

Thoughts on the Quiet Time

THOUGHTS ON THE “QUIET TIME”

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“QUIET TIME” (QT), aka “Daily Devotional,” describes the spiritual discipline of a daily time set aside for communion with God, listening to Him (His Word) and speaking with Him (Prayer). While the phrase “quiet time” is not found in Scripture, the concept of men communing with God is found repeatedly. Even after the first Adam’s sin, we see God continuing to pursue their relationship, calling out to Adam “Where are you?” (Ge 3:9-[note](#)) Mark records that “In the early morning, while it was still dark, (Jesus, the “Last Adam” 1Cor 15:45-[note](#)) arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and was praying there.” (Mk 1:35-[note](#)) clearly demonstrating His dependence on and need for communion with His Father (E.g., Jesus declared “I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.” Jn 8:28-[note](#), Jn 5:19-[note](#), Jn 5:30-[note](#)) If Jesus, our Example of the perfect Man (1Pe 2:21-[note](#), 1Cor 11:1-[note](#), 1Jn 2:6-[note](#)) perceived the need to meet with His Father, how much more do we as followers of Jesus need to meet regularly with the Father!

Scripture and church history repeatedly attests to the fact that those used greatly by God were those who met regularly with God. In Ge 19:27-[note](#) “Abraham arose early and went to the place where he had stood in the presence of the LORD.” In Ex 33:11-[note](#) “the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend.” The biographer of [Dwight L. Moody](#), one of history’s greatest evangelists records that “He was an early riser. He generally rose about daybreak in summer, devoting the early hours to Bible study and communion with God. He used to say that one who followed this plan could not get more than twenty-four hours away from God!” (The Life of D. L. Moody by A P Fitt) One of the greatest British preachers [G. Campbell Morgan](#) “was a man who coveted for himself a constant withdrawal from the pressing demands of his busy life and kept inviolate the sanctity of the early morning vigil of prayer and meditation. Here he breathed the atmosphere of heaven and daily recharged his spirit with the power that in turn poured out in extravagant measure in the preaching and proclamation of the Word.” (A Man of the Word by Jill Morgan) [George Müller of Bristol](#), the Christian philanthropist who was famous for his orphanages *funded* by prayer (he never ask men for money, only God!), was having health problems for which doctors prescribed more sleep, but the later he slept, the worse his condition grew! Muller self-diagnosed his problem as less physical and more spiritual as his late sleeping had interrupted his Quiet Time. His biographer A T Pierson records that his “resumption of early rising secured long seasons of uninterrupted interviews with God, in prayer and meditation on the Scriptures before breakfast and...He found himself not worse but better physically...and, as to his spiritual life such new vitality and vigor accrued from his waiting upon God...that it continued to be the habit of his (later years)!” Of course, this story does not suggest an anemic Quiet Time will make one physically ill, but it does underscore the importance for one’s SPIRITUAL health!

Christian author Patrick Morley adds that “Whenever a man tells me that he doesn’t feel very close to God, the first question I ask is, “Tell me about your devotional life (QT).” Often the problem is just there.” Indeed, for many the prospect of a regular QT is viewed more as drudgery than as delight, more as a ritual or routine than as a relationship. Henry Blackaby encourages us “not to think of the time you spend with God as a duty. The purpose of a QT is for you to get to know God. And as you come to know Him, you can walk out of your special times with God enjoying a living relationship with Him that you can cultivate all day and throughout your life.” When we meet Christ at the Cross, we call that conversion. When we meet Him “in the closet” (QT), we call that conversation. At the Cross we come to know Christ initially, and in the closet we grow to know Him intimately (cp 2Pe 3:18-[note](#)). Indeed, to be much like Christ, we must be much with Christ!

