

Laying a Solid Foundation

Doing daily devotions re-patterns the way we think and transforms the spirit of our mind. As we read God's words, we begin to see how God responds to things. Then when we face similar situations as Jesus did, we begin to respond in the way that He would.

Journaling is an excellent way to both record and process what God has spoken to us. It also helps us to come back and reflect on and review some of the 'treasures of truth' that God has spoken into our life. Without writing them down, we may forget those blessings and some very important lessons! And although journaling is a very personal time with the Lord, you may want to share some of your daily journaling with your small group or mentors. Through discussion, you may be able to look deeper into what God is speaking to you, gain new insight and even encourage others. Following is a helpful pattern to follow in your daily process of devotions developed by Pastor Wayne Cordeiro in *The Divine Mentor*:

S for Scripture - open your Bible to the reading found under today's date of your Bible Reading Plan. Take time reading and allow God to speak to you. When you are done, identify one verse that particularly spoke to you that day, and write it in your journal.

O for Observation - What do you think God is saying to you in this verse? Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. Paraphrase and write the scripture down in your own words.

A for Application-Personalize what you have read, by asking yourself how it applies to your life right now. Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, revelation of a new promise, or corrections for a particular area of your life. Write how this scripture can apply to you today. Ask yourself: "How will I be different today because of what I have just read?" This keeps you mindful that you're not just reading to read, but to be changed.

P for Prayer-This can be as simple as asking God to help you use this scripture, or to give you greater insight on what He may be revealing to you, or for the Holy Spirit's help in being obedient to what He has just spoken into your life. Remember, prayer is a two way conversation, so be sure to listen to what God has to say! Now, write it out.

If this seems a little overwhelming, take it slow and keep it simple. No matter how you decide to do your devotions, the important thing is to show up for your daily appointment, because God is always waiting for you!

HOW TO START

1. Set a time and place.
2. Bring a bible, a daily Scripture reading plan, a journal, a pen, and an open heart. Bible reading plan available at WWW.ONEYEARBIBLEONLINE.COM.
3. Spend 10 minutes reading, 10 minutes journaling, and 10 minutes praying.

Sample Journal Page

Title: Living Wisely

Scripture - *Matt 7:24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock*

Observation - *Jesus is saying that it is not the mere knowledge of His Word that makes the difference in our lives, but the actual practice of it. If we will be careful to listen with an open heart and a readiness to obey, and if we will practice what He says, we will live wisely, and regardless of what storms life may bring, we will be able to stand strong, endure, and overcome.*

Application - *What a powerful admonition! Jesus is reminding us that knowing his word alone is not sufficient. It is not about reading his word or listening to sermons to gain information, but it is about life transformation, letting His word change us.*

Prayer - *Jesus help me to live wisely. Help me today to carefully listen to all that you have to say to me with an open heart. Strip away the objections of my mind, the resistance of my flesh, and the stubbornness of my will. Help me by the power of your Spirit to walk in greater obedience to you in every circumstance that I face today..*

For more information on the SOAP method of devotions read the book *The Divine Mentor*, by Dr. Wayne Cordeiro