



Session #9 – Personal Quiet Time

True or False:

Please answer the following True or False questions based on what you believe about personal quiet time.

- 1) T ☐ F ☐ The main goal of Christian meditation is to relax and empty your mind of thoughts.
- 2) T ☐ F ☐ The best way to develop a close relationship with God is through service and activity.
- 3) T ☐ F ☐ It is possible for a believer to see God, hear Him speak, and feel His touch.
- 4) T ☐ F ☐ The Bible is a record of what God once said when He was briefly in a speaking mood.
- 5) T ☐ F ☐ The only way God speaks to us is through His Word.
- 6) T ☐ F ☐ Bible commentaries are considered equal in authority to the Bible itself.
- 7) T ☐ F ☐ Allowing distractions to keep us from spending time alone with God is sin.
- 8) T ☐ F ☐ The best Bible translation to choose is the one you will read.
- 9) T ☐ F ☐ The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself.
- 10) T ☐ F ☐ Understanding the context of a passage is crucial for proper interpretation.

So Many Distractions!!!

- 1) In 1939, C.S. Lewis wrote the following in his book 'The Screwtape Letters', a satirical novel in which the 'senior demon' Screwtape writes a series of letters to his nephew Wormwood advising him on how to corrupt a human soul:
"The junior devil asked Satan; 'What is the plan?' Satan replied; 'Our plan is very simple! We will make the noise of man's world so loud that he can no longer hear the voice of his God.'"
- 2) In order to drive us away from God, Satan chooses to distract us with 'noise'. He knows that if we are overrun by countless distractions that we will be unable to hear the voice of God in silence.
- 3) Our minds have been reprogrammed to crave distraction. Notice how secular distractions have increased over the past century.
 - 1910s/1920s – Entertainment (movies, amusement parks, radio)
 - 1950s – Broadcast Television
 - i. Notice that C.S. Lewis wrote 'The Screwtape Letters' a full decade before television was popular.
 - 1980s – Cable/Satellite Television
 - 1980s/1990s – Video games
 - 1990s – Internet
 - 2000s – Smart Phones/Social Media
 - 2010s – Streaming Television/YouTube
 - 2020s – Virtual Reality, Artificial Intelligence



- 4) Even our 'spiritual' activities can distract us from hearing God's voice. A.W. Tozer wrote the following in his book 'The Pursuit of God' (published in 1948):
- a. *"Every age has its own characteristics. Right now, we are in an age of religious complexity. The simplicity that is in Christ is rarely found among us. In its place, there are programs, methods, organizations, and a world of nervous activities that occupy time and attention but can never satisfy the longing of the heart. The shallowness of our inner experience, the hollowness of our worship, and the slave-like imitation of the world that marks our promotional methods all testify that we only know God imperfectly today, and the peace of God hardly at all. If we are to find God among all the religious inessentials, we must first determine to find Him, and then proceed in the way of simplicity."*
 - b. *"A generation of Christians reared among push buttons and automatic machines (and now electronic devices) is impatient of slower and less direct methods of reaching their goals. We have been trying to apply machine-age (now digital-age) methods to our relations with God. We read our chapter, have our short devotions and rush away, hoping to make up for our deep inward bankruptcy by attending another gospel meeting or listening to another thrilling story told by a religious adventurer lately returned from afar."*
 - c. *"It will require a determined heart and more than a little courage to tear ourselves loose from the grip of our times and return to Biblical ways. But it can be done."*
- 5) Consider the following questions regarding the distractions in your life:
- a. Has Satan succeeded in distracting you to the point that you no longer hear God's voice?

 - b. What are some of the distractions you are commonly drawn to? _____

 - c. Do you consider these distractions to be sin in your life? Why or why not? _____

 - d. Remember that sin can simply be 'missing the mark' or 'failing to reach a goal'. Does this change your previous answer? _____

 - e. What actions can you take to reduce the distractions in your life? _____



The Importance of Personal Quiet Time

- 1) It Exercises Our Spiritual _____
 - a. We have spiritual organs that can be cultivated to see, hear, and feel God's presence.
(Heb. 5:14, 1 Tim. 4:8, Psalm 119:18, John 10:27, Isaiah 30:21, and Heb. 3:7-8)
 - b. *"The sensual world intrudes upon our attention day and night for our whole lifetime. It is noisy, insistent, and self-demonstrating. It does not appeal to our faith; it is here, assaulting our five senses... We have organs in our hearts that we can use to know God as certainly as we know material things through our familiar five senses. We understand the physical world by exercising the abilities given to us for that purpose, and we possess spiritual abilities that we can use to know God and the spiritual world if we will obey the Spirit's urge and begin to use them."* – A.W. Tozer (from The Pursuit of God)
- 2) It Helps Us to _____ God Personally
 - a. Just like any personal relationship, we get to know someone by spending time with them.
(Jeremiah 29:13, James 4:8, and Isaiah 1:18)
- 3) It _____ Us with God's Will **(John 15:4-5 and 1 John 4:13)**
- 4) It _____ Our Mind and Attitude **(Phil. 2:5, Phil. 4:8, Romans 12:2, and Colossians 3:2)**
- 5) It Strengthens Our _____ and _____ in God **(Rom. 4:20-21, Rom. 10:17, Proverbs 3:5-6, and Psalm 56:3)**
- 6) It Strengthens Our _____ to the Enemy **(Eph. 6:13, Eph. 6:16-17, and 1 John 5:4)**
- 7) It Brings Us _____ and _____ **(Isaiah 26:3, John 14:27, John 16:33, Romans 5:1, Romans 8:6, Philippians 4:7, and 1 Timothy 6:6)**
- 8) It was _____ by Other Men of God **(Philippians 3:17)**
 - a. By Abraham **(Genesis 19:27)**
 - b. By Moses **(Exodus 34:2-3)**
 - c. By David **(Psalm 5:3)**
 - d. By Daniel **(Daniel 6:10)**
 - e. By Jesus **(Mark 1:35)**



