

Journaling: 4Rs of *Get Alone* time with God

Lovers spend time alone; same with Disciples. It's their priority to find **Get Alone** time with God. Here's Moses' hear: *If you're pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you.* (Exodus 33.13 NIV). Mary too: *Mary... sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ... "[Jesus:] Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."* (Luke 10.39b, 42b NLT) **Get Alone** is an indicator that someone is a serious Disciple.

Journaling, using a Bible and notebook to connect with God is a great way to practice **Get Alone** time. In this hyperactive culture, journaling helps a Disciple slow down, process life, evaluate feelings, chart spiritual growth and work through relationships.

Why journal? You slow your pace in order to ponder life. *The unexamined life is not worth living* (Socrates). You learn to articulate your life issues. *Writing [makes] an exact man.* (Francis Bacon). You recall God's goodness. *The palest ink is more reliable than the strongest memory.* [Chinese proverb]

Get Alone lets God stretch you more into the likeness of Jesus. *we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory...* 2 Cor 3.18

Nuts and Bolts of Journaling

Needed: an undistracted place – ask God to help you find it. (You may need to be creative. One pastor goes to McDonalds to journal. Somehow he ignores the activity around him.)

Consider declaring a temporary technology-free zone with no cell phone, no computer. (You may prefer to journal with your laptop, however). You'll need a journal notebook and Bible.

The simplest way to journal is, *what God said to me* and *what I said to God*.

What God said to me: as you read a Bible passage, ask what God is communicating personally to you. It may be a decision to decide, or a habit to change. An apology to make. A friend to encourage. It may be his encouragement to you, perhaps his correction. **Write it down.**

What I said to God: write your response, composing your prayer like a letter, *Dear Father...*

What to write? expressions of love to him (worship); things you're thankful for; something to clean up in your life; questions like *I don't know what to do, Lord...* and *Lord, I don't understand this passage...* and much more.

4R: Read... Record... Reflect... Respond. And perhaps, some days later, **Review.**

Other thoughts:

- Journaling's not for everyone, but worthwhile if you need to slow down and connect with God
- don't worry about grammar, spelling, handwriting – God's your Lover, not your Editor
- take the time to learn the skill – it takes 40 days to start a habit and longer to make it *you*.
- remember: reading without response means few results. That's why **Journaling's** so valuable.

See also : [SOAP](#), [959/FACTS](#), [spiritual Rhythm](#)

Small things done in great love will change the world, one person at a time...