



QUIET TIME GUIDELINES*

*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law . . .
Hear my prayer, O God; listen to the words of my mouth.
Psalm 119:18; 54:2*

Here is a simple truth about spiritual vitality: There must be awareness of our *deep desire* for God. Even when we forget about this innate desire for God, it exists deep within us as the ultimate true need. To be awakened to this desire is the beginning point of a breakthrough for our daily solitude with God that can transform us. With this in mind, let us give heed to these spiritual writers so that their thirst-provoking words can sink into the depth of our souls and stir up a new and fresh desire within us for deeper intimacy with God. Let us restore our thirst for God, realizing that our souls—even when we don't know it—longs to be intimate with God.

❖ **Restoring Our Thirst for God**

In the midst of this great chill there are some, I rejoice to acknowledge who will not be content with shallow logic. They will admit the force of the argument, and then turn away with tears to hunt some lonely place to pray, "O God, show me Thy glory." They want to taste, to touch with their hearts, to see with their eyes the wonder that is God. I want deliberately to encourage this mighty longing after God. The lack of it has brought us to our present low estate. The stiff and wooden quality about our religious lives is a result of our lack of holy desire. Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth. Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted. Too bad that with many of us, He waits so long, so very long in vain.

A. W. Tozer (The Pursuit of God, p. 17)

I ought to pray before seeing anyone. Often when I sleep long, or meet with others early, it is eleven or twelve o'clock before I begin secret prayer. This is a wretched system. It is unscriptural. Christ arose before day and went into a solitary place. David says: "Early will I seek Thee"; "Thou shalt early hear my voice." Family prayer loses much of its power and sweetness, and I can do no good to those who come to seek from me. My conscience feels guilty, my soul unfed, my lamp not trimmed. Then, when in secret prayer, the soul is often out of tune. I feel it is far better to begin with God—to see His face first—to get my soul near Him before it is near another.

Robert Murray McCheyne (Power through Prayer, E. M. Bounds, p. 32)

I want to cultivate my relationship with God. I want all of life to be intimate—sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously—with the God who made, directs, and loves me... I don't want to live as a parasite on the first-hand spiritual life of others, but to be personally involved with all my senses, tasting and seeing that the Lord is good... Usually for that to happen there must be a deliberate withdrawal from the noise of the day, a disciplined detachment from the insatiable self.

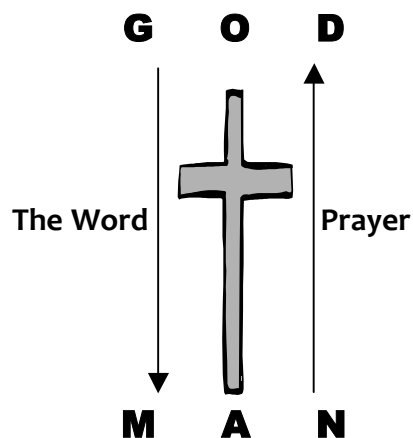
Eugene H. Peterson (The Contemplative Pastor, pp. 19-20)

* For more information and helpful materials/seminars for Quiet Time, please contact Pastor Paul Kim at paul.kim@crosswayoc.org.

❖ Developing a Proper Perspective of Quiet Time

1. What Is "Quiet Time"?

- 1) It is **NOT**:
 - merely being alone, but being alone *with God*.
 - a project time, but a relational space.
 - a "pit-stop" of self-improvement, but a "furnace" of transformation.
 - isolation with inner emptiness, but solitude with inner fulfillment.
- 2) It is a **daily solitude with God**—it is "a time set-aside with God alone to fellowship with him through the Word and prayer."



