**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

**1 JOHN 3:1-3**

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. Why does God regard us as his children? Are we *really* his children? But we don’t in any way display anything that will identify us as his children; on what grounds can we claim to be his children? Do YOU think you are really God’s child? What does it mean that you are a child of God in his eyes?
3. *“We shall see him as he is.”* Paul describes Jesus as *“For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”* (Colossians 1:16-17) What do you think it is like to see Jesus — the centre of the universe — beyond just the man who spent 33 years on earth, was crucified, buried and rose from death the third day? Do you think THAT person will fulfill his promise that YOU will be like him, a child of God? What will it be like, to be like him?
4. This then is our hope: we are God’s children by his will, and we will be God’s children by his power, when Christ comes again. If this is our hope, how does John suggest we then should live?
5. Write down a prayer in response.

# Tuesday

**1 JOHN 3:1-3**

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

**1 JOHN 3:4-6**

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. Vv4-6: John’s suggestion in v3 that we should “purify ourselves” means that we should filter out sin and allow righteousness to develop in our lives. In v4 how does John characterise sin? What do you think “lawlessness” implies?
3. In thinking about how we can “purify” ourselves, what can the nature of sin, as lawlessness, teach us about how we can shield ourselves from sinful behaviour?
4. Similarly, how can the truth that Jesus came to take away our sin clue us to another aspect of how we are to deal with sin in our lives (see also 1 John 1:9, 2:1-2)?
5. What must we be doing to be a person who “lives in Christ”, “has seen Christ”, “ knows Christ”? John suggests that such a person would not keep on sinning.
6. Putting together your thoughts from the passage, how can we, while still not fully what we will be as God’s children, purify ourselves, just as Christ is pure?
7. Write down a prayer in response.

# Thursday

**1 JOHN 3:4-6**

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

**1 JOHN 3:7-10**

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. *“Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray.”* From the context of what you have read so far in chapter 3, what do you think these people who are leading others astray are teaching? How does John clarify this matter of the Christian and sin? What is associated with God and what is associated with sin? What is Jesus’ objective when he came to us?
3. Sin is not to be tolerated in a Christian but it does not mean that Christians can be completely free from sin (see 1 John 3:2, 2:1 and 1:8-10). What areas are there in your life where you feel you are “tolerating the presence of sin”? Go over the previous days’ passage to consider what you can do about them.
4. Write down a prayer in response.

# Saturday

**1 JOHN 3:7-10**

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

**CALLED (TO BE) A CHILD OF GOD**

*See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (1 John 3:1)*

You can see it as an honour, a privilege, even grace; but John sees it as love. It is love, is it not, that he chooses to adopt us as his children, to bear his name, to be with him in his house, to love us as we who are parents love our children, and much more! See what great love the Father has LAVISHED upon us, that we should be called his children.

And that is what we are! What else is there to say if God says it is so?

But while God regards us as his children, we are very far from being his children in actuality. We continue to be sinful and righteousness is still a distant goal. The day will come when Christ appears and we will be like him. So even though we remain pretty much normal human beings like others around us, we can be sure not only that God sees us as his children but that one day we will be like Christ in his fullness.

If that is so, and to be so, John says that we should then begin the process of becoming like Christ; to purify ourselves just as Christ is pure.

It is a two-step process: strain out that which is sinful, lawless, evil and associated with the devil; and allow the seed of God’s image to grow — develop a heart that is fertile for righteousness, and do what is right. This part has a lot to do with love which John says a lot more about in the following verses. (Do read further and get a feel of what he has to say.)

But for now, savour this tremendous gift God has bestowed upon you: In his love he has made you his child. That is who you are, the Bible says.

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 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.