

Walking in Fellowship with our Father 6

Becoming a self-feeding Christian

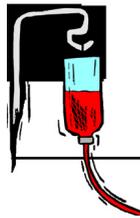
Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches... If a man remains [lives] in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. — John 15:5,6

HAVE you ever felt allergic to God?

Have you ever avoided him because you didn't feel quite holy enough? Most of us have. This is scary because Jesus said we can't spiritually thrive unless we remain connected to him like branches to a vine. Think about it: vine, branches, grapes. It's an organic link—closer than close. Separate a branch from its vine and what do you get? No life, no fruit. It's as simple as that.

That means this business of our "devotional life" is serious business. We believe it's so serious, we're going to stick our necks out and say this: Unless you and I cultivate the holy habit of spending regular time with God, to listen to him (read his Word), and talk to him (pray), we will not only not grow, we will spiritually regress. Over the top? Jesus' imperative "Abide in me... I am the vine, you are the branches; apart from me, you can do nothing" is about as clear as it gets,

If the sum total of our Christian existence is popping into church for a weekly sermonic drip administered by the pastor, we may survive, but we'll never get off life-support to mature into happy, Kingdom-builders for Jesus. Even if we are involved in ministry, if our energy is not derived from abiding in Christ, it will be flesh-driven rather than Spirit-led, and have our dirty fingerprints all over it.



Trust me. As a God-allergy expert, I am immanently qualified to help you deal with yours. For the first twenty-five years of my ministry, I struggled to have a daily "Quiet Time," but even when I was consistent, because I was hiding my heart from God, it was a sterile exercise devoid of any real benefit for either of us. (God certainly did not feel loved by me.) Looking back I can see two major problems: **First,** I was afraid. I did not understand how long and wide and high and deep his love was (and is) for me. So, I had a QT to keep him happy with me, and served him as a slave rather than a son. (The QT also kept me from embarrassment if anyone wanted to see my "QT Badge.")

Second, I was arrogant. I could get along quite fine, thank you, doing God's work relying on my superb theological education, natural talents and spiritual gifts. Dumb as it sounds, I didn't think I needed to rely on the Holy Spirit to do the supernatural work of the ministry! The difference now is incalculable. (On good days) God's love motivates me, and I consciously rely on the Spirit to do what I cannot possibly accomplish on my own.

The cartoon below shows how doing a good thing (having one's QT) can be spoiled by doing it for the wrong reason. Be sure to do the *fill in the blanks* bit. We've never had anyone fail to complete the sentence correctly!

— JWJ —

OUR DODGY NOTIONS ABOUT DAILY DEVOTIONS

UP... I FEEL "SPIRITUAL"!

"The Ladder of Human Effort"

First I invent it, then I climb it by rigorous spiritual discipline.

Fill in the blanks: I think that my efforts to read the Bible, fast, pray and attend church will keep me in favor with God. My focus is on doing my duty so that God will have to bless me. I fear that if I fail to do these things faithfully, God might get _____ at me and refuse to _____ me.



A WORD to Church leaders and parents: All good parents want their children to mature from being spoon-fed to being self-fed, and beyond that, to doing their own food shopping and even cooking. Spiritually speaking, the last thing we want to do is to so mollycoddle those under our care so that they remain dependent on *us* for spiritual nourishment. Our goal is to nurture them to be “self-feeding Christians” who maintain daily intimacy with their Father. Paul wrote: “*We proclaim Him, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature (full-grown) in Christ.*” - Col.2:10 ESV. As leaders, that is our task.

And, to ensure that their growth moves forward, we must teach them the why and how of daily fellowship with God (private worship), and, the great importance of being active members of a local congregation (public worship and mission). Both are vital, but private worship is *seminal*. We know that if our disciples and children are healthy in this area, the Holy Spirit will propel them into wholesome fellowship with other believers, and outward to reach our lost and dying world.

We will flesh out how life in the church looks in Lesson 12—“*MISSION: The Propulsion of Grace.*”

I. The **MOTIVE** for personal devotions

Good and faulty (or lesser) motives for devotions.

A. Faulty and inferior motives

Can you think of some unworthy (or lesser) motives for having a daily Quiet Time?

1. **F _ _ A R**
2. **S H _ _ M E & P R I _ _ E**
3. **P R E P _ _ R A _ _ I O N**

• **Fear -1 John 4:18,19** “*There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us.*” Some Christians are so dependent on fear as a motivation, they try to blunt the impact of 1 John 4 by quoting Psalm 111:10: “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*”

Question: Shouldn't we hold God in holy awe? Yes! But Jesus said, “*If you love me, keep my commandments.*” (Jn.14:15)

Give it a think: A friend rings up and says, “*I really don't want to meet with you today, but I will because you might be angry if I refuse.*” Is that the sort of relationship God wants with us?

Discuss: Can you love someone you fear? Can you feel safe in the presence of someone who will accept you only when you meet all their conditions?

• **Shame/pride** - We're afraid other Christians might ask about our devotions, and, if we say we don't have them, they'll think less of us. (Indeed, it could cost a minister or missionary a job offer.) But, if we can say yes, we feel we're above criticism.

• **Ministry Preparation:** If we use our QT as a study time for preparing talks or gathering information, we are learning *about* God, not spending time *with* him. We need time with him—to listen to him, to talk to him about our sins and struggles, and, to seek perspective on our life-situation and ask for power to do his work.

B. Good (higher) motives

What do you think *should* motivate us to have daily devotions?

1. **L _ _ _ E**
2. **N O U R _ _ S _ _ M _ _ N T**
3. **E D _ _ _ A _ _ I _ _ N** (a passive result)
4. **Others?**

• **Think of your “Quiet Time”** as “Face time” with your Abba Father—“Daddy Time.” We seek his face, not his goodies.

Psalm 105:4 - “*Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his face continually.*”

Psalm 27:8 - When you said, “*Seek my face,*” my heart said to you, “*Your face, O LORD, I will seek.*”

Question: What is God asking you and me to do when he says, “Seek my face?”

A Quiet Time is seeking God's face, not his goodies!

Do you think of God as “Father Christmas” who dispenses the goodies you want, or as your Father whom you delight to be near, love and serve?

Spending time in God's presence—consciously in his presence—enables us to give him what he most wants from us: our love (the first and greatest commandment). A QT is a time to *rest* in God's love for you and to love him back. **Think:** How does it make you feel when someone takes the time to shower you with focused love and attention?

• **Think of your devotions as “Sanity Restoration Time”—a “Reality Check”**

Wonderfully, devotions are a two-way street. God feels loved by us (not used), and we have our parched souls nourished. Life has a way of warping our sense of perspective. The press of the world around us obscures eternal realities. In fact, our sanity needs to be restored daily because we go round the bend nightly!

It's true. When we wake in the morning, our heart's computer boots up in "orphan mode." We stumble out of bed mad as hatters ...spiritual amnesiacs who have forgotten who God is and who we are. We must be reminded that this is God's world, that he is in control, that we are not senseless beasts but God's loved sons and daughters. We must preach the Gospel to ourselves, remind ourselves that Christ is seated at the right hand of our Father in heaven—making us sleepy-headed morons beautiful to his Father—clothing us in his righteousness. That is the purpose of our QT. It's a tool for restoring our lost sanity, a time for remembering we have a higher purpose for the day before us than mere survival.

Your QT is a hearty slap in the face to snap you back to sanity.

- **Think of your QT as "Soul Education Time"** (different from Ministry Preparation Time) Dr. Jack Miller said, *"I read the Bible every day because I forget what God said."* Some people keep lists of important topics that pop up in their daily Bible reading for future reference (We do—in the rear of our One Year Bible). So, even though ministry preparation is not a conscious goal of the QT, it will be a blessed side-effect as we will grow more conversant with the Scriptures, learn sound doctrine, and thereby have our hearts prepared to teach others.

- **Think of your Quiet Time as a "Getting ready for eternity" time.** When the last trumpet has sounded, the Last Judgment is over, when God has re-created all things and Eden has been restored, his desire will be fulfilled at last: *"Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God."* (Rev.21:3) And Jesus? What does he want? *"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. [i.e. trust me!] I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."* Living near God: that's your future so, get used to it. Many of us find the idea of intimacy with God (or anyone, for that matter) extremely disquieting. We convince ourselves that these promises are corporate, not personal. But we have a verse for you. It's Revelation 2:17 which says that Jesus, the God-man who went about changing peoples' names, will give you *"some of the hidden mana"* and *"a white stone with a new name on it"*—your secret name known only to you and he. If you fear intimacy with God, you're up against One whose love will surely conquer you. You can run, but you cannot hide.

"I read the Bible every day because I forget what God said."

- Dr. Jack Miller

II. A CASE STUDY: Samuel Johnson - the "Guy Fawkes" of Morning Devotions"—the man who tried so hard he couldn't succeed (page 6-7). If it comforts your heart to hear of the weaknesses and failures of others, prepare to have your heart greatly comforted!

Play the shrink: Having read Johnson's own words, what do you think motivated his attempts to pray and read the Bible every day?

III. ANOTHER CASE STUDY: The Psalmists

Psalms 42, 63 and 84 teach us volumes about motivation for having fellowship with God.

As we read bits of each one, let's ask ourselves why, what and how:

- **WHY** did they wanted to spend time with God (compared to Johnson and the ladder guy)?
- **WHAT** they assumed about God's willingness to meet with them.
- **HOW** does their experience compares with *your* experience of hungering and thirsting for God (We ask to make you *hungry*, not guilty.)

A. Psalm 42:1-2 Of the Sons of Korah (These descendants of Korah who led a rebellion against Moses. They are credited with writing 12 of the Psalms.) *"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"* **Why, what how?**

B. Psalm 63:1-8 A Psalm of David. *"O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night. Because you are my help, I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings. My soul clings to you; your right hand up holds me."* **Why, what how? What does this metaphor of God's "wings" mean to you?** (Jesus uses it in Matt.23:37.)

C. Psalm 84:1-4 Of The Sons of Korah. *"How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, a place near your altar, O LORD Almighty, my King and my God."*

Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you."

[**Note** the implications for *public* worship. It's not, "Awww, do I have to go to church today?" but, "When can I go and meet with God?"]

Now, lest we feel overwhelmed with despair at what we have read, realise that these Psalms are a fleeting *snapshot* of the writers' spiritual lives. **The same David** who wrote that God satisfied his soul as with the richest of foods had an adulterous affair with Bathsheba. We remember this not to give ourselves an excuse for spiritual laziness, but to balance things out.

