

Use Journal Prompts, Part 1

I suppose that if the term “writer’s block” applies to journal keeping, then that was my problem. There’s always something to write about, but since mine is primarily a spiritual journal, I wanted to write about something that would edify my soul. On that day, however, no particular subject emerged from my mental fog.

It’s not that I won’t write about general subjects, for I do. I just want to discipline myself to write as much as possible about matters that relate directly to the spiritual life. Besides, Philippians 4:8 tells me, “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.” So I want to meditate on and journal about “these things” whenever I can.

The idea occurred to me to make a list of thirty-one subjects (one for each day of the month) that relate to my spiritual life. And if, for example, on the eighteenth of the month I don’t know what to journal about, I can turn to my “journal prompts,” look for number eighteen, and follow its prompting to write about fellowship. As a result, I might write about my need for fellowship, a specific way I can initiate fellowship with someone the next time I’m at church, how technology affects fellowship, a recent experience of fellowship, or something else prompted by the word.

While certainly not unchangeable, here is the list I quickly composed:

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| 1. Love for God | 17. The Lord’s Day |
| 2. Love for others | 18. Fellowship |
| 3. Evangelism | 19. The tongue |
| 4. Bible intake | 20. Thought life |
| 5. Meditation on Scripture | 21. Family |
| 6. Application of Scripture | 22. Ministry |
| 7. Prayer | 23. Joy |
| 8. Worship (public or private) | 24. Simplifying |
| 9. Serving | 25. Body |
| 10. Stewardship of time | 26. Faith |
| 11. Stewardship of money | 27. Reformation |
| 12. Fasting | 28. Revival |
| 13. Silence and Solitude | 29. Cross |
| 14. Journaling | 30. Sin |
| 15. Learning/mind | 31. Last things (death, judgment,
Heaven, Hell) |
| 16. Persevering | |

Sometimes the simplicity of a predetermined subject can make it easier to maintain the discipline of journal keeping.