**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

**PSALM 37:1-11**

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. Vv1-2: Why would we be envious of the wicked? Why shouldn’t we?
3. Vv3-6: What should we do instead? What will result when we do so?
4. Vv7-11: When we see wickedness prospering around us, what should we do? What shouldn’t we do? Why not?
5. Is it really true that God will deal with the wicked and that he will bless those who focus on doing good and being righteous, those who commit themselves to God and wait patiently for him? What does it mean to be “meek” (v11)?
6. Do you fret that instead of seeing the righteous around you prosper, it is the ungodly, the rule-breakers, and those who cheat the system, that seem to get ahead in life. Do you wonder whether you should follow suit and have one rule for business and one rule for church? Write down a prayer in response.

# Tuesday

**PSALM 37:1-11**

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

**PSALM 37:12-33**

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. Vv12-17: What power does the wicked have? What about the poor? Who does God oppose and who does he support?
3. Vv18-33: What characterises the wicked? What characterises the righteous? What characterises you?
4. What then is the fate of the wicked and the fate of the righteous?
5. The psalmist in the beginning observes that often the wicked succeed and this upsets him. But as he ponders over the situation he is assured that God is firmly on the side of the righteous. How about you? Write down a prayer in response.

# Thursday

**PSALM 37:12-33**

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

**PSALM 37:34-40**

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. Vv34-40: The psalmist calls on us to hope in God because he is faithful; he is actively involved in ensuring that our hope is never in vain and the wicked’s success is never permanent. Will you hope in God for your life and obey him in righteousness or will you trust in the tools and methods of the wicked to prosper yourself?
3. The Christian’s hope is in God. It is his values, his righteousness that we uphold in our life and living. It is to him we turn when we are in trouble. God calls on us to take refuge in him and in turn he will be faithful to us. Write down a prayer in response.

# Saturday

**PSALM 37:34-40**

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

##### TRUST IN THE LORD

The premise of this psalm is straightforward: God will bless his people and oppose the wicked. The psalmist makes it clear that the people of God are the righteous; those who uphold his values and principles.

From his time until now, it can be seen that the wicked — those who seek their own gain using all means available and regardless of who are hurt and impoverished along the way — often succeed. Not only are the righteous and the law-abiding often much slower to climb the ladder of success, the poor and needy have their rights trampled upon. It would seem that the way to success is not through love, kindness, mercy and generosity, but through scheming, selfishness, by circumventing laws, and even outright cheating, taking advantage of those who are defenseless. At the micro level people jump queue, park illegally or double-park, and game the system as much as possible.

The gains of wickedness are short term. God will make sure of that. Instead, the psalmist tells us to trust in the Lord and continue doing good. Commit your life to his way and delight in all that he is.

“Do not fret”, the psalmist says, “do not fret—it leads only to evil.” Don’t get upset, don’t be provoked to anger. Instead be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him to assert his justice. It is the meek who will inherit the land for “the Lord loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones.” So when we are in such circumstances, or we see the injustice in the land, the Psalmist calls us to turn away from looking at the wicked but to look at God and to place our hope in him. This is of course not turning a blind eye to injustice, but turning to God for justice. This is not doing nothing but doing what your hope in God allows you to do.

It is not common for the righteous people of God to become rich and powerful. Some do but most of us are just comfortable being blessed and being a blessing. What we delight in are the precious things that God sees as fruits of righteousness: love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. The legacy of a righteous life lives on while the wicked will be cursed by his fellow men and by God. So we also need to be careful about the measuring stick with which we measure success.

All this is true because God is faithful to those who commit to his righteousness and God is eternally opposed to wickedness.

*Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.*

*Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.*

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. Do they add anything to your own conclusions?
4. Review the past week. What concerns/joys/events occupy your heart?
5. Write down a prayer in response.