

Leave Only Footprints: My Acadia-to-Zion Journey through Every National Park

By Conor Knighton

Which park did you most want to visit (or revisit) as a result of reading this book? What about this park appeals to you?

Knighton chose to dive into a huge project as a way of dealing with heartbreak. What do you think about busyness as a solution to mental or emotional distress? Does it delay coming to terms with what happened? How would occupying yourself with work or a volunteer project compare to going out into nature as Knighton did?

Knighton saw God in nature, even quoting from a favorite hymn. Do you experience/encounter God anywhere? If so, where?

The national parks are so popular that many of them are literally overrun during peak months. What do you think is the best way to deal with overuse issues? Restricting visitation? Stopping vehicle access? Raising prices for passes? How do these issues relate to the relative lack of minority visitation? What other fairness issues do these ideas raise?

Knighton combines a lot of personal musings and memories with his reporting on the parks he visits. What did you think about this approach? Did you tire of reading about his love life?

At some parks, Knighton focuses on something quirky or an interesting person he met rather than on what the park has to offer overall. Did you find that this made the book more interesting? Why or why not? Did you have a favorite story or person in the book?

Strangers helped Knighton on the road (getting him out of the snowbank.) Have you ever experienced a stranger rescue of some sort when traveling?

Florida has three national parks (Biscayne, Dry Tortugas and Everglades), a national preserve (Big Cypress), two national monuments (Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Matanzas), two memorials (DeSoto and Fort Caroline) and two national seashores (Canaveral and Gulf Islands) and one national ecological and historic preserve (Timucuan). Which of these have you visited? Is there another place in Florida that you would add to any of these categories?

Pick a park that you have visited and share how your personal experience compares with what Knighton wrote.