

The Importance of a Regular Quiet Time

(High School graduates)

Michael R. Daily, September 2016

Other youth bible studies by Michael Daily available at: <http://gciweb.org/2011/04/youth-bible-study-materials-michael-r-daily/>

Draw a tree with fruit next to a stream, on the board.

Psalm 1:1-3

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.

Meditate means to think about what you have read and look at it from all different angles to figure out what it means, how it applies to real life, and how it ties in with other things the Bible teaches. The word “meditate” comes from a word that describes how cows chew their food. They chew on it then swallow it. After some time they spit it up into their mouths and chew on it some more. They do this a number of times. This is how God wants us to chew on his Word.

The person who meditates on God’s Word day and night becomes a person who remains spiritually healthy and able to bear fruit regardless of the circumstances around him. God’s Word is like a stream of water that keep us bearing fruit during times of drought and heat. In addition, meditating on God’s Word brings success in many areas of life.

Matthew 6:32-33

For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Put God first in the priorities of your life and He will give you things that non-believers spend the focus of their lives seeking. Its counterintuitive.

Jeremiah 17:5-8

Thus says the LORD, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind And makes flesh his strength, And whose heart turns away from the LORD. ⁶ “For he will be like a bush in the desert And will not see when prosperity comes, But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, A land of salt without inhabitant. ⁷ “Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD And whose trust is the LORD. ⁸ “For he will be like a tree planted by the water, That extends its roots by a stream And will not fear when the heat comes; But its leaves will be green, And it will not be anxious in a year of drought Nor cease to yield fruit.

Once you graduate from high school and leave home you can go the rest of your life without ever opening a Bible – and no one will say anything to you. No one is going to make you spend time in God’s Word much less meditate on it. This is something you will have to decide to do or not by faith. But I can promise you that if you do it, God will bless you and give things to you He doesn’t give to others, because you are His friend.

Psalm 5:3

In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.

Morning is the best time to meet with God for most people, but whatever time of the day works best for you is OK. For example, if I read the Bible right before bed I have found that the problems of the day come off my mind and instead I go to sleep thinking about what God has said. Guess what? I sleep better!

Hebrews 4:16

Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

James 4:8

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Proverbs 16:20

He who gives attention to the word will find good, And blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.

John 8:31

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;

I Peter 2:2

like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

Analogies to Quiet Time You May Find Helpful

Our quiet time is a time of prayer and listening to God through the Bible. It is the key to becoming trees firmly planted by streams of water. We would like to set a goal of everyday so that we can mediate on God's Word everyday. But for some people that can feel legalistic.

Perhaps an analogy or two may help. Some people describe daily quiet time as being similar to brushing your teeth. We do it regularly to stay in good health. You can skip a day here and there but why would you want to? If you skip too many days it starts to affect your health.

Another analogy that I like is that it is similar to an athlete training for the Olympics. The passage below describes a special eternal reward called the Imperishable Wreath (one of the 5 crowns) God will give those Christians at the Judgment who were faithful in one or more disciplines of the Christian life (others are prayer, bible study, scripture memory – think of them as different "events" you can "medal" in).

I Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. ²⁵ Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; ²⁷ but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

If the athlete misses a day here and there, it is not going to make any difference. But if we are missing more days than we are doing, the Olympic athlete is not going to win the race. So, think of the quiet time as a daily goal, but as long as you are doing it more often than not, you will be OK!

Imagine you are on a road trip driving across the country in your car on the highway. Does it really matter that much if you are going 65 miles/hour, 55 miles/hour, or 50 miles/hour? Not really. You are still going to get to your destination. But what if your travel speed was ZERO miles/hour? That's a problem.

When it comes to the disciplines of the Christian life (like quiet time), God rarely tells us how many times to do it. But what He does say is the number can't be zero! So, ask God what makes the most sense for you and Him to do together when it comes to quiet time, in terms of what you could sustain over the long run. How often should you meet with Him? If you can do 4 times a week that's not bad. If your quiet times are 5 minutes long that's OK. That still works. As the years go by you may find that you enjoy having longer quiet times with Him but that will be your choice – no one will be making you do it. Just keep the wheels on that car turning and you'll be OK.

Mechanics of Quiet Time

The best time to do a quiet time for most people is in the morning or perhaps at lunch. Determine a place and time that are consistently quiet that you can use. For me, I usually do my quiet time in my car at a park on a USAF base. This works best for me because the time it takes to enter the base gate varies by up to 20 minutes. Once I am through the gate the time from the park to my office is less than 5 minutes. If I am short on time on a particular day I do my quiet time during lunch in my car at the same park. On weekends I can do it at home. If you are a college student you may be able to use the college library or other designated study areas on campus. Be sure to have your Bible, your notebook with pre-printed quiet time sheets in it, a pen, and your quiet time workbook by Rev. John S. Mahon ("Lord, Teach Us To Pray", WestBowPress, 2015). The relationship you build with God through your quiet times will be what makes the difference in being a tree that stays fruitful during drought and a shrub that withers when the heat comes.

What if I don't understand what it means?

One of the things that will sometimes happen during our quiet time is God will emphasize or point out something to us but it will be something we don't understand. In those instances what is the application? In these cases the application is to find another Christian during the week and ask them about it. Just tell them you were having your quiet time in chapter so and so of the Bible and came across a passage that said such and such but you were not sure what it meant and ask them what they think it means. Most Christians will be glad to discuss these things with you.

Fellowship With Other Christians

Having a regular quiet time not only deepens your relationship with God but it is also critical to helping you have fellowship with other Christians. If you are not having quiet times with God then when you come to Bible study with others you may not get as much out of it. You may find yourself struggling with what is being taught in your class or by your pastor because the ideas and concepts seem new or foreign to you. You may wonder, "Does the Bible really say that? Is that really what God thinks about that topic?" Instead of learning and growing you find yourself confused and struggling while the class moves on. If you have been having a regular quiet time, God will often teach you things in your quiet time before your pastor or class studies them. Then, when your class studies the topic, you will already have learned the same ideas from God previously. Instead of struggling, you will be encouraged because you will see that God has taught others the same thing he taught you. You will say, "I thought that is what God meant when He showed it to me during my quiet time but I wasn't sure. Now I see that God is teaching others this same thing so now I feel strengthened in believing it. I also see that God can teach me directly from His Word." Instead of struggling and not believing, your belief becomes a conviction.

Quiet Time is the Foundation for Bible Study, Prayer, and Scripture Memory

Being able to study the Bible on your own is important for your own spiritual growth as well as enabling you to prepare and teach bible lessons for others. But here's the problem. You can't do in-depth self-study unless you have been doing regular quiet times! God calls to your mind what you have been learning in your quiet times to guide your word and verse searches when doing in-depth self-study.

Hebrews 5:12-14

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.¹³ For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

God always answers prayers that are according to His will. The Bible reveals God's will. Therefore, the more familiar we are with the scriptures the more we will know how to pray in His will. Regular quiet times give us the opportunity to pray according to the scriptures that God is going over with us each day. As a result, our prayers are more effective and our faith in God's willingness to answer prayer increases.

During our quiet times we will often find verses that we want to memorize for our own encouragement or for use when helping others. Scripture memory sharpens our understanding of the meaning of verses and protects us from blurring the meaning that God put in the words of the verses.

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *The Importance of a Daily Quiet Time*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Psalm 1:1-3*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

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PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *I Peter 2:2*

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