**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

**MATTHEW 3:13-16**

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 did John resist baptising Jesus? Why did Jesus insist on being baptised?
3. What happened immediately after the baptism? As the “pioneer and perfecter of faith” (Hebrews 12:2) Jesus paves the way for us who follow after him. Just as he received the Holy Spirit, so too do we receive the Holy Spirit when we repent and follow Jesus. In Matthew 3:11, John said that the key quality of Jesus’ ministry is that he will baptise with the Holy Spirit. Why is having the Holy Spirit so important?
4. In your own journey as a Christian, is the Holy Spirit a key aspect of your life? How so? How can you ensure that he remains a vital person in your life?
5. Write down a prayer in response.

# Tuesday

**MATTHEW 3:13-16**

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 3:17a**

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. *“And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son.”* The second reality that Jesus enables us to enter into is our adoption as God’s children. As God acknowledges the Sonship of Jesus, so too he acknowledges us as his sons and daughters (see 1 John 3:1, Romans 8:14-17). Take some time to be quiet and in your mind hear God acknowledging you as his son or daughter. *“You are my son; you are my daughter.”* How does it feel to hear God calling you his son or daughter?
3. *“Whom I love.”* Naturally, for what Father does not love his children. This is the most important outcome, that when God calls you his son or daughter, it is an act of love. Take time to listen to God opening his heart to you, to accept you as family and loving you as his son or daughter. How does it feel? What does it mean to you?
4. Remember that this is God speaking; he is the God who keeps his promises and says what he means and means what he says and he says that because of Jesus he loves you as a member of his family. Write down a prayer in response.

# Thursday

**MATTHEW 3:17a**

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 3:17b**

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. *“With him I am well pleased.”* Note that this is said at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, at the point of his baptism. God’s pleasure at his Son is not for what he does but for who he is. Similarly in God’s eyes we are perfect because of the perfect sacrifice of Jesus — *For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy* (Hebrews 10:14). In God’s eyes our sin is wiped clean — *Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more* (Hebrews 10:17). Do you believe that God is pleased with you?
3. *“For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever you who are being made holy.” “Your sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.” “With you I am well pleased.”* Take time to hear God’s Word as it applies to you. How does it feel? What does it mean to you?
4. It is true that none of us at this moment are perfect; but God tells us that he accepts us as such because of Jesus’ sacrifice. And God does not lie. Write down a prayer in response.

# Saturday

**MATTHEW 3:17b**

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

##### THE MYSTERY OF OUR SALVATION

How can the Holy Spirit dwell in us? How can God adopt us as his children? Why would he? Why does he love us? And how is it that we can enjoy his unreserved endorsement, that he is pleased with us?

It is a mystery. I do not feel especially holy, or exceptional or worthy of even the love of my fellow man, much less the God of the Universe! In fact, I know I am not. But I believe God means it when he gifts me with adoption, affection and approval.

When Jesus, as Man, emerged from the waters of baptism, the Holy Spirit descended on him and the voice of God proclaimed, *“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”* He is the pioneer, the first man who paved the way for all of us to follow. And his experience is now my reality.

I would not waste time to ponder how this can be. It is a mystery, but a wonderful one! I am empowered by the presence of the Holy Spirit in me. My relationship with God is not only restored, it is elevated. Not only does he care about me as his creation, he has decided to love me as son (daughter) for the sake of his Son. And just by trusting his promises, and with vow of allegiance to Jesus to follow him as my master, I too enjoy his pleasure.

I don’t understand it, but I take it with gratitude.

“*You are my son (daughter), whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”*

Amen, amen, amen! Thank you, Jesus. I worship you for all you have done to get me to this point. May I never abuse your sacrifice. Holy Spirit, help me that I may not disappoint my Father. Father, Abba, Father.

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.