

Eight Days on the Mountain

Eleven UCF men carried a New Testament, a journal, *The Kneeling Christian* — and your prayers — from Amicalola Falls to Mount LeConte.



Amicalola Falls • Len Foote Hike Inn • Mount LeConte | August 15–22, 2026

Before we loaded the van I gave them one charge: *What are you asking God to do in your life during this trip? Don't walk away wishing you had done something different spiritually.* Give Him everything you've got.

During the day the men broke off alone or in twos and threes to read a chapter of Philippians, work through the day's pages of *The Kneeling Christian*, and journal what they were seeing. Each evening after dinner we gathered to sing, talk through what they had read, and pray together.

Some of them had never prayed out loud in a group. We started slowly. By the end of the week these young men were eloquent in lifting their voices to the Father — praying for the UCF campus by name.

I knew how many of you were praying. All week the texts and calls and emails came in telling me so, and I read parts of them aloud to the guys. I cannot begin to tell you the impact that had — on them, and on me.



No power on the mountain — a kerosene lantern, a journal, and the Word.

The mountain went quiet

MOUNT LECONTE, TN

Picture the scene. The sun is down. On LeConte there is no power at all — the only light is the moon, the stars, and a kerosene lantern. You can hear the other hikers talking in their cabins. Then a guitar starts and twelve men begin singing praise that echoes off the mountain. The talking stopped. Everyone listened.

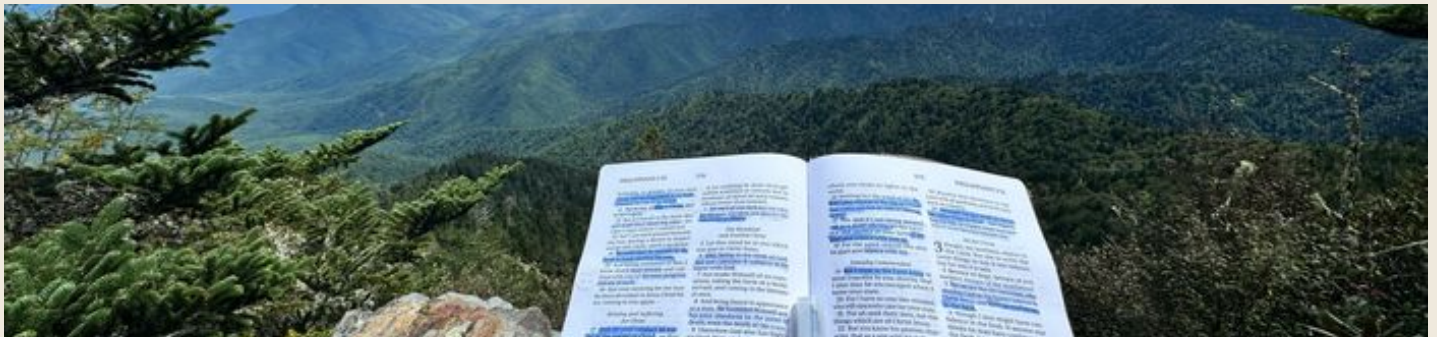
At both Hike Inn and LeConte, people came up to ask me who these young men were — how polite they were, how struck they had been watching them pray over every meal. The next morning at breakfast a gentleman walked to our table and handed the “starving college students” every extra biscuit, pancake and strip of bacon he had, thanking them for the music. Later that day he told me their praying had moved him enough that he made his own friends stop and pray over their meals.



The LeConte Lodge dining room, where the biscuits changed hands.

If you haven't listened to them in a while, these are three of the songs we sang in the evening — the ones that would create silence in those listening.

AGNUS DEI
HOLY FOREVER
WORTHY OF IT ALL



Philippians on the ridgeline • the porch at dusk • one very necessary stop on the drive home.

They are praying now — for the campus, for their friends, for BCM — with the sole purpose of bringing glory to God. This fall we begin a new study, *Contend Earnestly for the Faith*, and I am asking God for thirty men around that table.

None of this happens without you. So many praying. So many giving. You invested in these young men, and you invested in the Church — in what God is doing on the campus of UCF.

— Charles Wise, Pathway Ministries

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In their own words

I asked each of the men to write down what the week did in him. Here is what they said, unedited.



Sunset in North Georgia

TYLER

This trip came at the perfect time for me. In college, things never stay constant for long, and life leaves so many question marks as you find yourself constantly growing and changing. Focusing on prayer this week and removing distractions gave me the time I needed to breathe, focus on my relationship with God and my faith, and grow in brotherhood with the amazing group. The scale of God's Creation was humbling and gave me the perspective I'll need through the school year to defend my faith on campus and spread the joy of God to my community.

FREDO

June was a tough month. I read *The Kneeling Christian* before the trip and it reminded me of the power of prayer, which helped me get through it. Spending this week away from social media and all other distractions and focusing on prayer and connecting with my fellow Christian buddies was meaningful. I hope we continue to stick together, challenging one another to be men of faith, faithful husbands, and responsible fathers.

