

DEVOTIONAL PLAN

Developed by Pastor Tim Keller

What is a “Quiet Time”?

A “Quiet Time” is a time of direct contact between your mind and God’s using the Bible and prayer. It is a time of dedication, cleansing, instruction, strengthening, and delight.

Why do I need to study the Bible and pray?

Bible study and prayer are not simply for our sake. God deeply desires our fellowship and worship – it gives Him joy and pleasure! (John 4:23). Think from this perspective. If you’re not moved by this fact, then you have not understood it.

How often should I communicate with God?

Communication with God must [regular and often] (Josh. 1:8-9). To know God (not just to know about God) is the goal. How we pray, delight, and think on God is the only true measure of whether our relationship with Him is alive (Jn. 15:4). God bought (in blood) personal access to His presence for us. Even Abraham and Moses did not have this (2 Cor. 3:12-18; Matt. 27:51). Moses was denied (Ex. 33:18, 20; 2 Cor. 4:6) that which we may have each morning (Jn. 4:21-23).

What are the goals of a Quiet Time?

1. First, **worship**: To get to know Him, to be humbled by His holiness, comforted by His love, strengthened by His presence.
2. Second, **change**: to root out sins and establish biblical attitudes and actions in your life.

How can I get started?

1. Make a contract right now to begin a daily Q.T. Be consistent in time and place. Start with about 20 minutes. It should be unhurried. The place for it should be quiet. Morning is often the ideal time.
2. Use a notebook and/or the “Quiet Time Sheet.” Expect dry periods! That’s no excuse for stopping. Change your format, or the book of the Bible you are reading, every so often to avoid stagnation.
3. Share what you are learning in your Q.T. with other Christians (such as at youth group, core group, school, church, etc.). Get a hold of a good Q.T. if you wish.

Tips on Bible Reading & Prayer (Addition by Aaron Orendorff)

Read *systematically* – the Bible is a story, not a magical book of God-talk. Reading the Bible like a magic book often sounds “spiritual” – “I just open up and listen to God talk” – but it undercuts the reality of what the Bible is, what it’s about and how it communicates.

Read *strategically* – pick a book of the Bible that corresponds to what you want to learn or study. If you’re struggling with joy, read Philippians; if you’re suffering, read Job or 2 Corinthians; if you want to understand the atonement, read Romans; etc.

Pray with *concentration* – while it’s true that there’s never a bad time to pray, it’s also true that, on the pages of both the Old and New Testaments, prayer is never pictured as something to do *while* you’re engaged in another activity. The paradigm to follow is, of course, Jesus himself who “rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark...departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed” (Mark 1:35; cf. Matt. 6:6; 14:23).

How do I have a Quiet Time?

1. First, *meet God*. Still your heart, ask for His presence, concentrate. You may wish to praise Him a bit with a psalm to “warm up” your heart. Take a psalm and look for things to praise Him for.
2. Secondly, *listen to God* by reading a passage from His Word. Don’t choose more than a chapter! Read it carefully, reverently, intelligently; read it more than once. Pick out what you think is the central thought of the passage. Record that thought and/or some other truth that has struck you, in your own words. Then determine what God’s message is for you. Is there:
 - a. A promise to claim?
 - b. A sin to confess?
 - c. A command to obey?
 - d. An example to follow?
 - e. An error to avoid?
 - f. A new thought about God?

Once this is determined, record it, and think of some way to practice or act upon the message if possible.

3. Thirdly, *talk to God through prayer*. The elements of prayer are:
 - a. **Praise and thanksgiving.** Be specific. Search your life and mind for things to thank Him for and then praise Him for.
 - b. **Request for self and others.** Be specific. Unload your burdens and pour out your feelings. Also make a list of things to pray about for family and friends. Use the list daily to pray.
 - c. **Confession.** Search your life for sins committed since yesterday. Search for good deeds you avoided doing as well! Ask for cleansing, and then thank Him for His full forgiveness through Christ’s blood.

My Devotional Plan

Where? _____

When? _____

What? _____

How? _____