

6 Ways to Start Journaling

Journaling is a practical way to engage your physical mind and spiritual heart. When you journal, it positions you for greater understanding and intimacy with God. It also helps you apply what God reveals to you.

There aren't right or wrong ways to journal, but if you need a place to start, here are a few suggestions:

Write out the verses and passages that stand out to you.

Ask yourself, "Why do I like this?" and attempt to answer your own question, even if the answer is, "I don't know yet." You can also write down quotes from books or take-aways from sermons, podcasts, etc. to help you contemplate the things you've read or heard.

Write out some of your prayers.

There are many prayers recorded in the Bible, so you can join that tradition by writing down your own prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication.

Don't assume you know the meanings of the words you read, even familiar words.

Use a Strong's Concordance, biblegateway.com, blueletterbible.com, etc. to look up specific words and biblical concepts (e.g., sanctification, theophany, Christology, atonement, etc.). Write out the definitions or interpretations, then think about the verse or passage in light of what you learned.

Ask questions of the text and then seek to answer them.

Explore the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the text. Ask yourself: Is there a command to obey or a promise to claim? Is the promise conditional or unconditional? If conditional, what's the condition? Is there an example to follow, sin to avoid, or something you need to confess? What did you learn about God the Father, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, or about yourself? What did you learn about the Kingdom, the Gospel, discipleship, Christian community, mission, etc.?

Note what you don't understand.

You're not going to understand everything you read. Write down what's unclear or even problematic as you read the Bible and ask God to reveal His truth.

Share your "God thoughts."

Make a point to share with others what you're learning from the Word of God. Emphasize how it's changing your attitude and perspective, and impacting your obedience to Christ. God can open a door of evangelism or discipleship as you share your take-aways with others!