

# *Life's Log Book*



*“Recording Your Time With God”*

*Ed Blankenship*

***“Very early in the morning,  
Jesus got up,  
went to a solitary place,  
where He prayed.”***  
***Mark 1:35***

***Jesus set the example. He calls us to follow!***

The most exciting opportunity in all of life is the privilege of walking close to God. That certainly begins by coming to know Jesus personally through salvation. Inviting Christ into your heart and receiving God's gift of salvation is the start of a wonderful experience, both here on earth and in eternity! But it shouldn't just stop there. God wants us to grow in our knowledge and love for Him each day. That is true personal worship! But how does a believer do this? The answer is simple - "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." James 4:8a. "Drawing near to God" involves daily meeting Him, talking with Him, and He with you. As each of us do this, we begin to build a deeper and deeper relationship with Him, the most important relationship in all of life.

This journal shows you not only why, but also how to develop such a meaningful time with God. It includes a daily journal for three months, pages for prayer, a New Testament reading plan, how to do in-depth Bible study, have personal planning retreats, and a page to help you set goals for your spiritual life and ministry. While intended for individual use, also included is helps for the small group and ways to build greater accountability. So come on, practice walking with Him today. He's waiting for you. Then share it with others as well!



Ed Blankenship came to Christ in college through the ministry of The Navigators where he was discipled and taught how to have a daily Quiet Time. He later served 12 years on staff with the Navigators Church Discipleship Ministry in Arkansas and Tennessee. He and his wife Janice attend Mount Ararat Baptist Church in Stafford, Virginia. He has written several Bible Study Guides for small group use. Ed is currently employed as a civilian analyst for the U. S. Marine Corps and works at the Pentagon. Ed and Janice have three grown children and five terrific grandchildren. [E-mail Ed at Ed.Bankenship@hotmail.com](mailto:Ed.Bankenship@hotmail.com) with comments on your time with God and on this Journal. Thanks!

# *Life's Log Book for*

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*(Your Name)*

*Recording My Time With God...*

*For the Period*

\_\_\_\_\_ *to* \_\_\_\_\_

*A Spiritual Journey*

*Dedicated to Janice,  
who outside of the Lord,  
is my one true love!*

This Log Book is part of  
*The Transformation Series*

Some studies in this series are:

- *Reflections* – Spending Time With God
- *Excavations* – Digging Deep Into God’s Word
- *Meditations* – Becoming a Person After God’s Own Heart
- *Directions* – Moving Others Towards Christ
- *Acts* – Reaching the World for Christ
- *2nd Timothy* – Sharing Spiritual Truth

For a complete listing see page 75.

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# *Why this Book?*

We've had a magnet on our refrigerator that says, "**Jesus is life. The rest is just details.**" I have no idea where that quote comes from, but it is so true! **1 Timothy 6:19 says that life with Christ is "real life". This book is to record your life with Christ.** This can include daily devotions (called Quiet Times), some of the Bible studies you may do, extended times with God (Personal Planning Retreats), sermon summaries, prayers, ministry opportunities...anything really. The list can go on and on because God is involved in every aspect of life. So the purpose of this Log Book is to record your life with Him and then use it to remember what God has done.

**You see God wants each of us to be communing with Him daily;** to spend time regularly in His Word and to pray for ourself and for others. That is the purpose of this journal, to provide help and encouragement to do so on a daily basis.

In this journal we do this by teaching a concept called a daily Quiet Time, or Devotional Time as often called. Not only do we teach it, but in this journal you also practice it by having regular Quiet Times. We encourage you to find a group, or an individual or two who also have Quiet Times and share with each other what God is showing you from His Word. We also have a Goals page which allows you to tailor this journal to meet your own needs. The purpose of this is to include some accountability which we all need, to insure that the concepts we learn are also the concepts we practice.

This journal is intended for individual use, but as said earlier can also be helpful in a group setting. It can be combined with other Bible study or small group material. Included is also how to study the Bible without using a study guide and blank forms you can use (or copy) to record your study.

During these weeks the intent is for you to have a Quiet Time daily. Our hope and prayer is that God will show you some key insights from His Word. You will record those thoughts on the Journal Pages included. There are several kinds of journal pages inside, those with days of the weeks identified and those without. Both have spaces for 7 days on any two adjoining pages. Use the ones with days on them first, working to develop a daily habit, then go on to the ones without days. **The purpose behind all this is not to fill out blanks on a sheet, nor is it even to achieve certain goals, but to meet with God on a daily basis as often as you can.** When you do that, He will change your life! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

## *Using this in a Group*

While designed for individual use, **you may want to use this as part of a small group.** In this case everyone in the group would have his (or her) own Journal. The leader should model what is being taught by having a daily Quiet Time and applying them to their life. If the Quiet Time is new to you we encourage you to do the practice Quiet Time ahead of time and then use the Journal Pages for 2 weeks to personally see the benefits before you teach it. There is also material about the quiet time that is to be read. You may want to have this read aloud by group members, going around the room and letting each person read a paragraph aloud, in sequence. So during your 1<sup>st</sup> group meeting use the material on pages 7-11. This would cover salvation, using the Bible, and quiet time. Definitely do the practice quiet time together during your first time together. Then as you add new people, do this individually with them. Another idea is to have a practice quiet time session each quarter.

**Each week group members should share something they have written down in their Journal. This is not to be rushed.** During the practice session have everyone

share as time permits. In subsequent weeks, ask for volunteers, and encourage them in what they have written down. Try to allow for all to share, including yourself, even going first at times. Note that it is recommended that members choose their own book in the Bible to read rather than assigning specific devotional readings. This allows for better sharing. **Encourage members to get a paperback New Testament or Bible for their Quiet Times so they will feel free to mark in it.** They may also want a different Bible for any additional Bible study your group is doing.

**Choose a Bible study that would best fit your group.** Some studies I have written are in the back. You may also want to try doing Bible study without a guide. These are explained on pages 54-62. **You can use any Bible study guide you prefer in conjunction with this Journal. It is best if group members prepare their study ahead of time.**

**A format for a small group to use this Journal is to:**

- 1) Open in Prayer**
- 2) Have people share from their Quiet Times**
- 3) Share progress on reaching goals (see page 67)**
- 4) Discuss your Bible study**
- 5) Finally, close in prayer**

**Many groups often have refreshments as well.**

Some other tools are given in the book that you may also want to consider using in your small group, but don't forget the daily quiet time. **May God bless you as you introduce the quiet time to your group and then continue emphasizing it weekly.** I trust the members will grow stronger in the Lord as they meet with Him daily. As a paraphrase of Luke 24:32 says, "Didn't our heart burn within us as He opened to us the Scripture as He talked with us this day!"

# *Have You Received the G-I-F-T of Salvation?*

The Christian life is the most rewarding experience possible, because it is a relationship with the person of Jesus Christ. Biblical Christianity is God reaching down to us, caring for us, and accepting us just the way we are. It's a **gift**, not earned.

