of John Bunyan by John Piper IX

Preface by John Newton (1776) XXXIX

Discussion Questions

1. On page XII, Dr. Piper writes, “In all my reading of Bunyan, what has gripped me most is his suffering and how he responded to it—what it made of him, and what it might make of us.” What do you think he means when he asks what Bunyan’s suffering might make of us?
2. Bunyan received an ordinary education for the poor, which really wasn’t much education at all. Still, *The Pilgrim’s Progress* is one of the world’s best selling and most popular books ever. If it wasn’t his refined English education that made him such a great writer, what was it?
3. John Bunyan wasn’t the only one to endure sorrow. Consider his wife, Elizabeth. What was it do you think, that gave her such strength?

Memory Verse

“Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; He makes my feet like the deer’s; He makes me tread on my high places.

To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments.”

-Habakkuk 3:17-19 ESV

Week Two: *The Pilgrim's Progress* Book Club

To read this week....

Chapter One: The Jail 1

Chapter Two: Conviction of the Necessity of Flying 5

Discussion Questions

1. What is it that Christian has discovered that troubles him to the point of inability to sleep at night?
2. Have you ever been burdened so by something? If so, how did you feel when people didn't take you seriously, and made light of your burden? Did it encourage or dishearten you?
3. Doing the right thing, more specifically following Christ, is often a hard thing to do. Christian was given many opportunities to turn back, and plenty of excuses and persuasions from Obstinate, but he kept on. Why was Christian so determined? What do you think fueled his earnest desire and commitment to leave?

Memory Verse

Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

-Acts 16:30-31 ESV

Week Three: *The Pilgrim's Progress* Book Club

To read this week....

Chapter Three: The Slough of Despond 9

Chapter Four: Evangelist Findeth Christian Under Mount Sinai, and Looketh Severely Upon Him 19

Discussion Questions

1. Pliable hears of the good things Christian is seeking, and decides to follow him. But when he discovers that this road Christian is taking is difficult and full of trial, he turns back. Are there times when you are easily dissuaded because the task at hand is harder than you imagined?
2. Christian's burden seems heavier after taking Mr. Worldly wiseman's advice. Why do you think this is the case? Whose advice sounded better at first glance, Evangelist or Worldly-wiseman?
3. Why can Mr. Legality offer no hope to Christian? Can he do anything to save himself? What hope does Evangelist offer?
4. What are some of the things the Interpreter shows Christian? What do they mean?

Memory Verse

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

-John 10:27-30 ESV

Week Four: *The Pilgrim's Progress* Book Club

To read this week....

Chapter Five: Proceeds to the Cross 39

Chapter Six: Christian Saluted by the Three Shining Ones 41

Discussion Questions

1. Christian rejoices in the beginning of chapter five, “He hath given me rest by His sorrow, and life by His death.” Then it tells us, “he stood still awhile to look and wonder; for it was very surprising to him, that the sight of the cross should thus ease him of his burden.” Have you ever stood still awhile to look and wonder at the salvation Christ offers us through His death and resurrection?
2. This month’s hymn is “O Love That Will Not Let Me Go.” The fourth verse sings, “O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee; I lay in dust life’s glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red, life that shall endless be.” How does this verse apply to Christian's wonder at the cross?
3. On page 43, Christian tells Formalist and Hypocrisy, “By laws and ordinances you will not be saved, since you came in not by the door. And as for this coat on my back, it was given me by the Lord of the place whither I go; and that, as you say, to cover my nakedness with.” What does Christian’s coat symbolize?

Memory Verse

But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

-1 Thessalonians 5: 8-11 ESV

Week Five: *The Pilgrim's Progress* Book Club

To read this week....

Chapter Six: The Hill of Difficulty 45

Chapter Seven: The Valley of Humiliation 61

Discussion Questions

1. “To go back is nothing but death; to go forward is fear of death, and life everlasting beyond it. I will yet go forward.” When you face difficulty, how do you want to respond initially? What do you do to remind yourself of the coming glory?
2. Christian struggled up the Hill of Difficulty, often giving into the temptation and falling down. There are times when we fall as well, but what a wondrous thing that God always stands ready to forgive us. What is an example of a time where you “fell” but the Lord was gracious to give you the strength to get back up, and keep moving forward?
3. How does Apollyon seek to discourage Christian in the Valley of Humiliation? What is Christian’s response? How is this true for believers tempted to be weighed down by the guilt and shame of their unfaithful past?

Memory Verse

For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city.

-Hebrews 11:14-16 ESV

A Literary Journal

Who Wrote it and Why?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

A Literary Journal

Noteworthy Quotes from *The Pilgrim's Progress*

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