

WEEK FOUR

Fresh Pages

A Journaling MasterClass

with Ann Voskamp

annvoskamp.com

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Reminders from each of our sessions







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this session begins with

a letter

She said she seldom wrote people like me, but she confessed she had to make an exception.

And she said she knew what she was talking about. She'd lived almost 7 decades, was a follower of Christ for nearly 50 years, half a century, and had studied, trained, worked and was now a retired psychiatrist.

She was blunt:

"I have seen and used lots of journals. Bible Study Books, and other quiet time materials." But your work around SACRED as you write about in WayMaker — "is especially blessed." Then she underlined the next word twice: "PLEASE consider publishing a daily journal" around SACRED, "so we could have a place to record our daily time with our Lord." This SACRED prayer practice "has rejuvenated my prayer time."

Rejuvenated. Revived. Refreshed. Reoriented. Reinvigorated.

No small thing in times like these.

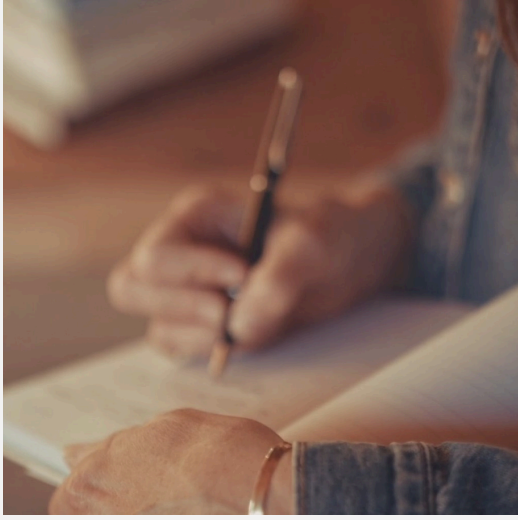
Who doesn't take the wisdom of such a sage, an expert who says this way of journaling with SACRED prayer uniquely revived her interior life?

So we created this proven and transformative daily journal, SACRED prayer.

This week, we'll dive into SACRED Prayer and Gratitude Journaling.

exploring

PRAYERFULNESS & THANKFULNESS



We only thrive when we abide in the vine.
(John 15)

He is the vine and we are the branches, and if we remain in Him, we thrive and bear much fruit — but deprive ourselves of the vine, and we experience failure to thrive, because apart from Him, we can do nothing.

Like every newborn needs constant closeness and interaction with a loving caregiver to survive, thrive and flourish, so the human soul only survives, thrives, flourishes when we experience close connection, interactions, exchanges with our heavenly Father.

Deprive ourselves of intimate interaction with our Abba Father, and our soul experiences failure to thrive.

The only way to thrive is to intimately abide.

How do we do that? What if there were two very profound — and accessible —- ways to transform your life from the inside out?

Through daily prayerfulness and thankfulness.



DAILY

prayerfulness & thankfulness

Begin your day with the Word and a journal,
and you start the day in a way that is
relational, conversational, navigational & inspirational

Begin the day with the Word and journaling words,
and you connect personally to the Word and very Maker,
Creator, of the Universe.

**Begin the day with the Word and journaling,
and you begin with the only Friend who sees your soul,
has moved right into your heart, understands all your
feelings, shares your mind & knows every iota of your
being.**

Thankfulness and prayerfulness
are both about conversation with God,
to more intimately bond with God.

Prayer is a sacred conversation with God.

Notes

what stood out to me:

We only thrive when we abide in the vine (John 15)



SACRED Prayer

SACRED Prayer



SACRED Prayer is an acronym:

Stillness
Attentiveness
Cruciformity
Revelation
Examine
Doxology

Why enter into SACRED prayer with God?

Because sacred literally means *to be set apart* — and when we set apart SACRED prayer time to be with God, God sets us apart to think more like Him, to love more like Him, to BE more like Him.