## **G - God Loves Us and Has a Wonderful Plan**

Some people say God couldn't possibly be concerned about them. But look at 1 Peter 5:7 and John 3:16. They say God does love us and has a wonderful plan for us – eternal life.

## **I – I Sin and Do Things Wrong (We All Do!)**

But there is a problem. The Bible says all people have something in common. Instead of the life God intended, we mess it up, and there is an awful result. Look at Romans 3:23 and Romans 5:12. Our sin separates us from God. Some people think the way to win favor with God is to be a good person and do good works. But look at what the Bible says in Ephesians 2:8, 9. We simply can't earn our way to heaven!

## **F – Forgiveness is Through Christ**

With people in such a helpless situation, God didn't just leave us hanging. He sent Jesus for us. See Romans 5:8. To those who say there are many ways to heaven, the Bible differs. John 14:6 says there is only one way. Jesus paid the penalty for us.

## **T – Trust in Jesus**

In John 6:29 Jesus says we must believe in Him to have the abundant life God intends. In Revelation 3:20 Jesus gives the promise he will come into our life if we ask. He wants to be part of everyone's life. You can invite Him in by praying, "**Lord Jesus, I know I have done things wrong and I am sorry. I ask that you help me to turn from those things. I ask Jesus to come into my heart and life and save me. Amen.**" If this is the prayer of your heart, Jesus is in your life! 2 Corinthians 5:17 says that He then makes you a new person.

# **Using Your Bible**

The Bible is God's Word to humanity. It was written by individuals inspired by God. There are two subdivisions in the Bible, the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament is God's dealings with Jews, and it also tells of the beginning of the world and of the coming Messiah. The New Testament tells about Christ's time on earth and God's dealings with Christians, and also the Messiah's future second coming and the end of the world. Both the Old and New Testaments are pertinent to us today, **but it is recommended to read the New Testament before reading the Old.** The Bible's theme is God's salvation of His people.

The Bible actually consists of numerous individual "books". **The table of contents in your Bible should be used to help you locate the individual "books" of the Bible.** Note that some book titles are very similar, such as the book of John, the book of 1 John, the book of 2 John, and finally the book of 3 John. If a particular verse you are looking up doesn't make sense in regards to a study question, you may be in the wrong Bible book!

The references to Bible passages in this journal and in most study guides are in the traditional manner - by book, chapter, and verse. Example - John 3:16 refers to the book of John in the Bible, chapter 3, the 16th verse. Sometimes a reference may indicate "a" or "b" afterwards, indicating either the first half or the second half of a verse. It is also helpful to read the context (the verses before and after) as well. Finally, if you have trouble understanding a particular verse, reading the verse in another translation helps.

**It is helpful to have a separate Bible for Bible study in addition to a paperback Bible or New Testament used for your Quiet Time.** Bibles are found in book, department, or discount stores. Note that there are major differences in the language used by different versions of the Bible sold today. While all English Bibles were translated from the original Greek and Hebrew texts, some versions (e.g. the King James Version) were translated in the 1600s and use old English. Others were translated recently and use modern English. Make sure you use Bible(s) you can fully understand for your Bible study as well as for your Quiet Time. I recommend the New International Version (NIV) or the New Living Translation (NLT). The Message is suitable only for quiet times.

# *Personal Worship (“Quiet Time”)*

The most exciting opportunity in life is the privilege of walking close to God. That certainly begins by coming to know Jesus personally through salvation. Inviting Christ into your heart and receiving God’s gift of salvation is the start of a wonderful experience, here and in eternity!

But it shouldn’t just stop there. God wants us to grow in our knowledge and love for Him each day. But how does a believer do this? The answer is simple - "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." James 4:8a. "Drawing near to God" involves daily meeting Him, talking with Him, and He with you. As we do this, we begin to build a deeper and deeper relationship with Him, the most important relationship of all.

One key habit that can help build this deeper relationship with God is having a daily “quiet time”, or a daily “devotional” as it is sometimes called. This is a time of Bible reading and prayer where you quiet your heart before God and listen to Him through His Word and then also commune (or talk) with Him in prayer. It doesn’t have to be long, maybe just 5-10 minutes at first, but it is a time you will soon find grows and means more and more to you each day!

## **WHY HAVE A DAILY QUIET TIME?**

**First, God desires to meet with you daily!** He died on the cross to make that a possibility. Each and every day, He is interested in your life, and having a daily quiet time is a wonderful way to commune with Christ. (See Zephaniah 3:17 and Revelation 3:20.)

**Secondly, you need a daily quiet time.** By doing so, you will get to know Jesus better. It will enrich your day. God will use it for cleansing and to guide you in everyday decisions. It will help in all areas of your life. As Jesus says in Luke 10:38-42, “Only this is really needed.” (See also Psalm 16:11 and Philippians 3:8.)

**Third, it will give you something to share with others.** A passage you read today may be just what someone else needs to hear. Keeping a journal is an excellent way to have those thoughts from God available to you for others' needs, so share as God leads.

## **HOW TO HAVE A DAILY QUIET TIME.**

While there are many ways to have a quiet time with God, here is one that can often work best to get you started.

1. Find a quiet place, apart from distractions, where you can be alone. Many find the morning to be the best time. (Fill in below): My Quiet Time will be at \_\_\_\_\_ (am/pm). Place: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Pray, telling God you love Him, and ask for wisdom and for Him to speak to your heart. Also thank Him, and confess any sin that comes to your mind. (James 1:5 and 1 John 1:9)
3. Read a passage in the Bible. Start with a chapter, perhaps in the New Testament, particularly if the quiet time is a new concept. As you read, underline verses that stand out to you. **Many prefer a modern paperback Bible for their quiet time so they feel "more free" to underline in it. I encourage you to use one. (I will use this modern paperback version: \_\_\_\_\_.)**
4. When completed reading, go back and review the verses you underlined. Pick one underlined verse that impresses you. Fill out a journal entry on it. For the appropriate day, write down in a journal what you read in the Bible, what verse stood out to you the most, what that verse said (paraphrase it or put down what it said verbatim), how it impressed you, and your response. An example:  
◊ **Monday:** Date: 12/4/09 What I read: Phillipians 1 Best Verse: 25  
What it said: Paul lived so he can help others grow and experience the joy of salvation.  
How it impressed me: He was focused on helping people grow more mature in their faith.  
My response: Lord, help me (and use me) to help others grow and experience You daily!
5. After completing your journal entry, talk to God in prayer about this verse, how it impacts you, and how you want to respond as a result. Then go on to pray about other items on your prayer list(s).

