

# The Connection

## Messages of Hope



A Weekly Online Newsletter: Edition 829

April 2, 2025

## “Spiritual Discipline #9 - Journaling”

In Reformed theology, journaling can play a significant role in the life of a believer, serving as a tool for reflection, spiritual growth, self-examination, and deeper communion with God. Journaling, when approached from a biblical and theological perspective, helps a believer engage in the practices of prayer, thanksgiving, confession, and meditation on God's Word. Let's break down this concept using key points grounded in Reformed thought and supported by Scripture.

### 1. Journaling as a Practice of Reflection and Self-Examination

Reformed theology emphasizes the importance of self-examination as part of a believer's sanctification process. Journaling allows believers to reflect on their daily lives, their thoughts, and their actions in light of God's Word.

- **Scripture Reference:** *"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup."* (1 Corinthians 11:28)  
In this passage, Paul calls for believers to examine themselves before partaking in the Lord's Supper. Journaling can serve as a way to continually engage in self-examination, reflecting on one's walk with God and the state of their heart.
- **Scripture Reference:** *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."* (Psalm 139:23-24)  
David's prayer is an invitation to God to search the believer's heart. Journaling can be a means of inviting God's light into one's thoughts and actions, leading to spiritual clarity and growth.

### 2. Journaling as a Form of Prayer and Communion with God

Reformed theology emphasizes the believer's relationship with God, which is made possible through Christ and nurtured by the Holy Spirit. Journaling provides an opportunity for intimate communication with God, much like prayer.

- **Scripture Reference:** *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."* (Philippians 4:6)  
Journaling can be a form of petition and thanksgiving, laying out personal struggles, hopes, and gratitude before the Lord, as Paul encourages in Philippians.
- **Scripture Reference:** *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans."* (Romans 8:26)  
Journaling allows the believer to express their prayers, even when words fail. It is a way to articulate the groanings of the heart and invite the Holy Spirit to intercede.

### 3. Journaling as an Act of Gratitude and Thanksgiving

Reformed theology emphasizes God's sovereignty and providence in all things. Journaling can be a way for the believer to regularly remember and give thanks for God's works in their life, thus cultivating a heart of gratitude.

- **Scripture Reference:** *"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."* (Psalm 107:1)  
Journaling provides space to record daily instances of God's goodness and faithfulness, acknowledging His enduring love and grace.
- **Scripture Reference:** *"I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth."* (Psalm 34:1)  
Journaling can help a believer maintain a posture of continual praise by recording moments of worship and adoration, fostering a heart that blesses the Lord at all times.

# HOPE Calendar

Wednesday, April 2  
Supper, Study and Prayer  
Supper @ 6pm  
Bible Study @ 7pm  
Prayer @ 7:45

Thursday, April 3  
Worship Team Rehearsal @ 7:00

Sunday, April 6  
Worship Team Run Through  
@ 8:00 a.m.  
Worship @ 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, April 9  
Wednesday Night Supper @ 6pm  
Study & Prayer @ 7:00

Thursday, April 10  
Worship Team Rehearsal @ 7:00

## Helping Hands for

**APRIL 6, 2024**

**ProPresenter**  
**Dianne Reinoso**  
**Soundboard**

**Live Streaming**  
**Franklin Johnston**  
**Communion**  
**Dianne Reinoso**  
**Greeter**  
**Joan Rollinson**

Scripture Text and Sermon  
This Coming Sunday  
Spiritual Disciplines for the  
Christian Life:  
"Learning"  
Proverbs 13:4  
Matthew 11:28-29

## Prophecies O.T.

Revealed....	N.T.
Apr 5	Matt 1:1,9:27
Apr 6	1 Chr 17:13
Apr 7	Heb1:5
Apr 8	Job 19:23-27
Apr 9	John 5:24-29
Apr 10	Ps 2:1-3

## GROW

**Women of HOPE**  
**Saturdays at 10a.m. at HOPE**

**4/12/25**

**It's never too late to make things  
right**

**Wednesday Night**  
**Supper, Study, and Prayer**

Supper at 6:00 p.m.  
**Email Attendance to Pastor**  
Donations appreciated.  
Study at 7:00 p.m.  
Prayer Time at 7:45 p.m.

