

HOW TO JOURNAL

By Peter Lord

I pray you are being blessed by reading my encounters with our Lord in the “Our Father Speaks” Daily Devotional, but even more, that you will know the blessings of encountering Him yourself on a regular basis.

The most necessary and important factor for the daily Christian walk and ministry is a personal and regular experience of Jesus Christ Himself.

These devotions are my written record -- my journal of what our God and Father said to me as I meditated on Scripture. The "now," the immediate, the fresh relevant words from a Father to his child blessed and enriched me immeasurably. I am blessed a second time as I read and meditate on my journal of what my Father said to me in the past. For you, the reader, they are all at best, secondhand.

It is my goal to have you experience the firsthand blessing the Father would give you as often as you give Him time. To aid you in this, I am attempting to share with you how to Journal, how to read the Scriptures in a new way so the author, Holy Spirit, can apply them to you now. Journaling is writing down what God, your Father says to you. Everyone I have taught to Journal has found their life enriched and blessed.

Two thoughts are the basis of these suggestions to you. First, Christ lives in you to reveal Himself to you. Second, his recorded word, the Scriptures, have been the best place for saints who sought to communicate and experience Him. The purpose of the Scriptures has always been to lead us to Him. They are not an end in themselves. Why not give it a try? Follow these simple instructions.

1. Be prepared to write. Have a pen or pencil and pad, you can keep for the future. You will want to keep these records to read and re-read to remind yourself of what He said to you.

Note: writing down what God says has two immediate blessings. One, you have to concentrate on listening and writing, thus your mind cannot be overly active thinking your own thoughts. Two, you will have easy, accurate recall. The faintest ink is better than the strongest Memory.

2. You will need a specific time in a quiet place. If you presently have a quiet time, this can be just a way to enrich it. You do not have to set aside additional time unless you want more time.

If you do not have a "quiet Time," a place and time to meet with God regularly, then you would need to establish one. Here are a few suggestions:

- a. Find the best time. Most people find early morning is best.
 - b. Make it a regular time. Habits are helpful when they are good. It takes about six weeks to establish a new habit.
 - c. Make it long enough. Hurry will hurt and hinder this time as much as anything. You should set aside at least 30 minutes.
 - d. You will need a Bible and your notebook at this time.
3. When you get into this time, take a few minutes to get still and comfortable. Get in a position that is comfortable for you and will enable you to write. I personally sit in an easy chair. Get quiet outside. Turn off all distracting sounds and seek to be in a place by yourself. Get quiet inside. Set your mind on the Lord Jesus and think about Him coming to join you. Remember, you are a child listening to a loving Father.

Note: This is where the "Our Father Speaks" Instrumental Music comes into play. You can play the music while you journal.

4. You are now ready to Journal. You will need to select a book in the Bible. I suggest you begin with, I John. If not I John, then choose one of the shorter New Testament books. Start at the beginning and go through the book. It will take a long while, but the effects will be worth it

5. Write in your notebook the scripture you are going to Meditate on. It should be a unit of thought. Sometimes a verse, sometimes part of a verse, but very seldom more than one or two verses. Example. I John 1:1. "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life."
6. You have looked at this. You are now going to turn to the author, the indwelling teacher, and depend on Him to explain what He meant when these words were written. He will explain to you what it means to you at this moment.

Your dependence will be on Him whom Jesus sent to be your Teacher, Guide, Helper. Holy Spirit will be to you what Jesus was to the 12 disciples.

Next, it would be good for you to write down under the verse the following:
"Heavenly Father, tell me what you would have me learn from this."

Then write down the flow of thoughts that begin to come into your mind. Do not try to judge them now. Just write as the thoughts flow from Holy Spirit. When they stop, and it is the end, move on to another scripture.

Remember, it is possible for Him to say, "there is nothing in this verse for you now."

Note: the subjects the Holy Spirit seems to be most interested in will keep coming up in your thoughts as you Journal.

He will speak to you about what your Father is really like, and what God thinks of you.

He may reveal to you what your relationship to Him is, and what it is not.

There will be *encouragement*, *revelation* (new truth), *remembrance* (old truth that you need now), *guidance* in personal matters, and *instructions* about inner changes you need to make.

You will discover that this is a time for you and Him. He will be talking about you and Himself, not other people. Although many of the applications will have to do with others.

At first, you will probably write very little, but soon you will see a change as you listen and write.

The main thing to remember is that it takes time. Give time to Christ, just to know Him, to enjoy Him, and let Him enjoy you. It takes time to develop in a relationship. It will take time for you to get to know Him.

The time will not be without struggle. It is always an effort to develop the discipline of setting your mind on the spirit, as with any new discipline. The further you go, the easier and more natural it will be. You can be sure the enemy will attack you at this most important point, the one point that Jesus said was necessary.

But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from her."

What was the "good part" Jesus was talking about? Taking time to sit and listen to Him.

May our Lord help you to see the simplicity of getting to know Him in an ever increasing way both in the depth of experience and the moment by moment sense

of his presence. Getting to know Him is going to be the most enriching time in your life.

May the Lord Bless you in His Presence,
Peter Lord