

Journaling through the Bible

Relax.

Find a quiet time and place.

Take your time.

Be honest.

This is a special time (a regular time) set aside each day to commune with God by reflecting on His Word, journaling, and praying in response to what He has said. In this personal time you are exposing your soul to His light and your heart to His voice. What you are reading is TRUTH! You can trust it to be true about you and about God and about life. God cannot lie. This is His Word. He is fully aware of your desire for a deeper relationship with Him and He knows exactly where you are reading! He wants to speak with you.

Pray before you begin: *Psalm 119:18. Choose a particular book of the Bible to read, journal, and pray through. I would suggest you don't "pick and choose" daily, but stay with a particular book. Read and journal through one book at a time. If you are just beginning this process, I would suggest you start with the Gospel of St. John or the Gospel of Mark.

For a deeper study, I use a Bible commentary or Bible handbook; a study Bible can be quite adequate. Before I begin a particular book, I look at information about the book in order to discover something about who wrote the book, the date it was written and possibly the environment. This gives me background and a setting. (Some Bibles include this at the beginning of each book.) A suggested resource: What The Bible Is All About by Henrietta C. Mears.

Meditate and journal on what you have read, waiting in openness, ready to obey God's Word to you. Suggested questions for meditation and journaling:

What is the main point of the passage?

What does God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit reveal of Himself?

What insight am I given about myself and into my life's situation?

What does Christ require of me now?

Is there a command to obey or a promise to claim?

Are there pitfalls to avoid or an example to follow?

Journal. Be specific and personal. Which part spoke to you the most and how did it impress you? If you don't get something personal, write a short summary of what you have read. Record your observations, questions, interpretations, principles and applications. Also record how the passage affected you. Remember to always read the Scripture in its context (this means verses before and after in order to determine what a passage is really saying). Don't take Scripture out of its context! People make the Bible say all kinds of things it never said by pulling out a verse all by itself.

Pray. Talk to God about what you have just read. Ask Him questions! Share your thoughts. Thank God for His greatness and love, confess your sin, pray for others, love the Lord and seek to live for Him today with joy. Some suggested helpful passages:

Adoration *Psalm 89, Psalm 95:1-7, Psalm 104.

Confession *Psalm 32, Psalm 51, 1 John 1:8-10.

Thanksgiving *Ephesians 5:19-20, I Thessalonians 5:18.

Supplication *Philippians 4:6-7, I Timothy 2:1.

*These are suggested Scriptures.

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