In the classic book [“My Heart Christ’s Home”](#) Robert Munger writes “I remember one morning when I was in a hurry, rushing downstairs, eager to be on my way. As I passed the living room, the door was open. Looking in, I saw a fire in the fireplace and Jesus was sitting there. Suddenly in dismay I thought to myself, “He was my guest. I invited Him into my heart! He has come as Lord of my home. And yet here I am neglecting Him.” I turned and went in. With downcast glance, I said, “Blessed Master, forgive me. Have You been here all these mornings?” “Yes,” He said, “I told you I would be here every morning to meet with you.” Then I was even more ashamed. He had been faithful in spite of my faithfulness. I asked His forgiveness and He readily forgave me as He does when we are truly repentant. “The trouble with you is this: you have been thinking of the quiet time, of the Bible study and prayer time, as a factor in your own spiritual progress, but you have forgotten that this hour means something to me also. Remember, I love you. I have redeemed you at great cost. I value your fellowship. Now,” He said, “do not neglect this hour if only for my sake. Whatever else may be your desire, remember I want your fellowship!” The truth that Christ desires my companionship, that He loves me, wants me to be with Him, wants to be with me and waits for me, has done more to transform my quiet time with God than any

other single fact. Don't let Christ wait alone in the living room of your heart, but every day find some time when, with your Bible and in prayer, you may be together with Him."

IS YOUR QUIET TIME TOO QUIET? The most common reason given for not having a regular QT is "Not enough time!" Beloved, if you are too busy for a QT, then you are too busy! As Charles Hummel said "Adequate time for daily waiting on God (cp [Isaiah 40:31-note](#)) is the only way I can escape the tyranny of the urgent." Jesus, addressing His disciples gave a good description of QT saying "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place & rest a little." (Mk 6:31KJV-note), to which Vance Havner quipped "Jesus knows we must come apart & rest awhile or else we may just plain come apart!" Beloved, when the Bible becomes a part of you in your morning QT, you will be less likely to come apart during the rest of your day! Attachment to Christ is the secret of detachment from the world. We are called to live in the world, but we draw our strength from outside the world. As Howard Hendricks likes to say "you are either in the Word and the Word is conforming you to the image of Jesus Christ or you are in the world and the world is squeezing you into its mold (cp [Ro 12:2Phillips-note](#), [1Pe 2:2-note](#))." In short, our time WITH GOD in the morning prepares us for our time WITH MEN during the day. [George Sweeting](#) former president of Moody Bible once said that "If we don't maintain a QT each day, it's not really because we are too busy; it's because we do not feel it is important enough. There's an old navy rule: when ships readjust their compass, they drop anchor in a QUIET SPOT (ponder that picture a moment in light of our discussion of quiet time).....Late nights kill the quiet time. Quiet time is not just a helpful idea, it is absolutely necessary to spiritual growth."

WHEN TO HAVE A QUIET TIME? Spurgeon said "In the morning is the fittest time for conversation with God. An hour in the morning is worth two in the evening. While the dew is on the grass, let grace drop upon the soul. Let us give to God the mornings of our days and the morning of our lives. Prayer should be the key of the day and the lock of the night. Devotion should be both the morning star and the evening star." David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22-note on David) said "IN THE MORNING, O LORD, You will hear my voice. IN THE MORNING I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch." (Ps 5:3-note) Baptist preacher [Robert G Lee](#) used to say "If you wake up in the morning and don't meet the devil face on, it just means you're headed in the same direction!" [Hudson Taylor](#) adds that "You don't tune up the instruments after the concert is over...(you) tune them before you start!" Job who was "blameless, upright, fearing God & turning away from evil" (Job 1:1-note) made it a continual practice of "rising up early IN THE MORNING & offering burnt offerings for each of his children." (Job 1:5-note) Puritan [Thomas Watson \(1620-1686\)](#) wrote that "The best time to converse with God is before worldly occasions stand knocking at the door to be let in: The morning is, as it were, the cream of the day, let the cream be taken off, and let God have it. Wind up thy heart towards heaven at the beginning of the day, and it will go the better all the day after. He that loses his heart in the morning in the world will hardly find it again all the day. O! Christians, let God have your morning meditations." Amen!

