



## Journal Keeping

*"Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding." Proverbs 4:7 NIV*

### Journal keeping...

...will help you reflect on your daily experiences. Experiences, with the benefit of reflection, help lead to insight and understanding.

...provides an opportunity for you to listen to God's voice and learn valuable lessons that He wants to teach you. Since we believe in a sovereign God who is Lord over the world and every daily incident that comes into our lives, we need to examine what has happened in order to learn. People, places, circumstances and even accidents can all be means by which the Lord teaches us. Writing about these things in a journal permits us to examine them and allows the Lord to speak through them.

...will help you be honest with yourself and with God. The Psalms are full of gutsy, honest communication with the Lord about all sorts of difficulties as well as good things in life. Journal keeping helps us pour out our lives honestly before the Lord just as the psalmist did.

...will help you remember. Think of what the New Testament would be lacking if St. Luke had not recorded conversations and real life experiences in his journal of the Acts of the Apostles? Your own journal of daily experiences, feelings and thoughts can be a rich storehouse of valuable memory for you. It can also help when you are trying to share your story with others.

### How to Get Started

Keeping a journal takes a commitment. Any tips on "how" to journal fall by the wayside if you have not decided that it is a worthy endeavor. Keeping a journal is dependent on what you put into it.

Once you have decided to keep a journal, decide to keep it your way. The journal is primarily for you, unless of course you plan to publish it when you return! Write it for yourself. It is your memoirs, not someone else's.

Be honest with yourself and the Lord in your journal. If you want some good examples of other saints writing honestly before the Lord, take a look at Psalms 15, 27, 51, 137,

or many more! Large parts of the Psalms are personal laments; others are songs of thanksgiving, and still others are stories. They can provide a great source of examples for understanding real life situations.

The following set of questions and categories for reflection are not meant to replace your own personal journal. However, if you don't keep any journal, at least keep this! It will follow the journey of time through your summer program and will hopefully ask you key questions at specific times along the way. It could be invaluable to your overall experience on the field as well as back home.

### 10 Helpful Daily GP Journal Questions to Consider

1. What was the most significant part of this day and why?
2. What was my most fulfilling experience today?
3. What was my most difficult or frustrating experience today?
4. Is there any story I want to remember?
5. Have I fulfilled my personal responsibilities today?
6. What were some of my feelings during the course of the day, and where am I on the "Approaching Differences Diagram"?
7. What is God teaching me from the day?
8. Have I shown a loving spirit towards those I spent time with today?
9. What do I want to be mindful of tomorrow?
10. What things am I learning about myself, the culture, my teammates, my host culture friends?