



THE PRAYER CLOSET

Equipping & Encouraging Believers
In Prayer

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRAYER CLOSET MINISTRIES, INC. © Copyright 2001

VOLUME VI

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER, 2003

ISSUE 6

DEVELOPING YOUR QUIET TIME

What do you think of when you hear the phrase "quiet time?" How do you respond to it? For some people, it is a precious event in which he or she spends time alone with God. For others it is something that they tried and have stopped doing. Others see it as a boring drudgery – a routine to carry out because "good Christians" have a quiet time. Some see it as a practice only for the "super-spiritual."

The phrase "quiet time" refers to the believer making time on a daily basis to spend with God. The quiet time usually consists of reading the Word of God and praying to God. It is the intentional commitment to take time each day to focus on God's Word and spend time in prayer with Him. It is the determination to dedicate a portion of your day that you might talk to God and listen to God. The history of the church is filled with believers who carved out time each day for this "quiet time." It is a vital practice that should characterize every believer's life. Every believer is in need of this daily time alone with God.

Now I can hear the sighs and the groans that are coming from some of you. Maybe you're thinking, "I tried it and it just didn't work for me." Or perhaps you are feeling that this will be just one more legalistic duty that you have on

your checklist of what a "good Christian" ought to do. Or maybe you're stuck in a rut and are wondering if you should even continue to pursue this daily time alone with God.

I acknowledge that the quiet time can become a routine – a legalistic burden without joy or power. However, that is true of any spiritual discipline. Any spiritual discipline that is divorced from intimacy with God and a focus on Him will become a dead and dry routine. Any spiritual discipline that is done just for the sake of doing it will become a heavy burden. If we are not focusing on God, the quiet time can become a matter of simply going through the motions.

And I realize that the Bible never says, "You shall have a quiet time each day." There is no direct command for a believer to have a quiet time. Yet the Word of God provides compelling evidence for our need to get alone and to get with God each day. There are biblical truths that reveal that a believer must carve out time each day with God. God can help you build a unique and rich quiet time.

This issue of *The Prayer Closet* will deal with building a quiet time. We will begin by looking at why a believer needs a quiet time. Then we will examine Jesus' instructions

Dr. Kevin Meador, 595 Stratton Road, Decatur, MS 39327 (601) 635-2180

EMAIL: prayercloset_1998@yahoo.com

OUR WEB PAGES: www.prayerclosetministries.org - www.kingdompraying.com



concerning the quiet time. And we will examine ways to build and strengthen your time alone with God. The purpose of this issue is to call you to get alone and get with God an never before in your relationship with Him. Wherever you are in your relationship with Him, it is my hope and prayer that you will develop a deeper, more mature relationship with Him.

Why Should A Believer Have a Quiet Time?

The Bible reveals that a believer needs to spend time alone with God on a daily basis. Developing a quiet time should be the pursuit of every believer. Why is there such a need for a daily quiet time?

First, God desires to spend time with you. God loves you and has saved you for the purpose of fellowship, "But know that the LORD has set apart for Himself him who is godly; the LORD will hear when I call to Him" (**Psalm 4:3**). God has saved you that you might spend time with Him. He longs to hear your voice and for you to hear His voice (**Matthew 6:6**). Your Father's heart beats for you. He loves you and desires to communicate with you. He hears when you call to Him.

Your Father wants you to develop a quiet time with Him because of His great love and desire for you. He longs to have an intimate relationship with You. God is not an unmerciful tyrant who demands that you read the Word and pray each day or else. He is a loving Father with a passionate desire to spend time with you. He saved you for this reason. His heart yearns for a deep relationship with you. This is why you should strive to build a quiet time. It is not because you have to or God will "zap" you. It's not so that you can brag about your relationship with God. It is not because of guilt. Yet, it is because you have a loving Father who desires You and longs to have a relationship with You. The everlasting and almighty God desires You and longs to spend time with You each day.

The example of Jesus should encourage you to build a quiet time with God. The Bible reveals that Jesus spent time alone with the

Father, "Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed" (**Mark 1:35**). Jesus' life was characterized by getting alone and getting with His Father (**Luke 4:1-13, 6:12-13, 14:32-42**). If the Son of God needed to spend time alone with the Father daily, how much more do you and I need that time alone with God? Jesus faced many demands on His time. He experienced pressure from all sides. Yet, He carved out time to spend with His

Father. His example should stir us to make the same commitment.

Spending time alone with God empowers us to live for and serve Him. The Bible says in **Luke 5:16**, "So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed." Then **Luke 5:17** says, "And the power of the Lord was present to heal them." Do you see the connection? Jesus spent time alone with the Father. He then had the power to heal the sick. He received the insight and power to heal as He spent time alone with God. Spending time alone with God is the key to experiencing God's power for living for Him and ministering before Him. It is only as you seek Him daily that you receive the empowering to serve Him.

Your daily quiet time prepares you for corporate worship. The Bible declares our need to worship together with the people of God, "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (**Hebrews 10:24-25**). God desires that we join with our brothers and sisters for corporate worship. Yet, if we are not worshipping God six days a week, we certainly will not worship Him one day a week. Our daily time alone with God prepares us to worship with believers in corporate worship. It is an essential for preparing your life for worship on Sunday or any other times that you join with other believers for worship.

Building a quiet time is a practical way of taking advantage of your access through Jesus

(Ephesians 2:18). Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, you now have access to God. You are given the privilege to communicate and spend time with the God of the universe. Jesus has opened the door to God's presence for you. How do you respond to this amazing and glorious privilege? You spend time alone with God! By spending time alone with God you are taking advantage of Christ's gift of access to the Father. Jesus bled, died, and was raised from the dead that you might have this privilege. Don't waste this gift; take advantage of it by spending time alone with God.

