



In the WIND

Reflective Journal

Dr. Billy Burch

Introduction to your *In the Wind Reflective Journal*

You decided to read *In the Wind*, and I am very grateful. Not only for allowing me to be part of your journey, but grateful for what you will gain from this journey. Spirituality— the space we give to that ‘something more’— always goes to the deepest places of who we are. At very least, as the title promises, *In the Wind* will stimulate you to consider how God shows himself to be near.

When we read about subjects that go to deeper places in our mind and soul, it triggers emotions as well. I was told long ago to allow myself the space to explore these feelings. Letting these feelings simmer allow us to get the full flavor of that moment. Moments comprise seasons. Maybe this is your season in life to truly engage in what God is doing in you. This may be the start of the most meaningful and life-transforming journey you have ever taken.

Journaling will help you in this process. A primary reason for journaling is its ability to slow you down. Slowing down our fast paced, highly dotted calendar proves difficult. Pen in hand can force thoughtful deceleration. This ‘slowing down’ allows for a secondary reason for journaling— identifying and isolating thoughts and emotions. In other words, putting words to your thoughts and feelings. Journaling has been a profound method of reflection for centuries, as people have found meaningful insights into their own lives through the practice of journaling.

The following questions are rather simple. They have one purpose— to offer a prompt in order that you might write out the thoughts and feelings which first come to mind. The value is not so much in the questions, but in your contemplative responses. It is there you will notice newness, life-change, and wisdom as you delve into the deeper places of ‘something more’ and ‘something missing’— the deeper places of God.

You may decide to print the *In the Wind Reflective Journal* and use the printout as a place to write your thoughts. If that doesn’t sound appealing to you, I have found it helpful to visit a local art or office supply store and purchase a blank journal which feels right for this occasion. You can read the journal prompts from your screen and record your thoughts in the journal. When you finish reading *In the Wind* and completing the journal, you have a treasure of your thoughts and feelings at this stage of your journey, a sort of memoir for this season in your life. There is a reason why ‘journal’ and ‘journey’ come from the same word. You can then place your journal on a book shelf where it will be accessible anytime you desire to revisit the things you learned along the way.

On a side note, I have found it very motivating to have a good writing pen as well, one that glides along a page just the way you like it. Pen and paper are part of the experience, and the right ‘feel’ actually encourages you to look forward to this quiet time of journaling.

I encourage you to leave enough time when you begin a journaling session. Journaling involves the soul. ‘Slow down’ is the posture to take when the soul is involved. Rushing is what you do when you fill out your medical history at the doctor’s office. This is different. So take your pen into your fingers, and take a deep and purposeful breath, and take your time. Inhale a sense of God’s nearness. Then you can exhale observations and conclusions which are sure to give you insight into the deepest part of who you are.

May you be enriched as you turn the pages of *In the Wind*.
And through this journey, may you sense God’s nearness.

I would love to hear from you. Visit my website at billyburch.com

BEGINNINGS

First Thoughts

- You just read an introductory chapter called '*Beginnings*.' What is the primary emotion you feel as you begin this journey?
- What insights in this chapter give you a good feeling about moving forward?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing your life in which you feel it imperative to sense the nearness of God?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- When was the last time you asked God 'why'?

- What event can you remember in your life where you sensed God's nearness?

Concluding Thoughts

- What things in your life need resolution, healing, or understanding?

- In your own mind, how would God's nearness help with what you just listed above?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

MYSTERY

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *mystery*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distance past related to the subject of *mystery*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *mystery* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *mystery* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST As a point of action after having read this chapter on *mystery*,

My Prayer:

BELIEF

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *belief*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distant past related to the subject of *belief*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *belief* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *belief* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

WONDER

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *wonder*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distant past related to the subject of *wonder*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *wonder* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *wonder* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

PURPOSE

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *purpose*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distant past related to the subject of *purpose*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *purpose* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *purpose* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

EMPTINESS

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *emptiness*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distant past related to the subject of *emptiness*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *emptiness* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *emptiness* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

PAIN

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *pain*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distant past related to the subject of *pain*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *pain* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *pain* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

REMORSE

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *remorse*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distant past related to the subject of *remorse*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *remorse* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *remorse* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

BLESSING

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *blessing*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distant past related to the subject of *blessing*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *blessing* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *blessing* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

LIGHT

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *light*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distant past related to the subject of *light*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *light* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *light* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

LOVE

First Thoughts

- Is there a primary emotion you felt upon finishing this chapter on *love*? If so, name that emotion. If not, why is it hard to identify?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- Which of the human-life stories and experiences mentioned in this chapter resonated with you? Why?
- What is one thing you recount in your recent or distant past related to the subject of *love*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him?

- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- What thoughts or feelings related to *love* moved closer to resolution, healing, or understanding?

- What thoughts or feelings related to *love* need further exploration?

- As a point of action after having read this chapter on *beginnings*, write a prayer which includes two things:

- GRATITUDE
- REQUEST

My Prayer:

FINDINGS

First Thoughts

- Congratulations, as it always feels good to finish a book. This concluding chapter, 'Findings,' gave us several things to ponder: being lost, death and afterlife, God searching, making decisions. Which part of this chapter spoke loudest to you? Why?
- What insights in this chapter felt new or compelling to you?
- What is one thing you decided after having read *In the Wind*?

Deeper Thoughts

- Does this chapter open your mind to understand something new about God?
- What did you notice about Jesus (his words and his actions) as he responded to the people and situations around him, especially the thief on the cross next to him?
- How are you noticing the nearness of God more so now than before you read this chapter?

Concluding Thoughts

- You finished *In the Wind*, a book which was part of your deeper journey. Take a minute to close your eyes, take a deep breath, and just sit in silence. Next, just between you and God, write out your honest thoughts, insights and feelings. After all, that really is what prayer is— honest communication with God. Don't forget to include gratitude and requests, because those two, when pointed to God, will change your outlook on life.

My Prayer: