

Keeping a Spiritual Diary: An Introduction

Many people keep daily diaries or journals. They do so for lots of different reasons. People choose to record such things as the daily weather, notes about family events, or something as simple as notes on their gardens or crops or even the birds that come to their birdfeeder.

However, what is being proposed here is the keeping of a spiritual diary. A spiritual diary may include many of these ordinary events too but strives to view them in relationship to one's spiritual objectives. Keeping a spiritual diary involves consciously assessing how these various aspects of our lives are connected to our relationship with God.

Where does reading, scripture and prayer fit into all of this? A spiritual diary encourages and assists us to try to see the spiritual strand that holds all these various elements of life together. By consciously reflecting on these things we can set useful spiritual goals for ourselves.

A diary is personal. We are not writing for the world but to record things for our own benefit. Whatever else, it must be honest. We are not keeping a record of what we think our lives ought to be but a glimpse of where we are at the moment.

It is a place where we can celebrate our successes and acknowledge our failures. Over a span of time we can see the patterns in our lives that ought to encourage us and identify some that may need to be reshaped.

This exercise is an introduction to keeping a spiritual diary. Thirty days is long enough to build this new activity into the pattern of our lives and to help us see what works best for us.

To help you get started the diary pages that are provided follow a certain format and include some prompts. If you choose to continue keeping your diary for a longer time your spiritual diary will begin to develop a focus of its own and you will probably want to graduate to a diary with just blank pages.

At the end of the 30 day exercise you are encouraged to look back over what you have written and evaluate the process. If you see value in this activity you will probably also begin to see ways in which it can be more personalized to your life and your spiritual needs. Perhaps at the end of the 30 days you will decide that keeping a spiritual diary is not for you. Even if that is your decision it is hoped that you will have acquired some insights about your life that will be helpful in the future.

If you are considering continuing the exercise into the future you will need to select some sort of journal that meets your needs. If you need some additional ideas you may want to look through a book on this topic we have in the Alberton Church library. You are welcome to borrow the book *How to Keep a Spiritual Journal: A Guide to Journal Keeping for Inner Growth and Personal discovery* by Ronald Klug.

Also included with this package:

- Some notes on Private Prayer which we invite you to reflect on while you are doing this challenge.
- A simple plan for reading through the New Testament in a year. If you find this helpful you can continue throughout the year.