



LOVE GOD RELATE TO GOD

SPIRITUAL OUTCOME DEFINED

Intentionally cultivates a relationship with God by humbly walking through life with Him, talking and listening to Him, and seeking to personally know Him through Scripture.

SPIRITUAL OUTCOME DESCRIBED

God promised through the prophet Isaiah, that one day a virgin would "conceive and give birth to a son, and will call his name, Immanuel," which translates, "God with us" (Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:23). What greater proof do we have that God doesn't desire to be apart from us, but to be *with* us and in relationship with us? There are many different ways we can relate to God and we can find multiple expressions of this relationship throughout all of Scripture. God is described as Father, Mother, King, Shepherd, Love, Light, Abba (Daddy), Provider, Protector, Defender, Peace, to name a few.

God uses a surprising word to describe the relationship between Himself and Abraham. He refers to Abraham as "my friend" (Isaiah 41:8). Similarly, toward the end of His earthly life, Jesus wanted His closest followers to know how much He valued their relationship when He said, "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15).

Following Christ is not just a method of living, but the pursuit of a genuine relationship with the God who chose to be with us. Yes, there is reverence, awe, and worship of God, but there also is a daily walking and talking with God that has its own unique intimacy. The way we nourish this relationship with God is through the avenues of prayer and Scripture, and like any relationship, it can grow cold without intentionality and effort. But when we engage in the intentional practice of talking and listening to God, we develop our own relationship with Him that is present throughout our daily lives.

EVIDENCE OF THIS SPIRITUAL OUTCOME IN A PERSON'S LIFE

- Regularly pursues God through reading and studying Scripture.
- Regularly pursues God through conversational prayer.
- Seeks God for wisdom, insight, and direction in all aspects of one's life.
- Regularly brings both hardship and celebration to one's relationship with God.

"...one can know a great deal about God without much knowledge of Him...knowledge about God, and the capacity to talk well of Christian themes, is not at all the same thing as knowing Him."

- J.I. Packer

GUIDANCE

Read each passage multiple times. Then write your observations about the passage and any thoughts you have from the discernment question. What do you notice in the passage, and what does this reveal about your life?

JOSHUA 1:1-9

Observations:

Discernment Question: Joshua was exhorted to meditate on God's Word day and night. When your mind goes into neutral, what do you think about? What do your thoughts indicate about your relationship with God?

1 KINGS 19:10-13

Observations:

Discernment Question: Elijah did not hear God in the earthquake or the wind but in the quiet whisper. How have you experienced times of solitude and quiet with the Lord? How could you create more space in your life to both seek and experience God's presence like this more often? What could be possible if you did?

PSALM 27:4

Observations:

Discernment Question: The psalmist's greatest desire is to "gaze upon the beauty of the Lord" and "seek him in his temple." What spiritual practices stir your heart with this kind of awe and affection for the Lord?

PSALM 16:5-8

Observations:

Discernment Question: What aspects of the psalmist's experience of the Lord do you resonate with? Fullness of satisfaction? Security? Delight? Steadiness? Counsel? Praise? Which aspect do you lack and how can you begin to experience it?

JOHN 1:14, 5:19, 14:9

Observations:

Discernment Question: Jesus is the very WORD of God, and if we know Him, we know the Father. Do you easily make this connection, or is it hard for you to believe that the character of Christ is the very character of God? How might you approach God differently if you truly embraced this?

JOHN 17:23

Observations:

Discernment Question: Life is described as “knowing” God. If there was a spectrum of knowing God with “strangers” on one end and “intimate friends” on the other, where would you fall on that spectrum? What are you doing in your life today to cultivate a friendship with God?

PHILIPPIANS 3:7-11

Observations:

Discernment Question: Paul considered all things a loss that got in the way of his “knowing” Christ. What in your life do you consider "gain" which really is "loss" in comparison to knowing Christ? What will it take to let go of that which gets in the way of knowing Christ?

HEBREWS 10:19-23

Observations:

Discernment Question: Jesus' atoning work on the cross has once and for all opened up the way for us to draw near to Him. Is there anything currently holding you back from drawing near to Him with the confidence and freedom that is described here? Are you experiencing relationship with Christ free of a guilty conscience? If not, what is getting in the way?

