

## Chair Time Questions

### Is Journaling just writing your thoughts down?

We like to think of journaling as praying with a pen. It's a way for you to acknowledge the things God is teaching you through your time in the chair. It can be as simple as writing down a portion of the passage you read in the Bible and then jotting down a few thoughts. You can also direct your writing to Jesus and ask Him to transform your heart according to His Word. There are no set rules, but it always helps to start with Scripture and let it "read you" as you write down your thoughts.

### How can you distinguish between a personal experience with God versus a personal experience with people?

One of the wonderful things about being human is that we are made in His image. So, the way you interact with people is a good place to begin as you think about interacting with God. One of the stereotypes of religion is that God is ready to strike you down if you don't come into His presence with perfection. We know from Scripture that He is a holy God and we need to be holy to stand before Him, but this is why Jesus becoming fully human while being fully God is so amazing. His perfect life, his death, resurrection and now His glorification make it possible for us to come close. He is the one that tells us to approach God as "Abba" or Daddy. Hebrews tells us to approach Him with confidence all because of Jesus. Jesus also said that He now calls us friends. There are other places in Scripture that speak to this, but the overarching theme is a God who desires close intimate relationship with us. He doesn't just clean us up and put us in right standing with Him, He makes us a part of His forever family. So, yes it starts with our limited understanding of interacting with another person, but Scripture reveals that it is to be so much more.

### How does God talk to you? Is it out loud and in a language that you can understand? If it is only in your thoughts, how would you know the difference?

First and foremost, we hear His voice through Scripture. It speaks loudly of God's heart, His plan, His desire for our lives, as well as our inability to save ourselves. Hebrews 1 tells us that God's primary way of speaking was and is through Jesus. He truly is God's final Word to humanity. If the Bible isn't your primary means of hearing His voice, anything else can and will create confusion and a lack of clarity. That being said, He does use (according to Scripture) dreams, His creation, other people, a still small voice in our hearts, and occasionally an audible voice. If you believe you are hearing God through one of these secondary means, you must always check it with the Bible. If it is contrary to His will revealed in Scripture, then it's not Him. There is also wisdom to be found in a multitude of counselors. Sharing what you think God might be saying to other believers who also have a solid Biblical foundation can be a way that God confirms something He is telling you. There may be times when He has someone confront you with something, or exhort you with a tough word. Always prayerfully consider these words and weigh them against Scripture.

### In order to connect with God, are you supposed to pray out loud or can you just pray in your mind?

There is a rich tradition and history in the body of Christ for both out loud prayers and silent, meditative prayers. I would encourage you to develop a habit with both practices. Praying in your head and heart is a great way to stay connected with Him through the day at work or school. Short prayers that acknowledge His presence and your love for Him throughout the day are a great way to grow in your walk with Him. It is also a great thing to cultivate a time for out loud prayers. You will find yourself less distracted and more focused. I have also found that there are times when I am compelled to get on my knees as I pray. The important thing to remember is that a regular conversation with Jesus is the goal.

### What is a good daily devotional for chair time with Jesus?

Here is a complete list of resources from each Chair Time class. Our teachers all have favorites:

Moments with the Savior by Ken Gire

Daily Light for Your Daily Path compiled by Samuel Bagster

7 Minutes with God: How to Plan a Daily Quiet Time by Robert Foster

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to Be Spiritually Mature, While Remaining Emotionally Immature by Peter Scazzero

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Day by Day: A 40-Day Journey with the Daily Office by Peter Scazzero

Jesus Calling by Sarah Young

Praying the Names of God by Ann Spangler

Praying the Names of Jesus by Ann Spangler

Draw the Circle by Mark Batterson

God's Wisdom for Navigating Life: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Book of Proverbs by Timothy Keller

Portraits of Devotion by Beth Moore