How Do You Build A Quiet Time?

We have already examined the biblical truths that lay the foundation for having a quiet time. The Bible teaches the need to get alone and get with your Father. Now how do you develop a quiet time in your personal life?

There are two basic building blocks that you can use to develop your quiet time with God. They are the Word of God and prayer. A quiet time basically consists of reading the Word and praying to God.

Why should you read the Word as a part of your quiet time? There are some basic reasons for this.

- *The Word of God prepares you to enter God's presence.* Paul declares that the Word has a washing, cleansing power (**Ephesians 5:26**). The Word will clear your mind of clutter. It will help you to focus on the Lord. It will also point out sins that you need to confess before you pray (**Psalms 66:18**).
- *God speaks to you through His Word.* God's primary way of speaking to you will be through His Word. When you pray, you are speaking to God. When you are in the Word, you can listen to God.
- *The Word will provide fuel and insight for your praying.* The Holy Spirit will provide you with a variety of insights for your praying through the Word. He will often grant you insight during your reading that

will apply to that particular day or the needs of that particular day.

The other building block for your quiet time is prayer. Your quiet time is the opportunity for you to listen to God through His Word and to speak to God through prayer. Jesus says that we are to get alone in a secret place and "pray to the Father" (**Matthew 6:6**). The purpose of the quiet time is to focus on the Father – to listen to Him and to pour out our heart before Him.

You can develop your quiet time in a variety of ways. Yet, the Word and prayer are essential to your time alone with God. The following are some suggestions on how you can build your quiet time.

- ❖ *Begin by being still before the Lord.* Take time to calm your heart and mind before you start your quiet time.
- ❖ *Spend time in the Word.* The basic way that you spend time in the Word is by reading the Word. It would be beneficial for you to read through the Word in a year. There are a variety of Bible reading plans that can help you pray systematically through the Word. You might also consider meditating on a verse or two that stands out to you. You can use this time memorize a verse or two.
- ❖ *Spend time in prayer.* You can pray either before or after you spend time in the Word. Relax and rest in God's promises in **James 4:8**. Pour your heart out to God. Use the essential aspects of prayer – praise, confession, thanksgiving, petition, listening, pleading. Focus on Him and speak to Him as your loving and caring Father.

These are some practical suggestions on how to build your quiet time. One word of caution though – don't get caught up in procedure and lose sight of the relationship. God is not as interested in your fine phrases or in your meeting him punctually every day as he is in **you**. This is not a business proposition. It is not about a legal contract. Your quiet time hinges on a relationship and not on a procedure.

Your quiet time is not about achievement or performance. To borrow the Nike advertising slogan, "Stop worrying about getting it 'right.' Stop worrying about yourself, your words, and your procedure and **just do it.**" There will always be room for growth and improvement. You can develop and deepen your quiet time through a variety of means. Yet, above all, God longs to hear from you and speak to you from His Word. You can choose to do this in a variety of ways. Yet, the essential is to focus on God – speaking to Him and listening to Him.

Jesus' Instructions For Your Quiet Time

In **Matthew 6:6**, Jesus teaches that we are to get alone and get with our Father. In other words, we are to develop a quiet time alone with Him. In this verse, Jesus gives us some basic instructions for building this quiet time with the Father. Jesus says, "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly" (**Matthew 6:6**). From this verse, we can glean the following guidelines for our quiet time:

- *Make an intentional commitment to spend time alone with the Father.* Jesus says to go into a room and shut the door. This refers to the fact that one has to make a deliberate choice to spend time with God. It does not happen by chance or coincidence. You must make a commitment to spend time alone with Him.
- *Find a place to have your quiet time.* Jesus says that we are to go into a room. In other words, we are to find a secret place – our own little holy ground. Find a place where you can meet with God each day.
- *Focus on the Father.* Your quiet time is about a relationship and not a procedure. Listen to His voice as you read and meditate on the Word. Speak to Him as

you pray. Your quiet time is an encounter with God.

- *Seek to deal with your sin and impure motives.* Jesus says, "the Father who sees in secret will reward you openly." It is interesting that Jesus refers to the Father who "sees" in secret. I have often wondered why Jesus said this instead of the Father who "hears" in secret. The truth is that God sees the heart. He knows our motivations. He sees our sins. If we are going to have a vivid encounter with Him, then we must come clean with our sins and our impure motives. If we desire to meet with Him and have Him answer our prayers, we must strive to have a pure heart before Him.
- *Approach your quiet times with God with anticipation.* Jesus promises that God will hear and respond as we seek Him. God will meet with you. He will listen to you. He will speak to you. Approach your time with Him in confidence and great anticipation.

Invigorating Your Quiet Time

Whether you are just beginning to develop your quiet time or if you have been doing this for years, you must strive for variety. Just as in any good relationship, our time with God needs change. You will have occasion for developing different ways of meeting with God. You will need to come up with activities that will enliven your time with Him.

The following are some suggestions on how you can invigorate your quiet time. They are offered to stimulate your thinking about your quiet time and how you can add variety to it. You can use these suggestions or develop your own from it. The key is to add variety to your unique quiet time. This will guard you against simply going through the motions of the quiet time. And it can help you strengthen and invigorate your time with God. However don't feel constant pressure to innovate. Perpetually experimenting and never establishing solid habits will only leave you tired. But do allow yourself some room for variety in your quiet time.