

WEEK THREE

Fresh Pages

A Journaling MasterClass

with Ann Voskamp

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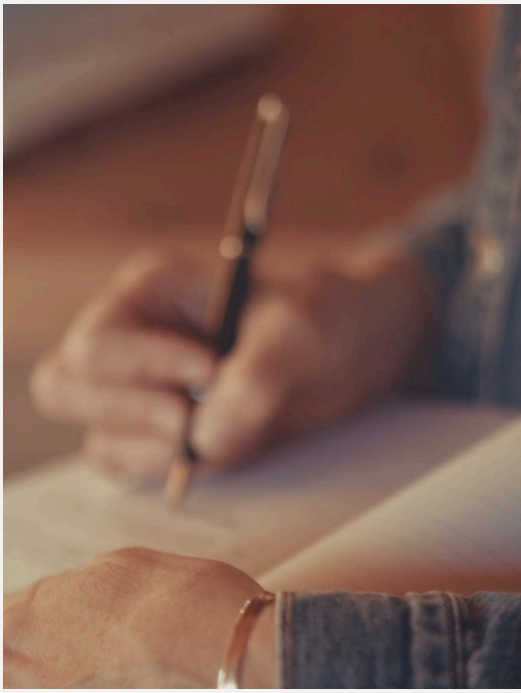
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PROMPTS & RESOURCES

Open a Fresh Page with these questions







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This Week? It's all about

Why & What

Last week, we discussed Doctor Journaling, because research shows us what a POWERFUL, transformative tool that particular way of journaling mends our tender places.

And over these next two sessions, we will explore the WHY & WHAT of Journaling.



notes to soul
from our journaling sessions:

The Story does the slaying.
The Story ALWAYS does the slaying.

When you pick up a pen and begin to write words — you encounter the Word Himself

Shame dies when our stories are told in safe places.

Telling the hard story
always slays the hard things.

A Relationship with Journaling



There is no better way to understand your thoughts than to sit down and write those thoughts down.

Having a relationship with journaling is about having a relationship with your mind — the way your mind is thinking; the way your thoughts are journeying with the WORD Himself; seeing where and how and if you have the mind of Christ.

Write down the stories you're telling yourself in your head – and you'll start to understand the thoughts in your mind.

Want to combat stress?
Journal: The story slays.

Want to win the battle with anxiousness?
Journal: The story slays.

Want to attune your story to the story of God, to the Word Himself?
Journal: The story slays.

Want to change your life, speak to your soul, see the way your mind works, the way your thoughts are turning, and grow deeply closer to the Word Himself?
Journal. THE STORY SLAYS.



inspiration from

Fellow Journalers

1. The Psalmist David was a kind of holy journaler – and we read his journal, holy words, as the book of the greatest comfort in the world.

2. Every morning, Benjamin Franklin opened his notebook and asked himself, “What good shall I do this day?” and every night, he returned again to his journal to answer the question:
“What good have I done today?”

3. Albert Einstein amassed more than 80,000 pages of notes in his lifetime.


Open up
fresh pages
consistently —
& you are opening up
a fresh way of seeing

THREE KEYS

to consistent journaling

How do you have an ongoing, consistent relationship with journaling, to have a relationship with your mind, to have a relationship with the WORD HIMSELF – and not break it off, not have a falling out with journaling?

We'll explore three keys:

Know Your Why

Know Your Place

Know Your What

1. KNOW YOUR WHY

You've got to know your why. What is your why of journaling? I'll offer three whys that help me:

Journaling opens a fresh way of seeing.

Open up Fresh pages consistently – and you are opening up a FRESH WAY of seeing. You open up your mind and heart for self-reflection — to better see a better way through. Open up Fresh Pages every day – as a way to get out of bed and really open up your eyes to what is going on in your mind and soul and world. I always think: I haven't really opened up my eyes to the day – until I have opened up pages in a journal.

Journaling offers effective healing.

Open up fresh pages every day because research has shown that journaling is scientifically proven to be effective and healing for any one working through stress, anxiousness, ADHD, depression, and PTSD. When we journal about *detailed events*, connected to *deep feelings*, we move toward *deeper healing*.

