

# The H.E.A.R. Journaling Method

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“Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.” Psalm 119:18

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The H.E.A.R. journaling method promotes reading the Bible with a life-transforming purpose. No longer will your focus be on checking off the boxes on your daily reading schedule; your purpose will instead be to read in order to meditate, understand, and respond to God’s Word.

## 1. HIGHLIGHT

After reading the passage of Scripture, highlight the verses that speaks to you by copying it into your journal. Write out the following directly into your journal:

- The name of the book
- The passage of Scripture
- The chapter and verse numbers that especially speak to you

## 2. EXPLAIN

At this stage you will engage with the text and wrestle for its meaning. By asking some simple questions, and prayerfully leaning on the help of the Holy Spirit, you can understand the meaning of a passage or verse.

Here are a few questions to get you started:

- Why was this written?
- To whom was it originally written?
- How does it fit with the verses before and after it?
- Why did the Holy Spirit include this passage in the book?
- What is He intending to communicate through this text?

## 3. APPLY

This application is the heart of the process. Everything culminates under this heading. As you have done before, ask a series of questions to uncover the significance of these verses to you personally, questions like:

- How can this help me?
- What does this mean today?
- What would the application of this verse look like in my life?
- What does this mean to me?
- What is God saying to me?

To conclude your application challenge yourself to write between two and five sentences about how the text fits into your life.

## 4. RESPOND

Your response to the passage may take on many forms. You may write a call to action. You may describe how you will be different because of what God has said to you through His Word. You may indicate what you are going to do because of what you have learned. You may respond by writing out a prayer to God. For example, you may ask God to help you to be more loving, or to give you a desire to be more generous in your giving. Keep in mind that this is your response to what you have just read.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's passage: \_\_\_\_\_

## H.E.A.R. Journal Entry

<b>H</b> ighlight	After reading the passage of Scripture, Highlight each verse that speaks to you by copying it under the letter "H". Include the book, chapter and verse(s).
<b>E</b> xplain	At this stage you will EXPLAIN what the text means. You will ask why it was written, and what is the author trying to say to the original audience. Be sure to pay attention to the context (verses before and after) to help you understand the meaning.
<b>A</b> pply	Now it is time to write down how this passage can apply to your life. How will this passage change the way you think about God? How will this passage inform your practice as a Christian?
<b>R</b> espond	Write down a prayer or an action as a result of what you have just learned. Be specific and carry it out.