**TIME ALONE WITH GOD**

Ingredients:

* Half an hour, every day.
* Quiet, so you focus on yourself and on God;
* Prayer, worship, thanksgiving, as your response to God
* Word, so you can ponder His truth
* Life, people and events, so you are aware of Him in these situations

Method:

* Time – a fixed time when you are unlikely to be interrupted is best but more important is to actually start having such a time with God.
* Quiet – A simple method is to be quiet until you are aware you are in God’s presence before you start to respond to Him.
* Word – Read and be familiar with what is said. Meditate on the Word: “What does it say?” “What does it mean?” “How should I respond?” You may use the questions to help you or set them aside.
* Life – Use the time to also be aware of the things that are happening, inside you and around you. Bring these before God and speak to Him.

# Monday and Tuesday

[**PSALM 92:1-3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2092&version=NIV)

Remember this is your time alone with God. It is a time to tell God what is on your mind (thinking back over the past day), listen to him speak to you (reading and meditating on a bible passage), and finally, to respond to him (prayer). The questions are there to help you do this. Ignore them if they do not help. If your time is limited, I suggest that you don’t do everything in one go but spread them over the two days.

1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you during the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 92:1-3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2092&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“It is good to praise the Lord … proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night …”* “Praising God and proclaiming his love and faithfulness” paints us a good picture of what the Psalmist is advocating. It is not merely words and songs that elevate and glorify God, but the telling of stories and testimonies of his love and faithfulness and letting them invoke in us praise. Is this something that you would do frequently? Do you think “morning and night” is significant or do they merely suggest frequently or regularly? The Psalmist encourages us to express how we feel about God, telling us that it is something good for us to do. What about the contrary? What happens when you rarely have occasion to praise God?
2. *“It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High, proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night, to the music of the ten-stringed lyre and the melody of the harp.”* In bringing in music and musical instruments, the Psalmist is clearly thinking of more formal settings, like a worship meeting. Do you think the worship sessions in your church are good for you, in that they are like “chicken soup for your soul”? Elaborate.
3. *“It is good to praise the Lord …”* Do you read this as meaning a) this is something good to do; b) doing this is good for you; c) this is something all Christians should do; or d) this is something that God would appreciate?

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**PSALM 92:4-9**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2092&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 92:4-9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2092&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“For you make me glad by your deeds, Lord; I sing for joy at what your hands have done. How great are your works, Lord, how profound your thoughts!”* How did God’s deeds and works affect the Psalmist? Do you think he is speaking of God’s specific activities in his life or God’s general activities in Creation? How does God affect you?
2. *“Senseless people do not know, fools do not understand, that though the wicked spring up like grass and all evildoers flourish, they will be destroyed forever. … For surely your enemies, Lord, surely your enemies will perish; all evildoers will be scattered.”* How does the Psalmist describe those who do not appreciate God? In what ways do they demonstrate their lack of appreciation of God? What then will result from these people’s lives that are lived with no appreciation of who God is? Do you think this might be at least one reason why it is good to praise God and proclaim his love, his faithfulness, his deeds, his works, his thoughts?
3. *“But you, Lord, are forever exalted.”* Is God—his love, his faithfulness, his deeds, his works, his thoughts—someone who brings you joy for who he is and what he does and what he stands for? Who is God to you? How do you exalt him?

# Friday and Saturday

[**PSALM 92:10-15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2092&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 92:10-15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2092&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; fine oils have been poured on me. My eyes have seen the defeat of my adversaries; my ears have heard the rout of my wicked foes.”* What is the Psalmist’s testimony of God in this psalm?
2. *“The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green …”* The righteous would be those who find their delight in God. Why does the Psalmist believe that they will be the ones who would get to the finish line? Do you think this is saying that the lifestyle of the righteous will put them in good stead, or that God will actively bless the righteous? Do you think this is realistic—what about disease, accidents, crime, disaster, etc? How would you understand what the Psalmist is claiming here?
3. *… proclaiming, “The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.”* This is the basis of the Psalmist’s confidence—God is good. Is this the conclusion you have arrived at so far in your own Christian experience?

# Sunday

**YOU MAKE ME GLAD**

*“I sing for joy at what your hands have done.”*

In these days where much of worship in churches consists of singing songs, it would seem that all of us would know in our life and experience what is meant when the Psalmist says that it is good to praise the Lord, as expressed by the rest of the psalm.

Yet I suspect, and forgive me if I am wrong in your particular case, that many of our experiences of worship in church, while they may bring us to a high in emotion, do not last long enough to draw us closer to God, and be emotionally invested in him, for the rest of the week. And that is because, again, in my opinion, there is a disconnect between what we sing and what we know—what arises in our hearts out of our experiences.

I think that in the main, the worship we experience in church is not so much the response that arises out of the lives of the people of God gathered as much as the efforts of those in charge to lead the worship to transport us to a place where the words and songs of worship enter our minds and hearts and draw out our emotions. Or worse, the obligation we carry out every Sunday to elevate the God we profess with words and songs.

In other words, churches are now much more concerned that we have a “good” worship, whatever that means to us, rather than “true” worship—worship that each of us can honestly express, arising from our knowledge, experience and our faith. It is true that “good” worship may lead to “good and true” worship, and that would be excellent because such true worship that comes out of a good worship can work in our minds and hearts and produce the “good” that the Psalmist speaks of.

But all of us should focus on true worship.

Jesus, in response to a question posed by the Samaritan woman he met at a well said this:

*“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” (John 4:23-24)*

1. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down in the past week. Read the short sharing above. Does it add anything to your own thoughts?
2. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.