In a 2013 study involving 40 people working through a season of significant depression, participants were asked to journal about either an emotional event or non-emotional, daily, play-by-play events. And the research discovered that: "Emotional writing significantly decreased symptoms of depression, while the more mundane writing didn't."

Write into the deep feelings – and you begin to deeply heal.

1. **KNOW YOUR WHY**

Journalers gain fresh strength.

Open up Fresh Pages on a consistent basis – and you're gaining FRESH STRENGTH. LITERALLY.

Journalers are stronger for the journey. Psychologist and researcher James Pennebaker believes that *journaling can help us strengthen our immune system by acting as a stress management tool.* According to Pennebaker, journaling reduces the impact of stressors on our T-lymphocyte cells, which are our white blood cells, or our immune system cell.

And how can we be surprised by this, when we see how David writing the psalms – is a sacred journaler, writing down detailed events, and deep feelings – and experiencing divine communion with God and deep healing through God.

If you want to feel stronger every day – just lift up a pen… and let the ink flow… and you will find yourself strengthening in the Word Himself.



2. KNOW YOUR PLACE

In a series of recent interviewers, well-known people were asked if they could get to keep only one thing from the bag that they carry with them, what would it be?

Time and again, do you know what folks answered:

Out of everything in my bag, the one thing I cannot do with out IS MY JOURNAL.

Know your place. Do you have a journal that you find beautiful, that you want to carry with you, a journal that speaks to you, that feels like HOME for you? Get one that feels special to you, and make it your home — *your* place.





What do you journal?

Just like there are all different kinds of glasses to help one see — there are all kinds of different WAYS of JOURNALING that help us see.

WHAT do you journal? Journaling always actually begins with exactly that one word: WHAT.

It can be tempting to write your whys:

Why is this happening? Why isn't this happening? Why is God letting the story unfold this way? Why doesn't this happen instead?

WHY WHY WHY?

But the better question to always begin to journal with, to ask your one life, is not WHY – but WHAT…

What...

What is happening in my life right now?
What am I feeling?
What's going on inside of me?
What am I thinking much about?
What is God asking me to do in this situation?
What would be a growth response?
What is the problem? What could I do to be part of the solution?
What would glorifying God look like?
What would healing look like?

The WHAT of journaling is always about WHAT…. Not WHY.

A different kind of journaling can meet you in different seasons of life, or meet different needs you have in the very same day.

Forget thinking: ah, there's an app for that —
the reality and JOY and WONDER is —
there is always a different kind of JOURNAL for that!

Notes

what stood out to me:

If you want to feel stronger every day – just lift up a pen... and let the ink flow... and you will find yourself strengthening in the Word Himself.



Dispatch Journaling

Journaling through Letters

Dispatch Journaling

Dispatch Journaling is journaling a letter to someone… a letter that you are not going to send, but you're going to release the words and thoughts and feelings.

If you have some feelings toward someone that you want to dispatch… get out that dispatch journal, and write the letter you don't ever have to send.

Dispatch a letter to a parent...
To someone you work with...
To someone who wounded you...
Dispatch a letter to someone you have a fractured relationship with...
To someone you've lost and journal what you long to say...









Destress Journaling

A way to move the stress through

Destress Journaling

This is a way of journaling for when you feel mounting stress, a bit overwhelmed, and a lot is whirling around within.

- Take your timer, set it to 15 minutes, and DESTRESS with your DESTRESS Journal.

- Open a Fresh Page, and write down a problem, any problem you're feeling within.

- And then write down BECAUSE... and write what comes to mind.

- Repeat, until you have answered BECAUSE five times.

- If you're so led, follow up your 5 *because* statements with 5 *what* statements. For example:

  What am I feeling and *what* is stirring these feelings?
  What is the thing happening here under all the things?
  What do I have agency to do in this situation?
  What is just one thing that I could do today?
  What would be a helpful growth response?

Destress Journaling Practice

The problem is...

This is a problem...