1 PETER 5:6-7

Observations:

Discernment Question: Do you experience the kind of relationship with God where you regularly share your worries and anxieties with Him? If so, what does that experience bring? If not, what might be possible if you did?

NEXT STEPS

What are practical next steps you will do based on what you have discovered in this survey of Scripture about cultivating a relationship with God? Include insights offered from others in your Life Group that could be applied in your own life, as well.

MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE

MARK 12:30, NIV

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

JOHN 17:3, NIV

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.



LOVE GOD RELATE TO GOD

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S STORY

Why is reading the Bible an essential piece in relating to God? Because it is His story. The Bible is God's self-revelation to humanity, a way in which He has made Himself known. It's also only by His grace that we are able to see that.

When addressing the religious leaders of His day, Jesus made a piercing observation about their approach to Scripture that is helpful for our purposes here.

You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life (John 5:39-40).

These religious leaders were right that the scriptures do give life, but not in the way they thought, but by pointing them to Jesus. The texts that they would have known and had memorized from start to finish, bear witness to all that Jesus came and did. Rather than letting His Word inspire and inform their worship of God, they worshipped Scripture as if Scripture itself was a god. Scripture testifies not just to something, a collection of beliefs and ideas, but to Someone, the very person of God. Sadly, they missed this and couldn't see that the answer to all the words they knew by heart was standing right in front of them!

Reading and interacting with Scripture is a movement from the pages to the person, the person of Christ. Therefore, the more we read and pour over Scripture, the more we'll grow in knowledge of and love for Jesus.

The challenging part about this is that the Bible is not an easy book to read. This book tells us the story of the God of the Universe seeking out His creation for relationship, so we shouldn't be surprised that it is deeply complex and nuanced. Because God is infinite and mysterious, there will be no end to the discovery of who He is as we read of Him in the Bible. This should excite us, not discourage us because we get to be in relationship with an awesome God that chooses to make Himself known to us. Could there be a more worthwhile pursuit than to mine the treasures of His story to us?

Like any book, the Bible is meant to be read and understood a certain way. You wouldn't pick up a fictional novel, flip to the middle, and expect to know what's going on in the story. You also wouldn't pick a page in a history book on World War II and expect to find a moral answer to a dilemma you're having that day. A good question to ask ourselves when approaching Scripture is, "Am I asking something of this that it wasn't written to give?" And, "Am I projecting onto the Bible what I think it should be and do or am I letting the Bible tell me what it is and is doing?"

It's also important to keep in mind when approaching Scripture that it is about getting to know God and not always about you. Think about it this way. If a good friend or yours or your spouse begins to share a story with you about their childhood, you wouldn't stop them in the middle and say, "Wait, am I going to get anything out of this? What does this have to do with me?" Why? Because part of growing in that relationship is getting to know the person. Plus, that would most certainly hurt their feelings! It's good to remember that when we're approaching Scripture, we are not reading a self-help book or a map on how to live your best life; you're approaching a Person, the One who made you and wants to be close to you. As we get to know God and His story, we get to know ourselves more and more and how we fit into this grand story that He is still writing!

THE BIBLE IS OUR GUIDE

Two passages inform us significantly.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

This brief statement describes Scripture as “God-breathed.” Hear carefully how Peter describes this very concept from a different angle.

For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21).

So Paul, writing to Timothy, refers to Scripture as “God-breathed,” and Peter, writing to followers of Christ everywhere, describes how the prophets of Scripture “*were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*” If God breathed His words through the Holy Spirit to the prophets, we would expect to experience at least two attributes of Scripture. First, we would expect Scripture to have the profound and distinctive voice of God. And second, we would expect to feel the unique presence, personalities, and writing styles of the various prophets who were themselves carried by God’s Spirit in their writings.

The Bible is an eclectic book of writings spanning thousands of years. There is narrative, poetry, teaching, wisdom, prophecy, and more. It is not a single book by a solitary writer. It was written by numerous writers, both known and anonymous, who had the unifying experience of being “*carried along by the Holy Spirit.*”

If this is in fact a collection of writings breathed out by the very presence of our Creator, we would be wise to listen carefully. It is for this reason that Paul wrote in the above-mentioned passage that the person who listens to Scripture will be “*thoroughly equipped for every good work.*” This also means that Scripture is alive and powerful. As it says of itself in Hebrews, “*For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joint and marrow. It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart*” (4:12).

