



## Quiet Times: How to Develop A Love Relationship with the Lord

*You will seek Me and find Me  
when you seek Me with your whole heart.  
Jeremiah 29:13*

**Does your quiet time** consist of a 10 or 15 minute hurry-up, “jiffy lube” kind of a time with God? Read some scriptures, say a couple of prayers from your prayer list, then go attack the day? Do you want a relationship with God, not just a ritual where you get your ticket punched?

Do you want a friendship with God - a loving Father/son or Father/daughter relationship? Are you willing to pay the price to get to know God? Do you want to be changed and will you *allow* God to change you, to conform you to Jesus? If you do, then when you read your Bible, God will speak into your life and transform you. If you don't, then your Bible study will be a nice theological read, but will not impact your life at all.

When you think of your friendships, what does it take on your part? Time? Communications? Trust? It is the same with a friendship with God.

Do you realize that it takes time to get settled down, to be able to hear from God? The Word states that “My sheep hear My voice.” Are you one such sheep who hears from God regularly?

We have to be brutally honest and ask ourselves . . . am I really seeking the kingdom of God first? In Matthew 6:33, Jesus says, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness . . .” We are to seek God first, with our whole hearts. An awesome promise for us is found in Jeremiah 29:13, “If you seek Me with you whole heart I will be found.”

**The ache in our soul, the longing we can't satisfy** can only be realized in a love relationship with the Lord. Colossians 1:16 says that you were created *by* Christ and *for* Him, and Colossians 2:10 says you are *complete* in Christ Jesus.

How ironic it is, then, for any human being to try to find completeness in any way other than in a close relationship with God through Christ. Yet many people try to fill the void in their lives and find completeness with the things and people of this world. Others try to fill it with religious works. Either approach involves other gods and idols which are warned against in the first and second commandments. (Exodus 20:3-4)

Through the prophet Jeremiah, God says, “But my people have exchanged their glory for worthless idols . . . They have forsaken Me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.” (Jeremiah 2:11-13)

**Why is it sometimes hard** for us as Christians to pursue the love relationship with God for which we were created?

I believe that there are **seven major hindrances** that we have to overcome. They are:

1. Busyness – too busy to spend time with the Lord (Jeremiah 29:13, John 10:27, Matthew 6:33, II Timothy 1:7, Ephesians 2:10 and I John 2:15)
2. Love for the world. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life *compete* with our desire for God and, if we aren't careful, infiltrate our lives and choke out our love for the Lord. (I John 2:15-16)
3. Un-confessed sin in our lives or we have allowed idols in our lives (Isaiah 59:2, Jeremiah 2:11, I Corinthians 10:13)
4. God seems so “unseen” or “spiritual” – too far removed from this physical world. (II Corinthians 4:18 and 5:7)
5. Wrong View of God (Romans 12:2, Psalm 139, Hebrews 11:6, Romans 5:8)
6. Anger towards God (Psalm 62:8, I John 1:9)
7. Compartmentalizing our lives (Acts 17:28, II Corinthians 5:20, and I Thessalonians 5:17)

*Many Christians are unable to stand against the temptations of the world or of their old nature. They strive to do their best to fight against sin and to serve God, but they have no strength. They have never grasped the secret: The Lord Jesus will every day from heaven continue His work in them. But on one condition – the soul must give Him time each day to impart His love and His grace. Time alone with the Lord Jesus every day is the indispensable condition for growth and power.*

*Andrew Murray*

**How can we avoid looking to people,** things or even our own accomplishments to fill the void that is meant to be filled by God? It is by being intentional about our relationship with Him. As A.W. Tozer says, “It is by pursuing Him”.

Human relationships take time and effort. A close, vital human relationship develops through spending time together, sharing openly, communicating regularly and being committed to each other. Just think about your relationship with your best friend or your girlfriend or boyfriend or your spouse. The same thing is true for your relationship with the Lord. If you want an intimate love relationship with Him, you must spend *time* with Him.

*The Bible assumes as a self-evident fact that men can know God with at least the same degree of immediacy as they know any other person or thing that comes within the field of their experience.*

*A. W. Tozer*

Realize that your quiet time isn't only for you either. God wants to have fellowship with you.

You were created for Him. He reconciled you to Himself at great cost through the sacrificial death of His Son so you could have a relationship.

**We must plan DAILY uninterrupted times alone** with Him (quiet times or Q.T.'s) and also focus on Him during our day to abide in Him, as John 15:5 says we should. Planning a regular time each day assures consistency, which is vital to your walk with God.

For your Q.T., find a comfortable, quiet place where you can be alone and not be distracted or interrupted. First thing in the morning is the best time, because you are fresh, and the whole day lies ahead. To effectively have an early morning quiet period, you will have to plan ahead the night before, as you set your alarm to go off in the a.m. You may have to go to bed earlier. Also, snooze alarms have to be conquered. But, some of you may find that evening is the best time for you to connect with God. Whatever the time, plan it into your day as you would any other activity.

Q.T.'s *will* require a sacrifice on your part. If an early morning Q.T. doesn't work for you, be sure to block out the next earliest time in your schedule.