# Practice Having a Quiet Time

Read and mark 1 Thess. 1 then complete the practice journal entry:

## 1 Thessalonians 1

1. Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you. 2. We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. 3. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. 4. For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5. because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. 6. You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. 7. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. 8. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia--your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, 9. for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10. and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead--Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. (NIV)

## Practice Journal Entry

◊ **Today:** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ What I read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_

What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUIET TIME JOURNAL (Week 1)

**GET STARTED:** Pray for guidance, then pick a chapter in a **modern paperback Bible or New Testament such as the New Living Translation or The Message.** (You may want to start in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2 as you read chapter 1 in practice.) Read and underline what stands out to you. Pick what you consider to be the best verse and fill out the appropriate journal entry. Then talk to God about it. Do this daily. As God leads, share what He shows you with others.

◊ **SUNDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **MONDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **TUESDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **WEDNESDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **THURSDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **FRIDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **SATURDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

## **QUIET TIME JOURNAL: Pray, Read, Underline, Record**

◊ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ What I Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ What I Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

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My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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◊ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ What I Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_

What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ What I Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_

What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

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My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

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My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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## QUIET TIME JOURNAL

◊ **SUNDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **MONDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **TUESDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **WEDNESDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **THURSDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_

What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **FRIDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_

What it said: \_\_\_\_\_

How it impressed me: \_\_\_\_\_

My response: \_\_\_\_\_

◊ **SATURDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_

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My response: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUIET TIME JOURNAL

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My response: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUIET TIME JOURNAL

◊ **SUNDAY** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Below is an alternate approach covering just one day's devotional insights if you prefer. Feel free to photocopy. Two more such pages follow without this heading. You can use a lined or unlined journal for this approach to record your Quiet Times.*

## **QUIET TIME JOURNAL**

"Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" Luke 24:32

◊ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ What I Read: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Verse: \_\_\_\_\_

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My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Prayer Items:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other Notes/Thoughts for the Day:**

## QUIET TIME JOURNAL

"Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" Luke 24:32

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Prayer Items: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other Notes/Thoughts for the Day:**

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My response: \_\_\_\_\_

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Prayer Items: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other Notes/Thoughts for the Day:**

## ***Keeping Track of What You've Read***

It is important for every Christian to read their Bible regularly. This is true both for encouragement and for guidance. Psalm 119:9 says that a person should guard his (or her) life according to God's Word. But to do so you must be in The Book, it's not enough just to have it in your house! The more you get into the Bible the more God can show you His will. The New Testament is an excellent place to start reading. Some people like to keep track of where they read to record their progress. Use the chart following the Quiet Time Journal pages to keep track of your reading in the New Testament. This chart lists every book of the New Testament and every chapter number. Put an "X" through the chapter numbers as you read them. My prayer is that this will encourage you to read through the entire New Testament. You should be able to do so in 9 months if you read one chapter daily. Then you can re-read it, or go on to the Old Testament. An Old Testament chart is also given. Three chapters a day gets you through the entire Bible in one year.

## ***Using a Prayer List***

You will want to add prayer to your quiet time. There are four basic types of prayer. You can remember them by **A-C-T-S**. Adoration (or praise), Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication (prayer for self and others). Try using this approach in your prayers. Many Christians also use prayer lists to help be more consistent. Following the New Testament Reading Chart you will find several prayer pages that have a column for specific prayer request and another for God's answer. It helps to be specific in your prayers as much as possible. For example if some friends you know are going through a difficult time, don't just say "Prayer for Bill and Sue", also ask that "God would provide a job and finances for Bill and Sue." This will help you see specific answers.

Remember that God can answer in 3 ways – Yes, No, or Wait. If he answers No or Wait, he is not trying to be mean, but knows that this isn't either the best thing or not the right time. Keep praying and be consistent in your prayers and God will bless you with many wonderful answers to prayer. (Colossians 4:2)

## OLD TESTAMENT READING CHART

It is important for every Christian to read their Bible regularly both for encouragement and for guidance. Psalm 119:9 says that a person should guard his (or her) life according to God's Word. But to do so you must be in The Book, not just have it in your house! **The New Testament is an excellent place to start.** (See next page.) Some people like to keep track of where they read to record their progress. Use the chart below to keep track of your reading in the Old Testament. Put a line (or an "X") through every 10 chapters as you read them. Our prayer is that this will encourage you to read through the entire Old Testament. 3 chapters a day will get you through the entire Bible in about a year.

### HISTORY BOOKS

Genesis	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50
Exodus	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	
Leviticus	1-10	11-20	21-27		
Numbers	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-35	36
Deuteronomy	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-34	
Joshua	1-10	11-20	21-24		
Judges	1-10	11-20	21		
Ruth	1-4				
1 Samuel	1-10	11-20	21-30	31	
2 Samuel	1-10	11-20	21-24		
1 Kings	1-10	11-20	21-22		
2 Kings	1-10	11-20	21-25		
1 Chronicles	1-10	11-20	21-29		
2 Chronicles	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-36	
Ezra	1-10				
Nehemiah	1-10	11-13			
Esther	1-10				

### POETRY and WISDOM BOOKS

Job	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-42		
Psalms	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70
71-80	81-90	91-100	101-110	111-120	121-130	131-140	141-150
Proverbs	1-10	11-20	21-30	31			
Ecclesiastes	1-10	11-12					
Song of Solomon	1-8						

### PROPHECY BOOKS

Isaiah	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-66
Jeremiah	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-52	
Lamentations	1-5						
Ezekiel	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-48		
Daniel	1-10	11-12					
Hosea	1-10	11-14					
Joel	1-3						
Amos	1-9						
Obadiah	1						
Jonah	1-4						
Micah	1-7						
Nahum	1-3						
Habakkuk	1-3						
Zephaniah	1-3						
Haggai	1-2						
Zechariah	1-10	11-14					
Malachi	1-4						

## NEW TESTAMENT READING CHART

Jesus says in Matthew 4:4 that "we should live, not by bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of God." Reading the Bible, starting with the New Testament should be our spiritual food – daily! The New Testament tells about Christ's time on earth and God's dealings with Christians, and it also tells of the Messiah's future second coming and the end of the world. Read the New Testament first, and then read the Old. Some people like to track their progress as they read. Use the chart below to keep track of your reading in the New Testament. Put an "X" through the chapter numbers as you read them. Our prayer is that this will encourage you to read through the entire New Testament. You should be able to do so in about 9 months if you read 1 chapter daily. 3 chapters a day will get you through the entire Bible in about a year.