Because:

Because:

Because:

Because:

Because:

What is God stirring within? What is God's Spirit leading me toward? What may be a growth response?

Destress Journaling Example

The problem is...

Inside my spirit is a lot of feelings of sadness....

This is a problem...

Because my kids are launching into the world and I'm feeling the quiet of the house...

Because I'm feeling a bit of lostness and loneliness in the wake of their launching

Because it's been too long since I called a friend for a "walk and prayer" date.

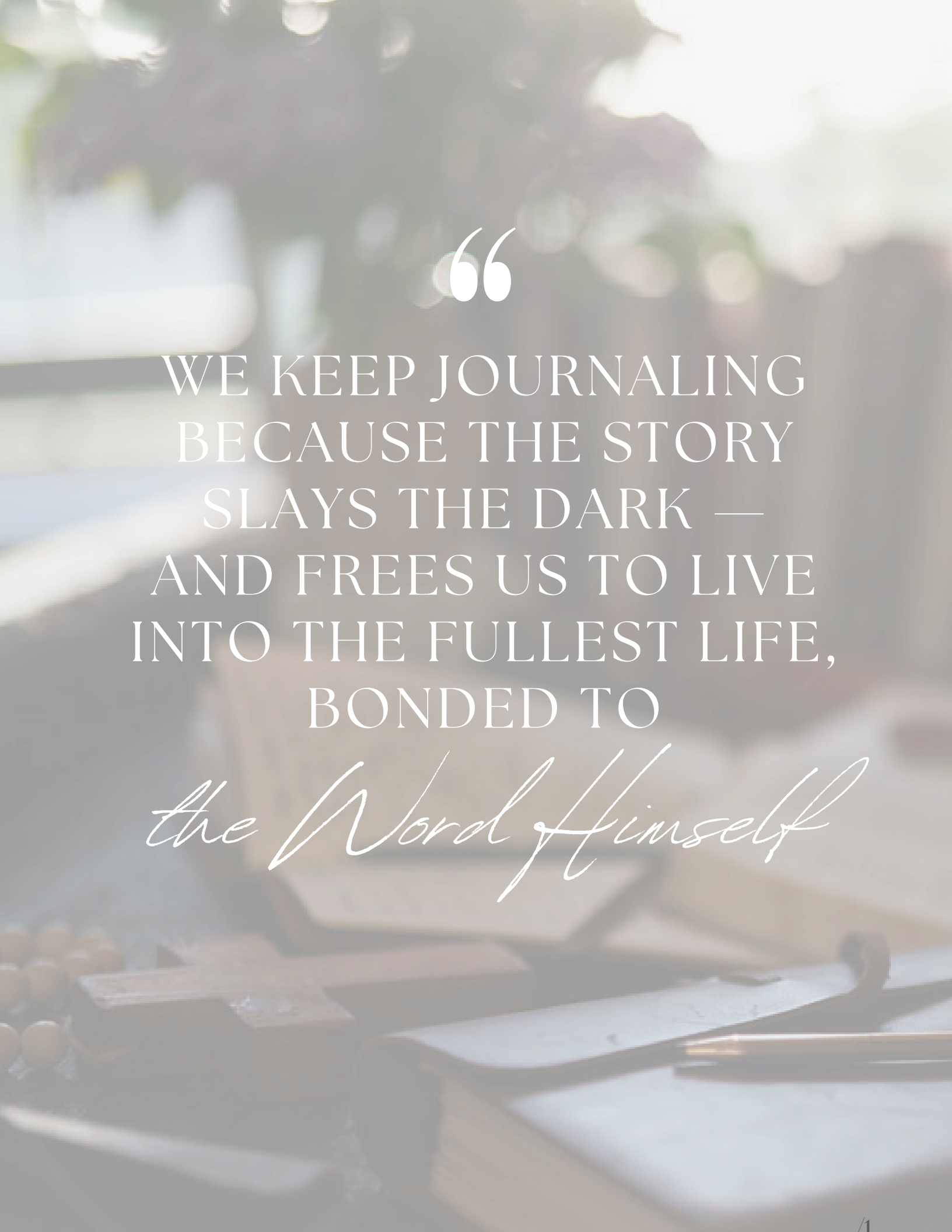
Because I'm looking for a cruciform direction forward, reaching out to others instead of turning inward...

