

How to Journal

What is journaling?

- Journaling is a way to communicate with God on a day to day basis through the Bible.
- Each day you are encouraged to read parts of the Bible. You then write down a Scripture that stands out to you, and write down why it is important to you and how you can apply that to your day to day life.
- It is a way of reading through the whole Bible in a year.

Why should I journal?

- *'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work'. 2 Timothy 3:16*
- It can help you to be an everyday Christian rather than a Sunday Christian or a Friday night Christian.
- The Bible offers wisdom for everyday life, and you can discover God's heart and personality.
- The Bible can give you encouragement, direction and a wakeup call when you need it.
- Realise that you are journaling with lots of people, not just in our church, but all over the world. You are reading and thinking on the same Scriptures as hundreds of thousands of people, possibly millions, all over the world, every day. There is power in numbers. (*'Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken'. Ecclesiastes 4:12*)
- The Bible holds all the answers you need to life. If you have a serious question or issue to work through, the Bible without a doubt holds the answer. (*'Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened'. Matthew 7:7-8*)

How do I journal?

- First, you should pray that God will point something out to you in today's portion of Scripture.
- Next, get your reading plan or journaling card and find today's date. It will tell you which chapters to read.
- You can now begin reading these chapters. Don't rush through as you read. Think about what you are reading.
- If a Scripture stands out to you, remember where it is, or underline it in your Bible if you want, and continue reading.
- Once you are finished reading, you can now begin writing down your thoughts.
- Journaling is done through the acrostic SOAP:

Scripture
Observation
Application
Prayer

- **Scripture:** write down the actual Scripture/s that stood out to you. It does not matter if it is one verse or several. Whatever stood to you is what matters.
- **Observation:** why did the Scripture/s stand out to you? Describe what is happening in the Scripture and/or its context within the rest of the chapter.
- **Application:** how can this be applied to your life today? Is there something you need to do, not do, practice, learn, etc...
- **Prayer:** write a short prayer asking God to help you with the application.
- If you are journaling alone, then you are done. If you are doing it in a group, you can then share with the group what you've written. This way we can learn from each other.

What...?

- ... do I need to journal? A Bible, a reading plan or journaling card, a notepad or journal and a pen.
- ... if I miss a day of journaling? *Don't stress about it.* This is meant to empower you, not burden you. *Do not try to catch up on the following day.* It won't happen and you'll get further behind. Trust me, I've done it before. Just make the decision to start again tomorrow.
- ... if nothing stood out to me? Have another quick glance through the chapters. You will notice something. Ask God again to point something out to you.
- ... if my journaling card runs out during the week? Grab one at church on Sunday or at Youth if you remind a leader to get you one earlier. But until then, go to <http://www.ewhope.org/bible/>. This is an American site, so it may load up a different day. In the top right corner you can scroll to today's date to get the daily readings.
- ... if I have a question that's not on here? Ask someone at church to help you.

An example of a journal entry

S: Deuteronomy 12:4 – ‘You must not worship the Lord your God in their way’.

Q: God is instructing His people to go to war and claim some new territory. He then tells them that when they take over the territory, they are not to worship Him in the way that the previous people of that land did; through false idols, etc.

A: Sometimes, we can get so caught up in copying others or in following tradition (ie. Worshipping in their way) that we forget to really seek Him for ourselves.

P: ‘Lord, help me not to get caught up in worshipping You for the sake of it, but to really seek You and worship You in a sincere way’.