Key Components for an Effective Quiet Time

- 1) Eliminate _____
 - a. Find a quiet location that is 'off limits' to others.
 - b. No electronic devices (phones, TV, tablets, etc.).
 - c. No clocks. If you have to, set an alarm and set the clock away from your view.
- 2) Allocate _____
 - a. Prioritize quiet time over everything else. **(Matthew 6:33)**
 - b. Be realistic and assign a manageable time (maybe 5-15 mins to start).
 - c. Be consistent but also be flexible.
 - d. Notice many of the godly men we spoke about above had quiet time early in the morning.
- 3) Open Up _____
 - a. Start with prayer. Ask God to reveal Himself to you.
 - b. Ask for God's wisdom and the Holy Spirit's guidance.
 - c. Come with the right attitude. View this time as an opportunity to delight in God's presence, not as a religious obligation.
 - d. Expect to hear from God.
 - e. *"Let any man fully commit to turn to God, let him begin to exercise himself to godliness, let him seek to develop his powers of spiritual receptivity by trust and obedience and humility, and the results will exceed anything he may have hoped in his leaner and weaker days. Any man who repents and sincerely returns to God, who will break himself out of the mold he has been held in, and will go to the Bible itself for his spiritual standards, will be delighted with what he finds there... The Universal Presence is a fact. God is here. The whole universe is alive with His life. And He is not a strange or foreign God, but the familiar Father of our Lord Jesus Christ whose love has surrounded the sinful race of men for these thousands of years. And He is always trying to get our attention, to reveal Himself to us, to communicate with us. We have the ability to know Him inside us if we will just respond to His proposals... We will know Him in increasing degree as our receptivity becomes more perfect by faith and love and practice."* – A.W. Tozer (from The Pursuit of God)
- 4) Open Up Your _____
 - a. Perhaps start with a short devotion or daily reading.
 - b. Look for answers to questions you may have.
 - c. Look up verses concerning sins you may be struggling with.
 - d. Verify things fellow believers or Christian leaders have told you. **(Acts 17:10-11)**
 - e. Study a particular topic or Bible account.



- 5) _____ on God's Words (**Psalm 119:27, Psalm 119:97, Psalm 119:148, Colossians 3:16, Deuteronomy 6:6-7, Psalm 37:31, Psalm 1:1-3, and Joshua 1:8**)
- Allow verses and passages to fully sink in, reading them over and over if necessary.
 - Focus on understanding and reflection rather than the amount of text being read.
 - Memorize key verses and their locations.
 - Let God's Word be your daily food. (**Job 23:12, Matthew 4:4, and Jeremiah 15:16**)
 - "You've probably heard the old adage that says, 'Give a man a fish and he eats for a day; teach him to fish and he eats for the rest of his life.' The same can be said of reading the Bible. If you want to thrive in your relationship with Jesus, you need to learn how to fish. Your pastor may serve up an excellent 'meal' every Sunday, but if that's the only time you feed on God's Word, you're going to get very hungry."*— Greg Laurie (from Start to Follow Manual)
- 6) Be Prepared to _____
- Have a pen and notepad handy to write down 'things to do later' that may come to mind during your quiet time. Then forget about them until later.
 - Feel free to write in your Bible and underline or highlight verses that stand out to you.
 - Keep a journal of things God is showing you or things you want to research further.
 - Record your prayers, experiences, ideas, or reflections to keep for private use.
 - Write what verses mean to you and anything the Lord speaks to your heart.
 - Keep a journal of prayer requests and answers to your prayers.
- 7) Be Prepared to _____ on the Lord (**Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:31, Psalm 130:5, Psalm 40:1, and Micah 7:7**)
- Practice being still. (**Psalm 46:10**)
 - Exercise and cultivate your spiritual receptivity.
 - Take time to listen to God. (**1 Kings 19:11-13**)
 - "It is important that we get still to wait on God. And it is best that we get alone, preferably with our Bible open before us. Then, if we are willing, we may draw near to God and begin to hear Him speak to us in our hearts. I think the progression will be something like this for the average person: First a sound like a Presence walking in the garden. Then a voice, more intelligible, but still far from clear. Then the happy moment when the Spirit begins to illuminate the Scriptures, and what was once only a sound, or at best a voice, now becomes an intelligible word, warm and intimate and clear as the word of a dear friend. Then life and light will come, and best of all, the ability to see and rest in and embrace Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and All."*— A.W. Tozer (from The Pursuit of God)



- 8) Be Prepared to _____ God's Commands
- Do not hesitate to be obedient. (**Psalm 119:59-60, Psalm 119:129, Matthew 7:24, Luke 11:28, and James 1:22**)
 - Apply what God shows you to your life.

