



A 30-Day Bible Reading Plan to Fight **PURPOSELESSNESS**

How This Plan Works

During the six week Adrift series we explored Spiritual Apathy and the six main roots. In this 30 day Bible reading plan we'll push back on the quiet question, "What's the point?". It's structured as the same rhythm that you learned in the Adrift study: 1 anchor passage a week, read every day, with a second passage alongside it on most of the days. You'll need a Bible, a pen, and about 10 minutes a day. Scripture takes that question seriously; a whole book of the Bible asks it. So this plan will walk you toward the purpose God has already given you, starting with the ordinary days you're living now.

Day 1: Drop Anchor

Read the background, then read the anchor passage twice, once silently, once out loud. Write down the word or phrase that catches you. That's the whole assignment.

Day 2: Anchor Out

Read the anchor again, then a related passage. How do the 2 passages explain each other?

Day 3: Anchor Out

Read the anchor again, then a passage that gets personal. Where does this name something true about you right now?

Day 4: Anchor Out

Read the anchor again, then a passage built for prayer. Turn both texts into prayer, line by line.

Day 5: Return To Anchor

Read the anchor one last time in 2 different translations. What do you hear now that you didn't on Day 1? Then look back at your weekly challenge.

Weekly Challenges

Each week opens with 2 challenges. Pick 1 and carry it all week. They start close to shore and push further out every week, so by Week 6 it should feel like a real stretch. Some will look familiar from the study guide, and that's on purpose, since a good practice is worth repeating. Tell your triad or a friend which one you chose so somebody asks.

Read It In Context

Each week day 1 opens with a few lines of background: who wrote the passage, to whom, and what was going on. Read that first, and when a second passage gives you a range of verses, read the whole range. The setting keeps us from making the Bible say whatever we'd like it to say.

WEEK 1: Naming the Ache

ANCHOR TEXT: Ecclesiastes 1:2-11

²Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. ³What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun? ⁴A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever. ⁵The sun rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it rises. ⁶The wind blows to the south and goes around to the north; around and around goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns. ⁷All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again. ⁸All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. ⁹What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. ¹⁰Is there a thing of which it is said, "See, this is new"? It has been already in the ages before us. ¹¹There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after.

CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK:

Before Day 1, pick 1 of these 2 challenges and keep it in view all week; this reading is meant to fuel it, not replace it.

- ☐ **Set Your Heading:** Start each morning this week by praying 1 line out loud: "Whatever I do today, I'll do it for You." Then pick 1 ordinary thing on your plate and name it as the offering (1 Corinthians 10:31), whether it's making a sales call or folding laundry.
 - ☐ **Write the Question:** Write your honest "What's the point?" question at the top of a journal page this week. Be specific about where it shows up. You'll come back and answer it at the end of this plan.
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DAY 1: Drop Anchor

Ecclesiastes is written by "the Preacher," a wise king who sets out to test everything life "under the sun" can offer: work, pleasure, wisdom, wealth. "Under the sun" is his phrase for life in this broken world, seen from ground level. The word translated "vanity" means vapor or breath, something you can see but can't hold. The Bible opens this book by saying the quiet part out loud, so you're allowed to say it too.

Read Ecclesiastes 1:2-11 twice, once silently, once out loud.

What word or phrase catches you? Write it down. Resist the urge to apply it yet. Today you're just noticing.

Journal: The word that caught me was...

DAY 2: Read Ecclesiastes 2:17-26

Read Ecclesiastes 1:2-11 again. Then read Ecclesiastes 2:17-26.

After an exhausting audit of his own work, the Preacher finds 1 crack of light: eating, drinking, and finding enjoyment in toil is “from the hand of God.” Meaning arrives as a gift, and the Preacher searched everywhere else first. How do these 2 passages explain each other?

Journal: The place I’ve been searching for meaning is...

DAY 3: Read Isaiah 49:1-6

Read Ecclesiastes 1:2-11 again first. Then read Isaiah 49:1-6.