The Christian life will be mountain tops and valleys, but mostly, it is rugged plains. Nevertheless, what these Psalmists have described is the *target* which we relentlessly pursue.

IV. YOUR TWO GREAT BATTLES: Consistency and Vitality

A. First off, the moment we resolve (sound familiar?) to have daily devotions (this will come as no surprise to anyone who has tried for even one week), we will find ourselves in the thick of it, fighting two great battles: one for **consistency**, the other for **vitality**.

1. the battle for CONSISTENCY

Virtually every book on how to have daily devotions will tell you the same thing: **First**, set a time of day. **Second**, set a place to meet with God each day. **Third**, stick to it!

Trust us. There is great wisdom in that, so, if your lifestyle permits such a regimen, by all means, *do it*.

• **Decide on a specific TIME to have your appointment with your Father.** "As soon as I get out of bed," or "when I have my morning coffee," or "after breakfast," or "when the children are down for their nap," or "just before bedtime." **Of course** morning is best. One puts on one's armour before battle, but *any* time is better than no time!
George Mueller: *How different, when the soul is refreshed and made happy early in the morning, from what it is when, without spiritual preparation, the service, the trials, and the temptations of the day come upon one!*

Note: Schedules will differ during the different phases of our lives (young mothers, empty nesters, work hours, illness, retirement, etc.) God understands that, so don't put yourself under a law you can't keep.

But, do think of your QT as an appointment with your Father, so if you must be late or miss it altogether, at least "ring him up" and let him know.

• **Decide on a PLACE to meet with your Father.** It needs to be a place as free from external distractions as you can find. You will have *internal* distractions—more than you can possibly imagine, so chose a place that will give you an edge.

• **Set a routine and stick to it.** Personally, I sit up in bed. By our bed there is a large wedge-shaped bolster pillow, ready to toss against the headboard to create a comfy place to sit upright. And there are bed pillows for the lap to support the Bible, a large book to put on the bed to steady my lidded coffee mug (don't ask how I know the importance of this), a lead mechanical pencil for notes, One Year Bible, Pocket PC with Bible software—all placed on the night stand ready for my morning appointment with God. Call it an obsession, or a holy habit, but it all works together to set my soul's expectation for the QT. Each of us will need to work at developing our own regimen, but it will be worth the effort.

The idea here is to build a holy habit that will give your life a sense of rhythm. Meeting with your Father will become woven into the fabric of your life. It is something you do because you love him and are so needy you can't live without Him. But

alas, life is messy, so, unless you're doing a custodial sentence, there will be times that your best laid scheme will go the way Robbie Burns said it would: *oft awry*.¹ But don't fret. Do the best you can. God is sovereign. Being omnipresent and always watching over you, he never slumbers or sleeps. So, he is ready to meet with you anytime, anyplace. I have been known to have my Not-So-Quiet-Time on the London Underground during morning rush using a Pocket PC Bible and listening to MP3 praise music to drown out the din. It works... sort of.

2. the battle for VITALITY

We wish we could say that if you win the battle for consistency, you're home free. **No.** The next, and much more vexing battle, is the one for vitality—for genuine intimacy with God. Here, you will be locked in a *Battle Royale* with your own sinful heart. You will struggle with your God-allergy, and, there will be times you'll realise you've been meeting with your habit rather than your Father. Don't beat yourself up over it. Repent. Ask him to forgive you; laugh at yourself and move on.

Make your QT a "holy habit," but, be sure you meet with your Father, not your habit.

¹ "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men, Gang aft agley" [go oft awry] - To a Mouse, 1785

KEY: You will not win the battle for vitality unless you know to preach the Gospel to yourself every day. Yes, every day. **The Gospel** is the foundation of your salvation, your sanctification, and your devotional life!

Give it a think: What might you say when you preach the Gospel to yourself?

Here is how Bishop Moule did it using his "Morning Act of Prayer"

I believe on the Name of the Son of God. Therefore I am in Him, having Redemption through His Blood, and Life by His Spirit. And He is in me, and all fulness is in Him. To Him I belong, by purchase, conquest, and self-surrender. To me He belongs, for all my hourly need. There is no cloud between my Lord and me. There is no difficulty, inward or outward, which He is not ready to meet in me today. The Lord is my Keeper. Amen.

Listen: The Father loves you. He wants you to meet with him. There is no ladder you must climb, no bridge you must cross. You are his beloved. Christ is your Big Brother. He died for you and is seated at your Father's Right Hand making you beautiful to your Father! And listen up. The Holy Spirit is in your heart crying out "Abba, Father!" Listen, and send that cry up to your Father. (Viz. Gal. 4:4-7; Rom.8:15).

As aids to keeping your QT fresh, you may want to experiment with different Bibles, hymnbooks, MP3 music, books of prayers, daily devotional readings, etc. We will list some of these on the resources page (6-16), but, all you really need is a **1.** Bible and **2.** a hungry heart.

V. FAITH ACTIONS: What to do when you meet with your Father: (LISTEN, TALK, REFLECT, PARTNER)

For any personal relationship to be healthy, it must be mutually satisfying. There will be give and take, talking and listening with each party alternately talking and listening so there is a genuine heart-to-heart connection.

And wonderfully, rather than you needing to invite God into your presence, God, your welcoming Father, invites you into his presence! When you meet, he will speak to you through his Word and you will listen. Then, you will speak to him and he will listen. So, the two of you commune—loved child to loved Father.

What a blessing when we sense that our hearts and minds are actually touching. That is the goal—what the old English Puritans called "**THE TRANSACTION**" [trans=across + action]. This is our aim, whether in public worship or alone in "our closet," *for our hearts to touch.*

A. LISTEN to God - Read a portion or portions of the Bible. Many have counseled me: "Be sure to pray before you begin reading and ask God to open your heart to what he would say to you." That is a great idea. I highly recommend it, sometimes do it, and wish I did more.

Start reading and listen, and (hopefully) God will start speaking to your heart, though if you happen to be in Leviticus, don't get your hopes up. If you find the Bible boring, and at times you will, then, out of a sense of need, ask the Spirit to help you! That's how I do it. Need has always been a wonderful antidote to my prayerlessness.

B. TALK to your Father. Normally, we will talk to the FATHER, through the SON with the help of the HOLY SPIRIT, though it is good and proper to address any of the persons of the Trinity.

Talk to him about what? Don't get stuck on one thing (like a senile old person) and so bore God and all the angels who are listening and waiting for something exciting to happen! Balance praise, thanksgiving and petition (asking for blessings for yourself and others). The Lord's Prayer is THE pattern Jesus gave when asked "Lord, teach us to pray," so it should be a pretty solid pattern.

Our Quiet Time is a LAUNCH PAD that sends us into partnership with God for the rest of the day!

C. REFLECT - Meditate on the Scriptures. Be sure your stance is the Word over you, not you over the Word. Let it give you a good wallop. Resist the temptation to see everybody else's sins in what you are reading: "Yes, that's her problem! That's precisely what he did! AHA! They really need to hear this!" Read and listen for yourself. Confess your sins. Name them; rest in his forgiveness; delight in his acceptance.

John said, "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."
- 1Jn.1:3 So, fellowship!

D. PARTNER - Our daily devotions are the "Launching Pad" into the remainder of our day!

Listen to Jesus' gracious invitation: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." - Matt.11:28-30

Notice how Jesus links our *resting* in him, and our being *yoked* together with him in work. **Your devotional time leads somewhere. It is the "launching pad" for the rest of your day** - a day of ministry in which everything is done in partnership with and for the glory of God. You may be in your office in the city, shopping, evangelising (whether strangers or your own children), discipling other believers, changing nappies and hovering your house, ongoing fellowship with God, your "Senior Partner" in way will help you set the tone of your day. Then, instead of running off in your own strength, you begin with him and continue walking with him through the day. The goal is to use your meeting with him to move from self-centered thinking to God-centered thinking, into the mindset of living in conscious partnership with the Father so that you go into your day relying on his limitless strength rather than your own limited resources.

Reading your Bible does not equal meeting with your Father.

Our morning devotions are about making choices that will colour our whole day. We often wake up full of fears. Our days are filled with demands on our time and energy. We demand a lot from ourselves, and others demand a lot of us. We feel we must perform up to a high standard. What to do?

We have a choice: We can live like "orphans"—a sad choice. Orphan living is a half-hearted existing. We don't really care about God or others. We just get by, play the game, serve dutifully, and squander as much time and energy as we can on ourselves. **Or, we can live like sons and daughters**, loved children who walk "in partnership" with our Father.

George Mueller (1805-1898), born in Prussia, became a pastor in Bristol and established orphanages to care for thousands of homeless children. The amounts of money required to care for so many children was staggering, but Mueller said he was only the "junior partner" in the ministry. God was the "Senior Partner." Each day, Mueller put his weak little hand in his Father's big strong hand, and each day the needs of the orphans were abundantly supplied.

Reading his biography, one is struck by the hundreds of seemingly insurmountable obstacles that plagued his ministry. Problems arose daily—in torrents. But, as the "junior partner," every problem was *God's* problem! This partnership idea was not some silly word-game with Mueller. He knew this world was under God's sovereign control and he trusted him implicitly! Mueller's faith-filled ministerial exploits made him famous, but for all the notoriety, he remained a selfless

and humble man who lived in childlike dependence on his Father. The subject of frequent praise and criticism, he wrote: **"The day came when I had to die to George Mueller and what people thought of me."**

For a fascinating study, as you read through the four Gospels, make a list of the times Jesus commends faith—or expresses disappointment at the lack of it. See: Matt. 6:30; 8:10; 8:26; 9:2; 9:22; 9:29. Jesus put a high premium faith in himself. He wants us to live and minister like Mueller—as faith-filled dependent children.

If you protest this is too hard, rest assured, living in self-dependence is harder still. The hard bit about living by faith is admitting our helplessness and getting out of God's way. It is terrible hard for us control-freaks to let go the wheel and let *God* drive, but our letting go is made infinitely easier if we are in the habit of having "face time" with our Father every day.

SUMMING UP... Our Father loves it when he is among our first conscious thoughts of the day—"Good morning, Abba. Here I am, ready for another day with you."

At some point in the day—and the earlier the better—we need to seek his face to regain our sanity. The world, the flesh and the devil will have no qualms about pressing their agenda on you, so press back! Meet with your Father, get your "marching orders," then sally forth, depending on him to lead and empower you. That is our goal. May he give us grace to press on toward it—for his greater glory and our good!

