

QUALITIES OF A QUALITY QUIET TIME

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
– 2 Timothy 3:16-17

GETTING STARTED

As you get started, think through these essentials:

1. TIME – *When will I devote time to the Word & prayer?*
2. PLACE – *Where will I do this in a distraction-free environment?*
3. PLAN – *How will I use my time? How will I study?*
 - Book-a-month
 - Chapter-a-day
 - Through the Bible
 - Study Guide
4. TOOLS – *What do I need to have a quality quiet time?*
 - Bible + ESV Study Bible
 - Journal
 - Pen, pencils, highlighters
 - Optional: Online Bible Tools, Commentaries, Bible Handbook

OBSERVATION: What does the Word say?

PRAY: “Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.” (Psalm 119:18)

READ THE TEXT. Begin with reading the whole chapter to get an idea of the content, context, and flow. Then, go back to study a paragraph at a time, including each verse and word in the paragraph.

READ ALOUD, but quietly, for focus and continuity.

AVOID using additional Bible study tools initially; do not cut corners in this step of self-discovery.

DISCERN the context – Who? What? Where?

IDENTIFY:

- Key Words – *significant, repeated, emphasized*
- Expressions of Time – *then, after, until, when*
- Prepositional Phrases – *in, on, upon, through, to*
- Cause & Effect Statements – *if, because, since*
- Comparisons & Contrasts – *like, as, such as, but, however, nevertheless, similes, metaphors*
- Results – *therefore, so that, for this reason*
- Commands – *clear action statements*

MARK UP THE PASSAGE: Write in your Bible. Circle, underline, and highlight. Write in margins. Your Bible is a personal journal. Here are some ways to use color:

- Blue – *God, who He is, His character*
- Red – *Christ, gospel, salvation*
- Green – *God’s promises*
- Yellow – *commands*
- Black – *anything else*

IDENTIFY a key verse to memorize in each chapter.

NOTE what is unclear and needs further explanation in the step of interpretation.

INTERPRETATION: What does the Word mean?

REFER to an ESV Study Bible for additional study notes, insights, historical background, and more.

USE ONLINE RESOURCES to assist in your personal study: esvbible.org, YouVersion.com, BibleGateway.com.

RESEARCH THE CONTEXT:

- Who... *is the author? the audience? being discussed? accomplishing the action?*
- When... *did the events take place? will it happen?*
- Where... *is the author? the action taking place?*
- What... *is the main theme? meaning of key words? significance of a phrase?*
- Why... *did God choose each word? give a specific command? connect these ideas?*

IDENTIFY THE GENRE – historical, poetic, prophetic, parable, epistle.

CHECK cross-references to see how the passage or a word relates to other verses.

COMPARE TRANSLATIONS. Refer to NIV, NASB, NKJV, HCSB to see what is similar, different, or clarified.

DEFINE key words.

CONFIRM OR CORRECT your personal observations with additional, trusted sources such as a Study Bible.

DISCUSS insights and questions with others.

APPLICATION: What will I do with the Word?

ASK God to SPEAK to you. Are there:

- Sins to confess?
- Promises to claim?
- Examples to follow?
- Actions to obey?
- Knowledge to grow in?

Most passages have one or more of these applications.

KNOW. BE. DO.: Consider specific application in three statements “I understand... I am... I will...”

EMBRACE what God’s Word says is true about your identity.

WRITE OUT at least one specific application in your journal or on an index card.

PRACTICE the specific application in:

- your life contexts (home, work, community, church)
- your life relationships (spouse, children, extended family, friendships, coworkers).

SHARE God’s truth with someone for their encouragement or growth.

MEDITATION: How will the Word dwell in me?

RENEW your mind with God’s Word.

REVIEW the passage over and over for increased comprehension and longer retention.

PRAY through the passage by personalizing the text back to the Lord.

RECITE key verse(s) from memory, from each chapter.

JOURNAL application, handwritten verses, jot down notes from the text.

PONDER a phrase, a verse, a paragraph.

LISTEN to the Spirit as you read the Word.

DO NOT RUSH this final step of studying God’s Word.

PRAYER Talking with God

Fellowship with God involves both hearing God speak through His Word and speaking to God through prayer.

PRAYER ON YOUR KNEES: at a specific time

On your knees. Out loud. Fervent. With a list. Bible open. See Mark 1:35.

- PRAISE God for who He is (adoration) and what He has done (thanksgiving).
- REPENT by confessing past sin and asking for power to turn from future sin.
- ASK God for needs for self (petition) and for others (intercession).
- YIELD to apply God’s Word in your life today.

PRAYER ON THE GO: at all times

In temptation, anxiety, disappointment, and doubt; when in need of extra grace, forbearance, and wisdom. Pray in worship and thanksgiving. Pray in conversations with others, in your small group and in your car. Pray while exercising or doing dishes. Pray in all circumstances. See 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

A quality prayer life is not “either/or” but “both/and” – being disciplined in prayer and dependent in prayer; praying at a consistent time and at all times.