[Dawson Trotman](#), (founder of Navigators) actually had a morning & evening QT. His watchword in the evening was HWLW which stood for "His Word the Last Word," a reminder to himself to fall asleep meditating on God's Word. Spurgeon would have agreed for he used to say that Bible passages make soft pillows. The renowned expositor [Stephen Olford](#) once said "I want to hear the voice of God before I hear anyone else's in the MORNING, and His is the last voice I want to hear at NIGHT." Olford goes on to say that "The barometer of one's Christian life is the Quiet Time. Do you have a Quiet Time or have you let it slip? Be the man of God who takes time to be holy, speaks oft with his Lord, abides in Him only, and feeds on His Word." God grant that this may be true of each of us. Amen

BENEFIT OF QUIET TIME: Spurgeon once said that "If we are weak in communion with God we are weak everywhere." Do you find yourself seemingly unable to resist the temptations of a besetting sin (Heb 12:1-note)? Our sensitivity to sin & ability to resist temptation is directly proportional to our "nearness to God" (Ps 73:28-note). As the respected Scottish expositor [John Eadie](#) put it "power to live a new life depends upon daily communion with the living Lord (in His Living Word -Heb 4:12-note)." Have you noticed how quickly your Iphone loses its charge during the day? Now think about our spiritual life? Quiet Times are not optional if we are to have our "spiritual batteries regularly recharged", ready to meet the day's challenges! [E M Bounds](#) encourages us to spend quality time with God, for "Our ability to stay with God in our closet (QT) measures our ability to stay with God out of the closet." Vance Havner adds that "If our lives and ministry are to count for anything today, we must solemnly resolve to make time for God (QT)." It is well known that a piano can go out of tune by hard use. The constant striking of the strings may loosen them & they need to be adjusted if they are to continue producing harmonious sounds. "In like manner all common experiences have an exhausting effect upon us, even when we serve the Lord...As we minister to others, as we strive & struggle, duty drains our life-fountain. We then need to come into God's presence for spiritual renewal...In the quietness of that fellowship He tunes our lives and strengthens us for further service."

HOW TO DO A QUIET TIME: Keep it simple. Practice the Three P'S: A Place, a Pen (to write in your Bible and notebook) and Privacy. For more details see the link below. One caveat: Minimize your use of devotional resources written by others. Max Lucado says "If that is your approach, if your spiritual experiences are secondhand and not firsthand, I'd like to challenge you with this thought: Do you do that with others parts of your life? You don't do that with vacations. You don't do that with romance. You don't let someone eat on your behalf, do you? There are certain things no one can do for you. And one of those is spending time with God!" Most importantly, when you leave your "Quiet Time," don't let your "Quiet Time" leave you! In other words, as you enter the busyness

of your day, remember to take with you the truths God has spoken to your soul during your time with Him! Consciously recall specifics [passages, insights, prayers, etc] at various intervals during the day. As you begin to practice the conscious choice to reflect on your QT with God, you are more likely to find that the rest of your day becomes an ongoing experience of His presence and power. Havner said it this way "It is tragic to go through our days making Christ the subject of our study but not the sustenance of our souls.

Here's a song ([There is a Quiet Place](#)) that lacks a modern beat, but still unpacks a timeless message...

There is a QUIET PLACE

Far from the rapid pace,
Where God can soothe my troubled mind.
Sheltered by tree and flow'r,
There in my QUIET HOUR,
With Him, my cares are left behind.
Whether a garden small
Or on a mountain tall
New strength and courage there I find;
Then from this quiet place,
I go prepared to face
A new day with love for all mankind

William Wilberforce, Christian statesman of Great Britain in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, once said, "I must secure more time for private devotions. I have been living far too public for me. The shortening of private devotions starves the soul. It grows lean and faint." Following a failure in Parliament, he remarked that his problems may have been due to the fact that he spent less and less time in his private devotions in which he could earnestly seek the will of God. He concluded, "God allowed me to stumble."