**Have you got hold of that?
Has that got hold of you?
GOOD!**



GRACE ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Read** "Daily Bread" by McCheyne (6-9)
2. **Read** Mueller on Morning Devotions (6-11)
3. **Read** "Notes on Prayer" by Miller (6-13)
4. **Resolve** (in a totally un-Johnsonian fashion) to have a daily Quiet Time

"Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation. Harken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." — **Psalm 5:1,2 KJV**

Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709–1784)

The Guy Fawkes of morning devotions

Samuel Johnson LL.D., often simply referred to as Dr. Johnson, is one of England's best known literary figures. The most quoted English writers after Shakespeare, he was a poet, essayist, biographer, lexicographer and critic of English literature.

Between 1745 and 1755, Johnson wrote his best-known work, *A Dictionary of the English Language*. In 2005, A 50p coin was minted to commemorate its 250th anniversary. Another of his notable works is *Rasselas (The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia)*, a novella penned in just one week in January 1759, the proceeds intended to defray the funeral costs of his mother. In Charlotte Bronte's *Jayne Eyre*, Helen Burns is pictured reading it.



Johnson was a genuine Christian, though this is seldom acknowledged by secular historians. He was an active churchman, and even wrote sermons. His **SELECTED PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS** (a diary/prayer journal) is a painfully honest record of his struggles against "indolence, sloth, sensual thoughts" and prayerlessness."

Johnson was a conservative Anglican, a staunch Tory and a compassionate man who supported a number of poor friends under his own roof. He was an opponent of slavery and once proposed a toast to the "next rebellion of the negroes in the West Indies." He had a black manservant, Francis Barber ("Frank"), whom Johnson made his heir.

He died in 1784 and is buried under the paved flooring in "Poets' Corner" at Westminster Abbey, along with the likes of Dickens, Tennyson, and Kipling.

SELECTED PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS

from the Diary / Prayer Journal of Samuel Johnson

On my Birthday. September 18, 1738 [We cite this as evidence of his sincere trust in Jesus Christ.]

O GOD, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Father of all mercies, I thine unworthy servant do give Thee most humble thanks, for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to me. I bless Thee for my creation, preservation, and redemption, for the knowledge of thy son Jesus Christ, for the means of grace and the hope of glory. In the days of childhood and youth, in the midst of weakness, blindness, and danger, Thou hast protected me; amidst afflictions of mind, body, and estate, Thou hast supported me; and amidst vanity and wickedness Thou hast spared me. Grant O merciful Father, that I may have a lively sense of thy mercies. Create in me a contrite heart, that I may worthily lament my sins and acknowledge my wickedness, and obtain remission and forgiveness, through the satisfaction of Jesus Christ. And, O Lord, enable me, by thy grace, to redeem the time which I have spent in sloth, vanity, and wickedness; to make use of thy gifts to the honour of thy name; to lead a new life in thy faith, fear, and love; and finally to obtain everlasting life. Grant this, Almighty Lord, for the merits and through the mediation of our most holy and blessed Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, be all honour and glory, world without end. **Amen.**

July 1755 On the 13th of the month he wrote in his Journal the following scheme of life, for Sunday:

'Having lived not without an habitual reverence for the Sabbath, yet without that attention to its religious duties which Christianity requires;

1. **To rise early**, and in order to it, to go to sleep early on Saturday.
2. **To use some extraordinary devotion in the morning.**
3. To examine the tenour of my life, and particularly the last week; and to mark my advances in religion, or recession from it.
4. **To read the Scripture methodically** with such helps as are at hand.
5. To go to church twice.
6. To read books of Divinity, either speculative or practical.
7. To instruct my family.
8. To wear off by meditation any worldly soil contracted in the week.'

NOTE: What follows may surprise you. Despite decades of resolving to rise early to pray, he failed miserably. Though he lived during The Great Awakening, arguably the most powerful out-break of spiritual renewal in history, its gracious influences seemed to have passed him by.

1729: October “*Desidia valedixi; syrenis istius cantibus surdam posthac aurem obversurus.*” “I bid farewell to Sloth, being resolved henceforth not to listen to her syren strains.” [He was quite serious about this!]

1738: (9 years later) “O Lord, enable me to redeem the time which I have spent in sloth.”

1757: (19 yrs. later) “O mighty God, enable me to shake off sloth, and redeem the time misspent in idleness and sin, by diligent application of the days yet remaining.”

1759: (2 yrs later) “Enable me to shake off idleness and sloth. To rise early.”

1760: (1 year later) Resolved (Nos. 5, 10, 11 from a list 14): 5. To rise early. 10. To oppose laziness by doing what is to be done tomorrow. 11. To rise as early as I can.

1761: (1 year later) “I have resolved and resolved until I am afraid to resolve again.”

1764: (3 years later) “My indolence since my last reception of the sacrament has sunk into grossest sluggishness. My purpose is from this time to avoid idleness and to rise early....

1764: I have now spent fifty-five years in resolving; having, from the earliest time almost that I can remember, been forming schemes of a better life. I have done nothing... O GOD, grant me to resolve aright, and to keep my resolutions, for JESUS CHRIST’S sake. Amen”

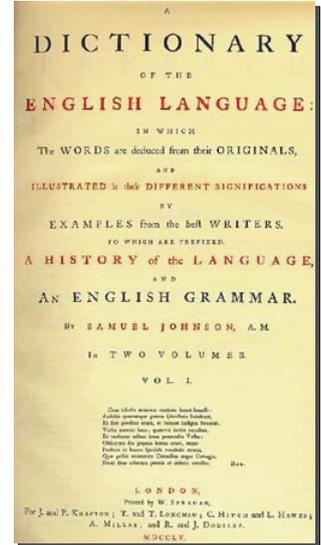
1764: (Five months later) : He resolves to rise early, “not later than 6 if I can.”

1765: (1 year later) “I purpose to rise at 8 because, though, I shall not rise early, it will be much earlier than I now rise, for I often lie until 2.”

1769: (4 years later) “I am not yet in a state to form any resolutions. I purpose and hope to rise early in the morning, by 8, and by degrees, at 6.”

1775: (6 years later) “When I look back upon resolution of improvement and amendments which have, year after year, been made and broken, why do I yet try to resolve again. I try because reformation is necessary and despair is criminal.” He resolves again to rise at 8.

1781: (5 years later - 43 years after the first entry regarding sloth and just 3 years before his death) “I will not despair. Help me, help me, O my God.” He resolves to rise at 8 or sooner to avoid idleness.



These brief glimpses into Johnson’s heart are but the tip of a much larger iceberg. Honestly, though, as we chuckle at Johnson’s impotence, we must ask ourselves, “*Really... do I fare any better? Am I that powerless?*”

QUESTION: Why do you think Johnson had so little power over his besetting sins?

Dr. C. John “Jack” Miller compared the life of Johnson with the lives of two of his great contemporaries, John and Charles Wesley. Miller suggested that the difference was that in their weakness, the Wesleys learned to look to Christ for strength. But Johnson, an intensely critical and proud man who looked down on and often berated others, was frustrated in his resolutions because he lived as a spiritual orphan. In their weakness, the Wesleys learned to live as loved sons of the Father.

To Johnson, prayer and Bible reading were religious duties—things he felt he ought, as a “good Christian,” to do. They were not matters of life and death.

The irony of ironies: Dr. Johnson was *much too strong* to really succeed with God.



James Boswell, Johnson’s biographer, was a lawyer, diarist, and author, born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1740. His association with Johnson was so close his name has passed into the English language. Thus *Boswell, Boswellian, Boswellism* are used to refer to one who is a constant companion and observer.

A case in point: Arthur Conan Doyle has Holmes introduce his chronicler, Dr. Watson as “my Boswell.”

Boswell: *Mr. Johnson, I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it.*

Johnson: *That, Sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help.*

DAILY BREAD by Roberty Murray McCheyne

Being a calendar for reading through the Word of God in a year

"Thy Word is very pure; therefore Thy servant loveth it."



MY DEAR FLOCK,

The approach of another year stirs up within me new desires for your salvation, and for the growth of those of you who are saved. "God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." What the coming year is to bring forth who can tell? There is plainly a weight lying on the spirits of all good men, and a looking for some strange work of judgment upon this land. There is a need now to ask that solemn question – "If in the land of peace wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

Those believers will stand firmest who have no dependence upon self or upon creatures, but upon Jehovah our Righteousness. We must be driven more to our Bibles, and to the mercy-seat, if we are to stand in the evil day. Then we shall be able to say, like David – "The proud have had me greatly in derision, yet have I not declined from Thy law." "They have persecuted me without a cause, but my heart standeth in awe of Thy word."

It has long been in my mind to prepare a scheme of Scripture reading, in which as many as were made willing by God might agree, so that the whole Bible might be read once by you in the year, and all might be feeding in the same portion of the green pasture at the same time. **[NOTE: See page 6-17 for the plan.]**

I am quite aware that such a plan is accompanied with many -

DANGERS.

(1.) Formality.

– We are such weak creatures that any regularly returning duty is apt to degenerate into a lifeless form. The tendency of reading the Word by a fixed rule may, in some minds, be to create this skeleton religion. This is to be the peculiar sin of the last days – "They have a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Guard against this. Let the calendar perish rather than this rust eat up your souls.

(2.) Self-righteousness.

– Some, when they have devoted their set time to reading of the Word, and accomplished their prescribed portion, may be tempted to look at themselves with self-complacency. Many, I am persuaded, are living without any Divine work on their soul – unpardoned and unsanctified, and ready to perish – who spend their appointed times in secret and family devotion. This is going to hell with a lie in their right hand. **[Note:** This sounds harsh, but McCheyne feared that many unconverted people were trusting in religious exercises to make themselves right with God.]

(3.) Careless reading.

– Few *tremble* at the Word of God. Few, in reading it, hear the voice of Jehovah, which is full of majesty. Some, by having so large a portion, may be tempted to weary of it, as Israel did of the daily manna, saying – "My soul loatheth this light bread;" and to read it in a slight and careless manner. This would be fearfully provoking to God. Take heed lest that word be true of you – "They said, also, Behold what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of Hosts."

(4.) A yoke to heavy to bear.

– Some may engage in reading with alacrity for a time, and afterwards feel it a burden, grievous to be borne. They may find conscience dragging them through the appointed task without any relish of the heavenly food. If this be the case with any, throw aside the fetter, and feed at liberty in the sweet garden of God. My desire is not to cast a snare upon you, but to be a helper of your joy.

