**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 25:1-5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2025&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 the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 25:1-5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2025&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. *“In you, Lord my God, I put my trust.”* From the grand and cosmic view of God in Psalm 24, we enter into a more intimate reflection in Psalm 25. Do these two perspectives conflict in your mind? Is it one or the other for you? Is it possible that “the Lord, strong and mighty in battle” can also be “my God, in whom I put my trust”? Does one perspective enrich the other, and vice versa?
2. *“In you, Lord my God, I put my trust.”* To trust completely is to know the person is good, the person is in control, and the person has your interest at heart. Only God deserves our complete trust. Trust is a response: you act in faith, without knowing the outcome, as a child would towards their parents. Spend some time to meditate on these few words, and what trust can bring you, and what trust requires of you.
3. *“I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause.”* The implied act of trust here is the psalmist’s allegiance to God, expressed in his obedience to God’s laws, as against turning to alliances, and seeking power and victory in evil. Do you trust that when you honour God and obey him that you will not be put to shame?
4. *“Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.”* Out of the belief in (3), the psalmist seeks to know more so as to further obey. Do you desire to know more so as to obey God more fully? How do you express this desire?

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**PSALM 25:6-8**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2025&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 the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 25:6-8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2025&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. *“Remember, Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.”* The Psalmist recalls the past and reminds God of his great mercy and love. In your own history with God what is it about God that stands out the most for you?
2. *“Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, Lord, are good.”* At the same time, the Psalmist recalls his own sinfulness. The Psalmist calls on God to remember his mercy and love, overlook his youthful indiscretions, but remember him nonetheless, trusting that out of his goodness, God will take the view that is best for the Psalmist. This is a very human approach: remember the good, overlook the bad, excuse them for youthful indiscretions. How do you think God, who is good, looks at us?
3. *“Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.”* The Psalmist’s view of the good and upright God is not one who will judge and condemn, but one who instructs and helps the sinner to change his ways. How do you view God as he views the weaknesses, blemishes and sins in you? Do you think this is the way he sees you or he sees you in some other way?

# Friday and Saturday

[**PSALM 25:9-11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2025&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 the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 25:9-11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2025&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. *“He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.”* There is a movement here from “he instructs sinners in his ways” to “he guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way”. Why did the Psalmist move from seeing himself as among sinners to being one who is humble? What is his point about humility in this context?
2. *“All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant.*” From “humble”, the Psalmist moves to “those who keep the demands of his covenant” and God’s response progresses from “teach and guide” to love and faithfulness. What is the point that the Psalmist wants to emphasise?
3. *“For the sake of your name, Lord, forgive my iniquity, though it is great.”* Ultimately the Psalmist realises that God cannot overlook sin but he can forgive those who humbly seek his grace. Do you see your sin as mere indiscretions, youthful or otherwise, or do you understand that in God’s presence it needs to be disposed of properly?

# 

# Sunday

**IN YOU, LORD MY GOD, I PUT MY TRUST**

*“Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.”*

From the confident declaration of trust, to the desire for guidance and instruction, the Psalmist revels in the goodness of God. But when he considers himself, and his less than worthy life, you can sense his hesitation. He calls on God’s mercy and love, he asks for his indiscretions to be overlooked and forgotten, but you feel that he could not move on. He turns to the God who is upright and good to teach him and guide him, and at this point he begins to understand what is needed.

“He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way”. In the context of sin, trust is not the most important approach. We must be humble, acknowledge our wrong, and seek forgiveness. The focus is not on God, but on ourselves. “I trust you”, “you are merciful and loving”, even, “my hope is in you” is not quite what is needed.

When it comes to sin, what God desires of us is a humble “forgive my iniquity”. Yes, you do so because you trust him, and you do so because he is merciful and loving, and you do so because there is no one else you can turn to—he is your only hope—but ultimately, most importantly, it must be that you do so because you were wrong and you acknowledge it and humbly throw yourself at his mercy.

We all want to dwell on the victory that God brings; we want to be vindicated and our hopes fulfilled. But the ways of God are righteous and we are sinful, weak and full of blemishes. At some point we need to be humble enough to acknowledge that we do not deserve to be in God’s good books; we do not deserve to “ascend the mountain of the Lord”. It is when we humbly come to him and acknowledge our sin and seek his forgiveness and help that we enter the place where our taste of God is “loving and faithful” (v10).

*“For the sake of your name, Lord, forgive my iniquity, though it is great.”*

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.