



creative CONVERSATIONS with God

the ART OF BIBLE JOURNALING

LEARN A VARIETY OF SIMPLE VISUAL TECHNIQUES
*to help you to be still—to slow down and focus on
enjoying your relationship with God.*

GROW IN YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF God
*as you discover interactive learning methods for
Scriptural reflection and meditation.*

FIND INSPIRATION FROM MARY OF BETHANY
*for a Biblical pattern of wisdom, prayer, and
worship.*

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CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS with GOD

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This workshop will equip you with a variety of simple visual tools to help you to “be still and know.” You will grow in your knowledge of God as you use these active learning methods for Scriptural reflection and meditation. These fun creative activities will help you to slow down and focus on enjoying your relationship with God. Supplies: Bible, Journal, Colored Pencils or Pens.

INTRODUCING MARY OF BETHANY

In each of the three passages we will explore today we find her at the feet of Jesus. We'll learn from her example transformative truths about **wisdom**, **prayer** and **worship** and we'll apply it to our own study of Scripture.

PART ONE: WISDOM

Luke 10:38-41 – “She sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.”

Mary comes to know God by sitting at the feet of Jesus and paying attention to all he has to teach her. It is here that she gains knowledge and wisdom—the ability to use her knowledge.

When we open our Bibles, we, like Mary, are privileged to be sitting at the feet of Jesus. Although, if we are honest, at times our reading of the Bible can feel dry, forced, or uninspired—more like performing a duty or checking off an item on a to-do list than having an intimate and enjoyable conversation with our beloved. How do we make Bible study fun, engaging, meaningful, and applicable? What if you don't have a workbook to fill in? What if you just have your Bible and a journal? During this workshop we'll explore techniques that will help you look forward to having a “creative conversations” with God.

Remember that the Bible is a book first and foremost about God. His Holy Spirit guides us into all truth, so we start by asking the Holy Spirit to teach us about the Father and his son Jesus. If we begin by searching out what the Word tells us about God, when we see him for who he really is—high and lifted up— it changes the way we see ourselves. Our painful negative emotions like anxiety, fear, shame, helplessness can be transformed by glimpsing the glory and power, the mercy and compassion of the God who calls us his children.

The graphic organizers that follow are simple tools to help you focus and find meaning as you study the Bible.

ACTIVITY 1: ONE WORD

- a. Write out **Romans 15:13** in your journal or in the space below.
- b. Acknowledge that God desires to speak to you through his Word and ask his Holy Spirit to guide you. Read the verse a few times and circle one word that stands out. Using your concordance at the back of your Bible, or the center cross-references, find another 3 verses that contain that word and write them out in your journal or the space below.
- c. Divide your journal page into thirds by making either vertical columns or horizontal boxes and labeling them as follows:
- | GOD IS... | I AM... | I CAN.../I WILL... |
|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| | | |
- d. Combining what you observe in these passages, make a list of everything you learn first about God and then yourself. In the third column, write an action or attitude you will adopt as a result of what you've learned.
- e. If you choose ONE WORD to focus on for the year, you might try starting a designated journal for this extended word study. Use a Bible dictionary or website like biblehub.com to find out the precise meaning of this word. Each day find a few verses by using a concordance. Write them out—the physical act of writing helps you to learn and remember them—on the left facing page and chart your insights and applications on the right facing page.

activity 2: "LORD YOU, Father I"

Use this two-column structure to help you focus on what the Scripture teaches you first about God and then about yourself. Try this with Psalms. When you first read the passage and discover the wonderful attributes of our loving God who is sovereign over His creation, it is easier then to confidently address your prayers and praise to your loving Heavenly Father.

Continue with Psalm 139 and complete the left side of the chart about God first. Then reread and notice what you see about yourself—truths that will encourage or convict you, actions you resolve to take.





Example from Psalm 139

LORD YOU...	Father I...
<i>...examine my heart and know everything about me.</i>	<i>...can never escape from your Spirit, I can never get away from your presence.</i>
<i>...even know what I am going to say before I say it!</i>	<i>...was knit together by you in my mother's womb.</i>
<i>...go before me and behind me.</i>	<i>...hate those who hate you, wish you would destroy the wicked.</i>

ACTIVITY 3: "FOUR SQUARE" (HEAD, HEART, STOP, START)

Try this tool for processing what you are reading in the epistles. Divide your paper into quadrants and record your observations.