- 3) **Following Jesus' Example** [Mark 1:35]: Make Quiet Time your...
 - **Ultimate Priority** in daily life: *"Very early the morning..."*
 - **Deliberate Withdrawal** from all distractions: *"Jesus got up... and went off to a solitary place ..."*
 - **Relational Time with God**—not a project or thing to do: *"...he prayed."*
- 4) **Three Key Benefits** of daily Quiet Time [Matt 1:36-39]
 - **Clear Direction** (vs. directionless life): *"Let us go somewhere else..."*
 - **Firm Conviction** (vs. pleasing people): *"...that is why I have come..."*
 - **Spirit-Dependence** (vs. self-reliance): *"...preaching and driving out demons."*

❖ Developing a Meaningful Quiet Time

In order to develop a meaningful and consistent Quiet Time, three things are essential: (1) *Readiness*, (2) *A Right Approach*, and (3) *A Procedure That Involves Two People*.

1. **Readiness**—through 4Ds.

In order to have a consistent meaningful Quiet Time, you need to solidify your commitment for 4Ds (desire, decision, determination, & discipline). Assess yourself on the continuums below using an "X" to mark and create action points accordingly:

- **DESIRE**

← I know I need to have desire for a daily QT, but I am not convinced of it fully yet. I have increasing desire for a daily QT in my life, and I am excited about it →

- **DECISION**

← I haven't made any plans about my QT as of now I have already made decisions on all four things for my QT. →

* **FOUR THINGS to Decide:**

- 1) **Time:** Decide on a fixed time and duration (mental prime time).
- 2) **Place:** Choose a quiet, solitary place.
- 3) **Reading Schedule:** Have a pre-assigned schedule which is not too much for one day's meditation (i.e., 10-15 verses).
- 4) **Starting Date:** Decide on when you will start your Quiet Time plan. Prepare a notebook (QT journal) prior to this starting date.

- **DETERMINATION**

← Frankly, I have never considered the sacrifices that I need to make for a consistent QT. I have counted all necessary sacrifices and I am very determined about my QT. →

- **DISCIPLINE**

← I am struggling much about disciplining myself for QT. I am learning to effectively discipline myself to have a consistent QT. →

2. **A Right Approach**—as you begin your Quiet Time

- Let your first conscious thought on waking (or as your Appointment with God is near) be of your Savior whom you are rising to meet. He is waiting for you.
- Bring back your thoughts again and again to the fact that you are not alone; the two of you are sharing the room and the Bible. He is there!
- Don't do all the talking. Listening is the first thing and the most important part of your Quiet Time. There should be stillness and expectancy (Psalm 46:10).
- The time must not be hurried (Isaiah 30:15). If there is not much time available, don't attempt to crowd in too much. Be quiet. Concentrate. Expect. Don't hurry.
- Never underestimate the benefit of the fixed time—at the same hour every day.

3. **A Procedure That Involves Two People**—YOU and GOD!

1) **Pray** and invite Him.

"Lord, thank you for your love and care for me. I've come now to be with you alone because I need you. Open my eyes, that I may see the wondrous things in your Word. Make my heart responsive, that I may be in your presence. Speak to me, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen. "

2) **Read** the passage and listen to Him.

After the first reading of the day's passage, title the passage to summarize the essential content in your own words.

3) **Meditate** on the passage and jot down what you learn.

- As you read the passage more carefully and slowly the second time, meditate on the passage by asking relevant questions. Two main questions are:
 - **"What is God like?"**
What can you learn about God, his character, or how he works? How should you respond to this thought about God? Look also for indirect expressions and explanations about God, Jesus, and Holy Spirit.
 - **"What lesson(s) is God teaching me?"**
Ask yourself **SPACE** questions: Is there any...
 - ✓ **S**in to avoid?
 - ✓ **P**romise to claim?
 - ✓ **A**ttitude to change?
 - ✓ **C**ommand to obey?
 - ✓ **E**xample to follow?
- Simplify your writing. Meditation is the key; writing just facilitates your thoughts. Don't write too much.
- After each lesson or thought about God, personalize it to you. (e.g., "Am I like this?"; "I need to apply this in my family life."; "Lord, teach me this.")
- To meditate means to chew on the verses over and over, *"calling to mind, and thinking over, and dwelling on, and applying to yourself with the passage!"* (J.I. Packer). How? By asking yourself questions about the passage, such as who, what, where, how, why, etc. Ask God questions. Remember? He's there with you. He wants to speak to you with the passage. Ask him and listen intently.

