

A FAYETTEVILLE PRAYER ROOM JOURNALING GUIDE: CONVERSATIONS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SOLITUDE

Think of time in solitude as breathing in and breathing out.

BREATHE IN. In solitude, breathe in scripture. Expect the Holy Spirit to speak to you personally as you read. When a concept or phrase in the Bible stands out, that's Him preparing to reveal something wonderful to you. So, stop and **copy the verse**, expecting the thoughts to flow. God may beef up the thought by bringing to your mind song lyrics, images, metaphors, quotes, stories, memories or past encouragements from friends. You'll sit back a few minutes later with wisdom on the page that did not come from you!

Expect to experience paradigm shifts this way. God often teaches bit by bit through a series of entries. Then, one day, He strings them all together to blow your mind and reshape your thinking for your good and His glory.

BREATHE OUT. In solitude, breathe out your emotions. God is big enough and interested enough to hold your emotions. Even the best parents couldn't because they are limited, but that is not a reflection of God. You do not have to worry that you are too much for Him or that He is too busy for you or too bored with you. He is very interested and very able.

Simply ask Jesus questions about your emotions and write it out raw and real and deep, ready for Him to comfort or convict you, whichever you need at the time. As you submit your emotions to God, He will heal hidden wounds and fulfill buried longings. As you

abide, He will replace old hurts with the wholeness and freedom that He promises in His Word.

"The wilderness and dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus: it shall blossom abundantly." Isaiah 35

Journal Entry Starter. Ask God to help you recall and name some emotions you have felt in recent months. Some will be positive: *hopeful, grateful, valued, bold, joyful, secure, peaceful, refreshed, content*. Some will be negative: *frustrated, afraid, confused, discouraged, anxious, ashamed, disappointed, angry*. Make a messy list of every emotion that comes to mind.

Next, look over your list, expecting God to highlight a word. When one stands out, circle it. Then ask God what He wants to tell you about the one emotion you circled.

The Lord may want to sit with you and comfort you in an emotion like grief or disappointment. Or He may want to gently correct you and encourage you about something like resentment or fear. He may invite you to surrender something unexpected. He may even high-jack your pen and write you a love letter. Follow His lead.

As you write, give yourself the freedom to get messy without expectations of a tidy conclusion. God is not in a hurry. He is so gentle and patient. He will steadily transform you from the inside out. Come to Him vulnerably in solitude again and again, expecting Him to reveal more and more over time.

Suggested Scriptures: Psalm 91, Psalm 18, Isaiah 35 & Isaiah 61