Because....

Notes

what stood out to me:

Dispatch Journaling is a way to keep short accounts and cleanse your soul of a whole lot of feelings... so you feel more whole



“

WE KEEP JOURNALING BECAUSE THE STORY SLAYS THE DARK — AND FREES US TO LIVE INTO THE FULLEST LIFE, BONDED TO

the Word Himself

Other kinds of journaling

Even without a description here just yet, take note of which type of journaling sounds most inviting to you.

- [ ] DREAM JOURNALING
- [ ] DECLUTTER JOURNALING
- [ ] DEVOTIONAL JOURNALING
- [ ] DEAR SOUL JOURNALING
- [ ] DOCKET JOURNALING & D0-LIST JOURNALING
- [ ] DIARY JOURNALING
- [ ] DISCOVERY JOURNALING
- [ ] DAILY TAKE-AWAY JOURNALING
- [ ] DISCLOSURE JOURNALING
- [ ] DELIVERANCE JOURNALING
- [ ] DOWN-THE-ROAD, FUTURE ME JOURNALING
- [ ] DOODLE JOURNALING
- [ ] DAY OF THE LORD SERMON JOURNALING
- [ ] DRUM ROLL JOURNALING
- [ ] DIALOGUE JOURNALING

Journaling Prompts

Choose one or more prompt to help begin journaling this week

Why do I want to commit to journaling ?

What is going on inside my mind right now?

What would healing look like?

Today I will open my eyes to...

Journaling Prompts

Choose one or more prompt to help begin journaling this week

What am I feeling, and what is stirring these feelings?

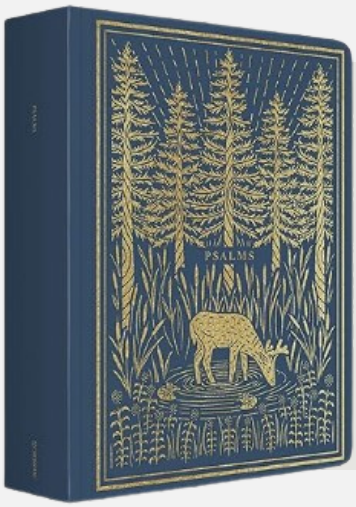
What is God's Spirit leading me toward?

These days I'm thinking so much about...

Write a letter that you will not send.
Dear _____,

HELPFUL

RESOURCES



PSALMS

A beautiful lay-flat Book of Psalms with space for you to journal alongside David and the psalmists

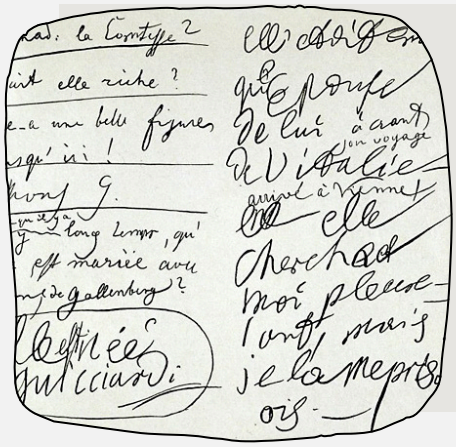
explore

JOURNALING BIBLES

A collection of Bibles with journaling space build right in — bonding your words to the Word.

explore





IMPORTANT NOTEBOOKS

A fascinating look at journal and notebook keepers — from Beethoven to Einstein

explore



FINAL THOUGHTS

In the next session, and final session, we will explore the two kinds of journaling that have most changed my life. I can't wait to share them with you.

In the meantime, we keep journaling – because the story slays the dark - and frees us to live into the fullest life, bonded to the *Word Himself*.

Start & End Your Day
with Sacred Prayer with God
and gratefulness to God

Gift someone the gift of deeper joy
and intimacy with God.



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