If you do not schedule a Q.T., or if you put it off, it probably won't happen. As the day progresses, it seems that more and more demands are placed on our schedules, and we also know that the world, Satan and his demons, and our own flesh will all try to prevent it. Remember Matthew 6:33, "But seek first His kingdom." Ask God to give you the heart and the discipline to make Him the first priority of your life and to give Him time (which equals love). You'll probably even want to spend half a day with the Lord from time to time. I have personally found that when I go on retreats for a couple of days or several days, I normally get insights from God that I can act on.

*The young believer must understand that he has no power of his own to maintain his spiritual life. No, he needs each day to receive new grace from heaven through fellowship with the Lord Jesus. This cannot be obtained by a hasty prayer, or a superficial reading of a few verses from God's Word. He must take time quietly and deliberately to come into God's presence, to feel his weakness and his need, and to wait upon God through His Holy Spirit to renew the heavenly light and life in his heart. Then he may rightly expect to be kept by the power of Christ throughout all the day and all its temptations.*

*Andrew Murray*

Remember, a quiet time is quiet! "Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10) I know that if I stay in the family room with my wife walking in and out of the room and making noise in the adjacent kitchen, I really can't concentrate. I need to find a place that is quiet to focus on God and His Word.

**Here are some ways you can relate** to God during your time alone with Him:

**Thank Him specifically** for things you consider to be blessings in your life. Often, we take so much for granted, like our health, our eyesight, our food and shelter, etc. Psalm 100:4 says that we enter God's presence when we thank and praise Him.

Thank Him for the hard things, too. Ephesians 5:20 tells us to always give thanks for everything. As Psalm 50 describes, sometimes this is a sacrifice, but it will help if you remember that, as a believer, God is working all things to good in your life. (Romans 8:28-29) Gratitude is really, really important!

**Praise Him for Who He is** (Creator of the universe and of *you*, a loving heavenly Father, our Savior from sin, etc.). You can do this in word, with song, musical instrument and dance, and also just with your everyday life. Job 38-41 and Psalm 103 and 104 are great places in the Bible to read to help you praise God.

**Go out in nature** when possible and observe His handiwork. That should automatically create a sense of awe and an attitude of worship. See Psalm 8:3.

**Talk to Him** about what is going on in your life and share what is on your heart with Him. He is interested in *everything* about you, because He loves you so much. You are His beloved child. Did you ever see a human father with his little baby or toddler and notice how captivated he is by everything the child does and says? That is how God feels about you . . . only even more so! Zephaniah 3:17 says that He takes great delight in you and rejoices over you with singing.

God wants to hear about your day, your hopes, your successes, your problems, your disappointments, your fears, your anger and your joy. In Psalm 62:8 and 142:2, He invites you to pour it all out to Him. You don't have to hold *anything* back. Be honest and open. He promises that He hears and cares. (I Peter 5:7) Journaling thoughts, concerns, feelings and specific prayers help many to connect with God, if you like to write. It can also really connect your prayers with answers to your prayers. I put in the margin of my journal, Praise the Lord, next to prayers that are answered, sometimes yes and even sometimes no.

**Listen to Him** because He *will* speak to you. In John 10:4, Jesus says that His sheep hear His voice." In Isaiah 65:24, God says of His people (us), "Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear." God will actually reveal His thoughts to you! (Amos 4:13)

**Discuss your plans** with Him and ask for guidance. In fact, ask for guidance *first*, then make plans! In Proverbs 3:5-6 and James 1:5-8, God promises counsel and wisdom if we ask for it. However, we must truly want to hear what He has to say and be willing to do it. In his Bible study "Experiencing God," Henry Blackaby says that 9/10<sup>th</sup> of most people's problem in hearing from God is generally that they want their own will and just want God to rubber stamp it.

**Read His Word**, which is really a collection of love letters written to *you*! If you want to hear His voice, all you need to do is open the Bible. God will teach, rebuke, correct and train you through the Word. (II Timothy 3:16) Before you start reading, ask God to open your eyes to what He has to say to you . . . be sure to apply it to your life and become a doer, not just a hearer, of the Word. (James 1:22-25)

**Then Practice His Presence all day!** This means focusing on God whenever possible during the day. He promises that His Presence will go with you. (Exodus 33:14) It takes only a few seconds to shift our focus from what we are doing to the Lord. Thinking of Him in this way off and on during the day and night and for longer periods when we can (while driving or exercising, for example) is called "practicing the Presence of God" and will help you stay close to Him all the time. I Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to "Pray without ceasing."

*A quiet time is a time set aside to deepen your knowledge of the Lord, to enrich your own personal relationship with Him, to fellowship with Him, to love Him, to worship Him, on a very personal basis . . . How much of a calm and gentle spirit you achieve, then, will depend on how regularly and consistently, persistently and obediently you partake of the Word of God, your spiritual food.*

*Shirley Rice*

**For more help in developing** a close love relationship with the Lord, feel free to ask for our Word docs on Prayer and on the Bible; also the short articles, (“Be Still,” “Stay Focused” and “God’s Garage.”) A.W. Tozer’s classic, The Pursuit of God, is a great book to read on the subject.

**For help in overcoming things that prevent** a close relationship with Him, ask for the Word doc, “Anger at God.” Also consider reading the excellent book Disappointment with God by Philip Yancey.

*Better is one day in Your courts than a thousand elsewhere.* Psalm 84:1

