



How To Have A Devotional Time

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HOW TO HAVE A DEVOTIONAL TIME

Daniel 6:10 (Seeking the Lord)

The “Quiet Time” involves the following “ingredients”:

1. Presence – realize His presence
2. Praise – rejoice in His person
3. Ponder – read the Word
4. Purpose - re-consecrate
 - obedience to Him
 - trust in Him
5. Prayer – relies upon God

Each day the amount of each ingredient can change, thereby changing the “flavour of the meal”.

A. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUIET TIME

1. It is the secret of, and essential for, Christ-likeness.
 - a) You become like those whom you spend time with.
 - b) You will never grow in grace while you neglect your quiet time.
 - c) You need - group prayer
 - public prayer
 - seasons of prayer
 - but even more so, the quiet time.
2. It is being alone with God. This requires becoming disciplined! (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
 - a) Ideally early in the morning.
 - ...when you are fresh and alert
 - ...when there are fewer distractions

Try to have set times.

 - David’s example (Psalm 55:17)
 - Daniel’s example (Daniel 6:10)
 - Our Lord’s example (Mark 1:35) He went alone, even from those He loved, to be alone with His Father.
 - b) In a quiet place.
 - c) Again in the evening. After a hard days work.
 - Jesus did, after He fed the 5000 (Mark 6:46-47)
 - Thank Him where He has undertaken for you.
 - Praise Him for His provision, protection and mercies.
 - Seek forgiveness if and when you have failed.
 - d) These two, morning and evening, should be the minimum.
3. It is a two-way dialogue as well!
 - ☞ God speaks to you
 - ☞ You speak to God

4. How to Have a Quiet Time

A. REALIZE HIS PRESENCE

Don't rush

- Rushing is a tragedy
- It misses the essential ingredient of fellowship/friendship
- Rushing almost guarantees failure throughout the day
- Remember, you are representing the King of the world
- Come quietly, unhurriedly (Isaiah 40:31 "...they that wait upon the Lord...")
- Take time to think about Him...
- ...know that He is there

Example: Praying Hyde with Dr. Wilbur Chapman

...waited 5 minutes

...uttered not a word

...then with upturned face, tears streaming down his face, "Oh God"

...waited 5 minutes

...then prayed...

- Use a hymn book, or a Psalm of praise, etc

B. REJOICE IN HIS PERSON – WHO AND WHAT HE IS

Worship and enjoy Him

Take maybe Psalm 103

Thank Him for who and what He is

- All His goodness
- His grace
- For saving you
- Keeping you
- Defending you
- Providing for you
- Friends and family (Paul did! Ephesians 1:15-16)
- Everything (Ephesians 5:20)

JEHOVAH – Covenant Keeper

- JIREH – Provider
- NISSI – Protector
- M'KADDESH – Sanctifier
- SHALOM – Peace
- TSIDKENU – Righteousness
- ROHI – Shepherd
- SHAMMAH – Peace
- SABAOOTH – Lord of Hosts/Armies (Romans 9:29)
- EL-SHADDAI – God Almighty
- ADONAI – Owner/Master
- ELOHIM – God of Gods
- EL ELYON – Lord Most High

C. **READ THE WORD – PONDER**

Systematically, not haphazardly or randomly.

- Absorb and memorize parts
- Read from both Old and New Testaments daily
- Start at Genesis and Matthew
- Approach it reverently – not carelessly
- Read it methodically – not haphazardly
- Search it expectantly – not disinterestedly
- Ponder it prayerfully – not thoughtlessly
- Apply it personally – not excusingly
- Obey it instantly!
- Expect to see Jesus in every page
- Ask God to teach you His ways through it

D. **PURPOSE**

- Re-consecrate
- Adjust – total obedience in all things
- Trust Him
- Expect results, victory, advancement

E. **PRAYER. REALLY PRAY – RELYING UPON GOD**

- Pray to God the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Spirit. Eph. 2:18
- “For through Him (Jesus) we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.”
- Pray on the merits of Calvary, the shed blood. Hebrews 10:19-22
- Pray under the guidance of the Holy Spirit
- Pray in simplicity, speak freely to God
- Keep praying, not just once! Ephesians 1:15-22 (NB vs. 17 “keep”)

The Importance of Prayer:-

- In our Lord’s own life (Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12) “ Prayer”, in connection with Jesus, is used 25 times in the few gospels.
- In His present ministry (Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34)
- In the early church (Acts 6:1-4; Ephesians 1:15, 16, 17; 1 Thessalonians 3:9, 10; 2 Timothy 1:3; Romans 1:9, 10; Colossians 1:9)
- The Bible tells us to spend much time in prayer Ephesians 6:18 ‘watching thereunto” KJV means literally “being sleepless thereunto”. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 “pray continually”
- Lack of prayer means lack of power.

Someone has said: We would be more effective if we talked less to men about the Lord, and more to the Lord about men.

Example: Preacher watching a marble cutter:

“I wish I could deal such changing blows on stony hearts.”

“Maybe you could if you worked like me, on your knees.”

E.M. Bounds: “The man – God’s man – is made in the closet.”

Major Allister Smith: “How is it that Jesus, who needed to pray so little, prayed so much; while we who need to pray so much, pray so little!”

