

Being a habitual Journal-er

It takes 30 days to form a habit. Journal writing, too, is a habit born of consistency of time, place and tool.

Make time, buy a book, join a plan, be consistent. Consistency will condition your mind to writing and make it easier as time goes on.

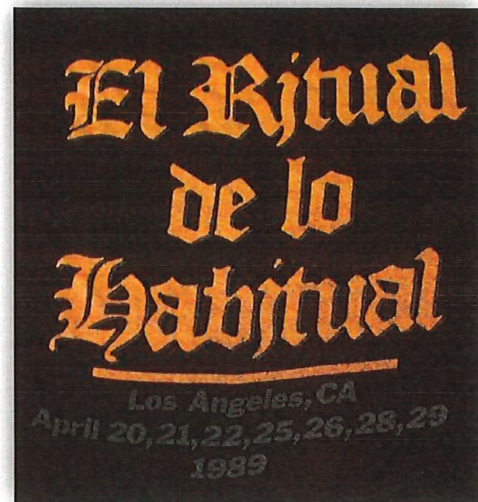
Don't burn yourself out. Start with writing 5 minutes a day. Expand to 7 and so on.

Find time, work with your life-style. If you are a night owl, write after dark. If you are an early bird, get up 7 minutes earlier.

Don't over think this. Journal in a place where you are comfortable, and safe. You don't have to go to a mountaintop or have an exquisitely clean study to journal. You can journal in your truck before you get a haircut (done it).

Don't lay off a day or two thinking it doesn't matter. Our heavenly father loves to listen to your heart.

You know what is going to happen this week. You're going to commit to journaling and the devil is going to throw a wrench in your plans. It's like the deer and the cheetah picture, one second, you're just getting a drink and then boom, drama! You'll have a dead line, get sick, have an argument. Lenny Luchetti said, "When you get Him, you get ALL of Him." Give God, in your journal, all of you. Your warts, fears, and failures. But also, give yourself a little grace. If you forget one day, grow with it.



Remember:

Ephesians 2: 8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast.

As writer Andy Stanley says, "You win, every day you show up for duty."

The Spiritual Journal

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Journaling to God will improve your relationship with him. Use this time to record all of your thoughts and feelings about your soul, God, and plans on how to grow closer to Him. Do not be afraid to bare your soul. You will first of all find **truth in God's word**. John 17:17 **Thy word is truth**. You will also find wisdom and your purpose in life.

Your journal is also a tool **of reflection**. You have a fascinating soul; your journal shows that. Take a deep breath, unplug from the distractions and listen. May I suggest that you write less on Sundays and use that time for some **introspection of your week's journal entries**. Contemplate on what the Lord is saying to you. Celebrate the answered prayers, re-focus on **purpose** and charge into the following week. Meditate on your next steps. Use that time to listen to God with an undivided attention. *Don't know what to write about today?* Tackle some of these prompts.

Journal Questions: Common content found in a "Daily Walk Notebook"

- What is my relationship with God like?
- What is my purpose?
- How much do I really care about material things?
- Where do I fit in the great scheme of life?
- What is God's will for my life?
- Are my goals spiritual or material?
- Am I a good parent?
- Why am I hurting?
- Why do I keep making the same mistakes over and over again?
- How do I connect deeper with my savior?
- What can I do to spiritually grow?
- How do I "Seek first the kingdom of God" (Matt 6) in my life?
- How do I live out Mark 12, and "Love God and Love others?"
- How do I expand my role in your Kingdom?
- Where in my life do I need to show grace? Patience? Mercy? Forgiveness?
- Do I consider others better than myself?
- What are my opportunities to act out God's will? To serve? To volunteer? To minister to others?
- Do I pray for my enemies?
- Who are the lost in my life and how can God use me to help them?

20 PROMPTS FOR SPIRITUAL JOURNALING

1. This week I was most blessed by . . .
2. My favorite passage of Scripture is . . .
3. The area where I need to put more trust in God is . . .
4. One lesson I learned from Scripture this week is . . .
5. An aspect of God's character he recently revealed to me is . . .
6. I find I feel God's presence most when . . .
7. God is leading me to make the following changes . . .
8. An act of obedience God is prompting me to take is . . .
9. My enthusiasm for the gospel is increased when . . .
10. Sometimes I get angry with God about . . .
11. I feel most distant from God when . . .
12. My calling in life is . . .
13. My spiritual gifts are . . .
14. What brings me the most joy in life is . . .
15. I'm eager for God to . . .
16. Three ways I want God to transform me are . . .
17. An area of my spiritual life where I need to seek God's guidance is . . .
18. Journaling has helped my spiritual formation by . . .
19. The most significant area of my life that is not finding its way into my journal is . . .
20. Two ways I can apply the gospel to my life are . . .

Dear God,

The list is endless. When something, or some theme, resonates with you, **don't trust your memory**, write it down. Don't be dismissive, **write extensively**. This will benefit you later, **when you** pray your journal content.

Gratitude Journaling

Gratitude journaling offers a simple way to celebrate what we are grateful for in our lives on a more regular basis. The simple act of reflecting on what you're thankful for and then listing these things out can be a surprising exercise in appreciating the abundance that surrounds us.

Psalms 136:1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Take one night this week to focus on cultivating an attitude of gratitude to God. Enjoy taking a few moments to slow down and say thanks to our heavenly father for his many blessings. Answer any of these questions, just enjoy writing.

1. What are three things you are grateful for today?
2. Who are you thankful for today?
3. What are three reasons you are glad to be alive today?

What makes you grateful to still be living and breathing right now?

4. In what ways have you grown as a person over the last year?

Even in challenging times, we can still take time to reflect on the ways we've evolved and changed for the better.

5. What is something you are grateful to have learned recently?
6. What are three qualities you appreciate about yourself?
7. What is something in your life that you feel "lucky" to have?

Gratitude often involves recognizing the people, things, or circumstances in our lives that seem to exist outside of anything we did to get them. What are those things for you?

8. What is a simple delight you have been enjoying lately?
9. What do you like about where you live right now?
10. How does expressing gratitude make you feel right now?

