

WALKING COMPANION TAKEAWAY

Key Point

You can't love or receive love from someone you don't know.

- 1) Do you feel you know Jesus on an intimate level, or do you feel you only know the Sunday Jesus, the one others tell you about? What do you think an intimate relationship with Jesus should look like?

- 2) Is God as your Father more of a faraway figure or a Dad who resides noticeably in your home and walks with you throughout your days?

- 3) Do you believe God will actually answer life's questions? If so, can you remember a time when you asked God a specific question, and He answered you?

- 4) Write a verse below that reminds you that God wants you to ask Him your questions. If nothing comes to mind, here are a few to consider: Jeremiah 33:3, James 1:5, and Matthew 7:7.

Key Point

The world we run to leaves us empty.

- 5) When we don't walk in an intimate relationship with Jesus, our only hope is to run to the world for answers, fulfillment, validation, relationship, comfort, safety, etc. What have you sought from the world that you now realize only Jesus can give?

- 6) In what ways has turning to the world to meet your needs shaped or misshaped you?

- 7) Have you known the open arms of the Father toward you, the prodigal, in a real and tangible way? If so, recount the story of your return.

Key Point

The Gardener weeds our lives with a gentle hand.

When we try the easy route and snap off an unsightly weed at the surface, the weed will certainly grow back. The only way to fully get rid of it is to dig deep down to the root.

- 8) How do you now view God when you mess up or fail? Do you see Him as a loving Father with a gentle hand who wants to help get you back on track or as a condemning Father with a harsh hand who is disappointed in you? Have you always seen Him as you currently do?

- 9) What are some weeds you have had or currently experience in your life's garden? For example, doubt, anger, anxiety, unforgiveness, pride, greed, gossip, bitterness, substance abuse, co-dependency, selfishness, fear, insecurities, adultery, pornography, etc.

- 10) Were there times when you tried to remove the weeds yourself rather than working with the Gardener? Did you find success in your own efforts?

- 11) Have you known the tenderness of the Gardener as you've worked through issues in your life? What are some examples?

It may take many years to overcome some of the costs and consequences of living a life apart from God. Even if your weeds aren't related to a prodigal season, weeds spring up in every life. The work you do alongside the Gardener will be a lifelong process. Some pulled weeds never return, while others rear their ugly heads again and again. We never have a weed-free garden.

Key Point

God is the God of all your needs.

- 12) The Facets of God pages list ways He meets all your needs. Choose one or two of the entries and make note of them below, along with why they speak to you.

In the days and weeks ahead, prepare your heart for an invasion by God as you invite Him into your situation. Watch for Him. Expect to get to know Him more. His intention is an intimate relationship with you.