*For those who cannot join us in  
person, a Zoom Link will be provided*

**"Food of the Month"**  
for the Raleigh Dream Center  
Food Pantry  
**Boxed Cereal**  
We have a collection bin in the foyer

**HOPE Meal Ministry**  
Take a meal from the freezer if  
needed for you or someone else.

## **SERVE**

**TLC Devotion**  
**5th Wednesday THIS month**  
**@ 11:00 a.m.**  
5124 Departure Dr # 101, Raleigh

***"But you, beloved,  
building yourself up in your most  
holy faith,  
praying in the Holy Spirit,  
keeping yourselves in the love of  
God,  
waiting anxiously for the mercy of  
our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal  
life."***

*Jude 20-21*

## Prayer Requests:

Janice Worthington, Donna Williams, Ron C., Ms. Ellie, Dale H., Jerry & Alice K., Burton(Erin), The Branch's, Phil Parton, Krishana, HOPE Vision Team, God's peace in the USA, Dave Rendall, Gene & Becky Hale, Sam and Rachael, Joan Rollinson, Will Floyd's Fiancé's Mother: Jennifer, Dianne Reinoso, Cindy (Elizabeth), Nancy Hutchens (Positive Cancer), Pastor Search Committee, Barbara(81) Stroke, Joey(18) Crohn's, Ebo (Glioblastoma #3/4)-family has 4 children, Youth Ministry, Kathy Jo and her family, Peggy Karpenske, Claudia in Idaho (Kathy H), Patty Moyer's son Brandon, Dave & Dot Geil, Corbin Broome, The Mallory family, Carol & Colin (Kathy H), Loretta (Sandi U), Joan Summers, Shelley Riggelman (Bruce), Jordan Stevens (Lynn J.), Ellie Tappan, Carlyle and Cynthia Franklin.

**"As with all Disciplines,  
journaling can be fruitful at any  
level of involvement....**

**Journaling can help you grow in  
grace."**  
**Whitney**

**UPCOMING**  
**WOMEN OF HOPE**  
**Saturdays at 10 a.m. at HOPE**

**4/12/25**

**It's never too late to make things  
right**

**4/26/25**

**Why do you call one day good and  
another day bad?**

**HOPE Church Raleigh**  
**An Evangelical Presbyterian Church**  
4911 Green Rd  
Raleigh, NC 27616  
919-508-6827  
**Worship Time: 9:30 AM**

**www.HopeChurchRaleigh.org**  
**www.facebook.com/HOPEChurchRaleigh**  
**Twitter: @HopeChRaleigh**  
**YouTube.com (type "HOPE Church Raleigh"  
in the search box)**

#### 4. Journaling as a Means of Meditating on Scripture

In Reformed theology, Scripture is central to the life of the believer. Journaling can be an effective tool for meditating on God's Word, understanding it more deeply, and applying it to everyday life.

- **Scripture Reference:** *"I will meditate on your word and fix my eyes on your ways."* (Psalm 119:15)  
Journaling allows believers to meditate on Scripture, process its meaning, and apply it practically to their lives. Writing down reflections on God's Word helps to internalize its truths.
- **Scripture Reference:** *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."* (Colossians 3:16)  
Journaling encourages the believer to engage with Scripture deeply, allowing the Word of Christ to dwell richly within, shaping their thoughts and actions.

#### 5. Journaling as a Tool for Spiritual Growth and Sanctification

Reformed theology teaches that the Christian life is a journey of sanctification, whereby the believer is progressively conformed to the image of Christ. Journaling can help track this process of growth, enabling the believer to see areas where they have grown and areas that need more attention.

- **Scripture Reference:** *"For this is the will of God, your sanctification."* (1 Thessalonians 4:3)  
Journaling can serve as a personal record of how God is at work in the believer's life, aiding in the process of sanctification by highlighting areas for repentance and faith.
- **Scripture Reference:** *"And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."* (2 Corinthians 3:18)  
Journaling can reflect this transformation, documenting moments of growth and the believer's increasing likeness to Christ.

#### 6. Journaling as a Means of Overcoming Doubts and Struggles

The Reformed tradition holds that the Christian life is marked by both triumph and struggle, with believers facing doubts and difficulties. Journaling can be a space to wrestle with questions, doubts, and struggles while seeking answers from Scripture and trusting in God's providence.

- **Scripture Reference:** *"I believe; help my unbelief!"* (Mark 9:24)  
Journaling can be a way of voicing both belief and doubt, allowing the believer to be honest before God and to grow in faith even amid struggles.
- **Scripture Reference:** *"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."* (1 Peter 5:7)  
Journaling can serve as an outlet for the believer's anxieties, allowing them to cast their cares on God while trusting in His care and sovereignty.

#### Conclusion

In Reformed theology, journaling serves as a vital tool for spiritual discipline and growth. It enables believers to reflect on God's Word, engage in heartfelt prayer, practice gratitude, meditate on Scripture, and track their progress in sanctification. As believers journal, they are invited to deepen their relationship with God, continuously grow in faith, and live in light of His truth.