If there be so many dangers, why propose such a scheme at all? To this I answer, that the best things are accompanied with danger, as the fairest flowers are often gathered in the clefts of some dangerous precipice.

Let us weigh -

THE ADVANTAGES.

(1.) The whole Bible will be read through in an orderly manner in the course of a year.

– The Old Testament once, the New Testament and Psalms twice. I fear many of you never read the whole Bible; and yet it is all equally Divine, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect.” If we pass over some parts of Scripture, we shall be incomplete Christians.

(2.) Time will not be wasted in choosing what portions to read.

– Often believers are at a loss to determine towards which part of the mountains of spices they should bend their steps. Here the question will be solved at once in a very simple manner.

(3.) Parents will have a regular subject upon which to examine their children and servants.

– It is much to be desired that family worship were made more instructive than it generally is. The mere reading of the chapter is often like water spilt on the ground. Let it be read by every member of the family beforehand, and then the meaning and application drawn out by simple question and answer. The calendar will be helpful in this. Friends, also, when they meet, will have a subject for profitable conversation in the portions read that day.

– The meaning of difficult passages may be inquired from the more judicious and ripe Christians, and the fragrance of simpler Scriptures spread abroad.

(4.) The pastor will know in what part of the pasture the flock are feeding.

– He will thus be enabled to speak more suitably to them on the Sabbath; and both pastor and elders will be able to drop a word of light and comfort in visiting from house to house, which will be more readily responded to.

(5.) The sweet bond of Christian love and unity will be strengthened.

– We shall be often led to think of those dear brothers and sisters in the Lord, here and elsewhere, who agree to join with us in reading those portions. We shall oftener be led to agree on earth, touching something we shall ask of God. We shall pray over the same promises, mourn over the same confessions, praise God in the same songs, and be nourished by the same words of eternal life.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne
December 1842

A Brief Biography of R.M. McCheyne

Robert Murray McCheyne (1813-1843), Scottish divine, youngest son of Adam McCheyne, writer to the signet, was born in Edinburgh, 21 May 1813. At the age of four he knew the characters of the Greek alphabet, and was able to sing and recite fluently.

He entered the high school in his eighth year, and matriculated in November 1827 at Edinburgh University, where he showed very versatile powers, and distinguished himself especially in poetical exercises, being awarded a special prize by Professor Wilson for a poem on 'The Covenanters.' In the winter of 1831 he commenced his studies in the Divinity Hall, under Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Welsh; and he was licensed as a preacher by the Annan presbytery on 1 July 1835.

In the following November he was appointed assistant to the Rev. John Bonar of Larbert and Dunipace, Stirlingshire. His health, which had never been robust, broke down under the strain of his new office; but his fame as a preacher spread through Scotland, and on 24 November 1836 he was ordained to the pastorate of St. Peter's Church, Dundee, which had been erected into a quoad sacra parish in the preceding May.

The congregation numbered eleven hundred hearers, and McCheyne addressed himself to the work of the ministry with so much ardour that his health again gave way, and in December 1838 he was compelled to desist from all public duty.

At this time the general assembly of the church of Scotland decided to send a committee to Palestine to collect information respecting the Jews, and McCheyne was included in the number who set sail on 12 April 1839. The record of this journey was written jointly by McCheyne and his companion Andrew Bonar (died 1892), and was published in 1842.

After his return at the end of 1839 McCheyne resumed his ministerial duties in Dundee with renewed energy. In the autumn of 1842 he visited the north of England on an evangelical mission, and made similar journeys to London and Aberdeenshire.

On his return from the latter place he was seized with sudden illness, and died on Saturday, 25 March 1843. He was buried beside St. Peter's Church, Dundee, where an imposing tombstone marks his grave.



George Müller *on morning devotions* †

MAY 7. It has recently pleased the Lord to teach me a truth... as far as I know, the benefit of which I have not lost though now... more than fourteen years have passed.

The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was to have my soul happy in the Lord.

How different, when the soul is refreshed and made happy early in the morning, from what it is when, without spiritual preparation, the service, trials, and temptations of the day come upon one!

The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord... but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished. For if I seek to set the truth before the unconverted, benefit believers, to relieve the distressed, and in other ways seek to behave myself as it becomes a child of God... but not be happy in the Lord or nourished and strengthened in my inner man... nothing could be done in a right spirit.

Before this time my practice had been, at least for ten years previously... to dress myself in the morning, then to give myself to prayer.

Now I saw that the most important thing I must do was read the Word of God and meditate on it so that my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reprov'd, instructed and brought into experimental communion with the Lord. I began therefore to meditate on the New Testament... early in the morning. The first thing I did, after having asked the Lord's blessing upon his precious word, was to begin to meditate on the Word, searching every verse to get blessing out of it; not for the sake of the public ministry of the word, not for the sake of preaching about what I had meditated upon, but for the sake of obtaining food for my own soul.

The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that after a very few minutes

† An excerpt from - The Life of Trust: Being a Narrative of the Lord's Dealings With George Müller. 1861. An autobiography. Ed. H.L. Wayland. Ed. by J.W. Long (simplified). Original text available free online at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/27288>

my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to intercession, or to supplication; so that, though I did not, as it were, give myself to prayer, but to meditation it turned almost immediately more or less into prayer. When thus I have been for a while making confession, or intercession, or supplication, or have given thanks, I go on to the next words or verse, turning all, as I go on, into prayer for myself or others, as the word may lead to it, but still continually keeping before me that food for my own soul is the object of my meditation.

The result of this is, that there is always a good deal of confession, thanksgiving, supplication, or intercession mingled with my meditation, and

that my inner man almost invariably is even sensibly nourished and strengthened, and that by breakfast time, with rare exceptions, I am in a peaceful if not happy state of heart. Thus also the Lord is pleased to communicate unto me that which, either very soon after or at a later time, I have found to become food for other believers,

though it was not for the sake of the public ministry of the word that I gave myself to meditation, but for the profit of my own inner man.

With this mode I have likewise combined being out in the open air for an hour, an hour and a half, or two hours, before breakfast, walking about in the fields, and in the summer sitting for a little on the stiles, if I find it too much to walk all the time. I find it very beneficial to my health to walk thus for meditation before breakfast, and am now in the habit of using the time for that purpose, that when I get into the open air I generally take out a New Testament of good-sized type, which I carry with me for that purpose, besides my Bible; and I find that I can profitably spend my time in the open air, which formerly was not the case, for want of habit. I used to consider the time spent in walking a loss, but now I find it very profitable, not only to my body, but also to my soul. The walking out before breakfast is of course not necessarily connected with this matter, and every one has to judge according to his strength and other circumstances.

The difference, then, between my former practice and my present one is this: Formerly, when I rose, I began to pray as soon as possible, and generally spent all my time till breakfast in prayer, or almost all the time. At all events I almost invariably began with prayer, except when I felt my soul to be more than usually barren, in which case I read the word of God for food, or



for refreshment, or for a revival and renewal of my inner man, before I gave myself to prayer. But what was the result? I often spent a quarter of an hour; or half an hour, or even an hour, on my knees, before being conscious to myself of having derived comfort, encouragement, humbling of soul, etc.; and often, after having suffered much from wandering of mind for the first ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour, or even half an hour; I only then began really to pray. I scarcely ever suffer now in this way. For my heart being nourished by the truth, being brought into experimental fellowship with God, I speak to my Father and to my Friend (vile though I am, and unworthy of it) about the things that he has brought before me in his precious word.

It often now astonishes me that I did not sooner see this point. In no book did I ever read about it... And yet now, since God has taught me this point, it is as plain to me as anything, that the first thing the child of God has to do morning by morning is, to obtain food for his inner man. As the outward man is not fit for work for any length of time except we take food, and as this is one of the first things we do in the morning, so it should be with the inner man. We should take food for that, as every one must allow. Now what is the food for the inner man? Not prayer, but the word of God; and here again, not the simple reading of the word of God, so that it only passes through our minds, just as water runs through a pipe, but considering what we read, pondering over it, and applying it to our hearts.

When we pray, we speak to God. Now, prayer, in order to be continued for any length of time in any other than a formal manner, requires, generally speaking a measure of strength or godly desire, and the season,

therefore, when this exercise of the soul can be most effectually performed is after the inner man has been nourished by meditation on the word of God, where we find our Father speaking to us, to encourage us, to comfort us, to instruct us, to humble us, to reprove us. We may therefore profitably meditate, with God's blessing, though we are ever so weak spiritually; nay, the weaker we are, the more we need meditation for the strengthening of our inner man. There is thus far less to be feared from wandering of mind than if we give ourselves to prayer without having had previously time for meditation.

I dwell so particularly on this point because of the immense spiritual profit and refreshment I am conscious of having derived from it myself, and I affectionately and solemnly beseech all my fellow believers to ponder this matter. By the blessing of God I ascribe to this mode the help and strength which I have had from God to pass in peace through deeper trials, in various ways, than I had ever had before; and after having now above fourteen years tried this way, I can most fully, in the fear of God, recommend it.

In addition to this I generally read, after family prayer, larger portions of the word of God, when I still pursue my practice of reading regularly onward in the Holy Scriptures, sometimes in the New Testament and sometimes in the Old, and for more than twenty-six years I have proved the blessedness of it. I take, also either then or at other parts of the day, time more especially for prayer.



Grace4Life - 2009 - London, UK

www.grace4life.org

George Fredrick Müller (d. 1898) born in 1805 in Kroppenstedt, Prussia, and after his conversion, immigrated to England to enter the Gospel ministry. After a brief time with the London Missionary Society, he became the pastor of Ebenezer Chapel in Devon. During his tenure as pastor, he refused a regular salary, believing that the practice could lead church members giving out of duty rather than desire. He also eliminated the practise of renting church pews, arguing that it gave unfair prestige to the rich.

Müller moved to Bristol in 1832 to begin working at Bethesda chapel where, along with his other ministries, he preached until his death. In 1834, he founded the Scripture Knowledge Institution for Home and Abroad, with the goal of aiding Christian schools and missionaries, and distributing the Bible. Not receiving government support and only accepting unsolicited gifts, this organization received and disbursed over £1.5 million, primarily in support of the orphanages, the distribution of nearly two million Bibles and religious texts, and the support of foreign missionaries such as Hudson Taylor.

Müller and his wife began their work with orphans in 1836 by preparing their own home in Bristol for housing thirty girls. Soon after, three more houses were furnished, bringing the total number of children to 130. As growth continued, in 1845, Müller decided that a separate building designed to house 300 children was necessary. That home opened in 1849 at Ashley Down, Bristol. By 1870, more than 2,000 children were being accommodated in five homes.