Scripture equips us for life because God is the Creator of life. When we encounter the Word with open and willing hearts, it will change us and enable us to live out the good that God created us to do.

EXPERIENCE IT

The great thing about God's Word being alive is that it still speaks to us today! There are many different ways to engage with the Bible. One way is through studying scripture, where we walk through the process of Observation, Interpretation and Application. We go into more detail of this in the Study God outcome.

Another way we engage with the Bible is by simply reading it. This is where we take in the story of God and trust Him to put the pieces together and use it to challenge us and change us. It's a good idea to constantly be taking in the Word on a daily basis by participating in a daily reading plan and being ok with not completely understanding everything we read. You can always come back to things you want to research more. But, be sure to read with your ears open, ready to hear what God wants to show you about Himself, and in turn, how you can respond.

There are also times where we need to experience the Word, engaging our hearts and souls as well as our minds as we read, trusting that God wants to speak to us here and now. Let's explore some of the many ways we can relate to God through Scripture at the heart level.

MEDITATE

Meditation is a widely practiced discipline in many religions and spiritual practices. It's typically used as a means of relaxation, or dealing with stress, and ultimately as a way of emptying the mind and giving it a break so it can focus on self.

How does Christian meditation differ? The concept of meditation in the Bible implies musing or thinking deeply about something or ruminating on something. If you picture a cow chewing on grass, it's slow, thorough, and repetitive. With this definition in mind, whether we realize it or not, we all meditate. As we drive down the road, for example, our minds turn to something. Maybe we mull over a frustrating conversation with a co-worker. Maybe we recall a wound we experienced years ago. Or maybe the mind goes in the gutter as we drift toward thoughts of vanity, greed, anger, or lust. We rehearse these thoughts, over and over, and whether we like it or not, these thoughts shape us.

How do we see the practice of meditation played out differently in Scripture? We almost always see it connected to the Word of God.

Blessed is the one who ... meditates on his law day and night. [They are] like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither — whatever they do prospers. (Psalm 1:1-3)

We can see here that meditation is not about emptying our minds and thinking on nothing, but filling it with God's word. And we're not only to be thinking the Word, but speaking it out loud and often. Like God instructed Joshua before taking the Israelites into the Promised land:

Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. (Joshua 1:8)

We also see this command to speak the word often as the Israelites were preparing to possess the Promised land:

These commands that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)

So meditating, as encouraged here, is simply taking in the Word of God, filling our minds with it, chewing on it till it sinks into our hearts and becomes true to our very lives. If we are speaking it often, then our very homes will be filled with the Word and will begin to reflect it in daily life. God's Word is powerful and transformative when we let it permeate our minds, then our hearts, and into our very lives.

From there begins a conversation that is now personalized. As we carefully ponder the passage, we talk, and we listen. If, for example, we read a story of great faith and great courage, maybe we talk to God about our fears and concerns. Or maybe we've been reading and memorizing a teaching on grace, and we now talk to God about an area of our lives where we feel especially susceptible to guilt and shame. Through these conversations, we pour out our thoughts, concerns, frustrations, and joys.

Or maybe not.

Maybe we sit in silence. Maybe we simply rest in the voice we've just heard. Meditation can be as diverse as spending time with a close friend. There are times the conversation abounds with words and ideas, and there are times where you are simply together and enjoying each other's company. Meditation, conversing with God, can be a lot like that.

MEMORIZE

Another way to engage with God's Word is through memorization. If you've spent time meditating on Scripture, this will be a natural byproduct. But, why is it important for our lives with God

Scripture calls us to “*prepare your minds for action*” (1 Peter 1:13). The original language is a call to “gird up the loins of your mind.” Odd? To our ears, very odd. But not to the ears of the original recipients. A “loin” is what they wore. Picture a robe. If they needed to move quickly, they would grab hold of the robe, or gird it up, to keep from tripping over it. Spiritually and emotionally, tripping over ourselves is common practice. For this reason, we are called to “gird up the loins of our minds.” A closer parallel today might be to “roll up the shirt sleeves of your minds.” As we are instructed in Ephesians, our battle in life is not physical, but a spiritual battle being waged all around us. We are daily fighting the schemes of the enemy who wants to keep us from a relationship with God. We are all familiar with Satan's voice of condemnation and shame, which Paul calls “flaming arrows” (6:16). But, the only offensive weapon listed in the “armor of God” that we've been given is the “sword of the spirit, which is the word of God” (6:17). By knowing God's Word by heart, we can more easily fight off the enemy because we are standing on the Truth of what God says, not the flimsy, destructive words of the enemy.

Knowing God's Word and committing it to memory enables us to resist the temptation to sin. As the Psalmist shares:

*How can a young person stay on the path of purity?
By living according to your word.
I seek you with all of my heart;
do not let me stray from your commands.
I have hidden your word in my heart
that I may not sin against you. (Psalm 119:9-11)*

Memorizing Scripture is one way we posture our thought-life with strength and truth. By memorizing two passages per Spiritual Outcome, you will internalize at least 40 brief passages from Scripture that you can call to mind whenever you're in need.

Many of us wish that we could hear God's voice more in our lives, but we forget that He has already spoken to us through His Word! When a passage comes to mind at just the right moment and it brings conviction and redemption instead of condemnation and shame, we can be confident that we are hearing from God!

PRAY

Now that we've looked at some ways to commune with God through His Word, let's talk about how we commune with God through prayer.

Prayer is an odd thing for many of us and doesn't come naturally. But, prayer is our "native tongue." It was the first language ever spoken by mankind, but because of our fallen nature, we've lost the ability to speak it fluently. Now, it's something we have to learn to do. This is why Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1).

Just like any element of the Christian life, we only learn how to pray by actually doing it! So, if we want to develop the muscles of prayer, we must start by talking to God. He has already begun the conversation, our role now is to simply respond-to keep the dialogue going. This is not a linear process; it's not a means to an end. It's discovering what you already have. So, you start where you are and you deepen what you have. The reality is, you have a relationship with God. He's there and He wants to talk with you. The good news is, you don't have to change to pray. You don't have to clean yourself up and get yourself right before talking with God. To pray is to change. When we come to God, acknowledging our need for Him and even our weakness in knowing how to pray, we are changed.

Here are a few tips in how to develop a life of communing with God through prayer.

Follow Your Wandering Thoughts

Many struggle with wandering thoughts while attempting a conversation with God. The frustration is understandable. When talking to a person, the person is in front of you, or at least on the phone, so the conversation has a tangible quality. Although talking with God is no less real, it is by nature a spiritual conversation and therefore lacks physical presence. Wandering thoughts can be a frustration, but with the right perspective, they can also be a tremendous help.

There is purpose to a wandering mind. There's always a deeper meaning behind where our thoughts tend to go. If, let's say, while talking with God, your mind wanders to a project at work, maybe it's the project at work that is creating undue stress in your life, and it needs to be brought before God. Or if your mind wanders to thoughts of anger, greed, lust, or addictive cravings, maybe these are the issues to address with God. Or maybe you can't stop dwelling on a conversation you had with a friend that isn't sitting well with you that maybe you need the Lord's wisdom to sort through. Rather than push the thoughts away, bring those thoughts to God. Talk to Him about those desires, those frustrations, those worries, and those concerns.

Journaling

A wandering mind may also be helped by a second suggestion: journaling. There's something very powerful about moving our prayers from our minds to the page.

This practice will vary from person to person. For some, writing comes more naturally than others. But there are aspects of writing that will enhance most anyone's ongoing conversation with God. Journaling can be done in a variety of ways. Consider a few.

A single page — Journaling need not be lengthy. When Christ taught on prayer He challenged lengthy prayers when He said, *"And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him"* (Matthew 6:7-8). There is no need for flowery language or lengthy prose. God knows what's on our minds, and we can use as few or as many words as needed. For those new to the exercise, consider limiting yourself to a single page or a single paragraph.

Bullet points — Use the journal to chronicle your thoughts rather than transcribe them. In other words, rather than writing the prayer out in its entirety, simply write a bullet point or a short sentence of what you will talk about with God. If you're of the athletic bent, this can be done before the run and again after the run is complete. By marking the thought before stepping into the conversation, we gain focus we may otherwise miss.