This is the voice of the Servant, the figure the New Testament says Jesus fulfills, and even he says “I have labored in vain” before catching himself: “yet surely my right is with the LORD.” Then God answers with a bigger mission than he imagined, “a light for the nations.” If the Servant’s work could feel wasted mid-mission, yours feeling that way doesn’t prove it is.

Where does this name something true about you right now? Which of your labors feels most in vain: the job, the parenting, the serving?

Journal: The labor that feels most in vain is...

DAY 4: Read Psalm 39

Read Ecclesiastes 1:2-11 again, slowly. Then read all of Psalm 39.

David has been holding his tongue, and when he finally prays, he asks a strange question: “let me know how fleeting I am!” In the middle of it he reaches for hope: “And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you,” even though the psalm ends without resolution. Now turn both texts into prayer, line by line.

Journal: Praying about how fleeting my life is surfaced...

DAY 5: Return to Anchor

Read Ecclesiastes 1:2-11 one last time, and today read it in 2 different translations. Watch what “vanity” becomes in each; some say meaningless, some say vapor. What do you hear now that you didn’t on Day 1? You’ve read this passage multiple times this week. That’s the whole point. Careful attention is the opposite of drift, and you just practiced it for 5 days.

Journal: As you look back over the past week, where did God meet you, in his Word or in the challenge you took on?

WEEK 2: Appointed Times and Places

ANCHOR TEXT: Acts 17:24-28

²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸for "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring."

CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK:

Before Day 1, pick 1 of these 2 challenges and keep it in view all week; this reading is meant to fuel it, not replace it.

- ☐ **Find Your True North:** Spend 10 minutes this week with 2 questions: How has God uniquely made me? What gifts or strengths has he entrusted to me? Then write down a few qualities or abilities you believe God has given you.
 - ☐ **Work Your Coordinates:** Pick 1 of your coordinates (your street, your workplace, your kid's team) and do 1 intentional thing there this week as someone placed on purpose.
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DAY 1: Drop Anchor

Paul is in Athens, a city full of idols and philosophers, and he's invited to explain himself at the Areopagus. He starts with their own altar "to the unknown god" and tells them who that God is: the Creator who gives everyone life and breath and set the times and places of every nation, "that they should seek God."

Read Acts 17:22-31 once for Paul's whole speech. Then read verses 24-28 twice, once silently, once out loud.

What word or phrase catches you? Write it down. Resist the urge to apply it yet. Today you're just noticing.

Journal: The word that caught me was...

DAY 2: Read Psalm 139:13-18

Read Acts 17:24-28 again. Then read Psalm 139:13-18.

David marvels that God formed him in the womb and wrote his days in a book “when as yet there was none of them.” Paul says the placement has a purpose: “that they should seek God.” How do these 2 passages explain each other? Your when and where are an invitation.

Journal: If my days are written, then today...

DAY 3: Read Esther 4:1-17

Read Acts 17:24-28 again first. Then read Esther 4:1-17.

A decree has gone out to destroy the Jewish people, and Esther, a Jewish woman who has become queen, can either stay quiet and safe or risk her life to speak up. God’s name never appears in the book of Esther, yet his hand is all over it. Mordecai asks the question: “who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

Where does this name something true about you right now? Look at your actual coordinates: this city, this job, this street, this stage of family life. What might they be for?

Journal: My “such a time as this” coordinates are...

DAY 4: Read Psalm 90

Read Acts 17:24-28 again, slowly. Then read all of Psalm 90.

This is the only psalm credited to Moses, a man who spent 40 years in the wilderness watching a generation pass. You prayed part of it in Week 1 of the series, so pray it deeper now. Turn both texts into prayer, line by line. “Teach us to number our days” and “establish the work of our hands” belong to a person whose days are set on purpose.

Journal: A month later, this prayer sounds different because...

DAY 5: Return to Anchor

Read Acts 17:24-28 one last time, and today read it in 2 different translations. Watch what “allotted periods” becomes in each. What do you hear now that you didn’t on Day 1? You’ve read this passage multiple times this week. That’s the whole point. Careful attention is the opposite of drift, and you just practiced it for 5 days.