SACRED prayer is about being set apart from all that is bondage in your life — to move into deep bonding with God who is the LOVE of your life
.
SACRED prayer is conversational and relational, beginning with being *still* in the presence of God, and then being *attentive* to God, appreciating Him, adoring Him. Then daily attending to God's heart for you, just like Hagar does in Genesis 16, telling Him everything about where you're coming from and where you are going.

God wants to know where we are coming from and where we are going to, because God wants us to experience His withness and witness everywhere we are.

SACRED

S	STILLNESS to know God
A	ATTENTIVENESS to hear God
C	CRUCIFORMITY to surrender to God
R	REVELATION to see God
E	EXAMEN to return to God
D	DOXOLOGY to thank God

SACRED Prayer

Research has extensively studied how our brains process hardship and pain (Lehman, 2011), and concluded that any pain we experience alone — develops into trauma.

That's what trauma is: Trauma is pain felt alone. And pain that is experienced alone, desperately seeks any kind of temporary relief.

And that temporary, cheap relief that we seek to numb our pain — liquid relief in a bottle, doom scrolling, scintillating reads, retail therapy, screen distracting — only leads to further costly long-term pain.

But when we, like Hagar, are *attentive* to the presence of God asking where we are coming from and where we are going to — our pain experiences the withness and witness of God —and His withness and witness destroys all aloneness.

The God who pursues Hagar in the wilderness pursues all who wander in hurt wildernesses.

From Hagar's confused feelings of abandonment and forsakenness on the relentlessly burning sands of her life — she looks up into the face of the God who is always coming to seek us out, to find us, to hear our heart, and she names God and her experience with Him (Gen 16:13): You are El Roi, You are the God who sees me.



This is who God is.

This is our named experience of God:

- God sees me.
- God hears me.
- God understands me.
- God holds me.
- God moves for me.
- God moves me.

When in SACRED Prayer,
we attend to God's withness and witness of us —
we discover God's attunement to us —
and we intimately attune to Him.

There may be an epidemic of loneliness, but journaling is *movement toward real wholeness* through WITHNESS AND WITNESS with the Word Himself. Because?

Attunement to God — undoes any of our aloneness in the world.

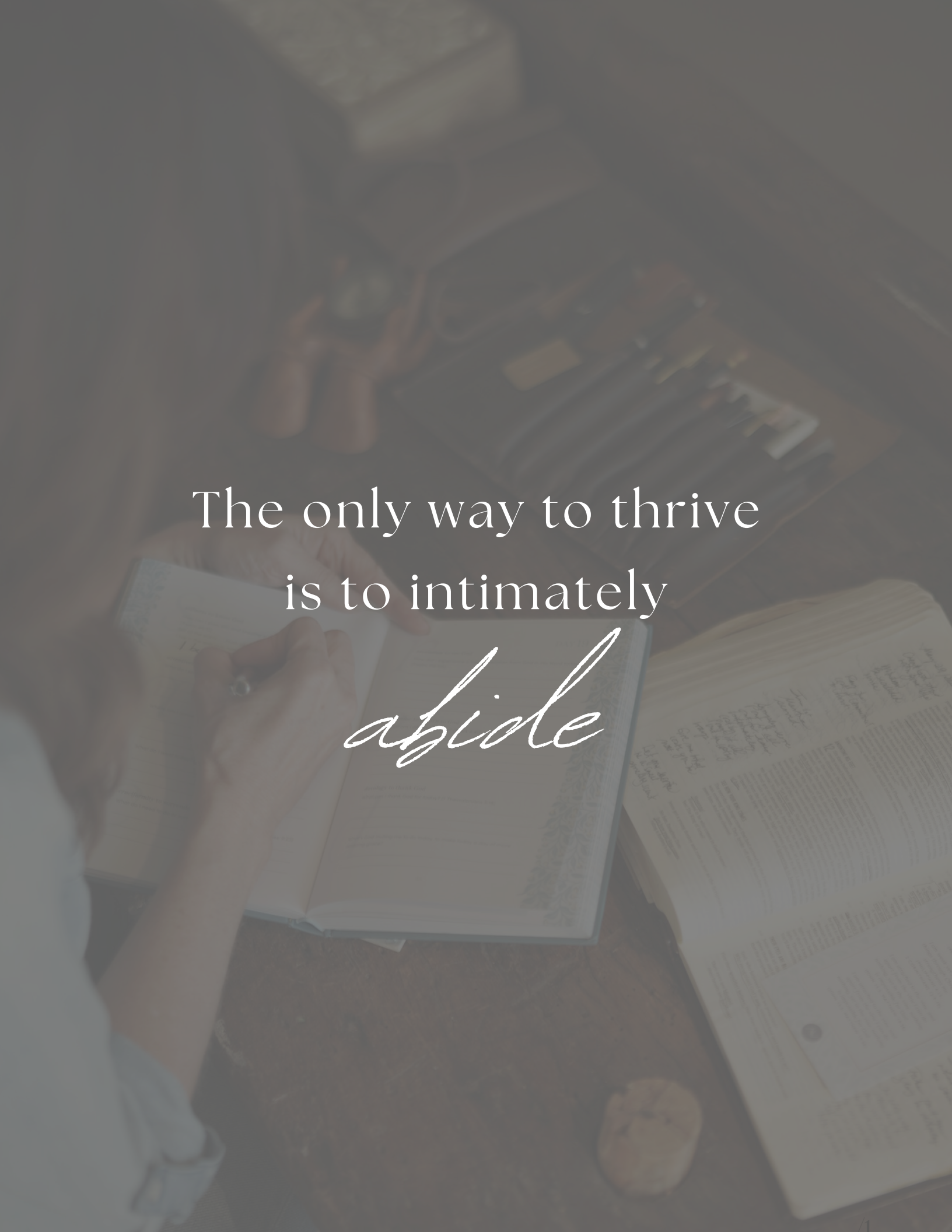
God is attuned to you — and God moves for you.