HEARING GOD'S VOICE

Hebrews 1:1-2; 3:7-19

- a) Hundreds of people in the Bible “heard God speak to them”
- b) Since then millions of others have heard Him speak to them...
ie. The example of Elisha (2 Kings 6:8-17)
- c) But many of us are not too sure how He speaks today
- d) If a local church is to fulfill its purposes in God, its reason for existing, then ALL of us as PRIESTS are going to have to HAVE HEARD GOD, and ONGOINGLY HEAR GOD, AND KNOW HOW TO SEEK HIS FACE, BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY.
- e) We are going to have to KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT ONLY GOD CAN AND WILL DO, and WHAT ONLY WE CAN AND MUST DO!
- f) HEARING HIS VOICE, AND SEEKING HIS FACE ARE TWO OF THOSE THINGS THAT ONLY WE CAN DO! God can't and won't do them for us!

THE REQUIREMENT FOR HEARING GOD SPEAK

A. YOU MUST KNOW THE WAYS THROUGH WHICH GOD SPEAKS TO US

1.Through An Audible Voice

Old Testament example - Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:4 – 4:17)

New Testament example - Christ's baptism (Matthew 3:17)

- Paul's conversion (Acts 9:4)

2.Through The Bible

Sometimes He leads us to go and open our Bible. Sometimes He gives you a chapter and verse. Sometimes while you are reading in your daily devotions or studying your Bible He “quickens” (makes alive) a certain portion. “Thy Word is a lamp... a light.” Psalm 119:105

How He led me regarding the transition of team leadership:

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Numbers 27:12-23 | NB vs. 20 |
| 1 Chronicles 22:5-19 | David chooses Solomon to succeed him as leader |
| 28:1 | Makes Solomon king |
| 29:1 | Presents Solomon to people; still leads on |
| 29:22 | Acknowledged Solomon a second time; then he ruled |
| 1 Samuel 16:13 | David anointed king |
| 2 Samuel 2:4 | David anointed king of Judah |
| 2 Samuel 5:1-5 | David anointed king of Israel |

3.Through The Inner, Inaudible Voice

This can sometimes be the nudging of God in your imagination, impressions. Or feeling compelled (led) to do something...

...go somewhere

...say something

This will never contradict the Word of God - the Bible. A few words that may help here:-

- The devil can't read your mind, and nor can anyone else!
1 Kings 8:39 "...for You alone know the hearts of all men."
- Submit your heart, mind, imagination, etc to God's will...
...then ask Him to speak to you.
- How to ensure that it isn't you or the devil:-
 1. There are three sources of inspiration. To inspire means to seek to communicate will or ideas
 - Self: Romans 6:11 "count yourself dead" – "reckon" KJV
 - Satan: James 4:7 "resist the devil"
 - Saviour: James 4:7 "submit yourselves to God" – receive
 2. The difference between God and the devil in guidance:-
 - Satan drives – God draws
 - Satan condemns – God convicts
 - Satan harasses – God harnesses
 - Satan hurries – God doesn't cause you to panic
 - Satan causes panic – God gives peace

4. Through The Gifts Of The Spirit (1 Corinthians 12)

Old Testament example – Elisha and Gehazi (2 Kings 5:26)

New Testament example – Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5)

5. Through Visions

Old Testament example – Isaiah 6

New Testament example – Paul's Macedonia call (Acts 16:9)

6. Through Dreams (Job 33:14-18)

Old Testament example – Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2, 4)

New Testament example – Joseph's call to a far country (Matthew 1:20)

7. Through Angels (Numbers 22:32)

Angels often appeared to men.

8. Through People

God can communicate His will to us even through ordinary conversations.

9. Through Circumstances

God arranges circumstances in order to tell us something. Balaam could not get to where he wanted to go and became frustrated.

10. Through An Animal (Numbers 22:30)

11. Through Songs And Hymns (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19)

12. Through Creation (Romans 1:18-32 NB vs. 20-21, 28)

13. Through Conscience (Romans 2:15, 16)

B. CHRIST MUST BE LORD OF YOUR LIFE

- Submission to His Lordship protects you from other powers.
- You must be willing to do His will before you even know His will, otherwise you won't hear His voice. John 7:17 "If anyone chooses to do God's will, He will find out whether My teaching comes from God."
- Many, unfortunately, have no intention of obeying unless it suits them.

C. YOU MUST HAVE A CLEAN HEART

- Psalm 66:18 "If I had cherished sin in my heart the Lord would not have listened."
- Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

a. YOU MUST BE MOVING IN FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

1 John 1:7 "If we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship." You must be living in all the light you presently have, otherwise how can you expect Him to give you more if you only pick and choose what suits you!

b. BE LIVING A LIFE OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

- "God inhabits the praises of His people." Psalm 22:3
- His presence brings His guidance.
- As you thank Him for what He has done in the past, He takes you further.

c. MATURITY ENSURES GUIDANCE

John 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice." Not lambs.

d. SOMETIMES REQUIRES FASTING (Acts 13:1-3)

- From food
- Time
- Pleasures

REASONS WHY GOD SPEAKS TO US

1. GOD SPEAKS TO US (Reveals Himself, His Will and His Ways) IN ORDER TO BECOME FRIENDS WITH US!

- Genesis 3:8, 9. Here God is looking for Adam and Eve to join Him and share His company.
- Abraham was called "the friend of God" James 2:23; Isaiah 41:8
- To become friends, communication is essential. John 15:15

2. HE WANTS US TO KNOW HIS WILL

- He is our commander and He will give us our "marching orders".
- He wants us to know His "specific" will.

3. TO GIVE US ANSWERS TO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

- Situations arise that demand decisions.
- We need to know from Him how to make those decisions.

4. **BECAUSE HE HAS SOMETHING TO SAY TO US**

- Direction
- Commands/Correction
- Comfort and encouragement
- Warnings