God's timely provision for these children is legendary, e.g. a bread wagon breaking down outside the bare-pantried Ashley Down house and donating its entire cargo. Over his lifetime, Müller cared for more than 10,000 orphans, and was so well-known for providing for their education, he was accused of being a "factory robber" as he raised the poor above "their natural station" in life.

NOTES ON PRAYER

A Devotional Reading by C. John "Jack" Miller

Revised & expanded for *Grace4Life* by John W. Long, Jr.

T**HESIS:** It should be the desire of every Christian to be a "reproducer," that is, one who shares his life in Christ with others, and who, by his testimony and example, promotes faith in Jesus—among both believers and unbelievers.

Jack Miller
Kampala,
Uganda
1980s



I. TO DISCIPLE OTHERS is to fulfill our most fundamental calling—"go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:18-20). The problem is, neither being a disciple nor making disciples is easy. Why not?

A. Being a disciple and discipling others requires that we give up our self-will and learn to be utterly dependent on God, both for salvation from our sins, and for everything pertaining to life.

B. Discipleship entails moving from self-centredness toward God-centredness. "Father, how can I please you today?" must increasingly be our focus. Jn.5:30; 2Cor.5:9; Col.1:10; 2Tim.2:4, etc.

II. PROBLEM: AS WE TRY TO CARRY OUT the task of making disciples, a tension will be created in us because we, the disciplinators, are still selfish, self-centered, self-willed people. Deep-down in our hearts, we are still nursing our own ambitions, our own expectations for ourselves and others. And sadly, our tendency is to try to control everything and everybody around us so that those ambitions are fulfilled.

A. Worse, we believe we have the *right* to hold on to grudges against others for the hurts they have inflicted on us. We may have nurtured and cultivated those grudges through years of careful devotion to our wounds. In short, we are *self-centered disciplinators*.

B. The "Who-What" Rule. If we are ever to be able to effectively speak to others about giving up *their* specks of self-will to become disciples of Jesus, we must first remove the beams from our own eyes. We must grow in becoming more God-centred ourselves—seeking his glory, desiring his will, and seeking after his methods of accomplishing that will. This means we must become increasingly self forgetful. For good or ill, *we will always be duplicating who we are* in our disciples. Therefore, *who* we are is just as important as *what we teach*.

III. WE WILL

BE CHANGED by faith-filled praying, or what some call "believing prayer." Our conversation with God in the context of *who we are to him in Christ* (sons and daughters) is *an essential means* appointed by God for our transformation. Believing prayer is the most effective weapon of spiritual warfare he offers us. He gave us the gift of prayer to bring us into partnership with him so that we could accomplish his purposes in our life and in the lives of others—all for his glory and praise. There is nothing mystical or magical about this. Believing prayer is God's ordained means for linking weak sinners (you and me) with the Mighty Christ.

A. In the act of "believing prayer," we begin to lose our self-will, and become *God-centered*.

B. Believing prayer gives us power to do God's will in God's way. It enables us to identify with God's will, submit to it—and dare others to commit themselves to it. As the Kingdom of Self is broken down, the Kingdom of God is lifted up. Prayer is the heart of Kingdom Power. Now, all of this may sound very hard even frightening. So, let's ask:

IV. HOW CAN WE BEGIN TO PRAY IN THIS WAY?

Obviously if God-centred kingdom praying is important, then praying this way, and teaching others to pray this way, is critical for a healthy Christian life—not to mention for the coming of the Kingdom itself. (viz. Matthew 6:10 "*Thy Kingdom come...*")

The following two FAITH-ACTIONS outline the most essential elements of prayer. We use the term, "faith-actions" because they are not really steps, *per se*. They are merely the biblical ways of relating to God by faith. (And we refuse to burden you down with steps that neither we nor anyone else can remember.)

Try this: Meditate on these *and* the Scriptures from which we have gleaned them. Then, if you think they are biblical and worthwhile, practice

them. Consider practicing them at a set time each day—preferably in the morning before the demands of the day’s work flood your mind and heart. Then, as you go through your day, remember what you agreed with the Father about. That’s the joy of a true partnership; we are not alone.

We believe that the practice of these FAITH ACTIONS with *understanding* is what stimulates our faith and invites the Spirit to bless us with *“the power which is for us who believe—that power which is like the mighty working of God’s strength which he exerted in Christ Jesus when he raised him from the dead.”* (Eph.1:19,20)

A. FAITH ACTION ONE

PRAY AS A SON or DAUGHTER OF THE KING

Paul writes: *“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has also made you an heir.”* – Gal. 4:4-7 (NIV)

It is critical to recognize, right at the beginning of prayer, that we are there for fellowship with God. We are His sons and daughters—coming to communicate with our Father God—to enjoy him, greet him, salute him, worship and adore him. We make a terrible mistake when we rush off into other areas of prayer before this foundational fact of our *sonship* becomes a heart-reality in our meeting with him.

1. There will be times when we will *feel* or *sense* God’s presence in a very special way as we bow our hearts before him. Review the way he called you to himself. Give thanks for the provisions he has made for you through the Cross of Jesus. Focus on Jesus, our Great High Priest who is seated at the Father’s right hand, ready to welcome us into his presence. Meditating on these facts can warm our cold hearts.

2. On the other hand, there will be times when we feel no sense of God’s presence. Don’t worry overmuch about this. Don’t struggle to feel something. Concentrate on the truth of God’s promises: When we cry out in the name of Jesus, we *are* in God’s presence—whether we feel like it or not. Jesus promises us in John 14:23: *“If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”* (NIV) [Note that obedience flows from love.]

In either of those two instances (or anywhere in between), it is our privilege and right to come before our Father and enjoy his company through the High-Priestly work of Jesus. (Heb. 10:1ff) He welcomes us. He wants us to commune with him, the one who has *“blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus”*, the One who *“chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world”*, the one who *“predestined us to be adopted as His sons”*, who was pleased to *“reveal his Son in us”*—all *“to the praise of his glory”*. (Eph.1) His grace to us *is* glorious and lavish. *Enjoy it!*

B. FAITH ACTION TWO

PRAY AGAINST THOSE THINGS WHICH HINDER OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD THROUGHOUT THE DAY!

That means confessing our sins to God because our sins hinder our fellowship with Him. There is one “generic sin” in particular that deserves special attention. It may be the number one hindrance to fellowship with God—worry. Worry (which is in essence, doubt), is the antithesis of faith/trust.

Tim Keller points out that the essence of worry is pride. We know with certainty how God should order events in our lives and in this world.

Rebecca Long says she hears people laugh about being “worriers” as though it was just some funny problem they have. Still others insist their worrying shows how much they love people. (So, worry becomes a ministry?) “I doubt,” she says, “that God is amused.” Here are two reasons why worry is so awful. Perhaps you can add more.

1. First, worry shows a deep lack of faith in God as our loving Father. It calls into question both his ability and willingness to keep his promise to provide what we need. *“Do not worry... O you of little faith... your heavenly Father knows what you need.”* – Jesus (Matt.5:25ff)

2. Worry reveals our self-centeredness. It shows that the kingdom of self is raging and reigning—that we have ambitions, loves, desires, dreams, demands, and expectations we’re holding onto for ourselves. *“God, I have my rights and plans. ARE YOU LISTENING?”* Worry shows we have a deep need to control people and situations instead of submitting our control to a loving Father’s providence.

Trusting does not mean that we become passive or lazy, but that we don’t try to micro-manage our lives. Trust means that

we don't let difficult circumstances destroy the knowledge that our loving Father is in complete control of every situation—no matter how grim things appear. And remember, if things never do go smoothly in this life, *heaven waits.*

V. HOW CAN WE ELIMINATE this stumbling block to our fellowship with God, this impediment to our ability to love serve him fruitfully? Here are some helps:

A. Examine your heart to determine what your ambitions are and how you have been trying to accomplish them. If they are not really God's plans, *or*, if you have been using fleshly tactics to try to accomplish what are God's plans, then *repent*. No matter how good our purposes are, if the fruit of the Spirit is not being manifested in the way we do ministry, God will have no interest in blessing it because his work will have our messy fingerprints all over it.

B. Let God mould your *person* and your *priorities* in his presence. "*Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.*" — Ps. 37:4 When God is our delight, our desires change. Listen to what he tells us about ourselves and his purposes for our lives.

B. Pray Kingdom-centred prayers. Pray that God will get great glory as you partner with him in ministry. When we pray in this way, our very praying will help keep our heart and eyes on the goal. Now, where is the burden for success? It is on God, not us! Hudson Taylor, the Yorkshireman missionary to China said it eloquently: "*God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supplies.*"

In this frame of heart and mind, we can live and work as God's *junior partners*. Have you caught this vision? Why be anxious? *Let your worries become God's worries. Which brings us to...*

THE STORY OF "MR. NO WORRIES"

Chris and Mike met in London. Chris noticed that Mike, normally a worried looking chap, seemed incredibly peaceful. Amazed, Chris probed, "*What has happened? Today you look peaceful... pleased as punch, but last week when we met, you had so many worries you said dying would be a sweet relief.*" Mike answered, "*Something wonderful has happened! I met this chap named Edward, and have hired him to do all my worrying for me for just £500 Pounds a week.*"

Chris shot back in surprise, "*£500 Pounds a week? So where do you think you'll find that kind of money?*"

"*I haven't a clue,*" Mike replied, "*That's his worry!*"

4. With our hearts trusting in our "Senior Partner" to make us into the sort of man or woman who can carry out *his* plans, anxiety, this awful stumbling block to our fellowship and effectiveness, is removed.

Now 1Thessalonians 5:17 doesn't sound so absurd: "*Pray without ceasing.*" Prayer is no longer an optional accessory. It has become the vital link with our Father we can't do without (and so much more interesting than praying about our great aunt's second cousin's hangnail). Our praying goes on through the day because we must keep handing over the reins, relinquishing control, but, as we do, our Father will give us the wisdom, guidance and strength to *power us through* the challenges of the day. The secret of strength is our weakness, our dependence.

WINDING UP: To help work these truths into your life, you might like to *rename* your morning devotions "My Father Time" or "My Daddy Time." This will help you remember that the *purpose* of your meeting with God is not to give you a good conscience because you met some goal, or to enhance your spiritual standing before others. The purpose is to meet with your Father. Intimate fellowship with our Father is *the foundation* for all the good things that follow.