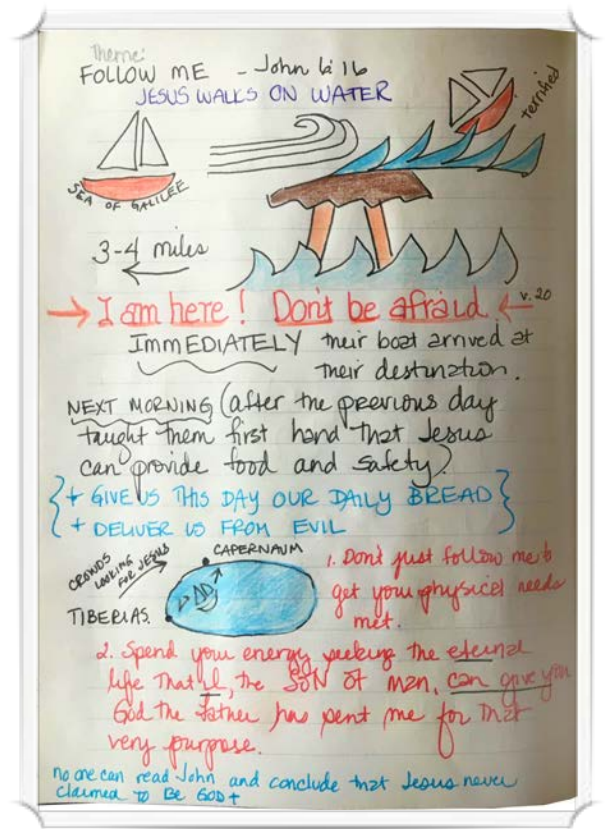
Choose any chapter or passage in Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, or Colossians.

<p>head </p> <p><i>What does this passage help me to know and understand about God and his kingdom—what is it calling me to believe?</i></p> <p>Example for 1 Corinthians 2:16 "We have the mind of Christ."</p> <p>v.9: No eye has seen, no ear has heard and no eye has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.</p>	<p>heart </p> <p><i>What emotions or state of mind will I experience if I understand and believe these truths?</i></p> <p>I can be more confident in making decisions, in understanding spiritual truths because the Creator of all things, the source of all wisdom, God's Holy Spirit lives in me.</p> <p>I can anticipate the future with peace and joy as I trust in the God who loves me and died so that I can be with him in eternity.</p>
<p>STOP </p> <p><i>Is this passage calling me to stop any sinful, unhelpful, or harmful attitudes or actions?</i></p> <p>1 Corinthians 2:5. Stop trusting in human wisdom. It can be tempting to get swept up in the negativity of politics, predictions of doom and a worldly perspective of life. Those in the media are driven by advertising dollars and that is part of the enemy's plan to create dissatisfaction and lack of peace.</p>	<p>START </p> <p><i>Is this passage calling me to any course of positive action?</i></p> <p>1 Corinthians 2:4 Rely on the power of the Holy Spirit, not my own strength.</p> <p>v. 12 Look to God, trust that the Spirit within can guide me into the hope that God freely gives us.</p>

ACTIVITY 5: DRAWING the DETAILS

As I was reading the Gospel of John, I noticed Jesus had asked the disciples first to “follow him.” This helped me trace a theme throughout the book, looking to see where their following him had taken them. I drew little details that would call attention to what I wanted to remember, such as how far Jesus walked on the water, or what their travels looked like on a map. I recorded Jesus’ words in red and I wrote my own insights in blue at the bottom of the page. Drawing pictures helps the mind to recall what it reads.

Choose a passage from any of the history books of the Bible and after reading it carefully, draw the details. Don’t be afraid to use symbols or stick figures. Use color.



ACTIVITY 6: MEDITATING ON SCRIPTURE THROUGH DRAWING

In this drawing, I was meditating, i.e, slowing down to reflect on the meaning of each word, on the first 5 words of Psalm 23. I stressed each word in turn, thought about the meaning and implication of that word, and using a drawing of my 5 fingers, recorded the significance of each. The colored pencil doodling around the edges of each finger gave me time to slow down and think deeply about what I was reading.

Choose a different Bible phrase of 5 words and spend some time meditating and drawing. Suggestions:

"Be joyful always, pray continually." • 1 Thess. 5:16-17

"Give thanks in all circumstances." • 1 Thess. 5:18

"Let us love one another." • 1 John 4:7

"In the beginning God created." • Genesis 1:1

"Love your neighbor as yourself." • Mark 12:31

