NEW YEAR JOURNALING GUIDE

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At the beginning of a new year, we naturally think of making resolutions. We seek to be healthier in our minds, bodies, spirits, or relationships. However, it is also very common to have a difficult time keeping these resolutions! This can lead to shame, frustration, or disillusionment. So, instead of (or in addition to) focusing on your resolutions, consider using these prompts to connect in a deeper way to Christ. Allow them to guide you into a time of dialogue with the God who delights in you. It is in this space of deeper awareness of both self and God that you may discern the way forward in this new year.

1

WHAT DO YOU DESIRE?

In scripture, Jesus constantly asked people questions. These questions are often an invitation to explore deeper longings, motivations, and desires. As you approach this new year, imagine Jesus asking you a question. Imagine Jesus is standing in front of you with great kindness and warmth, and he asks you, "What do you desire this year?" Sit with this question for as long as you need. Do not dismiss your desire if you feel it is not "good" or "spiritual" enough. Journal your desire. Explore where this desire originates from. Explore your underlying fears, dreams, insecurities, and expectations related to your desire. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you about your desires.

2

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO RELEASE?

As we enter a new year, what do you feel it is time to let go of? This could be physical. Perhaps you are feeling a need to simplify physically—letting go of material possessions that have become a burden or no longer serve you or your spiritual health. This could also be relational. Is there a relationship God is inviting you to release control of? Are you trying to fix something that is not yours to fix, or carrying a burden that is not yours to carry? Or this could be emotional. Are you holding unforgiveness as a shield? Are you feeling an invitation to bring this into Christ's loving presence and release it? Spend time processing these things and, when you are ready, journal a prayer of release.

3

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO HEAL?

Is there a part of your life that needs healing? A relationship, a physical ailment, or a trauma? Name this in your journal and express your desire for healing. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you about your role in this healing process this year. Healing may not come in the way you seek. Surrender to this, but also be open to the next steps you may feel led to take. Is it time to seek outside help for an addiction or a torn relationship? Is it time to receive the support of others who can be safe and loving? Is it simply time to be honest about your pain—and no longer try to suppress it? How might you be invited into the process of healing this year? Journal your thoughts and prayers on the following pages.

1 *What I desire this year*

2 *What I want to release this year*

3 *What I want to heal this year*