The fires of personal renewal, church renewal and bold evangelism will be lit only as we spend time with our Abba and learn to work in partnership with him.

As soon as you can, get into God's presence—and stay there—until you have done business with him!

Are you ready? Good. Let's go for some practice!



RESOURCES

that may enhance your "Abba Father Time"

Beware: Our God-allergy can turn these good things into diversions and substitutes for meeting with our Father. So, use them *wisely*—as “means to faith.” (viz. Robert Shaw, **4-3**) This is a limited list of a few resources we happen to be aware of, so do your research.

1. One Year Bible - Highly recommended! (Top Pick!)

Strengths: The daily text is before you. Has the OT, NT, Psalms & Proverbs daily. Flexible.

Weaknesses: No NT Epistles until mid-July

2. The Chronological Bible (through the Bible in a year)

Strengths: Actual order of books preserved

Weaknesses: Starves you! No NT until late September, no Epistles until November

3. a Study Bible (with study notes)

Strengths: Helps with interpretation of difficult passages.

Weaknesses: May make you dependent on the ideas of others

4. Our Daily Bread (or any daily devotional reading prepared by another)

Strengths: Practical helps for daily living

Weaknesses: Many words, very little Scripture, doctrinally and practically one-sided

5. Spurgeon's Morning & Evening

Strengths: Morning and evening times...

Weaknesses: Same as 4

6. McCheyne's Bible In A Year - a calendered chart **(Top Pick - see this lesson p. 6-17)**

Strengths: Well-balanced. Read the whole Bible in 1 year, Psalms & NT twice. Flexible. Free!

Weaknesses: A chart can be tedious to follow

7. Hymns & Praise Songs - Hymnals, MP3, YouTube, etc. (Top Pick)

Strengths: Touch the heart/soul deeply to move us into fellowship with God

Weaknesses: None, as long as they are not a substitute for Scripture

8. Books of Prayers (written by others - The Valley of Vision, etc.) **(Top Pick)**

Strengths: Can stimulate us to pray more deeply and wisely

Weaknesses: Can make our prayers seem immature; can make us dependent on others

9. The Praying Life - by Paul Miller, NavPress, 2009. **(Top Pick)** This is the book on prayer I've been praying for. It's honest. It's real. It teaches that if we're to be real prayer warriors, we must learn to be... *weak*. Now there is a qualification even I can meet.

10. Christian biographies

Strengths: Can stir us up to love and good works, can stretch our horizons

Weaknesses: May give unrealistic views of the holiness of people who were sinners like us.

The Robert Murray McCheyne One Year Bible Reading Plan - "FaceTime" with God - Grace4Life

JANUARY

1 Gen.1; Mt.1; Ezr.1; Acts 1
2 Gen.2; Mt.2; Ezr.2; Acts 2
3 Gen.3; Mt.3; Ezr.3; Acts 3
4 Gen.4; Mt.4; Ezr.4; Acts 4
5 Gen.5; Mt.5; Ezr.5; Acts 5
6 Gen.6; Mt.6; Ezr.6; Acts 6
7 Gen.7; Mt.7; Ezr.7; Acts 7
8 Gen.8; Mt.8; Ezr.8; Acts 8
9 Gen.9-10; Mt.9; Ezr.9; Acts 9
10 Gen.11; Mt.10; Ezr.10; Acts 10
11 Gen.12; Mt.11; Neh.1; Acts 11
12 Gen.13; Mt.12; Neh.2; Acts 12
13 Gen.14; Mt.13; Neh.3; Acts 13
14 Gen.15; Mt.14; Neh.4; Acts 14
15 Gen.16; Mt.15; Neh.5; Acts 15
16 Gen.17; Mt.16; Neh.6; Acts 16
17 Gen.18; Mt.17; Neh.7; Acts 17
18 Gen.19; Mt.18; Neh.8; Acts 18
19 Gen.20; Mt.19; Neh.9; Acts 19
20 Gen.21; Mt.20; Neh.10; Acts 20
21 Gen.22; Mt.21; Neh.11; Acts 21
22 Gen.23; Mt.22; Neh.12; Acts 22
23 Gen.24; Mt.23; Neh.13; Acts 23
24 Gen.25; Mt.24; Est.1; Acts 24
25 Gen.26; Mt.25; Est.2; Acts 25
26 Gen.27; Mt.26; Est.3; Acts 26
27 Gen.28; Mt.27; Est.4; Acts 27
28 Gen.29; Mt.28; Est.5; Acts 28
29 Gen.30; Mk.1; Est.6; Rom.1
30 Gen.31; Mk.2; Est.7; Rom.2
31 Gen.32; Mk.3; Est.8; Rom.3

FEBRUARY

1 Gen.33; Mk.4; Est. 9-10; Rom.4
2 Gen.34; Mk.5; Job 1; Rom.5
3 Gen.35-36; Mk.6; Job 2; Rom.6
4 Gen.37; Mk.7; Job 3; Rom.7
5 Gen.38; Mk.8; Job 4; Rom.8
6 Gen.39; Mk.9; Job 5; Rom.9

7 Gen.40; Mk.10; Job 6; Rom.10
8 Gen.41; Mk.11; Job 7; Rom.11
9 Gen.42; Mk.12; Job 8; Rom.12
10 Gen.43; Mk.13; Job 9; Rom.13
11 Gen.44; Mk.14; Job 10; Rom.14
12 Gen.45; Mk.15; Job 11; Rom.15
13 Gen.46; Mk.16; Job 12; Rom.16
14 Gen.47; Lk.1:1-38; Job 13; 1Cor.1
15 Gen.48; Lk.1:39-80; Job 14; 1Cor.2
16 Gen.49; Lk.2; Job 15; 1Cor.3
17 Gen.50; Lk.3; Job 16-17; 1Cor.4
18 Ex.1; Lk.4; Job 18; 1Cor.5
19 Ex.2; Lk.5; Job 19; 1Cor.6
20 Ex.3; Lk.6; Job 20; 1Cor.7
21 Ex.4; Lk.7; Job 21; 1Cor.8
22 Ex.5; Lk.8; Job 22; 1Cor.9
23 Ex.6; Lk.9; Job 23; 1Cor.10
24 Ex.7; Lk.10; Job 24; 1Cor.11
25 Ex.8; Lk.11; Job 25-26; 1Cor.12
26 Ex.9; Lk.12; Job 27; 1Cor.13
27 Ex.10; Lk.13; Job 28; 1Cor.14
28 Ex.11:1-12:21; Lk.14; Job 29; 1Cor.15

MARCH

1 Ex.12:22-51; Lk.15; Job 30; 1Cor.16
2 Ex.13; Lk.16; Job 31; 2Cor.1
3 Ex.14; Lk.17; Job 32; 2Cor.2
4 Ex.15; Lk.18; Job 33; 2Cor.3
5 Ex.16; Lk.19; Job 34; 2Cor.4
6 Ex.17; Lk.20; Job 35; 2Cor.5
7 Ex.18; Lk.21; Job 36; 2Cor.6
8 Ex.19; Lk.22; Job 37; 2Cor.7
9 Ex.20; Lk.23; Job 38; 2Cor.8
10 Ex.21; Lk.24; Job 39; 2Cor.9
11 Ex.22; Jn.1; Job 40; 2Cor.10
12 Ex.23; Jn.2; Job 41; 2Co.11
13 Ex.24; Jn.3; Job 42; 2Co.12
14 Ex.25; Jn.4; Prv.1; 2Co.13
15 Ex.26; Jn.5; Prv.2; Gal.1
16 Ex.27; Jn.6; Prv.3; Gal.2

17 Ex.28; Jn.7; Prv.4; Gal.3
18 Ex.29; Jn.8; Prv.5; Gal.4
19 Ex.30; Jn.9; Prv.6; Gal.5
20 Ex.31; Jn.10; Prv.7; Gal.6
21 Ex.32; Jn.11; Prv.8; Eph.1
22 Ex.33; Jn.12; Prv.9; Eph.2
23 Ex.34; Jn.13; Prv.10; Eph.3
24 Ex.35; Jn.14; Prv.11; Eph.4
25 Ex.36; Jn.15; Prv.12; Eph.5
26 Ex.37; Jn.16; Prv.13; Eph.6
27 Ex.38; Jn.17; Prv.14; Phil.1
28 Ex.39; Jn.18; Prv.15; Phil.2
29 Ex.40; Jn.19; Prv.16; Phil.3
30 Lev.1; Jn.20; Prv.17; Phil.4
31 Lev.2-3; Jn.21; Prv. 18; Col.1

APRIL

1 Lev.4; Ps.1-2; Prv.19; Col.2
2 Lev.5; Ps.3-4; Prv.20; Col.3
3 Lev.6; Ps.5-6; Prv.21; Col.4
4 Lev.7; Ps.7-8; Prv.22; 1Th.1
5 Lev.8; Ps.9; Prv.23; 1Th.2
6 Lev.9; Ps.10; Prv.24; 1Th.3
7 Lev.10; Ps.11-12; Prv.25; 1Th.4
8 Lev.11-12; Ps.13-14; Prv.26; 1Th.5
9 Lev.13; Ps.15-16; Prv.27; 2Th.1
10 Lev.14; Ps.17; Prv.28; 2Th.2
11 Lev.15; Ps.18; Prv.29; 2Th.3
12 Lev.16; Ps.19; Prv.30; 1Tim.1
13 Lev.17; Ps.20-21; Prv.31; 1Tim.2
14 Lev.18; Ps.22; Eccl.1; 1Tim.3
15 Lev.19; Ps.23-24; Eccl.2; 1Tim.4
16 Lev.20; Ps.25; Eccl.3; 1Tim.5
17 Lev.21; Ps.26-27; Eccl.4; 1Tim.6
18 Lev.22; Ps.28-29; Eccl.5; 2Tim.1
19 Lev.23; Ps.30; Eccl.6; 2Tim.2
20 Lev.24; Ps.31; Eccl.7; 2Tim.3
21 Lev.25; Ps.32; Eccl.8; 2Tim.4
22 Lev.26; Ps.33; Eccl.9; Tit.1
23 Lev.27; Ps.34; Eccl.10; Tit.2

24 Num.1; Ps.35; Eccl.11; Tit.3
25 Num.2; Ps.36; Eccl.12; Philem.
26 Num.3; Ps.37; SSol.1; Heb.1
27 Num.4; Ps.38; SSol.2; Heb.2
28 Num.5; Ps.39; SSol.3; Heb.3
29 Num.6; Ps.40-41; SSol.4; Heb.4
30 Num.7; Ps.42-43; SSol.5; Heb.5

