**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.

Notes:

* I copy the Word files to my Google Drive and then use Google Docs so they are not only archived in my Google Drive, but I can also access them wherever I have internet access.
* Don’t be fixated on the questions. Skip them if they are not helpful. The important things are the text, your thoughts/responses and God.
* Also don’t be fixated on the dates/sequence. Change the dates/days however you wish.
* I find writing down my answers/thoughts/prayers very helpful to focus my mind. Not to mention that I can always refer back to them.

# Monday

**MATTHEW 7:13-20**

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. Read the text until you can understand what it says. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. *“Narrow and small gate; narrow road; few are there. Wide gate, broad road, many users.”* One leads to life, the other leads to destruction. What is the key factor? Is it popularity; attractiveness; easy to find and easy to use; what is Jesus warning us about?
3. *Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.* What do they offer? Why would they succeed in ensnaring us? How could we miss their deception? What is Jesus warning us about?
4. The issue at hand is our judgement, which affects our choices. And our judgement is impaired when we are not rigorous and careful but instead allow our senses to influence our judgement. What is the consequence of making poor choices?
5. In the matter of choosing the concerns and priorities of God or the concerns and priorities of the world, how do you rate your choosing?
6. Write down a prayer in response.

# Tuesday

**MATTHEW 7:13-20**

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. Read the passage. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down yesterday. Is there anything that you need to respond to?
3. Review the past day. What concerns/joys/events occupy your heart?
4. Write down a prayer in response.

# Wednesday

**MATTHEW 7:21-23**

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. Read the text until you can understand what it says. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. *“‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”.* They acknowledge Jesus as Lord; they were involved in spiritual activities; they did what they did in Jesus’ name; why are they rejected?
3. *In John 10:14 Jesus says “I know my sheep and my sheep know me.”* Why is it here he says “I never knew you” but instead calls them evildoers? What went wrong?
4. Returning to the theme of choices: what do you think was the wrong choice these people made that put them in this situation? What is Jesus warning us about?
5. Write down a prayer in response.

# Thursday

**MATTHEW 7:21-23**

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. Read the passage. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down yesterday. Is there anything that you need to respond to?
3. Review the past day. What concerns/joys/events occupy your heart?
4. Write down a prayer in response.

# Friday

**MATTHEW 7:24-29**

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. Read the text until you can understand what it says. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. What is the difference between the wise man and foolish man?
3. Have you been wise or foolish thus far in your Christian life?
4. *“He taught as one who had authority.”* The idea of authority is that what is said by the one with authority will surely be so. Do you think Jesus is teaching you with the authority of truth?
5. Write down a prayer in response.

# Saturday

**MATTHEW 7:24-29**

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. Read the passage. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down yesterday. Is there anything that you need to respond to?
3. Review the past day. What concerns/joys/events occupy your heart?
4. Write down a prayer in response.

# Sunday

**CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES**

You can recover from bad choices. This is the grace of God. But choices have consequences. Jesus likened them to gates and roads. You go through a gate, and you get to a road. This road is not the same as another road behind another gate. When you are on one road, you shut yourself from the other road. Choices have consequences. Choose with the wisdom of God and not the wisdom of the world.

But how do you recognise the wisdom of God? How do you avoid being deceived by the wisdom of the world? By their fruit, Jesus teaches us. Here Jesus does not tell us what are godly fruit and what are evil fruit. They are just good and bad fruit. But you will need to know and you will need to know the fruit of our choices; not just the result, but also the kind of persons we become as we go deeper and deeper in our choices. The fruit and the tree are interrelated.

By the time we get to the pearly gates of heaven it will be too late. I never knew you! Away from me, you evildoers! Essentially if we continue to bear bad fruit, we are bad trees. And bad trees cannot bear good fruit. Even if the activities are the same as those who are good trees.

Here, now, we need to learn to make good choices but even more importantly, we need to make good choices; not just head knowledge, but in the shape of our lives.

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. Review the passages of Scripture, and the answers/thoughts you wrote down in the past week. What conclusion can you draw from the passages of Scripture you have been considering? Is there anything that you need to respond to?
3. Read the short sharing above. Does it add anything to your conclusion?
4. Review the past week. What concerns/joys/events occupy your heart?
5. Write down a prayer in response.