One word — Consider the finding and refining of a single thought, a single phrase, or even a single word. Much of the Psalms are written as poetry. There is power in one very refined thought. This single thought can be communicated in countless ways, but one way may be in the crafting of a simple but memorable phrase we carry with us. The thought or phrase may not have the artistic quality of words from a trained poet, but if this phrase is birthed from authentic conversation with God, it will be worthy of the work it takes to get to it. The phrase may come in a single sitting, or it may take weeks or months. Either way, if we allow our journal to be a place where we not only pour ourselves out to God, but also refine a few chosen words, we will discover those thoughts from God that carry great significance and are not forgotten with the turn of a page.

Carry the Conversation

Following Paul's exhortation in 1 Thessalonians to "pray continuously," this final suggestion is to not let the conversation end. Let prayer become an ongoing posture of your heart throughout your day. God has not designed our lives to be segmented between the spiritual and unspiritual, but that all areas of life might be filled with Him. While we need to set aside focused time to converse with God, view this time as the beginning of the conversation. When we cut off our prayer life from the rest of our lives, we may miss out on the more profound moments with God as He speaks into the daily realities of our lives. In an effort to inspire this, make Scripture memory note cards easily accessible throughout your day. As helpful as it is to review these thoughts during specific times, their greatest power might come when we remind ourselves of God's voice while riding the ups and downs of any given day.

APPLY

The *Apply* exercise associated with this spiritual outcome is designed to equip you to create a personalized plan for your conversations with God. This is one of the most foundational things you can do. Working through the rest of the spiritual outcomes will be futile if it they don't stem from a place of intimacy with the Lord. If we attempt to go about them without this, it will be from our own effort and on our own strength, which will only leave us tired, anxious, and probably jaded.

God is present with you, but He's not going to force your hand in the relationship. There's a reason why the Bible mentions seeking God dozens of times. He wants you to come to Him, to show that you're serious about knowing Him, and He promises He'll show up. It is when we do this that we discover the profound presence of our Creator, and His passion to walk closely through life at our side.

*Those who know your name trust in you,
for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you. (Psalm 9:10)*

*The lions may grow weary and hungry,
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. (Psalm 34:10)*



LOVE GOD RELATE TO GOD

INTRODUCTION

What makes a relationship strong? Time. Ask the elderly couple holding hands in the park. Ask the friends who have known each other for decades. Ask the co-workers who truly work as a team. Common to each is a relationship forged by participants investing time in the others.

The investment of time does not just happen. Strong relationships are grown through the investment of time in the other person's life because the time has been planned. The elderly couple converses at dinner — every night — exceptions are rare. The friendship spanning decades changed when college was over, but they continue to meet — every August — exceptions are rare. The co-workers who work as a team have consistent off-site meetings — every quarter — exceptions are rare. Time is never available unless time is made. The investment of time takes planning.

What's true of our relationships with people is true of our relationship with God.

If we are going to cultivate ongoing and authentic relationships with God, we must invest time. If this is going to happen, we must be thoughtful. The exercise that follows is designed to help plan intentional time with God. Planning does not mean you won't periodically break your plan or that you are confined by your plan. It's your plan, and you'll change it as circumstances change. But without a plan, there will always be something else you can do.

For this exercise, we will consider two forms of time.

Daily Time

This is the time invested in the normal rhythms of life. At the person-to-person level, this is family dinner, lunch every Tuesday with a friend, or a couple's date night. Planning daily time with God will increase the odds of this time truly happening.

Breakout Time

This is a periodic time when you're given the freedom to do and enjoy what you most want to do. At the person-to-person level, this is the yearly vacation or the quarterly retreat with the team. Cultivating your relationship with God on an open afternoon or during a time when the pressure is off will enrich your relationship greatly.

WHO ARE YOU?

Before creating your plan, consider your uniqueness. Do two things:

- 1) Check the descriptions that sound most like you.
- 2) Rank your answers, as best you can.

ARTIST: Artists think in pictures and metaphors and often connect with God best through sensory stimulation. The sounds of instruments, the smells of incense, and the sights of the cathedral all draw the heart of an artist upward. Artists are strongly influenced by environment, their physical setting, and are wise to be mindful of this when entering into conversations with God. Artists also discover God through the work of their hands. Through painting or photography or other artistic endeavors, they celebrate God's creative power and uncover new spiritual depths through their work.