MAY

1 Num.8; Ps.44; SSol.6; Heb.6
2 Num.9; Ps.45; SSol.7; Heb.7
3 Num.10; Ps.46-47; SSol.8; Heb.8
4 Num.11; Ps.48; Isa.1; Heb.9
5 Num.12-13; Ps.49; Isa.2; Heb.10
6 Num.14; Ps.50; Isa.3-4; Heb.11
7 Num.15; Ps.51; Isa.5; Heb.12
8 Num.16; Ps.52-54; Isa.6; Heb.13
9 Num.17-18; Ps.55; Isa.7; Jas.1
10 Num.19; Ps.56-57; Isa.8:1-9:7; Jas.2
11 Num.20; Ps.58-59; Isa.9:8-10:4; Jas.3
12 Num.21; Ps.60-61; Isa.10:5-34; Jas.4
13 Num.22; Ps.62-63; Isa.11-12; Jas.5
14 Num.23; Ps.64-65; Isa.13; 1Pet.1
15 Num.24; Ps.66-67; Isa.14; 1Pet.2
16 Num.25; Ps.68; Isa.15; 1Pet.3
17 Num.26; Ps.69; Isa.16; 1Pet.4
18 Num.27; Ps.70-71; Isa.17-18; 1Pet.5
19 Num.28; Ps.72; Isa.19-20; 2Pet.1
20 Num.29; Ps.73; Isa.21; 2Pet.2
21 Num.30; Ps.74; Isa.22; 2Pet.3
22 Num.31; Ps.75-76; Isa.23; 1Jn.1
23 Num.32; Ps.77; Isa.24; 1Jn.2
24 Num.33; Ps.78:1-37; Isa.25; 1Jn. 3
25 Num.34; Ps.78:38-72; Isa.26; 1Jn.4
26 Num.35; Ps.79; Isa.27; 1Jn.5
27 Num.36; Ps.80; Isa.28; 2Jn.
28 Dt.1; Ps.81-82; Isa.29; 3Jn.
29 Dt.2; Ps.83-84; Isa.30; Jude
30 Dt.3; Ps.85; Isa.31; Rev.1
31 Dt.4; Ps.86-87; Isa.32; Rev.2

JUNE

1 Dt.5; Ps.88; Isa.33; Rev.3
2 Dt.6; Ps.89; Isa.34; Rev.4
3 Dt.7; Ps.90; Isa.35; Rev.5
4 Dt.8; Ps.91; Isa.36; Rev.6
5 Dt.9; Ps.92-93; Isa.37; Rev.7
6 Dt.10; Ps.94; Isa.38; Rev.8
7 Dt.11; Ps.95-96; Isa.39; Rev.9
8 Dt.12; Ps.97-98; Isa.40; Rev.10
9 Dt.13-14; Ps.99-101; Isa.41; Rev.11
10 Dt.15; Ps.102; Isa.42; Rev.12
11 Dt.16; Ps.103; Isa.43; Rev.13
12 Dt.17; Ps.104; Isa.44; Rev.14
13 Dt.18; Ps.105; Isa.45; Rev.15
14 Dt.19; Ps.106; Isa.46; Rev.16
15 Dt.20; Ps.107; Isa.47; Rev.17
16 Dt.21; Ps.108-109; Isa.48; Rev.18
17 Dt.22; Ps.110-111; Isa.49; Rev.19
18 Dt.23; Ps.112-113; Isa.50; Rev.20
19 Dt.24; Ps.114-115; Isa.51; Rev.21
20 Dt.25; Ps.116; Isa.52; Rev.22
21 Dt.26; Ps.117-118; Isa.53; Mt.1
22 Dt.27:1-28:19; Ps.119:1-24; Isa.54; Mt.2
23 Dt.28:20-68; Ps.119:25-48; Isa.55; Mt.3
24 Dt.29; Ps.119:49-72; Isa 56; Mt.4
25 Dt.30; Ps.119:73-96; Isa 57; Mt.5
26 Dt.31; Ps.119:97-120; Isa.58; Mt.6
27 Dt.32; Ps.119:121-144; Isa.59; Mt.7
28 Dt.33-34; Ps.119:145-176; Isa.60; Mt.8
29 Jos.1; Ps.120-122; Isa.61; Mt.9
30 Jos.2; Ps.123-125; Isa.62; Mt.10

JULY

1 Jos.3; Ps.126-128; Isa.63; Mt.11
2 Jos.4; Ps.129-131; Isa.64; Mt.12
3 Jos.5:1-6:5; Ps.132-134; Isa.65; Mt.13
4 Jos.6:6-27; Ps.135-136; Isa.66; Mt.14
5 Jos.7; Ps.137-138; Jer.1; Mt.15
6 Jos.8; Ps.139; Jer.2; Mt.16
7 Jos.9; Ps.140-141; Jer.3; Mt.17

6 8 Jos.10; Ps.142-143; Jer.4; Mt.18
7 Jos.11; Ps.144; Jer.5; Mt.19
8 Jos.12-13; Ps.145; Jer.6; Mt.20
9 Jos.14-15; Ps.146-147; Jer.7; Mt.21
10 Jos.16-17; Ps.148; Jer.8; Mt.22
11 Jos.18-19; Ps.149-150; Jer.9; Mt.23
12 Jos.20-21; **Acts 1**; Jer.10; Mt.24
13 Jos.22; Acts 2; Jer.11; Mt.25
14 Jos.23; Acts 3; Jer.12; Mt.26
15 Jos.24; Acts 4; Jer.13; Mt.27
16 **Jud.1**; Acts 5; Jer.14; Mt.28
17 **Jud.2**; Acts 6; Jer.15; **Mk.1**
18 **Jud.3**; Acts 7; Jer.16; **Mk.2**
19 **Jud.4**; Acts 8; Jer.17; **Mk.3**
20 **Jud.5**; Acts 9; Jer.18; **Mk.4**
21 **Jud.6**; Acts 10; Jer.19; **Mk.5**
22 **Jud.7**; Acts 11; Jer.20; **Mk.6**
23 **Jud.8**; Acts 12; Jer.21; **Mk.7**
24 **Jud.9**; Acts 13; Jer.22; **Mk.8**
25 **Jud.10:1-11:11**; Acts 14; Jer.23; **Mk.9**
26 **Jud.11:12-40**; Acts 15; Jer.24; **Mk.10**
27 **Jud.12**; Acts 16; Jer.25; **Mk.11**
28 **Jud.13**; Acts 17; Jer.26; **Mk.12**
29 **Jud.14**; Acts 18; Jer.27; **Mk.13**

AUGUST

1 **Jud.15**; Acts 19; Jer.28; **Mk.14**
2 **Jud.16**; Acts 20; Jer.29; **Mk.15**
3 **Jud.17**; Acts 21; Jer.30-31; **Mk.16**
4 **Jud.18**; Acts 22; Jer.32; **Ps.1-2**
5 **Jud.19**; Acts 23; Jer.33; **Ps.3-4**
6 **Jud.20**; Acts 24; Jer.34; **Ps.5-6**
7 **Jud.21**; Acts 25; Jer.35; **Ps.7-8**
8 **Ruth 1**; Acts 26; Jer.36,45; **Ps.9**
9 **Ruth 2**; Acts 27; Jer.37; **Ps.10**
10 **Ruth 3-4**; Acts 28; Jer.38; **Ps.11-12**
11 **1Sam.1**; **Rom.1**; Jer.39; **Ps.13-14**
12 **1Sam.2**; **Rom.2**; Jer.40; **Ps.15-16**
13 **1Sam.3**; **Rom.3**; Jer.41; **Ps.17**
14 **1Sam.4**; **Rom.4**; Jer.42; **Ps.18**
15 **1Sam.5-6**; **Rom.5**; Jer.43; **Ps.19**

16 **1Sam.7-8**; **Rom.6**; Jer.44; **Ps.20-21**
17 **1Sam.9**; **Rom.7**; Jer.46; **Ps.22**
18 **1Sam.10**; **Rom.8**; Jer.47; **Ps.23-24**
19 **1Sam.11**; **Rom.9**; Jer.48; **Ps.25**
20 **1Sam.12**; **Rom.10**; Jer.49; **Ps.26-27**
21 **1Sam.13**; **Rom.11**; Jer.50; **Ps.28-29**
22 **1Sam.14**; **Rom.12**; Jer.51; **Ps.30**
23 **1Sam.15**; **Rom.13**; Jer.52; **Ps.31**
24 **1Sam.16**; **Rom.14**; **Lam.1**; **Ps.32**
25 **1Sam.17**; **Rom.15**; **Lam.2**; **Ps.33**
26 **1Sam.18**; **Rom.16**; **Lam.3**; **Ps.34**
27 **1Sam.19**; **1Cor.1**; **Lam.4**; **Ps.35**
28 **1Sam.20**; **1Cor.2**; **Lam.5**; **Ps.36**
29 **1Sam.21-22**; **1Cor.3**; **Eze.1**; **Ps.37**
30 **1Sam.23**; **1Cor.4**; **Eze.2**; **Ps.38**
31 **1Sam.24**; **1Cor.5**; **Eze.3**; **Ps.39**

SEPTEMBER

1 **1Sam.25**; **1Cor.6**; **Eze.4**; **Ps.40-41**
2 **1Sam.26**; **1Cor.7**; **Eze.5**; **Ps.42-43**
3 **1Sam.27**; **1Cor.8**; **Eze.6**; **Ps.44**
4 **1Sam.28**; **1Cor.9**; **Eze.7**; **Ps.45**
5 **1Sam.29-30**; **1Cor.10**; **Eze.8**; **Ps.46-47**
6 **1Sam.31**; **1Cor.11**; **Eze.9**; **Ps.48**
7 **2Sam.1**; **1Cor.12**; **Eze.10**; **Ps.49**
8 **2Sam.2**; **1Cor.13**; **Eze.11**; **Ps.50**
9 **2Sam.3**; **1Cor.14**; **Eze.12**; **Ps.51**
10 **2Sam.4-5**; **1Cor.15**; **Eze.13**; **Ps.52-54**
11 **2Sam.6**; **1Cor.16**; **Eze.14**; **Ps.55**
12 **2Sam.7**; **2Cor.1**; **Eze.15**; **Ps.56-57**
13 **2Sam.8-9**; **2Cor.2**; **Eze.16**; **Ps.58-59**
14 **2Sam.10**; **2Cor.3**; **Eze.17**; **Ps.60-61**
15 **2Sam.11**; **2Cor.4**; **Eze.18**; **Ps.62-63**
16 **2Sam.12**; **2Cor.5**; **Eze.19**; **Ps.64-65**
17 **2Sam.13**; **2Cor.6**; **Eze.20**; **Ps.66-67**
18 **2Sam.14**; **2Cor.7**; **Eze.21**; **Ps.68**
19 **2Sam.15**; **2Cor.8**; **Eze.22**; **Ps.69**
20 **2Sam.16**; **2Cor.9**; **Eze.23**; **Ps.70-71**
21 **2Sam.17**; **2Cor.10**; **Eze.24**; **Ps.72**
22 **2Sam.18**; **2Cor.11**; **Eze.25**; **Ps.73**
23 **2Sam.19**; **2Cor.12**; **Eze.26**; **Ps.74**

