

## Writing Down the Flow of Thoughts and Pictures that come to You

One of the greatest benefits of using journaling during your communion with the Lord is that it allows you to receive freely the spontaneous flow of ideas that come to your mind, **in faith** believing that they are from God, without short-circuiting them by subjecting them to rational and sensory doubt while you are receiving them. Journaling allows you to write in faith believing the flow of thoughts and pictures is from the Lord, knowing that will be able to test them later.

Have you ever asked God for direction or a solution to a problem that you have heard and sensed an answer from God that then gets mumbled in the cluster of your thoughts? What happened as a result of the mumbling of your thoughts?

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Maintaining a journal keeps your mind occupied and on track as you are receiving God's words. Journaling can become an accurate reminder of:

1. **God's faithfulness to you in the past.** Once you have journaled about an issue or prayer request and then seen the goodness of the Lord, go back to journal more and write down how God delivered you from the issue that faced you. Write down your prayer request that you spoke to him at one time and then go back to your journal to see how God answered your prayers. Keep that journal fresh when challenged with new or greater issues or prayer request in your life. God often challenged Israel in the Old Testament to recall his goodness to them in the past to strengthen their hearts at the time they needed it and recorded words will be a strong encouragement to your present issues based on the past encounters with God.
2. **God's direct revelation to you in the form of logos and rhema.** Writing down God's words directly given to you creates strong images in themselves to help you fully obey the Lord in all you do. You write using your head to train the heart to Listen to the Word, Turn towards the Word and Follow the Word with our whole hearts.
3. **Journaling can be shared with others to instruct and strengthen them.** By sharing your journaling with other, God's word to can also be used to strengthen other people's hearts. We are challenged by people's strengths and encouraged by their weaknesses. Sharing your journal with your spiritual advisors and with those weak in the faith can encourage both alike!

Have you ever journaled in the Lord's presence and if so, what you any of you learned from this experience? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Practical suggestions for journaling:

1. Plan to make time to spend with the Lord journaling His thoughts and pictures. You should approach the Lord at the best time of day or night for you when your creative juices are flowing and when you are not consumed by the cares of your life and world. Like David, go to the “strongholds” when and where you know you are protected from distractions! Some of us keep pen and paper next to our beds in case the Lord wakes you up in the night and you know that you need to write down what he says so that you will remember in the morning the words spoken to you in the middle of the night!
2. Everyone has a best way to write down God’s words and thoughts to you and take advantage of whatever works best for you. Some people like a simple spiral-bound notebook or if a computer works better for you as it does me, type away at the appropriate time. Then you can go back over what you typed for content and spelling.
3. Journal the way you are most comfortable; whether it be long or short hand, and use codes when needed to keep confidentiality on subjects of that nature.
4. Date all entries! This will be very helping when you go back later to see how God answered prayer or gave you specific direction.
5. Include in your journal your communion with God, your dreams and hopes and their interpretations from God, visions and images God has given you, and personal feelings and events that mattered to you (angers, fears, hurts, anxieties, disappointments, joys and thanksgivings).
6. Write down the questions, concerns and prayer request that are on your heart so that you can see how the Lord instructs, addresses and directs you through the questions and concerns in your heart.
7. Use journals to discern God’s key themes to you from previous writing and see how God answered the cries and concerns of your heart.

For some of you, this discipline comes very naturally and with little effort you can move into this function with the Lord. For others, it may seem like the last thing you will ever get to in a crowded and noisy world!