ROBERT

This trip changed a lot in my life. Not only were the views and the trip with the guys life changing, but the power of the Lord really worked in my life. Through the week the power of prayer was put in my life and I was woken up to how much I need to work on my prayer life. The chapters of the book and the time in the outdoors with the Lord changed my life.

SOREN

This week had a great impact on my life. I not only got to greatly strengthen my faith during this trip, but I was also able to fellowship and grow closer to my brothers in Christ as we read through *The Kneeling Christian* and the book of Philippians, and as we hiked and got to enjoy God's beautiful creation up in the mountains.

PAUL

This trip was a blessing and a turning point in my life. I had experienced a period of strong spiritual growth from the time I graduated high school until now. I was getting involved in college ministries and putting myself in a position to challenge myself and grow my faith. However, as I near the end of my college career, I felt myself becoming somewhat stagnant. This trip pulled me straight out of that and challenged me to become a man of prayer. The challenge of hiking through the beautiful mountains and disconnecting from busy life for a week provided an opportunity for me to listen to the still, small voice of God calling me deeper into a relationship with Him. For the first time in my life, I tapped into the amazing power of prayer that is offered to me through simply talking with my Lord and Savior. I claimed the truths of God's word in which He promises to hear and answer my call and give me everything that I ask, for His glory, in Jesus's name. Over the course of this trip, I began to see prayer as a privilege and a joy, instead of something I remembered to do. I have already seen proof of the Lord acting in a mighty way for the supplications that I brought to Him on behalf of my friends. That was definitely the most impactful memory from this trip. I'm so excited to see how God is going to work at UCF through me and the other guys on this trip.

ALEX

This trip has changed my life. Going through the book and learning the power of prayer has changed my faith more than any event ever has. I've joined a brotherhood to last through the years to come, through tough hikes and amazing views. Being out in the wonderful world God has made has changed my perspective on daily life. I will never forget this trip. Thank you.

ASHTON

This past week I spent travelling 40 miles on foot. I feel like as the distance increased, so did my friendships with those a part of the trip. I felt a strong connection to God as I learned about the importance of prayer, which prior I didn't have as great of an understanding of. I appreciate all that made this trip possible for me and my friends who came along.

CHRISTIAN

This trip has been a huge blessing for me. The time I got to spend away helped me refresh in order to get ready for the coming semester. Hiking up those mountains was a brand new experience that opened my eyes to what is out there. Hiking taught me how important it is to surround myself with Christian brothers, because I don't know that I would've made it up without them. Reading *The Kneeling Christian* was very convicting and made me realize how little time I put into prayer. I got to really dive deep in the book of Philippians, which was a huge blessing. The most amazing part was the views we got to see up in those mountains — God's creation is truly a blessing.

In their own words

CONTINUED

BRYCE

The trip really highlighted the fact that sometimes in order to grow, you have to face adversity, physical and/or spiritual. However, when you are able to face adversity with brothers around you, it is easier to remain on mission and accomplish what God is guiding you to do. And brothers don't have to be physically present with you to support you, as evidenced by the amount of prayers and support from countless people we may never meet, in the letter to the Philippians, in which Paul describes the power of prayer and how it encourages, and in *The Kneeling Christian*, in which there are numerous accounts of how prayer and words from fellow brothers and sisters in Christ can keep you in the fight for the faith.

Personally, the opportunity to get to know like-minded brothers in Christ on a deeper level, devoid of distractions, and to be able to share memories and times of pain and laughter is one that I will be able to look back on later in life, both to encourage one another and to keep one another accountable. My hope is that this trip will prove to be immeasurable in all of our lives as we enter the next seasons of life and faith. I thank each and every person who came together to make it possible.

JACOB

Ever since I heard about this trip I was immediately in. I knew this was going to be an amazing trip, but I never thought how impactful it would be on my life. From connecting deeper with old friends to making new ones, all while enjoying God's creation at its best, was truly an experience I'll never forget. Going through the book of Philippians and *The Kneeling Christian* really helped me realize not only what prayer really means but also how I can deepen my prayer life. I had a very loaded summer semester and am taking more classes in the fall, so this trip showed me how much I need to rely on God for strength, not myself, and how I also need brothers in Christ who can rally together when times get hard. Forever grateful for the opportunity to go on this trip.

THIEN-LOC

This past month, I've been focused on graduating, working, moving, and constantly pushing myself. I made it through, but looking back, I realized how much I was relying on myself instead of God.

A week away from my phone, reading *The Kneeling Christian*, hiking, worshiping, and praying with these guys gave me the opportunity to slow down and reframe that. I was reminded that I don't have to carry everything myself; I need to pray deeply, trust God, and allow Him to work through every season of my life. More than anything, this trip reminded me how blessed I am to have this community of brothers in Christ.



The top of LeConte • a summit fogged in at dawn • a hot meal off the trail

Eleven young men, one week, and a book about prayer. Read what they wrote and you will see why I am asking God for thirty men around the table this fall. Thank you for making it possible.

— Charles Wise, Pathway Ministries

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