24 **2Sam.20**; **2Cor.13**; **Eze.27**; **Ps.75-76**
25 **2Sam.21**; **Gal.1**; **Eze.28**; **Ps.77**
26 **2Sam.22**; **Gal.2**; **Eze.29**; **Ps.78:1-37**
27 **2Sam.23**; **Gal.3**; **Eze.30**; **Ps.78:38-72**
28 **2Sam.24**; **Gal.4**; **Eze.31**; **Ps.79**
29 **1Ki.1**; **Gal.5**; **Eze.32**; **Ps.80**
30 **1Ki.2**; **Gal.6**; **Eze.33**; **Ps.81-82**

OCTOBER

1 **1Ki.3**; **Eph.1**; **Eze.34**; **Ps.83-84**
2 **1Ki.4-5**; **Eph.2**; **Eze.35**; **Ps.85**
3 **1Ki.6**; **Eph.3**; **Eze.36**; **Ps.86**
4 **1Ki.7**; **Eph.4**; **Eze.37**; **Ps.87-88**
5 **1Ki.8**; **Eph.5**; **Eze.38**; **Ps.89**
6 **1Ki.9**; **Eph.6**; **Eze.39**; **Ps.90**
7 **1Ki.10**; **Phil.1**; **Eze.40**; **Ps.91**
8 **1Ki.11**; **Phil.2**; **Eze.41**; **Ps.92-93**
9 **1Ki.12**; **Phil.3**; **Eze.42**; **Ps.94**
10 **1Ki.13**; **Phil.4**; **Eze.43**; **Ps.95-96**
11 **1Ki.14**; **Col.1**; **Eze.44**; **Ps.97-98**
12 **1Ki.15**; **Col.2**; **Eze.45**; **Ps.99-101**
13 **1Ki.16**; **Col.3**; **Eze.46**; **Ps.102**
14 **1Ki.17**; **Col.4**; **Eze.47**; **Ps.103**
15 **1Ki.18**; **1Th.1**; **Eze.48**; **Ps.104**
16 **1Ki.19**; **1Th.2**; **Dan.1**; **Ps.105**
17 **1Ki.20**; **1Th.3**; **Dan.2**; **Ps.106**
18 **1Ki.21**; **1Th.4**; **Dan.3**; **Ps.107**
19 **1Ki.22**; **1Th.5**; **Dan.4**; **Ps.108-109**
20 **2Ki.1**; **2Th.1**; **Dan.5**; **Ps.110-111**
21 **2Ki.2**; **2Th.2**; **Dan.6**; **Ps.112-113**
22 **2Ki.3**; **2Th.3**; **Dan.7**; **Ps.114-115**
23 **2Ki.4**; **1Ti.1**; **Dan.8**; **Ps.116**
24 **2Ki.5**; **1Ti.2**; **Dan.9**; **Ps.117-118**
25 **2Ki.6**; **1Ti.3**; **Dan.10**; **Ps.119:1-24**
26 **2Ki.7**; **1Ti.4**; **Dan.11**; **Ps.119:25-48**
27 **2Ki.8**; **1Ti.5**; **Dan.12**; **Ps.119:49-72**
28 **2Ki.9**; **1Ti.6**; **Hos.1**; **Ps.119:73-96**
29 **2Ki.10**; **2Ti.1**; **Hos.2**; **Ps.119:97-120**
30 **2Ki.11-12**; **2Ti.2**; **Hos.3-4**; **Ps.119:121-144**
31 **2Ki.13**; **2Ti.3**; **Hos.5-6**; **Ps.119:145-176**

NOVEMBER

1 **2Ki.14**; **2Ti.4**; **Hos.7**; **Ps.120-122**
2 **2Ki.15**; **Tit.1**; **Hos.8**; **Ps.123-125**
3 **2Ki.16**; **Tit.2**; **Hos.9**; **Ps.126-128**
4 **2Ki.17**; **Tit.3**; **Hos.10**; **Ps.129-131**
5 **2Ki.18**; **Philem.**; **Hos.11**; **Ps.132-134**
6 **2Ki.19**; **Heb.1**; **Hos.12**; **Ps.135-136**
7 **2Ki.20**; **Heb.2**; **Hos.13**; **Ps.137-138**
8 **2Ki.21**; **Heb.3**; **Hos.14**; **Ps.139**
9 **2Ki.22**; **Heb.4**; **Joel 1**; **Ps.140-141**
10 **2Ki.23**; **Heb.5**; **Joel 2**; **Ps.142**
11 **2Ki.24**; **Heb.6**; **Joel 3**; **Ps.143**
12 **2Ki.25**; **Heb.7**; **Am.1**; **Ps.144**
13 **1Ch.1-2**; **Heb.8**; **Am.2**; **Ps.145**
14 **1Ch.3-4**; **Heb.9**; **Am.3**; **Ps.146-147**
15 **1Ch.5-6**; **Heb.10**; **Am.4**; **Ps.148-150**
16 **1Ch.7-8**; **Heb.11**; **Am.5**; **Lk.1:1-38**
17 **1Ch.9-10**; **Heb.12**; **Am.6**; **Lk. 1:39-80**
18 **1Ch.11-12**; **Heb.13**; **Am.7**; **Lk.2**
19 **1Ch.13-14**; **Jas.1**; **Am.8**; **Lk.3**
20 **1Ch.15**; **Jas.2**; **Amos 9**; **Lk.4**
21 **1Ch.16**; **Jas.3**; **Obad.**; **Lk.5**
22 **1Ch.17**; **Jas.4**; **Jon.1**; **Lk.6**
23 **1Ch.18**; **Jas.5**; **Jon.2**; **Lk.7**
24 **1Ch.19-20**; **1Pet.1**; **Jon.3**; **Lk.8**
25 **1Ch.21**; **1Pet.2**; **Jon.4**; **Lk.9**
26 **1Ch.22**; **1Pet.3**; **Mic.1**; **Lk.10**
27 **1Ch.23**; **1Pet.4**; **Mic.2**; **Lk.11**
28 **1Ch.24-25**; **1Pet.5**; **Mic.3**; **Lk.12**
29 **1Ch.26-27**; **2Pet.1**; **Mic.4**; **Lk.13**
30 **1Ch.28**; **2Pet.2**; **Mic.5**; **Lk.14**

DECEMBER

1 **1Ch.29**; **2Pet.3**; **Mic.6**; **Lk.15**
2 **2Ch.1**; **1Jn.1**; **Mic.7**; **Lk.16**
3 **2Ch.2**; **1Jn.2**; **Nah.1**; **Lk.17**
4 **2Ch.3-4**; **1Jn.3**; **Nah.2**; **Lk.18**
5 **2Ch.5:1-6:11**; **1Jn.4**; **Nah.3**; **Lk.19**
6 **2Ch.6:12-42**; **1Jn.5**; **Hab.1**; **Lk.20**
7 **2Ch.7**; **2Jn.**; **Hab.2**; **Lk.21**
8 **2Ch.8**; **3Jn.**; **Hab.3**; **Lk.22**

9 **2Ch.9**; **Jude**; **Zeph.1**; **Lk.23**
10 **2Ch.10**; **Rev.1**; **Zeph.2**; **Lk.24**
11 **2Ch.11-12**; **Rev.2**; **Zeph.3**; **Jn.1**
12 **2Ch.13**; **Rev.3**; **Hag.1**; **Jn.2**
13 **2Ch.14-15**; **Rev.4**; **Hag.2**; **Jn.3**
14 **2Ch.16**; **Rev.5**; **Zech.1**; **Jn.4**
15 **2Ch.17**; **Rev.6**; **Zech.2**; **Jn.5**
16 **2Ch.18**; **Rev.7**; **Zech.3**; **Jn.6**
17 **2Ch.19-20**; **Rev.8**; **Zech.4**; **Jn.7**
18 **2Ch.21**; **Rev.9**; **Zech.5**; **Jn.8**
19 **2Ch.22-23**; **Rev.10**; **Zech.6**; **Jn.9**
20 **2Ch.24**; **Rev.11**; **Zech.7**; **Jn.10**
21 **2Ch.25**; **Rev.12**; **Zech.8**; **Jn.11**
22 **2Ch.26**; **Rev.13**; **Zech.9**; **Jn.12**
23 **2Ch.27-28**; **Rev.14**; **Zech.10**; **Jn.13**
24 **2Ch.29**; **Rev.15**; **Zech.11**; **Jn.14**
25 **2Ch.30**; **Rev.16**; **Zech.12:1-13:1**; **Jn.15**
26 **2Ch.31**; **Rev.17**; **Zech.13:2-9**; **Jn.16**
27 **2Ch.32**; **Rev.18**; **Zech.14**; **Jn.17**
28 **2Ch.33**; **Rev.19**; **Mal.1**; **Jn.18**
29 **2Ch.34**; **Rev.20**; **Mal.2**; **Jn.19**
30 **2Ch.35**; **Rev.21**; **Mal.3**; **Jn.20**
31 **2Ch.36**; **Rev.22**; **Mal.4**; **Jn.21** **AMEN**

NOTES

This plan will take you through the whole Bible in a year, the NT and Psalms twice.

Feel free to vary the plan.

1. One year, read only the NT, Psalms and Proverbs.

2. Another year, read the OT and NT, but the Psalms once.

- Remember -

Reading the Bible does not equal meeting with your Father.

Your goal is to meet with your Father, not your habit.

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Strike off the day as you complete each reading. ➔ This chart is available for download on the [Grace4Life website. www.grace4life.org](http://www.grace4life.org)