Like God moves to name Hagar's son, like God makes her son a promised hope to many, God works and moves for you — and then as you journal through SACRED Prayer, you hear how God is moving you back into the world — to live out more of His revolutionary Word.

Every day we get up — and we don't deprive our souls
of SACRED Prayer — so we don't deny our souls
the very comfort of God.






The only way to thrive
is to intimately
abide

Notes

what stood out to me:

When we set apart
SACRED prayer time
to be with God,
God sets us apart to
think more like Him,
to love more like Him,
to BE more like Him.



Gratitude Journaling

Awakening us to the Goodness of God

Gratitude Journaling



Discouragement, difficulties and darkness constantly deaden us to the presence of God and His goodness. A broken world blinds us to God. But this is always the invitation: **Giving thanks gives us vision to see God**. Gratefulness awakens us to the greatness of God still right here. Gratitude is how we don't lose sight of God in world crowded with hardship and grief.

Take a pen in hand and journal three gifts at the end of the day — and in **Gifts and Gratitudes**, this thrilling, fresh, unique format — you see and remember the gifts on this day on all the previous months, which, in a broken world, re-members you so you trust God's goodness for all the coming days.

Taking a pen in hand to number our gifts and gratitudes, keeps our hand in our safe God's hand, so we don't lose our way, lose our connection with our Father in the midst of the dark. **Keeping gratitude in hand, keeps our hand in a good God's good hand.** No matter what storm may be at hand.

This is what we know for certain: We do not have agency over the storms, over the waves, over the dark; but we do have agency to keep looking for God's goodness, keep remembering God's goodness, keep counting all the ways God loves you so we can LIVE with a felt and known sense of being loved through the storms.

You can count on the power of counting all the ways God loves you, to be far more powerful than any storm.

This daily practice of counting God's gifts and goodness trains our brain to look for God's goodness even through pain.

MEANINGFUL INTERACTIONS

What two hearts need to bond — is meaningful interactions, and many of those meaningful interactions. When you daily count your gifts, you are having a meaningful interaction with God, and you are having many of those meaningful interactions.

This is an intimate miracle: You can count on gratitude, and counting gifts, to bond you and God.

This is the invitation to real life: Attunement to God, attachment to God, bonding with God…

Because the way to live through anything is to:

> Tell God about everything.
> Fear absolutely nothing.
> Give thanks through anything.
> And love others large enough to do something — one thing.



GRATITUDE

Pause right now and give thanks for three gifts today.

one

two

three


THE WAY TO
LIVE THROUGH ANYTHING
IS TO TELL GOD ABOUT
everything

Journaling Prompts

Choose one or more prompt to help begin journaling this week

How am I intimately abiding with the vine these days?

What can I thank God for today?

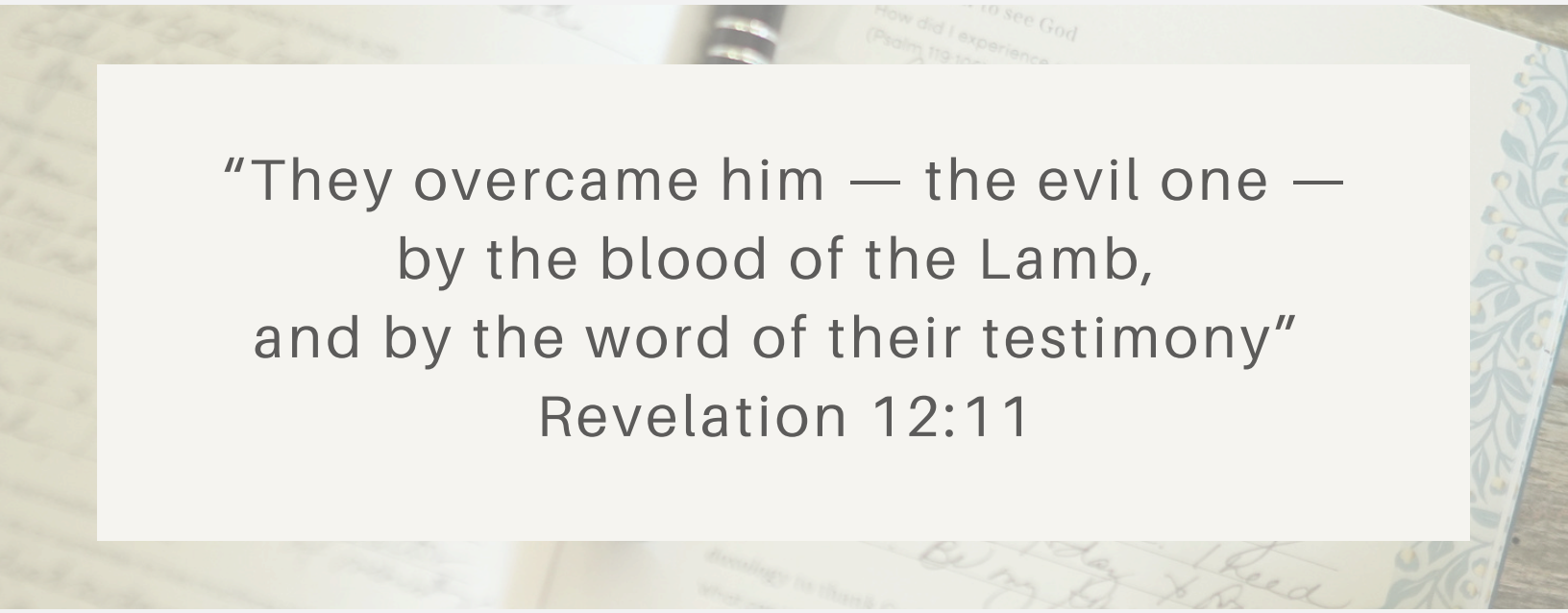
Where am I coming from, and where am I going to?

Abba Father, today I want to tell to You about...

Notes to Soul

session one

When you pick up a pen and begin to write words—
you encounter the Word Himself.



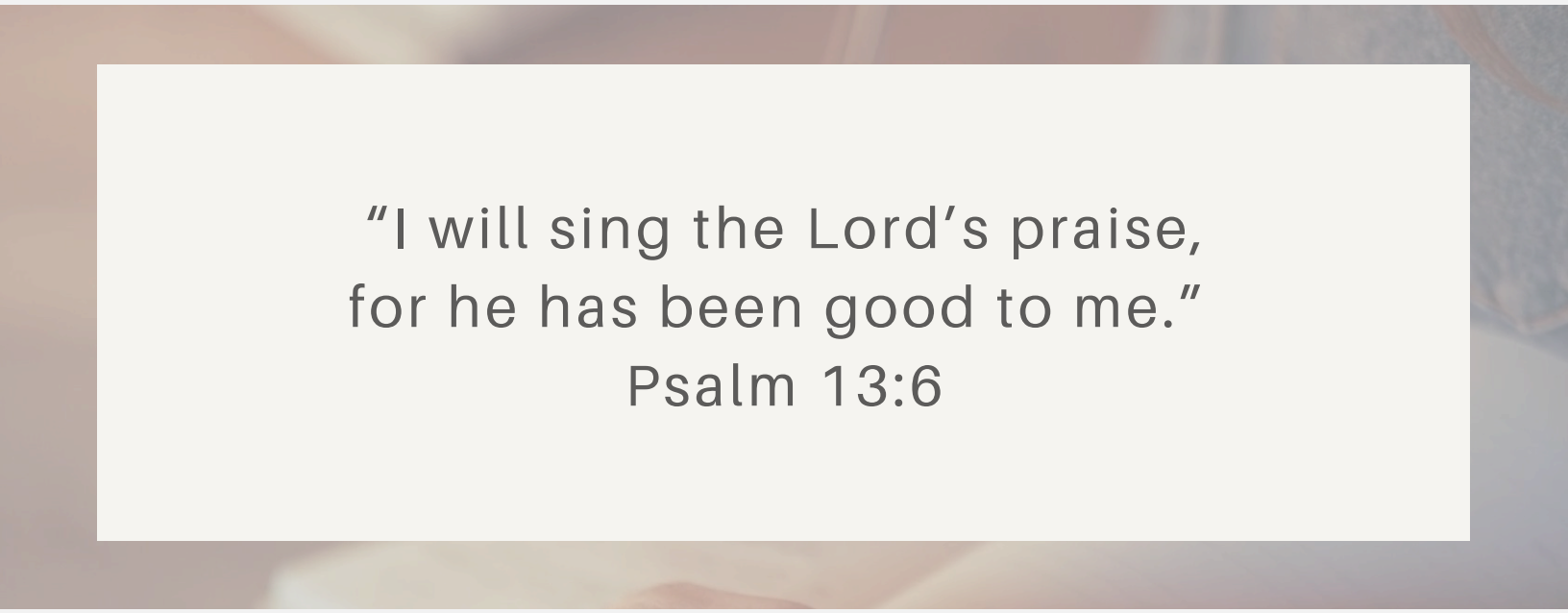
"They overcame him — the evil one —
by the blood of the Lamb,
and by the word of their testimony"
Revelation 12:11

The story does the slaying.
The story always does the slaying.

Notes to Soul

session two

Shame dies
when our stories are told
in safe places.