4) **Apply** into your life.

- From the personalized sentences, draw two or three applications for you to take action using the principles of **3 P's**:
 - ✓ **P**ersonal [receptive & obedient]
 - ✓ **P**ractical [specific & tangible]
 - ✓ **P**ossible [realistic, today or this week]
- One reason that you are having difficulty with practical applications is that either you don't write down your QT at all or you don't ask enough questions to personalize the lessons.
- Don't be legalistic or a perfectionist about jotting things down. Sometimes it could be just you and your Bible in your backyard, at a beach, or a nearby park.

5) **Respond to Him through Prayer.**

- God has spoken to your heart. Now it's your turn to respond to what He has said. Don't rush your prayer.
- Avoid formality. Use your most natural words.
- Remember that praying involves concentration. Don't expect your emotion to lead you through prayer. Concentrate and thoughtfully verbalize your response to Him. First, respond to what you heard from the passage:
 - **Adoration:** praise Him with the new thoughts you learned.
 - **Confession:** Tell Him your sins, decisions, realizations and application.
 - **Thanksgiving:** Thank Him for His promises, lessons, blessings, and answered prayers.
 - **Supplication:** Pray for yourself and for others who need your prayer.
- God honors your willful decision, not your emotion. Your feelings come and go; they change all the time. Do not depend on feelings. When you wander in your thoughts, don't be too self-conscious; but rather, focus your attention on God who is listening to your prayer.

A Suggested Format

Romans 12:1-8

06.01.12 (F)

"Title Today's Passage in Your Own Words"

Content:

- v. x Write what you learn about "what God is like."
-Personalize your response.
- v. x OR "what lesson God is teaching you" [SPACE]
-Personalize your response.
- vv. x-x Write in a succinct, direct way.

Application:

1. No more than 2-3 applications.
2. Think 3P's: Personal, Practical, & Possible
3. Arrive at concrete applications for today/this week.

Prayers:

1. For yourself (for example):
 - 1) Discipline in my daily QT in the next 3 months
 - 2) Wisdom in parenting/disciplining
2. For others (for example):
 - 1) Stacy's job
 - 2) Mom's health
 - 3) John's salvation

❖ *Overcoming Difficulties of Quiet Time*

1. Difficulties with Decision/Determination

Ask yourself questions like these:

- 1) Is it really important to me?
- 2) What benefits will it bring for me?
- 3) What cost or sacrifices must I face?
- 4) Do I have a basic plan? [i.e., *Time, Place, Reading Plan, Starting Date, & QT Partner*]
- 5) Have I experienced the victory in my devotional life? If not, why not? What must be changed to experience victory this time? Do I *want* to have Quiet Time every day?

2. Difficulties with Discipline

1) *On Waking Up*

- Go to bed on time.
- Pray the night before about getting up in the morning.
- Apply the "momentary act of the will"--the battle is lost or won during the few seconds which elapse between waking and a purposeful movement of hand or foot.
- Get wide-awake before starting your QT.
- Remove all distracting things from your desk, including music and telephone.

2) *If Your QT is at Daytime or Night*

- Make sure the "fixed time" is blocked out from all possible disturbances or unexpected visits.
- Ask for help from your family members or roommate(s)--i.e. not to disturb, to take phone messages, etc.
- Make sure the fixed time is your mental "prime time" not leftover garbage time.

3) *If You Miss a Day*

- Do not regard QT as a mechanical connection with God's blessing. Go on without a legalistic attitude. (WARNING: Any legalistic attitude can cause you to feel like quitting!) Next day, simply read the missed passage once just for the continuity with the day's QT passage.
- However, bring back your thoughts on your decision to have your QT *EVERY DAY*. Otherwise, you can easily get off track and sit with no QT for months.

❖ *My Commitment/Re-Commitment*

With God's help, I will ARRANGE my life AROUND my Quiet Time so that I can have a consistent, meaningful time alone with God daily.

Signature: _____ **Starting Date:** _____

❖ Time: _____ ❖ Place: _____

❖ Reading Plan: *CrossWay QT List* ❖ Accountability Partner: _____