

The H.E.A.R. Journaling Method

Keep a **H.E.A.R.** journal as you follow along with the Two Year Bible Reading Plan.

The acronym **H.E.A.R.** stands for **Highlight, Explain, Apply, and Respond**. Each of these four action steps contributes to creating an atmosphere to hear God speak. God does not want us to sit back and wait for Him to drop some truth into our laps. Instead of waiting passively, God desires that we actively pursue Him. Jesus said, "Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7).

Before reading a passage, pause to sincerely ask God to speak to you. It may not seem like a big deal, but it is essential to seek God's guidance to understand His Word (1 Corinthians 2:12-14). Every time we open our Bibles, we should pray the simple prayer that David prayed: "Open my eyes so that I may contemplate wonderful things from Your instruction [Word]" (Psalm 119:18).

Below is an outline of the H.E.A.R. method that will help you as you journey through God's Word!

H.E.A.R.

HIGHLIGHT the verses that speak to you.

- Write out the name of the book.
- Which chapter and verse numbers stand out to you?

EXPLAIN what this passage means.

- To whom was it originally written? Why?
- How does it fit with the verses before and after it?
- What is the Holy Spirit intending to communicate through this text?

APPLY what God is saying in these verses to your life.

- What does this mean today?
- What is God saying to you personally?
- How can you apply this message to your life?

RESPOND to what you've read.

- In what ways does this passage call you to action?
- How will you be different because of what you've learned?
- Write out a prayer to God in response to what you read today.

H.E.A.R. Journal Entry

Date: _____ Today's Passage: _____

HIGHLIGHT

After reading the passage of Scripture, HIGHLIGHT each verse that speaks to you by copying it under the letter "H." Include the book, chapter, and verse(s).

EXPLAIN

At this stage, you will EXPLAIN what the text means. You will ask why it was written and what the author is trying to say to the original audience. Be sure to pay attention to the context (verses before and after) to help you understand the meaning.

APPLY

Now it is time to write down how this passage can APPLY to your life. How will this passage change the way you think about God? How will this passage inform your practice as a Christian?

RESPOND

Write down a prayer or action resulting from what you have just learned. Be specific and carry it out.