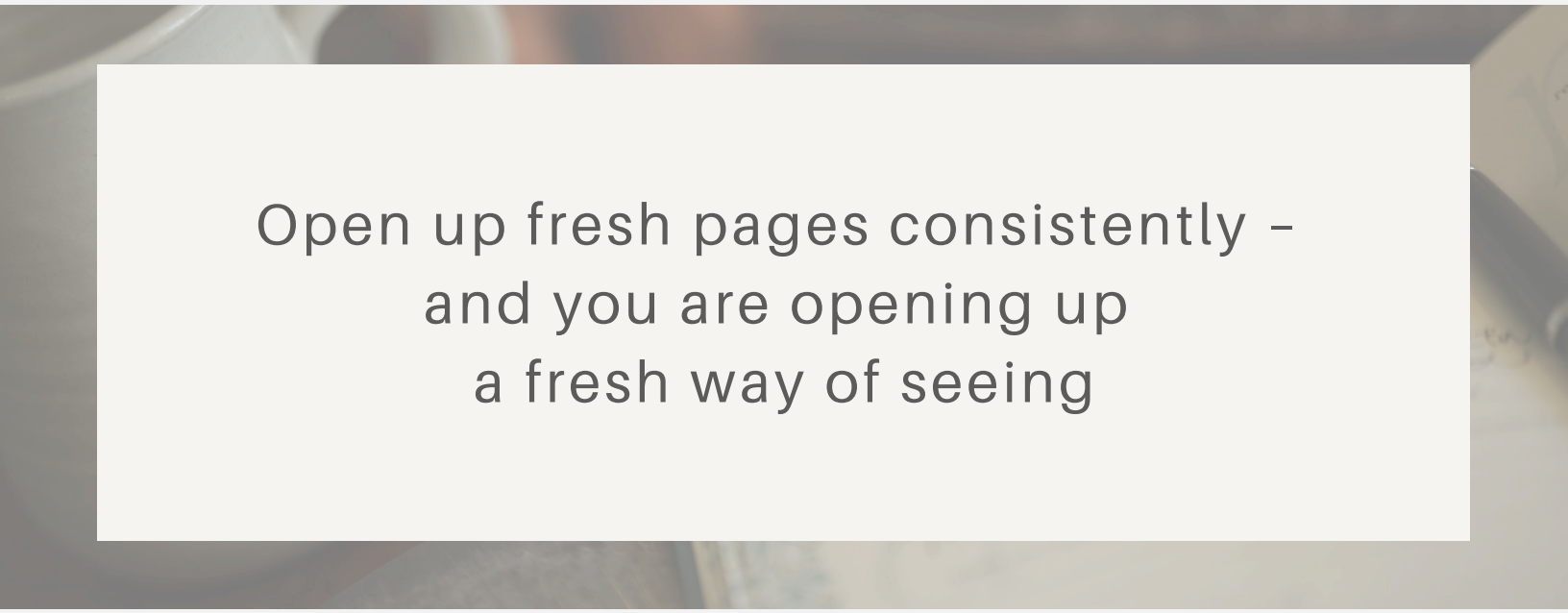
"I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me."
Psalm 13:6

Enter into the discomfort of journaling the story –
to heal the discomfort of the wounds of the story –
and find real comfort.

Notes to Soul

session three

There is no better way to understand your thoughts than to sit down and write those thoughts down.



