A letter from Billie Hanks Jr, the creator of the Spiritual Notebook. (Out of Print) and the Spiritual Journal ($8.87 on Amazon)

I could never break the cycle of inspiration and regression. Steady growth seemed impossible! Then slowly but surely things began to change. An older Christian took me under his wing much as Paul helped young Timothy. He showed me the importance of discipline and fellowship with Christ. Life took on a wonderful new meaning!

Like so many other Christians I was delightfully surprised to discover the great difference a daily "quiet time" could make in my life. I learned firsthand what Moses meant in Psalm 90:14: *"Satisfy us in the morning with thy steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days" (RSV).* I found His steadfast love in the mornings and I began to grow.

As time passed, it became natural for me to take notes on my Bible studies and the sermons I heard at church. Writing on the back of my bulletin had never been satisfactory, so I began carrying a notebook. It grew as I grew. The Lord continued to show me areas of need in my life; so new divisions were continually added.

As I became aware that many Christians were equally unsatisfied and undisciplined, I began to share the Spiritual Notebook or Spiritual Journal concept with personal friends. Everywhere I traveled as an evangelist, I found Christian people to be interested and eager for basic insights about spiritual growth.

While the Spiritual Notebook or Spiritual Journal was steadily building, a much larger need was emerging in my awareness: Christians need to be disciple-makers! Every maturing believer needs to be equipped to train less experienced Christians. Each Christian needs a Paul to instruct him, and a Timothy to instruct.

For me, this is where my Spiritual Notebook or Spiritual Journal finds its highest value. It is the well I draw from to teach and train those whom the Lord has given me. It holds and systematizes the insights that come each day as I fellowship with Christ. "*But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 John 2:27).*

Both in learning and teaching we need to be thoroughly equipped to follow the Lord's leadership. He can teach us best when we are teachable. He can use us most when we are usable! Your Spiritual Notebook or Spiritual Journal is a practical tool to help you continually grow. Jesus said, "*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" (John 8:31).*

The job description of every disciple of the Master was made clear from the beginning of his earthly ministry. When he called Andrew and Peter, He said, "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17, RSV). The authenticating mark of true discipleship is that it always has evangelism as its goal: ”*Go into the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15, RSV).*

May God guide you and bless you as you prepare for personal ministry by building your Spiritual Notebook or Spiritual Journal that will be practical, usable, and meaningful for the rest of your life. We can no longer afford the luxury of mediocre Christian lives. Jesus has not changed! He is still calling men and women to be his committed disciples, not merely His converts.

"*If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-3, RSV).*

I trust our generation will take seriously His clear call to be disciplined followers enjoying the radiant fullness of His abundant life!

Billie Hanks, Jr.

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