ATHLETE: Athletes prefer movement and often connect with God best during physical activity. A brisk run or a vigorous workout at the gym serve to release energy and clear the mind in ways that allow them to hear God's voice more clearly. Attempting to connect with God through quiet prayer or still meditation may feel initially odd to athletes. But it may also be something they benefit from if done in smaller doses, especially at first.

CONTEMPLATIVE: Contemplatives are happiest when deep in thought. They often connect with God best through reflective meditation. They are often discerning and keenly aware of their surroundings. In contrast to the athlete, the contemplative experiences the greatest clarity in a place of stillness and quiet. This tranquility affords them the freedom to openly explore the nuances and trace the contours of any spiritual truth or thought that comes to mind.

MUSIC LOVER: Music lovers are often musicians, but not always. They know the difference between music that is cliché and music that is captivating. No doubt they have favorite genres. But more than the genre, they simply appreciate good music. They love music because it touches something deep within them. Thoughtful music lovers will intentionally select particular songs for their time with God that inspire the kind of connection for which their hearts are most hungry. Musicians will often write and perform their own musical creations during their time with God.

OUTDOOR ENTHUSIAST: The outdoor enthusiast often connects with God best through nature. There are those who prefer arduous hikes up a mountain, and there are those who prefer quiet walks in a garden. Either way, their hearts swell at the sights and sounds associated with breaking out of confinement and into fresh air. The wide open view from a lake. The tree-lined trail. The intricate detail of a tiny rose bud. Relishing these majestic moments inspire the outdoor enthusiast toward thoughts of God.

STUDENT: Students are characterized by an insatiable hunger for knowledge. They are driven to understand truth at deeper levels. Accordingly, they often connect with God best through study of Scripture. They are rarely satisfied with simply being told that some spiritual reality is true. Rather, they have a great need to understand why it is true and how it fits with other spiritual truths. Students enjoy deep theological reflection and understanding Scripture in its full and original context.

WRITER: Writers revel in refining their thoughts through words. For them, it is not just the unloading of words on a page but the ping of a finely-tuned phrase or the arc of a well-crafted paragraph. When they converse with God, they will search for the exact words that capture not just the content, but also the tone of the thought. Like woodworkers shaping a form by sanding away the roughness, writers sand phrases to smooth out their thoughts. Through the process, they not only express their own voice, but increasingly, they hear the voice of God.

OTHER:

BRAINSTORM

With your uniqueness in mind ...

1) Brainstorm ways you can cultivate your relationship with God. Resist analyzing the ideas. This is just brainstorming. Planning comes next.

2) Based on the nature of the idea, place it in either the daily plan or breakout plan column. (Definitions of daily and breakout are on the cover page of this exercise.)

DAILY PLAN

Examples for an athlete/outdoor enthusiast:

- *Work on Scripture memory as I ride the exercise bike at the gym.*
- *Talk to God about my daily Scripture readings as I go for my nightly run.*

BREAKOUT PLAN

Examples for an athlete/outdoor enthusiast:

- *Go hiking alone one weekend and use this time to talk to God.*
- *Plan a camping trip with my running partners. Bring my guitar for worship together.*

DAILY PLAN

With your brainstorming in mind, create a daily plan. Make your plan realistic rather than idealistic. A little bit over a long time will bring great depth.

1. READ

Choose a time of day for daily Scripture reading:

Choose a location conducive to the realities of your daily life and the uniqueness of your spiritual personality:

2. MEMORIZE:

Choose a time of day you will review the Scripture memory verses (while running, before bed, first thing in the morning, at lunch, while doing dishes, etc.):

3. MEDITATE:

Choose a time of day you will meditate on what you've been reading and move into an authentic conversation with God. It may be identical to the read time above, but if you read in the morning or evening, you may want to choose a time during the day to pause and reflect on what you read that morning or the night before. This kind of brief pause can bring what you read into the realities of your life.

BREAKOUT PLAN

With your uniqueness in mind ...

Plan at least one breakout time.

Consider a monthly, quarterly, or yearly tradition you may want to implement.

Note: If planning your breakout times feels burdensome, then reconsider either your ideas or your timing. Breakout time should be highly reflective of your uniqueness and something you look forward to doing.

One planned breakout time:

A monthly, quarterly, or yearly tradition:

Notes: