



CULTIVATING A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNALING HABIT

Journaling is a powerful tool for deepening a person's relationship with Jesus. It creates space to reflect on the study of God's Word, pour out prayers, and record the many ways God is providing. Consider the fast-paced environment people live in each day. What would it look like to slow down, reflect, and intentionally record a walk with Jesus? The goal of this resource is to encourage individuals and families to deepen their relationship with Jesus by developing intentional journaling habits.

WHY JOURNALING MATTERS

Students are often encouraged to journal through books of the Bible throughout the year. Each year, without fail, many groan at the idea of journaling. If that is your first reaction, you are not alone, so before setting this aside, it is worth considering why journaling matters.

There is a helpful reminder often shared: If it is written down, it is remembered. If it is remembered, it is lived. The desire is for people to truly engage during teaching and prayer times, so they do not just gain knowledge but also gain wisdom. The aim is for faith to be carried into the home.

Not only does journaling serve as a tool for spiritual growth and reflection, but it also provides a way to process emotions, track prayers, celebrate God's faithfulness, and capture insights from God's Word.

REFLECTING ON GOD'S VOICE AND FAITHFULNESS

One of the greatest blessings of journaling is the ability to look back and see God's voice and hand at work over time. A journal becomes a tangible

reminder of the prayers He has answered, the lessons He has taught, and the ways He has sustained His people. These reflections act as a salve to the soul and spirit in the midst of present concerns.

“I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds” (Psalm 77:11–12).

The Bible often uses benchmarks or altars to remind God’s people of His care and provision. In the same way, a journal can serve as a personal altar, reminding believers of God’s faithfulness and His voice in their lives. This legacy is not only for the individual but also for the family. Years later, a journal can become a testimony of God’s care, a living record of a faith journey that inspires and strengthens others.

“One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts” (Psalm 145:4).

GETTING STARTED

If someone is going to journal, they need a journal. This can be a physical notebook or a digital app. A journal is designed to help track habits, take notes from Bible study or sermons, log prayers, and remember God’s faithfulness and provision.

Once a journal is in place, a framework is needed. It is helpful to include these components: Bible Study, Gratitude, and Prayer.

CONNECT METHOD

The CONNECT method provides a simple and intentional way to engage with God’s Word and respond to it. It is important that each time a person sits down to the Word, they CONNECT. Each step helps create space to hear from God and live out His truth.

Call: Begin with prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to open the heart and mind to what is true. This step sets the tone, reminding the reader that Scripture is not just information but a conversation with God.

Observe: Read the passage carefully, paying attention to what is happening, who is involved, and what stands out. Notice repeated words, themes, or details that seem important. This step focuses on seeing what the text actually says.

Notes: Write down what stands out, along with any questions or insights. This allows the text to speak before rushing to conclusions. It creates a record of what God is highlighting in the moment.

Next Steps: Identify the timeless principle that bridges the original audience to today. What truth about God or people remains consistent across generations? This step begins to move from understanding to application.

Examine: Look at the broader context of Scripture to confirm and deepen understanding. Compare with other passages and consider how this truth fits within God's larger story and reveals His character.

Commit: Respond with obedience by identifying one clear and specific way to live out what has been learned. This step moves truth from the page into daily life.

Tell: Share what God has revealed. Whether with family, friends, or others being discipled, speaking truth strengthens faith and multiplies its impact.

PRAYER JOURNAL

Maintaining a prayer journal is a helpful way to cultivate a meaningful prayer life and recognize God's provision and faithfulness. Writing down prayers helps maintain focus and intentionality while pouring out the heart to God. As prayers are recorded, it becomes possible to look back and see how God has answered, guided, and brought peace in difficult seasons.

Keeping a prayer journal fosters gratitude and trust in God's ongoing work. When starting, it is helpful to create a section labeled Prayer. Write prayers daily and leave space to reflect on God's faithfulness.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6).

GRATITUDE JOURNAL

Paul instructed in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 to "give thanks in all circumstances," reminding believers that gratitude is an essential part of the journey of faith. Without intentional focus, it is easy to become burdened by life's challenges. Writing down specific blessings each day shifts focus from difficulty to God's goodness and faithfulness. This practice cultivates joy and helps push back anxiety and worry.

In the journal, create a section titled Gratitude. Begin by writing down three to five things to be grateful for each day. Gradually, it becomes clear how God is shaping each step of the journey according to His purposes.

JOURNALING AS WORSHIP

Journaling can be viewed as a personal offering to God that reflects dependence on Him, understanding of His Word, and relationship with Him. Beginning today, it is worth considering journaling as a consistent practice.

For those who want to develop the habit, starting small is key. Spending five to ten minutes a day is a practical place to begin. It may also be helpful to connect journaling with an existing daily routine.

Journaling is more than a habit. It is an act of worship and a tool for deepening a relationship with God. Through Bible study, prayer, and gratitude, an environment is created where spiritual growth can take place. As with any meaningful habit, the focus is not perfection but consistency and intention. Steadily, this practice shapes a deeper understanding of God's faithfulness and a greater awareness of His presence.

"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" (Psalm 103:2).



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