

### STUDY GUIDE

## Joseph's Story: How Daily Journaling Transformed My Life

***"REMEMBER His marvelous works** which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth."* (1 Chronicles 16:12)

### I. The Journaling Journey

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) has had a greater impact on me than any other ministry in my life. Being exposed to the FCA Bible in the Fall of 2001 led me to **start the habit of daily journaling on January 1, 2002.**

Journaling eventually evolved to become my most important HABIT and then the lead domino for my life. Several times while journaling in 2008, Jesus told me, **"Joseph, coaching people to journal to hear My voice is your sweet spot!!!"**

### A. The great Epiphany

1. Born and raised Catholic
2. Went to church every week for most of my life
3. Good education
4. Met my wife at UVA
5. Left Culpeper Hospital in 1999
6. Read The Greatest Salesman in the World in 2000
7. Met Pastor Mark Jarvis Jun 2000
8. Committed life to Jesus on Jan 6, 2001 (Epiphany Sunday)
  - a. My life and priorities changed dramatically

- b. Two distinct chapters of my life (B.C.—Before Christ and A.D.—After Death to self)
- 9. As I pursued God passionately, He was working in the background
  - a. The Lord began cleaning up my life
  - b. I was determined to OBEY Him
  - c. For months I experienced severe persecution/rejection by my wife and children
  - d. Wife and two children invited Jesus into their lives in Sept 2001

Lesson: **The abundant life starts with Jesus!!!**

**B. Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough**

- 1. Miracle: I met Dr. Elmer Towns, co-founder of Liberty University (Lynchburg, Virginia) when he spoke at Open Door Baptist Church in Culpeper, VA in Jan 2001.
- 2. Dr. Towns' teaching and book about fasting led to me fasting regularly.
- 3. **Fasting led to greater revelation, more breakthroughs, and more divine connections.**

**C. FCA involvement transformed me and my family**

- 1. My wife and I attended our first FCA event as a guest of Joe Agee around April 2001. It was a real eye-opener for me.
- 2. After that, I recommended my daughter join the local FCA Club for the next year.
- 3. I was inspired to volunteer for my local FCA club after meeting with the two leaders, both teachers and assistant football coaches.

LESSON: Get involved!!!

## II. God Turns 9-11 Into a Blessing!

### A. **SHOW UP!!!**

1. Club Day at Culpeper High School was sovereignly moved from Tuesday September 5, 2001, to Wednesday September 12, the day after the 9-11 terrorist attacks.
2. My daughter Caren showed up at the first FCA Club meeting of the year on the morning of September 12, surprising me because she had switched clubs.
3. For the first time ever in the 10-year history of the FCA at Culpeper High School, more than 30 students joined hands together in the gym to pray out loud publicly.

LESSON: **90% of life is showing up at the right place at the right time!!!**

### B. **Follow Up Well**

1. When I ASKED the President and VP student leaders how I could help, they asked if I would drive them to the makeup FCA leadership training if the two coaches didn't because they had missed the summer training.
2. The two coaches opted out of that opportunity, but I said YES. The FCA leadership training a week later was awesome. Each attendee was given an FCA Bible, including me.
3. I fell in love with that Bible, and it became my preferred version.
4. The FCA Bible talked about using the P.R.E.S.S. method for journaling, so I began using that. P.R.E.S.S. stands for Pray, Read, Examine, Summarize, and Share.
5. Less than two weeks after my very first FCA huddle, daughter Caren—convicted by several scenes at a “Heaven’s Gates and Hell’s Flames”

drama—surrendered her life to Jesus and was miraculously transformed overnight from a selfish teenager to a beautiful, very kind young lady.

LESSON: **The fortune is in the follow up!!!**

**C. SHARE your blessings (every day)**

1. After attending the FCA leadership training meeting and having days to read and reflect on FCA Bible, I was inspired to donate \$500 to the FCA for them to give a case of 72 FCA bibles for students at the Culpeper High School FCA, and God blessed!
2. Cynthia Rahal, FCA overseer, came to Culpeper High School to acknowledge the gift and orient students to the FCA Bible, too.
3. One of the star football players at Culpeper High School asked for my autograph. I was inspired to write “The Prayer of Jabez” in his Bible. Culpeper High School later won the state championship in AAA football that year.

LESSON: **“SHARING is the key to having God’s fresh living waters flow through you into other people’s lives.”** - Joseph Peck, M.D.

Lesson: **You are blessed to be a blessing!!!**

*On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (John 7:37-38)*

### **III. The \$200 Miracle Seed**

**A. Supernatural Multiplication**

1. One day in mid-Nov 2021, I was led to invest 2.5 hours in my Sacred Place—instead of just one hour—reading the Bible, journaling, and

praying.

