

GUIDE TO PERSONAL WORSHIP USING “MAPS”

Find a quiet place to be alone with God (Mat. 6:6). All you need with you is a Bible and a way to record your thoughts. As you begin, pause to praise God and express your desire to know Him more (Jer. 9:23-34). Then open your Bible and ask Him to teach, correct, and train you in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16). Be sure to guard against this time becoming mechanical or monotonous. Focus on the intimacy that is found in being with God (Ps. 63:1-8).

MEDITATE & MEMORIZE

Each day's Bible reading normally comprises two chapters of Scripture. You might read one chapter at a time and walk through the steps below, or you might read both chapters at once and then walk through the steps below (with either one or both of the chapters). Regardless, read each chapter slowly, prayerfully, humbly, joyfully, and carefully. As you read, consider any verses that you might want to memorize, and begin memorizing them. Go back and review any verses you have memorized throughout the day or from previous days.

To meditate simply means to reflect. After you read the Word, spend some time reflecting on what it says and means. Ask the following questions and write down some of your thoughts in response. You don't necessarily have to answer every question. These are simply a guide to help you reflect on what you have read.

- What is happening in this passage? Examine the details of who, what, where, when and why. For example:
 - Who wrote this and who read this originally?
 - When and Where is this all taking place?
- What words, phrases, or ideas seem particularly important?
- What does this text teach you about who God is, who we are, who Jesus is, and how we follow him?
- What is the main point of this passage?
- Is there anything in this passage that doesn't make sense that you might need to explore further?

APPLY

After meditating and memorizing the Word, apply it to your life. Think about this in three different ways: “Head, Heart & Hands.” In other words, how does this passage transform my thoughts (head), my desires (heart) and my actions (hands)? You could ask the following questions based upon the text(s) and write down your thoughts in response. Then come up with a plan to follow through with those applications. Again, you don't have to answer every question.

- HEAD: How might I need to think differently about God/others/myself/the world based on this passage?
- HEART: How does this passage change what I want in my life, or my family, or in the world?
- HANDS: What does this passage compel me to do (or not do) based on what I've read?

PRAY

Pray according to your examination and application of the text(s), asking God to change your heart, mind, and life based on the time you've spent in His Word. Let this specific praying lead you more generally to...

- PRAISE: How is God's character revealed in these verses? Spend time praising Him for those attributes.
- REPENT: How do these verses reveal your sin, unbelief, or inadequacy? Spend time confessing those areas to God
- ASK: What's one thing you'd like to pray for your life based on what you've read? What's one thing you'd like to pray for someone else based on what you've read? Write out your prayer to the Lord.
- YIELD: Spend time talking to God about how you want to apply what you've learned.

SHARE

Conclude your time alone with God by committing to share what He has taught you with at least one other person (your roommate, spouse, child, co-worker, friend, small group members, etc.). Specifically pray through your schedule for the day (or the following day if you are spending this time at night), asking the Lord to direct you by His Spirit in everything you think, say, and do. Finally, ask the Lord for opportunities to share the gospel with others, ask Him for courage from His Spirit to obey, and then be ready to share in the opportunities He provides.

A SAMPLE JOURNAL ENTRY

PASSAGES READ: GENESIS 42; MARK 12

MEDITATE & MEMORIZE

MEDITATE: In Genesis 42, Joseph's brothers travel to Egypt because of their famine. Unbeknownst to them, Joseph (their brother whom they first decided to kill but then sold into slavery) is the one who is distributing the grain to those in need. This chapter is a good reminder that even in the most difficult of circumstances, God is in control. God has now used Joseph's difficult circumstances to make him a leader in Egypt, and God is now using Joseph to provide for his family in the middle of their difficult circumstances. God is sovereign over everything, and God is always faithful to His people.

So much is happening in Mark 12 as different religious leaders try to confront and trap Jesus on different issues. Jesus says many important things in response to them, but verses 29-30 seem most important. There, Jesus tells the scribes that the most important commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. He continues, saying that the second most important commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself.

God is the only One who is worthy of my love, worship, and devotion. God made me (and all people) with different faculties: a heart to have emotion, a mind to think, strength to do, and a soul that is eternal, and I am commanded to love God with the fullness of all of my faculties. This is the first and greatest commandment; every other area of obedience flows out of this. Even loving others as myself is clearly connected to loving God with all of my being.

MEMORIZE: I am going to memorize Mark 12:30. It reads, "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."

APPLY

I want to trust God in the middle of this difficult circumstance I am walking through in my life. I don't understand why this is happening, but I believe God is sovereign and in control. I also believe He is faithful, and I know that He will provide for me in the middle of all of this, even in the most difficult days.

I want to see loving God as the greatest and first call on my life. I want to love Him with all of my mind: studying His Word daily, thinking about Him and learning about Him continually. I want to love Him with all of my heart and soul, having affection for Him that is greater than any other affection I have in this world. I want to love Him with all of my strength, obeying Him all day long and loving others as He has loved me.

I can think of several people that I am far from loving well. Specifically, I think of my dad and brother; I can grow so impatient with them. I also think of John and Susan, co-workers that I know don't have a relationship with Christ. I have not yet shared the gospel with them, and in this way I have not shown love to them. How is my lack of love for others connected to my lack of love for God?

I repent today of both my lack of love for God and my lack of love for others. I need Jesus to give me the kind of love that He commands here. I continually need a renewed mind, heart, soul, and strength so that I might love God with the fullness of all my faculties.

PRAY

○ God, guide my steps throughout the day, I pray, and use me to share your love in the gospel with John, Susan, and anyone else you put in my path. Give me courage to speak when you give me an opportunity to share, and grant me the words to say in that moment. Help me to love You as You alone deserve to be loved.

SHARE

Today, I'd like to share the way's I've felt convicted with my small group members so they can pray for me. If the opportunity arises, I hope to share the gospel with my co-worker John when we grab lunch later today.