**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 40:1-5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+40&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 40:1-5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+40&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. *“I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.”* What is the core reason for us to praise God? Is this true for you?
2. *“Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him.”* Do you think this is true, that when Christians praise God for what he has done in their lives, many will come to know and fear God?
3. *“Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.”* Why is “ the one who trusts in the Lord” contrasted with “the one who looks to the proud” and “the one who turns to false gods”? What does the Lord desire in those who decide to follow him?
4. *“Many, Lord my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us. None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare.”* The God of the Psalmist is active in his life and there is always much to speak of. Is this your God as well?

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**PSALM 40:6-10**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+40&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 40:6-10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+40&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. *Sacrifice and offering you did not desire—but my ears you have opened—burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require.”* In the modern church what would be some equivalent to the act of offering sacrifices and offerings? The Psalmist makes the point of what is truly important and valuable to God (see next question), contrasting that with sacrifices and offerings. Does he mean that sacrifices and offerings should not be made at all? What is the point that he is making?
2. *Then I said, “Here I am, I have come—it is written about me in the scroll. I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.”* Far more important to God is obedience that shapes the heart and character of the worshipper. Without this, the sacrifices and offerings would be meaningless. How should this shape the way you worship God?
3. *“I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, Lord, as you know. I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help. I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness from the great assembly.”* Do you think it is acceptable to be silent about what God has done for you?

# Friday and Saturday

[**PSALM 40:11-17**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+40&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 40:11-17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+40&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. *“Do not withhold your mercy from me, Lord; may your love and faithfulness always protect me. For troubles without number surround me; my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails within me. Be pleased to save me, Lord; come quickly, Lord, to help me.”* Why does the Psalmist speak of his sin, his troubles and his fears in the context of his worship? Do you think such pleas for mercy and help is a part of acceptable worship?
2. *May all who want to take my life be put to shame and confusion; may all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace. May those who say to me, “Aha! Aha!” be appalled at their own shame. But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who long for your saving help always say, “The Lord is great!”* The Psalmist calls for his enemies to be put to shame and for him (and all who worship God like him) to experience victory. Do you think such an attitude is a part of acceptable worship? On the other hand, if we are always sceptical and fearful and pessimistic, do we glorify Him?
3. *“But as for me, I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer; you are my God, do not delay.”* The Psalmist ends his psalm of worship on his knees, a humble creature who needs his God. Do you think this is an appropriate posture in worship or it is better to have raised hands shouting words of power and victory?

# Sunday

**OUR ACTIVE GOD**

*“Many, Lord my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us. None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare.”*

When you contemplate the God of David, you will see a God who is active in his life: “I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.”

David’s God has done wondrous things but he is also continuing to do wondrous things in the life of David and the nation in “the things you planned for us”. So not only is David’s God active in the past, active in rescuing him from dangerous situations, active in taking care of the universe, he is also actively involved in the life of David and the nation. And so when David stands to testify of God’s greatness, there is always much to tell. “None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare.” David is not merely repeating the same stories over and over again. There are fresh experiences, fresh exploits, fresh encounters and fresh insights into his God.

David’s God is alive and actively involved in his life, in his nation, and in his world.

It is possible to think that David has a lot to say about his God because he is the king and surely there is much need to depend on God’s protection and care. It may also be true that God is uninvolved in our lives because we are not really walking in his righteousness and love; in the life we are living we do not need him and the things we seek from him are not the things he wants us to have.

*“I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, Lord, as you know. I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help. I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness from the great assembly.”*

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.