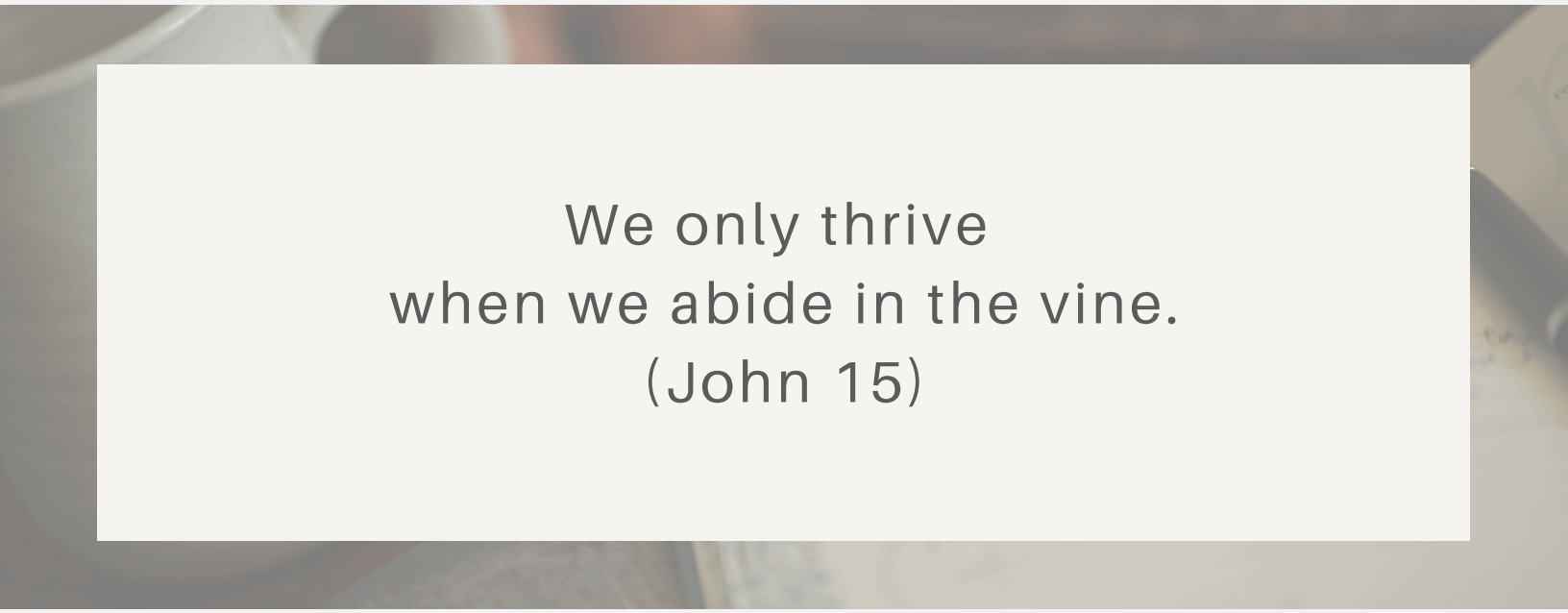
Open up fresh pages consistently –
and you are opening up
a fresh way of seeing

If you want to feel stronger every day – just lift up a pen… and let the ink flow… and you will find yourself strengthening in the Word Himself.

Notes to Soul

session four

God wants to know where we are coming from and where we are going to, because God wants us to experience His withness and witness everywhere we are.



We journal words — so we are not alone with our wounds but experience the Withness and Witness of the Word Himself who saves and heals us with His wholeness.

Notes to Soul

We journal words — because the Word Himself loves to be with us.

Doctoring Journaling. Dispatch journaling. Destress Journaling. And these two kinds of journaling: Divine Conversational SACRED Prayer journaling, and Doxological Gifts and gratitude journaling…

We journal words — **so we are not alone with our wounds** but experience the **Withness and Witness of the Word Himself** who saves and heals us with His wholeness.

We journal words — because **the story slays all the dark** and His Word seals it: you overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of your testimony.



HELPFUL

RESOURCES



GRATITUDE BOARD

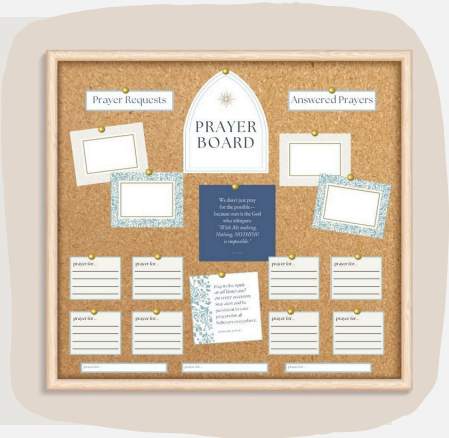
Make your own gratitude board with this fun printable packet