Matthew	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28										
Mark	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
Luke	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24														
John	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21																	
Acts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28										
Romans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
1 Corinthians	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
2 Corinthians	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13						
Galatians	1	2	3	4	5	6													
Ephesians	1	2	3	4	5	6													
Philippians	1	2	3	4															
Colossians	1	2	3	4															
1 Thess.	1	2	3	4	5														
2 Thess.	1	2	3																
1 Timothy	1	2	3	4	5	6													
2 Timothy	1	2	3	4															
Titus	1	2	3																
Philemon	1																		
Hebrews	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13						
James	1	2	3	4	5														
1 Peter	1	2	3	4	5														
2 Peter	1	2	3																
1 John	1	2	3	4	5														
2 John	1																		
3 John	1																		
Jude	1																		
Revelation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22																

## PRAYER PAGES

“Very early in the morning, Jesus got up, went to a solitary place, where He prayed.” Mark 1:35

### Date/Request

## Date/God's Answer

## PRAYER PAGES

"Very early in the morning, Jesus got up, went to a solitary place, where He prayed." Mark 1:35

### Date/Request

## Date/God's Answer

## **ADDING VARIETY TO YOUR QUIET TIMES**

As you continue to have daily quiet times, occasionally it may get a little dry. Take that as a prompting from God that you should vary what you do, allowing the Spirit to lead you. And also don't get discouraged if you miss some; that happens. But work toward meeting with Him daily. Here are some ideas to try. Remember the focus is to meet with God, not following a system. Don't be afraid to experiment.

- Sing some, Pray out loud, Stand, Walk, Sit, Kneel, vary your position. Add Christian music to your time.
- Focus on one verse, repeating it over and over again, each time emphasizing a different word and reflecting or praying on that word. Ask questions. Does it show you something about God? Yourself? Something you can praise God for? What is God saying to you?
- Look back over your previous months quiet time journal pages and thank Him for what He's shown you. Look for trends in God's dealing with you.
- Change Bible translations periodically. Get a more modern translation.
- Change the order. Pray then Read - Read, then Pray!
- If married, do it as a couple sometimes. If you have children, bring them into it occasionally.
- Vary the location. Have it outside sometimes, have it in your car (while stationary), have it in different chairs or rooms, or have it while walking outside.
- Ask others what they do in their quiet time. (My daughter-in-law "writes out" a prayer on a passage.)

**So keep at it. Sometimes "dry times" come.  
God can speak to you through these as well.**

## ***Getting the Most out of Church***

It is a tremendous privilege and opportunity to go to church. Psalm 122:1 says, "I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD." And Hebrews 10:24-25 says, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Yes, God wants us and our family at church for several reasons:

1. To show Him we love Him.
2. To build us up spiritually.
3. To give us an opportunity to help others.

To maximize your time in church, here are a few hints:

- Go to bed early, set your alarm, and plan to be on time.
- Bring Bible, paper, pen **and take notes** (see next pages).
- Pray for an open, receptive heart.
- Participate – Sing, Give, Find a task you can do.
- Stick around afterwards to meet people.

## ***Making an Application of the Word in Your Life***

Whether it be a sermon, or a verse from your quiet time or Bible study, we need to apply God's Word to our life. As James says, "In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." Some people like to use the acronym **S-P-E-C-K** to help them come up with applications. Look for Sins to avoid, Promises to claim, Examples to follow, Commands to obey, or Knowledge to share.) Then once you have identified that, ask yourself:

- 1. What does it say?** Example Romans 14 says some eat meat, while others eat only vegetables. Both are OK. Don't criticize.
- 2. What does it mean?** Ex: When we are faced with someone with a different opinion, don't be quick to judge. Welcome them.
- 3. Where do I fall short?** Ex: I tend to be critical of others. I sometimes look down on them and don't even meet them.
- 4. What will I do about it?** Ex: Remember I'm not perfect. Look for the good in others. Learn from them. Meet new folks.
- 5. What is my first step?** Ex: Meet new people after service. Invite our foreign neighbors for a cookout with meat and veggies.

# *Sermon Summaries*

◊Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_

Sermon Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Key Scriptures (Give the Reference and the Thought for each):

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Main Sermon Points: \_\_\_\_\_

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Application: \_\_\_\_\_

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# *Sermon Summaries*

◊Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_

Sermon Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Key Scriptures (Give the Reference and the Thought for each):

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Main Sermon Points: \_\_\_\_\_

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Application: \_\_\_\_\_

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Sermon Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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Main Sermon Points: \_\_\_\_\_

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Application: \_\_\_\_\_

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# ***Doing In-Depth Bible Study***

## **Dig for it as for Buried Treasure...**

The Bible is a book with deep meaning. But it is also a book that can change and transform lives. To do so we must get in it and uncover those personal truths for ourselves. Acts 17:11 says about the Christians in Berea, “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica because they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.” They didn’t just accept what they heard from others, they studied the Word for themselves, and it changed their lives!

Know that there are **Seven Steps to Bible Study:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Pray and Ask God to Speak to Your Heart and Show you Truth,
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Read It Several Times (Often in Different Translations),
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Look for What it Says (Observation),
- 4<sup>th</sup> Find out What it Means (Interpretation),
- 5<sup>th</sup> Determine How you can Apply it to your Life (Application),
- 6<sup>th</sup> Record Your Thoughts and Insights, and finally
- 7<sup>th</sup> Live it Out and Share it Daily, in Prayer and a Changed Life.

**What helps us to study the Bible?** Asking questions such as **Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?** Asking questions about the text and then attempting to find answers will assist in understanding the text. Where do you find answers? In other Bible passages (cross-references), in other translations, in prayer, and in commentaries. A good book you may want to get about Bible study is Rick Warren’s *Bible Study Methods*. He explains 12 different ways to study the Bible. There are also good internet tools available and we will look at some. Remember that this type of study is more demanding, but it is also more rewarding. **It takes time. Allow several hours per study.**

## **Four Bible Study Methods You Can Use**

### **Verse Study – Use this for a favorite verse or passage**

- Paraphrase It (In your own words)
- Compare in Different Translations (What do they show?)
- Questions and Answers (What questions come to mind? Ask Who, What When, Where, Why, and How?)
- Observations (What does it say?)
- Cross-References (Other passages that shed light.)
- Insights (What does it mean to you?)
- Applications(s) (How will I apply this to my life?)

### **A Chapter – Use this approach to study a chapter**

- Title (Do Last)
- Summary or Outline (Write your own outline or summary)
- Observations and Interpretations-What does it say & mean?
- Cross References (Other verses that shed light.)
- Questions and Answers
- Best Verse (What impacts you most)
- Main Lesson(s) and Application(s)

### **A Topic, Theme, or Word**

- Definition (From a Bible dictionary or regular dictionary)
- Scripture Passage(s) (Use a concordance or topical Bible)
- Interesting Insights
- Main Teaching (What is the predominant teaching)
- Questions and Answers
- Conclusion(s)
- Application(s)

### **A Person – Use this to learn from someone in the Bible**

- Scripture Passage(s) (What verses talk about him or her?)
- Reputation (How was this person viewed by others?)
- Character Qualities (Both strengths and weaknesses)
- Background (Where from? History? Occupation? Etc.?)
- Significant Events in this person's life
- Relationships (How did this person relate to others?)
- Personality
- Spiritual Life
- Lessons Learned from Him/Her