2. After my devotional time, I went to my desk and was inspired to write a \$200 check to the FCA in Fredericksburg, gifting more FCA Bibles to FCA leaders.
3. A miracle opportunity comes  
Less than 5 minutes after writing the \$200 check, I discovered a voice message from anesthesiologist I had met four years earlier.
4. **I took IMMEDIATE ACTION**
  - a. When I called Jon, he asked me to consider subbing for him part-time as a locum tenens anesthesiologist. He asked me to work for 6 weeks in 2002, which is 30 days.
  - b. While thinking about how to discuss pay, Holy Spirit told me “Listen!!!”
  - c. John then said to me, "Joseph, I don't know what you were planning to get paid, but I plan to pay you \$1,200 per day. That was exactly \$200 more per day than my highest paying anesthesia job before.
5. **God confirms His Word!!!**
  - a. The morning before in journaling, the LORD pointed out specific reasons I should go back and do anesthesia.
  - b. My fortune cookie from the day before at a Chinese restaurant said, **“An unexpected event will bring you riches!”**
6. Blessings of Obedience

My 2.5 times longer-than-usual quiet time in the Lord’s presence, plus my obedience in writing that \$200 check to distribute Bibles, resulted in:

- a. **God multiplying my \$200 financial seed 30-fold** within 15 minutes!
- b. The pay increase spilling over to every subsequent job I did.
- c. Over the next five years, God multiplied my gift more than 300 times.  
Praise God!

*"Now it shall come to pass, **if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD** your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all **these blessings shall come upon you and OVERTAKE**, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:" (Deuteronomy 28:1-2)*

**Lesson: Investing more time with God leads to more good fruit—and quickly!!!**

#### **IV. Listen, Trust, and Obey!!!**

##### **A. The 4 laws of sowing and reaping! (Matthew 13:18–23)**

1. You reap what you sow.
2. You reap more than you sow.
3. You reap later than you sow.
4. You reap where you sow.

##### **B. Words from Jesus (WFJ)**

1. **"When you learn to listen to Me, you will learn to listen to people."**
2. **"When you learn to love Me, you will learn to love people."**
3. **"Listen with LOVE!!!"**

Note: The song "Trust and Obey" is missing a key element, namely "Listen". You must first listen to the voice of the LORD in order to trust and obey Him.

LESSON: God gives great returns on your investment (ROI) when you listen, trust, and obey God and invest in His Kingdom.

#### **V. The Transition to Journaling Online**

##### **A. Small Beginnings**

1. Journaling by Hand

My journaling began January 1, 2002, writing by hand in a notebook. For my first two years of journaling, I used Oswald Chambers' *"My Utmost for His Highest"* journal with 365 devotionals.

Typically, during my devotional time in the morning, I would read my Bible first, and then journal using the PRESS method.

I absolutely loved this habit and found myself ushered into the presence of God on a consistent basis.

*"Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin, to see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand." (Zechariah 4:10, NLT)*

LESSON: **The secret of your future is hidden in your daily routine!**

B. Be willing to step out of your comfort zone

1. In the Fall of 2003 while listening to an 11 CD set by Rick Warren titled *"Preaching for Life Change,"* I heard Rick mention in a very short segment (20-30 seconds) that he does his "Quiet Time" online. That sounded extremely radical to me.
2. Having Quiet time with online journaling seemed incompatible to me.
3. I made an agreement with God to do a 30-day trial of online journaling starting January 1, 2004. I had already committed to increasing my daily Quiet Time from two to four hours as of January 1, 2004.
4. My deal with God: "I will continue journaling online after the trial period only if I see significant fruit within 30 days."

C. What I have discovered

1. I now journal primarily online (on my computer) because I saw enormous fruitfulness from this almost immediately.
2. **Journaling on the computer** is at least 10-100 times more powerful than journaling by hand.

3. Most people who transition to journaling online after journaling using a notebook experience new aha's and breakthroughs quickly.

#### D. Benefits of Journaling Online

Here are eight great reasons to journal online:

1. MEDITATE - in a deeper way on the Word of God
2. REARRANGE - Cut and paste contents from one place to another
3. PLAN - Become much more organized. Set goals and achieve them.
4. REVIEW - Much easier to go back, read, and review
5. OBSERVE - Keep track of important emails (analogous to letters in old days)
6. REMEMBER - Greatly facilitates remembering what the LORD has done
7. ACT - Follow through with your commitments (big difference)
8. SHARE - share your God stories with the world via the world-wide web

### VI. **How to Journal**

#### A. Introduction

Journaling will be unique to each person that does it. There is no such thing as one size fits all. In fact, if you journal regularly, your journaling method and style will likely evolve over time. Mine has.

If you have never journaled before, I recommend you start with a SIMPLE method. Routines are good, so having a set time of your day to journal makes you more likely to do it.

For journaling to really impact your life, it must become an enjoyable HABIT. Since it typically takes 21-35 days (3-5 weeks) to firmly establish a new habit, I recommend you commit in writing to invest at least 15 minutes every day writing in your journal.

Remember, "Successful people do daily what unsuccessful people do occasionally." "The secret of your future is hidden in your daily routine!"



If you have not been journaling on a consistent basis, be careful about how aggressively you plunge into this habit of journaling.

Common questions people have include:

- Which journaling method is best for me?
- When should I journal?
- How long should I journal?
- What should I include and not include in my journal?
- What journaling apps do you recommend?

## **B. Joseph's 5-Step Method for Journaling**

How you journal (your method) makes a huge difference. After trying different methods and evolving what I do, I now definitely recommend my “5-Step Method for Journaling.”

The first three steps are the most important.

If you only have time for one step, do the first one—thanking God. Having and maintaining a thankful heart will open more doors for you than you ever dreamed possible.

- Step #1: Thank God
- Step #2: Words from Jesus (WFJ)
- Step #3: Record your REST
- Step #4: ABIDE
- Step #5: Inspired Thoughts