**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 4:1-4**

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. This incident follows from the baptism of Jesus, and the declaration from the Father, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” Why did the Spirit lead Jesus to be tempted? Why is this necessary (See Hebrews 5:8-9, and 4:15)?
3. *“If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”* What do you think is the temptation: to prove his Sonship; to satisfy his human needs; or to abuse his divine status in order to circumvent the limitations of his humanity?
4. *“It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”* How is this an answer to the temptation?
5. While the physical needs of man are important (as acknowledged in Jesus’ response), the will of God is all-important. Jesus was led to the desert and the limits of being a human are exposed. But he accepted the will of God and endured the suffering of being human rather than use his divinity to escape the suffering. Jesus did not pretend to be human. He was human. Does obeying God expose you to pain and suffering, loss and deprivation? How does the example of our Lord encourage you?
6. Write down a prayer in response.

# Tuesday

**MATTHEW 4:1-4**

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 4:5-7**

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. *“If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down.”* The scene is at the holy city and Jesus is at the highest point of the temple. What is this display to accomplish? What is the temptation?
3. *“It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”* It is ***also*** written. Jesus did not dispute the verse that the devil quotes. So, why not use it?
4. Hebrews 12:6 tells us *“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”* Is your own relationship with the Lord built on faith and trust or do you hold yourself back wanting him to prove himself over and over again? Who is the Lord in that relationship?
5. Write down a prayer in response.

# Thursday

**MATTHEW 4:5-7**

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 4:8-11**

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. *“All this I will give you, if you will bow down and worship me.”* What is the temptation? But is it true?
3. *“Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”* At this point Jesus dismisses Satan for who he is: the fallen angel who has deserted his own calling to worship God and serve him only; and Satan has no reply. Satan tells us what we want to hear and promises what only God can deliver. Are you being exposed to Satan’s lies and illusions? Write down a prayer in response.

# Saturday

**MATTHEW 4:8-11**

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.

# Sunday

##### OUR PERFECT SAVIOUR

*“Jesus is the son of God; of course he is without sin!” “He is God, it can’t be that difficult for him to be on the cross.” “Jesus is the son of God; surely he cannot be tempted.”*

The notion that Jesus is God disguised as a man is very difficult for us, Christians in the 20th century, to shake off. In the days when Jesus walked on earth, the problem was the reverse. How can this man be God? Surely he is just a man through whom God is working miracles.

Hebrews 5:7-10 tells us that *“During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.”*

Son though he was, Jesus the man “learned obedience from what he suffered”. He did not pretend to be a man and used his divine nature to coast through his humanity. And for the son of God, just being a man surely is suffering — the creator of the universe stuck in a human body. How much more to be a man in a sinful world?

Neither did he display spectacular miracles to convince the world of his divinity. Yes he performed miracles, but as a man by the power of God. And when the Pharisees asked for a sign, he alluded to the cross.

In being truly and perfectly man, and all that man is before the fall, in perfect fellowship with God, he became the perfect saviour, the perfect sacrifice, and thus the perfect high priest (mediator) for us mankind before God.

Satan tempted Jesus at the tension between his humanity and his divinity but Jesus stayed true to become the perfect human sacrifice for the sins of the human race.

In a final toss of the dice, Satan offered a shortcut: worship me and I will let you win. But of course it was a lie. *“Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”* and with that, the destiny of man changed forever.

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.