## ***Here's some tips on how to do this kind of Bible study:***

- Look up the verse in a few different translations on [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) in whatever translations you prefer. The Amplified is especially revealing.
- For cross references, look up other verses that also say something in regards to this passage. In [www.Biblegateway.com](http://www.Biblegateway.com) we find many verses when we simply put in key words. Summarize some of the main verses you find.
- Some Bibles also list cross-references or have a concordance which gives cross-references. A separate Concordance, a Topical Bible, or a Study Bible are good books you should consider purchasing for Bible study.
- Use resources you already have, go to a bookstore or library for a Study Bible or a Concordance, or go to [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) and read the passage in other translations, look up cross-references, etc.
- Other websites to visit are [www.Crosswalk.com](http://www.Crosswalk.com), [www.StudyLight.Org](http://www.StudyLight.Org), [www.Biblemaster.com](http://www.Biblemaster.com), and [www.NTGateway.com](http://www.NTGateway.com).
- Complete as much of the Bible study each week ahead of time as you can. Put some effort into completing each section blank, but don't get bogged down in any one area. Group members will share what they got next week and you can write down additional thoughts from others. Fill in as much of the worksheet as you feel comfortable doing.
- Other interesting books or sources you may want to check are dictionaries, encyclopedias, Bible dictionaries, Bible encyclopedias, and of course [www.wikipedia](http://www.wikipedia).
- Remember, there is no right or wrong answers in this type of Bible study, it is designed to help you discover for yourself what God wants you to learn from His Word, which we know is absolute truth. Ask God for wisdom to determine accurately what His Word says. It is also helpful to study in a group and learn from others as well.

- Use *Excavations-Digging Deep into God's Word* by Ed Blankenship for more details on doing this type of study.

**To study books of the Bible longer than one chapter you will need to study each chapter as we do here, but with two additional studies, one done before you study the chapters, and another afterwards. Here's how it would work on the book of 2 Timothy which has 4 chapters:**

- **Book Overview** – Read the entire book, List major themes, and list any questions that come to mind.
- Chapter 1 Study
- Chapter 2 Study
- Chapter 3 Study
- Chapter 4 Study
- **Book Summary** – Review your chapter studies, list Highlights from each, write a Book Outline or Summary, and a final application.

**Blank Forms and What to Study:** One copy each of simple blank forms for each type of study are given. Feel free to photocopy them. They do not allow much room, however, so you may want to simply use notebook paper or a computer. What to study? Choose a person, a chapter, or a verse you like. Or study a topic that interests you or you wonder what the Bible has to say on that subject. When are you done? When you feel like you have covered the subject well enough for now. You can always come back to it later as needed. Some studies to consider are:

- **Verse Studies** – Hebrews 10:24-25, Mark 12:30-31, John 15:5, Psalm 42:1, John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:17.
- **Chapter Studies** – Psalm 23, Philemon, Psalm 15, Matthew 5, 6, and 7, 1 Corinthians 13, Hebrews 11.
- **Studies of People** – Aquila and Priscilla, Barnabas, Apollos, Stephen, Ruth, Martha, Mary, Paul, Peter, Judas.
- **Topical Studies** – Disciple/Discipleship, Honesty/Truth, Wisdom, Patience, Abiding in Christ, Peace, Prayer, Hope.
- **Book Studies** – Ruth, Ezra, Esther, Jonah, John, Romans, 1 John, Philippians, Malachi, Ephesians, Colossians, James.

## EXAMPLE BIBLE STUDY: Hebrews 10:24-25

**My Paraphrase** – *Think about how you can help others to be good to others. Don't stay home, but come together regularly. Help each other even more as Christ's return gets closer.*

### Insights (Different Translations) – *NASB – v 24*

*"Consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds." AMP – v 24*

*"...consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another,*

*studying how we may stir up (stimulate and incite) to love and helpful deeds and noble activities" NLT – "motivate" NIV – "spur one another on" MSG – "Be inventive" RSV – "Consider and provoke" CEV – "Encourage each other"*

**Questions & Answers (2&4s)** 2-What can we do to help others to love and good deeds? A-Pray for them, encourage, get them in the Word, be an example. 2-Why do people stay home? A-They haven't seen/experienced the benefit. 2-Why were they giving up meeting together? A-Sin, discouragement, persecution, immaturity. 2-How do we encourage? A-Share victories, help with challenges.

**Observations** – *Think about helping others, be proactive. Be an encouragement to each other. Work together. Use our creativity to do good.*

**Cross-References** – *"Good works" Ephesians 2:10 – We are God's workmanship. He prepared us for good works. Galatians 6:9-10 – Do good to others, particularly Christians. Don't get tired at it.*

*"Meet together" Acts 2:45-47 – They met daily, they prayed, shared, got in the Word, and witnessed.*

*"Encouraging" 2 Chronicles 30:22 – He encouraged them, they ate together and worshipped God. Romans 12:8 – Use your gifts in encouraging others.*

**Insights or Interpretations** – *Church is something I should go to get involved in, to give out. I will benefit from getting together and others will too! I need to have a plan to help others.*

**Application** – *I need to be seeking others out at church and not just run to the door afterwards. Try to help someone and encourage them.*

**Verse Study of Passage** \_\_\_\_\_

**My Paraphrase**

**Insights from Different Translations**

**Questions and Answers**

**Observations**

**Cross-References**

**Insights/Interpretations**

**Applications(s)**

**Chapter Study of: \_\_\_\_\_**

**My Title: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Brief Summary or Outline**

**Observations/Interpretations**

**Cross-References**

**Questions and Answers**

**“Best” Verse(s)**

**Main Lesson(s) and Application(s)**

**Study of a Person:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Scripture Passage(s)**

**Reputation/Character Qualities**

**Background**

**Significant Events in this person's life**

**Relationships**

**Personality**

**Spiritual Life**

**Lessons Learned/Application(s)**

**Topic/Theme/Word Study of: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Definition**

**Scripture Passage(s)**

**Interesting Insights**

**Main Teaching**

**Questions and Answers**

**Conclusion(s)**

**Application(s)**

## **QUARTERLY PERSONAL PLANNING RETREATS**

You can greatly strengthen your walk with God by having your own quarterly Personal Planning Retreats. These are times when you get alone with God, enjoy His presence, get extended time in prayer and the Word, and also review and plan your schedule for the next 3 months.

Jesus spent forty days alone with God in the wilderness. Moses was upon the mountain communing with God for many days as well. Great men and women of God have made it a habit to spend extended times alone with God. Here God can speak to you in a fresh new way. I recommend you begin with a morning or an afternoon, basically half of a work day with God. You can work up from there. I can personally attest that once you've done this, your walk with God will be greatly enriched. **During this time you will attempt to answer the questions, "Who are you, Lord?" and "What would you have me do?"** These will be times God will use to increase your love and effectiveness for Him and for others. (It is helpful if husband and wife also have an annual Planning Retreat together as a couple.)