Journal: As you look back over the past week, where did God meet you, in his Word or in the challenge you took on?

WEEK 3: The Center of the Target

ANCHOR TEXT: Matthew 22:34-40

³⁴But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK:

Before Day 1, pick 1 of these 2 challenges and keep it in view all week; this reading is meant to fuel it, not replace it.

- ☐ **Ask Your Crew:** Ask 2 or 3 people this week, "What gifts or strengths do you consistently see in me?" Write down what they say and look for what's repeated.
- ☐ **Love 1 Person on Purpose:** Choose 1 person to love concretely this week (a meal, an errand, an hour of full attention) and treat it as your purpose for that day. Because it is.

DAY 1: Drop Anchor

It's the last week of Jesus' life, and the religious leaders are taking turns trying to trap him with questions. A Pharisee who is an expert in the law asks him to name the greatest commandment. Jesus answers with 2, quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, and says the whole Law and the Prophets hang on them. Purpose has a center.

Read Matthew 22:34-40 twice, once silently, once out loud.

What word or phrase catches you? Write it down. Resist the urge to apply it yet. Today you're just noticing.

Journal: The word that caught me was...

DAY 2: Read Micah 6:6-8

Read Matthew 22:34-40 again. Then read Micah 6:6-8.

Israel asks what offering would finally satisfy God: burnt offerings, thousands of rams, even a firstborn child? Micah answers that God has already told them: "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." How do these 2 passages explain each other? Both answers are short, portable, and doable today.

Journal: Doing justice and loving kindness today could look like...

DAY 3: Read Luke 10:38-42

Read Matthew 22:34-40 again first. Then read Luke 10:38-42.

Martha opens her home to Jesus and works hard to serve him, while her sister Mary sits at his feet and listens. Jesus is gentle with Martha: she's "anxious and troubled about many things," and "one thing is necessary."

Where does this name something true about you right now? Purposelessness sometimes wears a full calendar. What are you busy with that's crowding out the 2 great commandments?

Journal: The busyness that's crowding the center is...

DAY 4: Read Psalm 86:8-13

Read Matthew 22:34-40 again, slowly. Then read Psalm 86:8-13.

David is in trouble and surrounded by enemies, and in the middle of his plea he asks for a whole heart: "unite my heart to fear your name." Now turn both texts into prayer, line by line. It's the prayer of a scattered person asking to be gathered around 1 thing, so mean the word unite.

Journal: The pieces of my heart that need uniting are...

DAY 5: Return to Anchor

Read Matthew 22:34-40 one last time, and today read it in 2 different translations. Watch what "depend" becomes in verse 40. What do you hear now that you didn't on Day 1? You've read this passage multiple times this week. That's the whole point. Careful attention is the opposite of drift, and you just practiced it for 5 days.

Journal: As you look back over the past week, where did God meet you, in his Word or in the challenge you took on?

WEEK 4: Sent People

ANCHOR TEXT: Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK:

Before Day 1, pick 1 of these 2 challenges and keep it in view all week; this reading is meant to fuel it, not replace it.

- ☐ **Take the Helm:** Choose 1 strength God has given you and use it to serve someone this week: teach a skill, help someone sort out something they've been avoiding, or cook a meal for someone having a hard week.
 - ☐ **Take 1 Step Toward Someone:** Identify 1 person in your everyday orbit who's far from God, and take 1 step toward them this week: an invitation, a question, a kindness with your name on it.
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DAY 1: Drop Anchor

These are the last words of Matthew's Gospel. The risen Jesus meets his disciples on a mountain in Galilee, some of them still doubting (28:17), and he hands every one of them the same mission and the same promise: "I am with you always, to the end of the age." The commission rests on his authority, so it doesn't depend on theirs.

Read Matthew 28:16-20 once for the whole scene. Then read verses 18-20 twice, once silently, once out loud.

What word or phrase catches you? Write it down. Resist the urge to apply it yet. Today you're just noticing.

Journal: The word that caught me was...

DAY 2: Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Read Matthew 28:18-20 again. Then read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.