Tips for Effective Bible Study

- Choose a Good _____
 - Choose a *reliable* translation that you will read.
 - Choose an *accurate* translation for Bible study.
 - Electronic Bibles are great for study but a paper Bible is best for personal quiet time.
- Gather Some Useful _____
 - Study Bible** – Usually includes study notes, book introductions to provide background and context, maps and charts, links to related scriptures, etc.
 - Bible Concordance** – An alphabetical index of words used in the Bible, listing every book, chapter, and verse where a specific word appears.
 - Devotional Guides** – Tools designed to help Christians spend intentional time developing their relationship with God through daily prayer, scripture reading, and reflection.
 - Bible Commentaries** – Contain observations and interpretations by spiritual leaders surrounding a biblical text, typically organized according to the text's sequential flow.
 - Bible Dictionary** – A reference tool containing alphabetically arranged entries that define, explain, and provide context for people, places, objects, and theological concepts found in the Bible.
 - Other Bible Translations** – Renderings of the Bible into languages other than those in which it was originally written. Hebrew and Greek translations are also available.
 - Smart device Bible apps provide multiple translations at your fingertips.
- Pray for _____
 - Pray to **God** for wisdom and direction.
 - Pray to **Jesus** for the insight to see the entire Bible as a cohesive story pointing to His life, death, and resurrection.
 - Pray to the **Holy Spirit** for guidance, understanding, comfort, and conviction.
- Follow Some Basic _____
 - _____ the Bible and ask these questions:
 - Who are the people in this passage?
 - Who is the author and who is the audience?
 - Who is speaking?
 - What is happening?
 - What is the main topic or context?



- b. _____ on what you read and pray for understanding. Ask:
 - i. What does the passage teach you about God? About life? About You?
 - ii. Is there a command to obey?
 - iii. Is there a promise to hold onto? Is there a condition to that promise?
 - iv. Is there a warning to heed?
 - v. Is there an example to follow or avoid? (**Philippians 3:17 and 1 Cor. 10:6-11**)
- c. _____ to what you have learned. Pray for resolve to obey God's Word. Ask:
 - i. Is there any sin mentioned that I need to confess?
 - ii. Does this point out any error in my actions or attitudes?
 - iii. What changes must I make?
 - iv. What can I do to follow the instructions or godly example given?
 - v. How will I put this into practice in my life?

5) Try Different _____ of Study

- a. _____. Method – Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer.
- b. _____ Method – Involves careful observation, interpretation, and application.
- c. _____ Studies – Involves studying the lives of Biblical characters.
- d. _____ Studies – Involves searching what the Bible says about a specific subject.

6) Avoid Common _____

- a. **Avoid over-personalizing** – Instead of immediately asking "What does this mean to me?", ask "What did this mean to the original audience?" to avoid misinterpretation.
- b. **Don't rely solely on others** – Use commentaries, but only after you have attempted to understand the text yourself.
 - i. Remember that the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself and the Holy Spirit in our best guide for interpretation.
- c. **Don't read into the text what isn't there** – Readers often place their own personal experiences or modern culture into the text, rather than interpreting what the author intended for the original audience.
 - i. Eisegesis vs. Exegesis: While *exegesis* draws the meaning out of the text (what the author intended), *eisegesis* inserts meaning into it.
- d. **Don't bite off more than you can chew on** – It is better to deeply study a few verses than to speed through whole chapters.
- e. **Don't fixate too much on the English words** – Some original words lose their full meaning when translated into English. Don't build an argument or doctrine around the English translation of a single word. Consulting other translations or a concordance can help with determining a word's full intended meaning.



Some Suggested Bible Studies

Below are some great Bible study suggestions to get you started. Remember to READ, REFLECT, and RESPOND as you do each study. Write down what you learn or what God shows you.

1) New Identity in Christ (**Romans Chapters 6-8**): _____

2) The Parable of the Good Samaritan (**Luke 10:30-37**): _____

3) The Cure for Worry (**Matthew 6:25-34**): _____

4) What is Love? (**1 Corinthians 13:4-7**): _____

5) The Armor of God (**Ephesians 6:10-17**): _____

6) How to Be Blessed (**Psalms 1:1-6**): _____

7) Christ's Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew Chapters 5-7**): _____

8) The Treasure of God's Word (**Psalms 119**): _____