You will need to plan these on your calendar and find a location where you can be alone. Some prefer the solitude and beauty of the outside, such as a park, while others prefer a room somewhere such as a hotel, library, or a room in their church. Make sure there is a place you can sing, talk, or pray aloud to help keep you alert. Also be sure you can get up and walk around for a change of pace.

Allow three hours for your first Personal Planning Retreat. This will be long enough for God to speak to you, for you to be refreshed, and for you to review and plan your schedule. Bring several Bibles, prayer lists, missionary letters, your journal, a songbook, prayer lists, reading glasses, and a snack. Get these ready the night before. Plan what you will do if you are meeting outside and the weather is bad. And don't get overly concerned with following a schedule or that you come away with any earth-shattering insights. Instead, **Let the Lord Direct.**

## **A schedule you can follow for your first Quarterly Personal Planning Retreat is given below:**

### **1<sup>ST</sup> HOUR - FOCUS ON GOD**

- **Realize His presence** – Read, meditate, and pray on passages about God, such as Isaiah 40:31, Psalms 27:13-14, Psalms 62:5, Psalms 139, and Genesis 28:16.
- **Grasp His Holiness and Our Need for Cleansing** – Read, meditate, and pray on such passages as Revelation 4, Isaiah 6:1-8, Psalms 139, Psalms 51, Psalms 32, and 1 John 1:9. Confess any sin that God reveals.
- **Worship Him** – Sing some Praise songs and read passages such as Psalms 103, Psalms 111, Revelation 5. Give thanks.

### **2<sup>ND</sup> HOUR – FOCUS ON PRAYER**

#### **A. PRAYER FOR OTHERS** – Family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, missionaries, leaders, enemies, etc. Use prayer and missionary letters if you like.

- **Pray specific things** – Spiritual strength, physical stamina, mental alertness, salvation, spiritual growth, family, relationships, effective ministry.
- **Pray one of Paul's prayers for others** – Such as Philippians 1, Colossians 1, Ephesians 1, or Ephesians 3.
- **Pray for others what you pray for yourself.** – Think of your needs and pray for others.

#### **B. PRAYER FOR YOURSELF (Could come 1st if needed.)**

- **Guidance & wisdom** – Read and reflect on Psalms 119:18, Meditate on Scripture you've memorized or enjoyed from this, or some other study, or from one of your quiet times.
- **Godliness** – Meditate on 1 John 1:9, Philippians 4:8, Galatians 5:22-23.
- **Concerns & needs** – Look into Scripture (Read a small book of the New Testament such as Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, Titus, James, or 1 John), Look for specific direction or promises to claim. Then pray over issues facing you, asking for His help. Things such as your walk with God, your relationships, and your ministry.

### **3<sup>RD</sup> HOUR – FOCUS ON PLANNING**

- **Review and meditate on Scripture** such as Philippians 4:13, Psalms 90:10&12, Psalms 119:105, Proverbs 16:9, Jeremiah 29:11, John 4:34, and 1 Chronicles 4:10.
- **Reflect on your Schedule and Activities (Write down any needed changes)**
  - What am I not doing that I should do?
  - What am I doing that I should stop, or do less?
  - Who and what are my priorities?
  - What should be my main objectives?
- **Have a Final Closing Prayer:** Read and pray one of the closing Psalms (144-150).

**Vary things: Read a while, then Pray some, then Sing,  
then Walk, then Sit, Review verses, etc.  
Allow the Lord to direct, but center it in His Word.**

### **PERSONAL PLANNING RETREAT INSIGHTS**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Use the space below to record your key insights:**

## ***Setting Goals***

**We set goals in many areas of life.** It may be to get a new job, to save for a down payment on a house, to start a family, to lose 10 pounds, to start college, etc. It is often helpful to set goals in the Christian life as well. In this Journal we encourage making it a priority to have daily Quiet Times, to read the Bible, to do Bible study, and regularly attend small group. Hebrews 10:24 says, “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.” And Proverbs 27:17 says, “Iron sharpens iron and one person sharpens another.” We want to be an encouragement and help to each other. Part of that is to set some goals and help each other achieve them.

Following is a page you can use to set spiritual goals for this quarter, semester, or some other period. A Quiet Time goal is already given of 7 consecutive days. Note that it may take several attempts to get 7 days in a row, but that is OK, for as you continue to try and eventually succeed your walk with God will be greatly strengthened. In future journals you may want to increase the number of consecutive days as **experience has shown it takes 28 days to form a new habit.** So moving up to 14, 21, and then 28 consecutive days can help build this habit into your walk with God for a lifetime. Feel free to change the number of days on the goals page as you like. But just remember that the ultimate goal is spending time with God, not some legalistic number of days.

Another goal might be to read certain books of the New Testament, or even the entire New Testament. It could be to complete all the questions in a Bible study lesson or to memorize a verse from the studies. It could also be to pray for a specific person or for something specific to happen. Another goal could be to bring someone to church, or to get involved in a specific ministry. It is sometimes good to set long-term goals, but to begin I recommend setting goals you can achieve in 1-3 months. This helps make your goals more achievable and help build on success. As Proverbs 13:19 says, “**A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul.**” It helps if you are part of a small group or have an individual or two who can weekly check each other on progress towards meeting goals. And you may want to have someone else see your progress and write a specific note of encouragement about the growth evidenced in your walk with God. **Prayerfully consider what goals you should set and work towards achieving them. Remember, goals are not an end in themselves, but are an aid to help your growth to spiritual maturity.**

# *My Goals*

Set up specific goals in your spiritual life for a 1-3 month period. One goal is given, to have a Quiet Time for 7 consecutive days. Set up any others that you like. Then **have someone else initial on the line before each goal as you complete them.** If in a small group, show them to your leader and ask them to write about the growth they have seen in your walk with God during this time.

***\_\_\_\_ Have a Quiet Time daily for 7 consecutive days  
(as shown by 7 consecutive journal entries)***

***\_\_\_\_ Pray for \_\_\_\_\_***

***\_\_\_\_ Tell \_\_\_\_\_ about Christ***

***\_\_\_\_ Invite/Bring \_\_\_\_\_ to church***

***\_\_\_\_ Complete these Bible studies:***

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***\_\_\_\_ Read \_\_\_\_\_***

***Other Goals***

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***My Small Group Leader's Comments (Optional)***