Let Me Meet You

Let me meet you on the mountain, Lord,
Just once.
You wouldn't have to burn a whole bush.
Just a few smoking branches
And I would surely be ...your Moses.

Let me meet you on the water, Lord,
Just once.
It wouldn't have to be on White Rock Lake.
Just on a puddle after the annual Dallas rain
And I would surely be...your Peter.

Let me meet you on the road, Lord,
Just once.
You wouldn't have to blind me on North Central Expressway.
Just a few bright lights on the way to chapel
And I would surely be...your Paul.

Let me meet you, Lord,
Just once.
Anywhere. Anytime.
Just meeting you in the Word is so hard sometimes
Must I always be...your Thomas'

The first hour of the morning is the rudder of the day. - H. W. Beecher

Noise Affects Human Behavior

Noise affects human behavior. In one experiment carried out by psychologists, a student leaving a library intentionally dropped an armload of books. In 50% of the cases, a passerby stopped to help the student pick up the books. Then the experimenters brought out a lawn mower without a muffler and started it near where a student would again intentionally drop the books. This time, only about 10% of the people who passed stopped to help. It was clear that behavior changed because of the earsplitting sound of the nearby lawn mower. In experiments in Los Angeles, researchers found that children who lived in neighborhoods near the airport could not complete certain tasks undertaken when jets were landing and taking off as easily as children who lived in quiet neighborhoods. Some studies of prison conditions have shown that the high level of noise causes more complaints by prisoners than the food or other prison conditions do.

Get Away from Your Work

Every now and then go away, have a little relaxation, for when you come back to your work your judgment will be surer, since to remain constantly at work will cause you to lose power of judgment...Go some distance away because then the work appears smaller, and more of it can be taken in at a glance, and lack of harmony or proportion is more readily seen." These are the words of Leonardo da Vinci, and no idler he; he excelled as a painter, sculptor, poet, architect, engineer, city planner, scientist, inventor, anatomist, military genius, and philosopher.

Be Still and Cool in Thy Own Mind

"Carry some quiet around inside thee," the well-known Quaker, George Fox, used to say. "Be still and cool in thy own mind and spirit, from thy own thoughts, and then thou wilt feel the principle of God to turn thy mind to the Lord from whence cometh life; whereby thou mayest receive the strength and power to allay all storms and tempests."

I Met God in the Morning

I met God in the morning,
When my day was at its best
And His presence came like sunrise,
Like a glory in my breast.

All day long the Presence lingered;
All day long He stayed with me;
And we sailed in perfect calmness
O'er a very troubled sea.

Other ships were blown and battered,
Other ships were sore distressed,
But the winds that seemed to drive them
Brought to us a peace and rest.

Then I thought of other mornings,
With a keen remorse of mind.
When I too had loosed the moorings
With the Presence left behind.

So, I think I know the secret,
Learned from many a troubled way;
You must seek Him in the morning
If you want Him through the day.

Ralph Spaulding Cushman

Morning and Evening Prayer - I have found, in my own spiritual life, that the more rules I lay down for myself, the more sins I commit. The habit of regular morning and evening prayer is one which is indispensable to a believer's life, but the prescribing of the length of prayer, and the constrained remembrance of so many persons and subjects, may gender unto bondage, and strangle prayer rather than assist it. - Charles Spurgeon

Well Worn Path - Early African converts to Christianity were earnest and regular in private devotions. Each one reportedly had a separate spot in the thicket where he would pour out his heart to God. Over time the paths to these places became well worn. As a result, if one of these believers began to neglect prayer, it was soon apparent to the others. They would kindly remind the negligent one, "Brother, the grass grows on your path."