download

SACRED PRAYER BOARD

Collect and display your prayers with this SACRED Prayer board kit

download

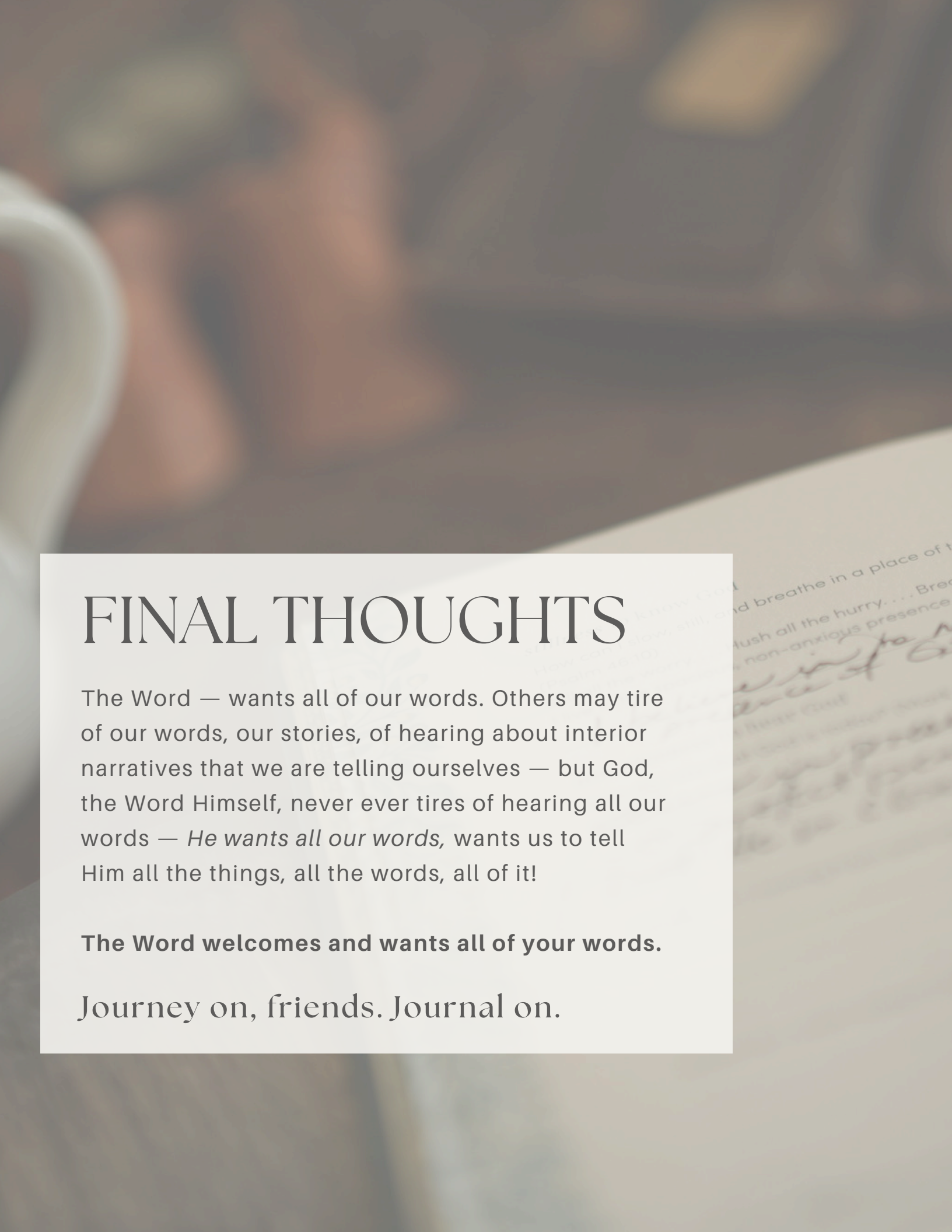




DOXOLOGY

A printable doxology — praise God from whom all blessings flow

download



FINAL THOUGHTS

The Word — wants all of our words. Others may tire of our words, our stories, of hearing about interior narratives that we are telling ourselves — but God, the Word Himself, never ever tires of hearing all our words — *He wants all our words,* wants us to tell Him all the things, all the words, all of it!

The Word welcomes and wants all of your words.

Journey on, friends. Journal on.

Start & End Your Day
with Sacred Prayer with God
and gratefulness to God

Gift someone the gift of deeper joy
and intimacy with God.



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