## *Verses to Memorize*

**There are particular verses that you will find that mean so much to you or impact your life in such a significant way that it makes sense to commit them to memory so you can carry them with you everywhere!** This page is for you to write down these verses as you find them so you can begin to memorize and put them in your heart and mind. Learn the verse a phrase at a time, adding phrases until you can say it all from memory. And also learn the address (reference) of the verse as well (e.g., John 3:16) so you can show someone else where it is. I find it helpful to also write the verses out on small cards and carry them with me for review. (Or you can get the Navigators Topical Memory System and memorize those 60 verses.) Research has shown that once you can say a verse from memory, however, you will be unable to do so in about an hour. But you will find that it will then take much less time to re-learn it. The same thing then occurs about a day later, a week later, etc., but each time taking less and less time to re-learn. Eventually it will be in there for good. I know verses I learned years ago because I reviewed them initially, and they have made such an impact on my life that I still learn new ones. **So the key to remembering a verse is not only to memorize it, but also to review.** Reviewing with another person is also helpful, and will be an encouragement to them. Mark on your daily journal in the diamond provided when you have reviewed your verses that day. Think about this, if the Bible is ever banned, the verses we've memorized will be the only ones we'll have. But even now, with Bibles in every book store and home, **there are times during the day when we don't have one with us, or it is impractical to pull out our Bibles. So at those times, the verses you've memorized are all that you have at that particular moment. Don't be caught short!** Have plenty of God's Word in your mind (and heart) to counter Satan's attacks as Jesus did in Matthew chapter 4. The Holy Spirit will then use the verses you've memorized in your life and also help you to be a ministry to others at any time! **God bless you as you memorize and use His Word.** Some verses from this journal you could memorize are: Mark 1:35, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Luke 24:32, Psalm 119:9, Hebrews 10:24-25, James 4:8, 1 Peter 5:7, John 3:16, Romans 3:23, Romans 5:12, Psalm 42:1, Acts 17:11, Romans 5:8, John 14:6, John 6:29, Revelation 3:20, Proverbs 27:17, Ephesians 2:8-9, Colossians 4:2, Luke 10:27, John 15:5, 1 Thessalonians 2:8, Proverbs 13:19, Matthew 28:19-20, 2 Timothy 2:2, and Matthew 5:16.

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## *Stages of Spiritual Growth*

All of us are at various stages spiritually, and God moves us closer to Him. We also can have a part in helping others in this process, as Jesus says in Matthew 28:19-20, **“Go and make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them to obey everything** I have commanded you....” You can help others come to Christ and grow by teaching others.

## Moving Non-Christians Toward Christ

But not everyone is ready yet to receive Christ. Some are **Far from Christ**. Some are **not interested** at all. The gospel message means nothing to them, yet they will respond to love and concern. Others of these are **curious** about religion, but wonder which one is correct. Showing them answers to prayer and a changed life speaks volumes. Others could be characterized as **Exploring Christ**. Some of these are **open to the Gospel**. They have questions and getting them to church or a small group can meet this need. Others are **ready to receive Christ**. They need someone to explain the gospel clearly and ask them to receive Christ. A gospel tract (or the G-I-F-T explanation) can move them to become a **new Christian**. Naturally prayer is needed in all cases, and you need to be a friend as well. Pray and help them progress!

## **-FAR FROM CHRIST-      -EXPLORING CHRIST-**

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graph LR
    A[Not Interested] --> B[Curious]
    B --> C[Open to Gospel]
    C --> D[Ready to Receive]
    D --> E[New Christian]
  
```

**Maturing as a Christian** (Circle below where you are spiritually)  
And it shouldn't just end there. Once someone becomes a **new Christian** they need to be **Growing in Christ**. They need assurance of salvation, prayer, and friendship. They need to get connected to a church, attend regularly, give, and be part of a small group. The next stage is **Close to Christ**. They should get rooted, by meeting with God regularly through quiet time, Bible study, and prayer. They should be serving, by using their gifts, talents, and abilities to meet others' needs. Finally they should be **Christ-Centered**, **sharing** their faith by being a witness to non-believers through their life and testimony and helping Christians grow and mature as well. You can be a part. So pass it on!

**- GROWING IN CHRIST- -CLOSE TO CHRIST- - CHRIST-CENTERED-**

```
graph LR; New[New] --> Connected[Connected]; Connected --> Rooted[Rooted]; Rooted --> Serving[Serving]; Serving --> Sharing[Sharing]; Sharing --> Christian[Christian];
```

**“What you have heard...entrust to faithful men (and women) who will...teach others also.” 2 Tim. 2:2**

# *Spiritual Stories*

God gives each of us things that happen in our life – call them victories or stories that show God at work. You can share some of those things, what Christ has done in your life, to help move non-believers closer to Christ or to help other Christians want to grow. And God will use what you share in their lives! **Each Christian has several stories as to how God has changed their life.** It may be victory over some sin or bad habit, such as gossip, smoking, liquor, prejudice, pornography, or infidelity. It may be changes in attitudes or goals, such as going to a specific school, a change in vocation, trusting God, faithfulness, desire to help others, or inner peace. It may be answers to prayer such as help with a teenager, salvation for a loved one, provision during a tough time financially, getting a job, or finding a mate. It may be a hunger for (or understanding of) the Bible, the joy of spending time with Him in quiet time, the excitement of seeing someone respond to Christ, or the knowledge that now you have eternal life and know where you will spend eternity. **Reflecting on the things listed above, what have you seen God do in your life? Write them here in the space below:**

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Each of these can be a story you can share with others. In sharing a story, arrange it into three sections, **Past, Present, and Secret:**

- 1-The **Past** – The issue you used to have and how you dealt with it.
- 2-The **Present** - Specifically what your life is like now in this area.
- 3-The **Secret** – How Christ made this happen!

Here's an Example of such a Story. Issue: Purity in my thought life.

1. The **Past** for this Issue: I used to really struggle with a "wandering eye".
2. The **Present** for this Issue: Now I'm having victory in this area of my life and praising God for my wife! I know how it can negatively affect my marriage.
3. The **Secret**, How Christ made this happen: What's the secret? You see in college I invited Christ to come into my life and take control. Now he's helping me. Thinking of Him and His Word when I'm tempted has made all the difference.

Now look over your list of things God has done in your life and write two separate “stories” on the next page you could share with someone:

## My Spiritual Story #1 on Issue \_\_\_\_\_

1. The Past for this Issue:

2. The Present for this Issue:

3. The Secret, How Christ made this happen:

## My Spiritual Story #2 on Issue \_\_\_\_\_

1. The Past for this Issue:

2. The Present for this Issue:

3. The Secret, How Christ made this happen:

Practice your spiritual stories and begin praying for opportunities to share them. In sharing one of your stories, look for common ground and leverage off that. If they are having trouble in their marriage and God has helped you in your marriage then share your "Marriage" Story. If they are having trouble with a specific habit, and God has helped you with some habit then share your "Victory over Habit X" Story with them. (It doesn't have to be exactly the same habit.) Use a simple approach such as, "Mary, I used to struggle with that, but had something happen to me that has really helped me in that area of my life. Could I tell you about it?" Or, "That reminds me of a story. Can I share it with you?" Do so if they agree. Then you can ask if they would like to talk further. You may want to share one of the leaflets listed on pages 75-77.

# *How to Help Others*

## **Will you take this challenge and experience the joy?**

The book of James says that we must not be like someone who looks in a mirror, sees himself, then walks away and forgets what we were like. **We should apply God's mirror – His Word – to our life – and then share it with others!** **2 Timothy 2:2** says, “**And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.**” Yes, share what you have. This pleases God (Hebrews 13:16). And it will give you great joy too!

All of us have 24 hours in a day, 7 days a week. We all need to sleep, work, and have family responsibility. But **we can all set aside some time to spend with others so they can see our light shine and so we can help them spiritually** (Matthew 5:16). I personally set aside my weekday lunch hours and my weekend breakfast times to meet with people individually at restaurants to help them. My wife and I also teach a small group on Sundays. You may not be able to do as much, but you can do something. **There are people all around you that could use spiritual input - neighbors, co-workers, people at church, school, family members, relatives, anyone really.** God has given you things you could share with others! So set aside some time to meet others, develop friendships, and help them. I meet with each person weekly or every other week. We study and discuss whatever interests them. And we hold each other accountable to grow and eventually to also reach out to others.

## **How You Can Do This**

There's no secret to how this is done. **Jesus did this in His ministry.** He first modeled a life of faith and daily contact with the Father. He then prayed and took opportunities to meet people. He used those contacts with others to teach them. He shared the Word with them and met needs. You can too! Here's a plan I use. Try it - then adjust it to fit you!

- 1. Walk with God daily (Quiet Time and Obedience) and pray for opportunities** to get to know others.
- 2. Meet people and get to know them.** Meet needs you see.
- 3. Share spiritual truth.** Move the conversation towards the spiritual. Share a spiritual story, the G-I-F-T (page 7), or use one of the leaflets (marked with an \*, pages 75-77) to help you do this. Ask to meet one-on-one with you or be in a group. Find out their interest. (See pages 75-77 for ideas.) Do a short study with them if they are interested. Then re-evaluate.
- 4. Send them out.** Once they are ready, **encourage them to help someone else. Pray for them.**

# *People I'm Meeting With*

*(List who you are trying to help)*

## *Ministry Log*

*(Record what God does in your encounters with others)*

**Date      What you did / With whom? / What was the result?**

## *Ministry Log (Continued)*

*(Record what God does in your encounters with others)*

**Date      What you did / With whom? / What was the result?**

# *Resources You Can Use (\* = Leaflet)*

## **TO BE ROOTED IN CHRIST**

### **\*Are You Firmly Rooted in Life? – Able to Withstand Life's Storms?**

A leaflet providing the gospel message. Can be used to set up a one-on-one mentoring relationship or develop small group interest. For both non-believers and Christians. Very easy to use. (2 Pages)

### **Investigations – Finding out if God is Real**

A book for non-believers to help them think about God and answer some of their questions. Contains an explanation of Biblical Christianity and an overview of the Bible. Challenges them to make their own spiritual quest reading the Bible. Can also be used in a discussion group in your neighborhood, at lunchtime at your work, or on campus. (80 pages)

### **\*Connections – Keeping in Touch**

A leaflet telling why and how to have a daily Quiet Time. (2 pages)

### **\*Celebrations! – Receiving the G-I-F-T**

A leaflet briefly describing the gospel and how to become a Christian. Also contains assurance of salvation. (2 pages)

### **Reflections – Spending Time with God**

A seven-week study introducing the Quiet Time. All the lessons relate to spending time with God. Contains an overview of the Bible. (80 pages)

## **TO BEAR MUCH FRUIT**

### **\*Is Your Christian Life Bearing Much Fruit? – Or Are You Withering on the Vine? A leaflet to help Christians want to grow, bear fruit and also reach out to those around them. Designed to help set up one on one mentoring or promote small group interest. (2 Pages)**

### **Finances – More than Making Ends Meet** (80 pages)

A seven-week study designed for a broad audience that explains Biblical principles on finances and provides guidance/projects on budgeting, saving, giving, and retirement. Includes Quiet Time.

### **Marriage & Family – Living & Leaving a Legacy**

A seven-week study designed for a broad audience that explains principles on marriage and raising a family from the Bible and includes helps/advice on family nights, dates, communication, sex, and other key areas. Also includes the Quiet Time. (80 pages)

**Also available as a seven chapter book** which explains God's plan for marriage. Includes the gospel, but not the Quiet Time.

### **James – Living Out Your Faith** (72 pages)

A seven-week study on the book of James with emphasis on making application of the Word of God. Also has the Quiet Time.

## **TO MAKE DISCIPLES (MULTIPLY SPIRITUALLY)**

**\*Are You Following Christ's Call to Make Disciples? – Are Others Lives Being Changed as a Result?** A leaflet to help Christians want to help others and grow to a deeper commitment to the Lord. Designed to help set up one on one mentoring or be in a small group. (2 Pages)

### **Acts – Reaching the World for Christ**

A nine-week study on the book of Acts with emphasis on increasing your heart and involvement in missions. Includes Quiet Time. (86 pages)

### **Life's Log Book – Recording Your Time with God**

Allows you to record your Quiet Times and other encounters with God over a three-month period and use them in your small group with any type of study guide. Contains many additional helps. (80 pages)

### **Directions – Moving Others toward Christ**

A seven-week study on helping others in their spiritual journey with application on personal testimonies, witnessing, and discipling. Also includes the Quiet Time. (77 pages)

## **Meditations – Becoming a Person after God’s Own Heart**

A seven-week study and experience on growing in your love and devotion to God. Includes how to meditate, extended prayer times, scripture memory, and celebration. Also has the Quiet Time. (92 pages)

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy – Sharing Spiritual Truth**

A seven-week study on the book of 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy with emphasis on ministering to others in three steps: 1) Walk with God and pray for opportunities, 2) Get to know people and meet needs (serve them), and 3) Share spiritual truth. Also has the Quiet Time. Contains the five leaflets described in this resource section. (101 pages)

## **Excavations – Digging Deep into God’s Word**

A seven-week study teaching how to do analytical Bible study on your own on any topic, verse, chapter, or person. Gives a plan to help you continue to study and grow in fruitfulness and ministry for Him. Also includes the Quiet Time. (80 pages)

**Transformation- The Process and the Series – Changing the World for Christ Starting with You!** A pamphlet explaining the disciple-making process and this series. Designed to help church leaders gain a vision and tools to help others grow to a deeper commitment to the Lord in their life and in ministry. (11 Pages)

### **Also available (but not listed above):**

- **Revelation** – Envisioning the End Times
- **Philippians** – Rejoicing in Christ
- **Prayer** – Conversing with God
- Devotionals for Kids and Teens.

**God will bless you as you share spiritual truth and your life with others! (1 Thessalonians 2:8)**

**For more information on these and other materials contact:**

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**Member: Mount Ararat Church**

**[MountArarat.Org](http://MountArarat.Org)**

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