Paul is describing his own ministry first ("we are ambassadors for Christ"), and the reason behind it is for every believer: "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation," reconciled to God and given a message to carry. How do these 2 passages explain each other? The commission on the mountain becomes a role you carry wherever you already live and work.

Journal: Being an ambassador where I already live and work means...

DAY 3: Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

Read Matthew 28:18-20 again first. Then read 1 Peter 4:7-11.

Peter writes to scattered, pressured believers and tells each of them they've received a gift from God, meant for serving others: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another." The mission is universal, and your piece of it is particular.

Where does this name something true about you right now? What have you received that's currently in storage?

Journal: The gift in storage is...

DAY 4: Read Psalm 40:1-10

Read Matthew 28:18-20 again, slowly. Then read Psalm 40:1-10.

David remembers God pulling him out of a pit, and he responds with a whole life: "I delight to do your will, O my God." Hebrews 10 hears these words ultimately on Jesus' lips, and they become ours because they were his first. Now turn both texts into prayer, line by line. "I delight to do your will" may need to start as "I want to delight." Pray it honestly at whatever strength you've got.

Journal: My honest version of "I delight to do your will" is...

DAY 5: Return to Anchor

Read Matthew 28:18-20 one last time, and today read it in 2 different translations. Watch what "make disciples" becomes in each. What do you hear now that you didn't on Day 1? You've read this passage multiple times this week. That's the whole point. Careful attention is the opposite of drift, and you just practiced it for 5 days.

Journal: As you look back over the past week, where did God meet you, in his Word or in the challenge you took on?

WEEK 5: Attached Branches

ANCHOR TEXT: John 15:1-8

¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK:

Before Day 1, pick 1 of these 2 challenges and keep it in view all week; this reading is meant to fuel it, not replace it.

- ☐ **Build an Abiding Habit:** Build 1 abiding habit into your week that will outlast this plan: a fixed daily reading time, a weekly hour of prayer, a standing walk with God. Put it on your calendar and tell someone.
 - ☐ **Into the Storm:** Take 1 real risk for God this month: share your faith with someone, give sacrificially, or step into a serving position at church. Ask your triad or a friend to cheer you on and check in.
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DAY 1: Drop Anchor

It's the night before the cross, and Jesus is preparing his disciples for life after he's gone. Israel was often pictured as God's vine in the Old Testament, and here Jesus calls himself "the true vine." Fruit grows from staying attached to him: "apart from me you can do nothing."

Read John 15:1-8 twice, once silently, once out loud.

What word or phrase catches you? Write it down. Resist the urge to apply it yet. Today you're just noticing.

Journal: The word that caught me was...

DAY 2: Read Psalm 1

Read John 15:1-8 again. Then read Psalm 1.

The first psalm sets up the whole book with 2 paths, and the blessed person is “like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season.” Both passages put location before production. How do these 2 passages explain each other? Where you’re rooted decides what grows.

Journal: What I’m actually rooted next to is...

DAY 3: Read Galatians 5:16-25

Read John 15:1-8 again first. Then read Galatians 5:16-25.

Paul contrasts 2 ways to live: by the flesh, or “by the Spirit,” and he calls the Spirit’s work fruit, something grown more than manufactured: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”

Where does this name something true about you right now? What have you been straining to produce on willpower alone?

Journal: The fruit I’ve been forcing is...

DAY 4: Read Psalm 92:12-15

Read John 15:1-8 again, slowly. Then read Psalm 92:12-15.

This is a song for the Sabbath, and it ends with the righteous planted in God’s house: “They still bear fruit in old age.” No season of your life is past its purpose. Now turn both texts into prayer, line by line. Pray about your current season by name, and ask what abiding looks like inside it.

Journal: Abiding in this exact season looks like...

DAY 5: Return to Anchor

Read John 15:1-8 one last time, and today read it in 2 different translations. Watch what “abide” becomes in each. What do you hear now that you didn’t on Day 1? You’ve read this passage multiple times this week. That’s the whole point. Careful attention is the opposite of drift, and you just practiced it for 5 days.