SAMPLE PRAYER LIST

EVERYDAY	Praise, Repent, Ask, Yield Personal holiness (specific areas) Responsibilities for that day Spouse and children – each by name
SUNDAY	Worship Services Pastors – preaching, leading, family Students
MONDAY	Parents / Grandparents Small Group Member(s): _____ Glorifying – the Lord in all areas of life Others: financial needs – provision, faith Small Groups
TUESDAY	Siblings, Nieces/Nephews Small Group Member(s): _____ Growing – in the Lord & Christ-likeness Others: health – healing, peace, trust Biblical Soul Care
WEDNESDAY	Church Leaders Small Group Member(s): _____ Grateful – a spirit of thankfulness for all Others: marriages – love, commitment Kids & Awana
THURSDAY	Government Leaders – local, nat'l, global Small Group Member(s): _____ Gracious – in words & actions with others Others: parents – wisdom, perseverance Compassion & Outreach
FRIDAY	Coworkers Small Group Member(s): _____ Generous – with time, abilities, finances Others: spiritually lost – turn from sin & embrace Christ by faith for forgiveness Welcome Ministries
SATURDAY	Neighbors Small Group Member(s): _____ Bold witness for Christ Others: serving the Lord around the globe Worship Ministry

Note: In addition to this weekly list, keep a journal of things you are currently praying for and how God answers prayer.

PRAYING GOD'S WORD

WHY PRAY GOD'S WORD?

1. REMIND me of God's promises.
2. RENEW my mind.
3. HELP me to pray God's will.
4. FOCUS me on God's truth.
5. DEEPEN my prayer life.

INCLUDE GOD'S WORD IN PRAYER

When God's Word is dwelling in you, it will come out in your prayer life as you pray for yourself and others. A benefit to memorizing God's Word is a deeper prayer life by recalling and incorporating God's Word in your prayers. And when you pray truths from God's Word, you align your prayers with God's will.

PRAY PRAYERS FROM THE BIBLE

Repeat a prayer from the Bible word-for-word – including the Lord's Prayer:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."
– Matthew 6:9-13

Pray a prayer from the Psalms:

- Praise – 18, 21, 32, 36, 40, 41, 66, 106, 135, 138
- Confession – 38, 51, 102, 130, 143
- Guidance – 25:4-5; 31:3
- Protection – 17:8
- Encouragement – 86:4-5
- Self-Examination – 139:23-24

Pray one of Paul's prayers: Ephesians 1:15-23, 3:14-21; Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:9-14, 1 Thessalonians 1:11-12; 2:13-17.

Intercede for others using a biblical prayer:

"Dear Heavenly Father, I pray for _____ today. Fill _____ with the knowledge of your will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. I pray that _____ will walk in a manner worthy of you. May _____ please you today – bearing fruit in every good work. Increase _____ knowledge of you. Strengthen _____ with all power, according to your glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy. I give thanks to you, Father, for qualifying _____ to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. Thank you for delivering _____ from the domain of darkness and transferring _____ to the kingdom of your beloved Son. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen."

from Colossians 1:9-14

PRAY THROUGH PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE

Take a passage and personalize it in a prayer to God. Read a line of Scripture then reflect the concepts in first-person language back to God in written or spoken form. This method of prayer isn't limited to prayer passages. Most passages can be personalized in prayer.

KEY SCRIPTURES ABOUT PRAYER

Routinely include these truths about prayer in your prayers – Jeremiah 33:3; Matthew 7:7-11, Philippians 4:6-7, Hebrews 4:16, James 1:5-8, 1 John 5:14-15

MEMORIZING GOD'S WORD

5 TIPS FOR MEMORIZING GOD'S WORD:

1. HANDWRITE the Scripture on an index card.
2. READ IT ALOUD seven times a day for a week.
3. DWELL on it. Think about it. Let it renew your mind.
4. SHARE it with someone else – your Small Group, your spouse, a friend.
5. REVIEW it three times a year and you will have it for life.

50 ESSENTIAL VERSES TO MEMORIZE:

GOSPEL: Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 6:23, Romans 10:9, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 John 5:13

BIBLE: Joshua 1:8, Psalm 119:9-11, Jeremiah 15:16, Colossians 3:16, 2 Timothy 2:15, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12

PRAYER: Jeremiah 33:3, Matthew 7:7-11, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 John 5:14-15

DISCIPLESHIP: Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Timothy 2:2, Hebrews 10:24-25

GOD'S PROMISES: 2 Peter 1:3-4, Deuteronomy 31:8, Proverbs 3:5-6, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Isaiah 54:17

COMFORT: Psalm 27:13-14, Psalm 46:1, Isaiah 41:10, Romans 8:38-39, Romans 15:13, 2 Corinthians 4:16-17

CHRISTIAN LIVING: John 13:34-35, John 15:4-5, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, 1 Peter 4:10, 1 John 1:9

MARRIAGE: Genesis 2:24, Ephesians 4:32, Ephesians 5:33, Hebrews 13:4

UNCOMMON COMMUNITY (One Another's): 1 John 4:7-8, Ephesians 4:32, Galatians 5:13, 1 Peter 5:5, Philippians 1:3-6, Romans 12:4-5

After you have memorized these 50 verses, then seek to memorize more verses – including paragraphs, whole chapters, and even whole books of the Bible.

*I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you.*

– Psalm 119:11