Journal: As you look back over the past week, where did God meet you, in his Word or in the challenge you took on?

WEEK 6: Finish the Course

ANCHOR TEXT: Acts 20:22-24

²²And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. ²⁴But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK:

Before Day 1, pick 1 of these 2 challenges and keep it in view all week; this reading is meant to fuel it, not replace it.

- ☐ **Lay the Keel:** Adopt 1 rule-of-life practice for the next 90 days, chosen from what these weeks trained: a set-time prayer, a standing act of service, a weekly hour with Scripture. Put the start date on your calendar, add it to your Ship's Log from Session 6 in the Adrift study guide, and tell 1 friend who'll ask about it.
- ☐ **Plant Yourself:** Commit to 1 place to serve consistently for the next 90 days, instead of waiting until you feel ready. Sign up this week, and ask your triad or friend to check on you.

DAY 1: Drop Anchor

Paul is saying goodbye to the elders of the church in Ephesus, the church he spent 3 years building, at Miletus, where he had called them to meet him. He's headed to Jerusalem, where he knows prison is waiting. He says his life is worth nothing to him except 1 thing: to finish his course and "the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus." His course was his own. Every follower of Jesus has one too.

Read Acts 20:17-38 once for the whole goodbye. Then read verses 22-24 twice, once silently, once out loud.

What word or phrase catches you? Write it down. Resist the urge to apply it yet. Today you're just noticing.

Journal: The word that caught me was...

DAY 2: Read Philippians 3:7-14

Read Acts 20:22-24 again. Then read Philippians 3:7-14.

Paul has just listed his old religious credentials and counted them all as loss "because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." Then: "forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal." How do these 2 passages explain each other? Paul's purpose has a direction and a person at the end of it.

Journal: What I need to leave behind to press forward is...

DAY 3: Read Hebrews 12:1-3

Read Acts 20:22-24 again first. Then read Hebrews 12:1-3.

Right after the long list of faithful people in chapter 11, Hebrews tells weary believers to run “the race that is set before us,” looking to Jesus. The race is marked out by God.

Where does this name something true about you right now? Based on these 30 days, what does your particular course look like? Sketch it in a few phrases: the people, the place, the work, the gift.

Journal: My course, in a few phrases...

DAY 4: Read Psalm 57

Read Acts 20:22-24 again, slowly. Then read all of Psalm 57.

David wrote this hiding in a cave from King Saul, and he still prays “to God who fulfills his purpose for me.” A cave season and a purpose can coexist. Now turn both texts into prayer, line by line, and pray that verse with your name in it.

Journal: Praying “God fulfills his purpose for me” from my current cave...

DAY 5: Return to Anchor

Read Acts 20:22-24 one last time, and today read it in 2 different translations. What do you hear now that you didn’t on Day 1? You’ve read this passage multiple times this week. That’s the whole point. Careful attention is the opposite of drift, and you just practiced it for 5 days.

Then finish the 30 days by going back to the “What’s the point?” question you wrote in Week 1 and writing your answer underneath it in 2 or 3 sentences. Then draft 1 sentence that names your course: who you’ll love, where you’re planted, and what you’ll do with what you’ve been given. Keep it where you’ll see it, and refine it as you walk it.

Journal: As you look back over the past week, where did God meet you, in his Word or in the challenge you took on?

Explore More (Optional)

If you'd like to go further in the fight against purposelessness, here are a few ways to do so:

- ***The Call*** by Os Guinness. A fuller treatment of calling as something bigger than a career choice.
- ***Don't Waste Your Life*** by John Piper. A direct, urgent challenge not to spend your one life chasing comfort instead of what actually matters.
- ***Every Good Endeavor*** by Tim Keller. A deeper theology of work, connecting your actual job to God's larger purposes, good if you want something more substantial than a devotional read.
- **SHAPE**. A short self-assessment to help you identify your spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality, and experiences, the same SHAPE framework named in Session 3. You can find this in the Live Christ Keystone study too.
- **Live Christ Keystone Study**. A five-session OBCC small group study on putting your time, talents, influence, and resources to work for God.