[**TIME ALONE WITH GOD**](http://timealonewithgod.org/)

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

[**GENESIS 2:1-3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=gen+2&version=NIV)

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. In the passage today we learned of the 7th day, set apart as a day when God “ceased from work” (the meaning of the word translated as rest). In other words, it is not six days of Creation and then one day of rest, but rather seven days of creation in which on the seventh day, God ceased from work and made it holy (this is a set and not a sequence because there is no 8th day and so on). Assuming that God does not live in seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years—which is how modern man marks time—and thus this is not about establishing the “7-day week”, why is the day God ceased from work made to be a part of the period God worked, and made distinctly special (holy)?
3. God, being God, obviously does not need to rest or sleep. So what do you think God did on that “7th day” when his work of Creation was clearly finished?
4. It would seem that with the work of Creation delineated by days (“evening and morning” during which God was not “working”), and the inclusion of a day when God ceased from work in the account of Creation, we can safely conclude that this pattern has been set for our sake, rather than something that God has to do. What can we learn from God’s pattern about how we should structure our activities? What significance would you take from the fact that the concept of “rest” is baked into the account of God’s activities BEFORE the fall?
5. “Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy.” What do you think the seventh day should focus on: not continuing the work of the 6 days, or using the day to give your attention to what you have not had occasion to focus on in the 6 days? What do you think should be YOUR focus and activities on the 7th day?
6. Write down a prayer in response.

# Tuesday

[**GENESIS 2:1-3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=gen+2&version=NIV)

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

[**EXODUS 20:8-11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ex+20&version=NIV)

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 passage gives the fourth commandment of the 10 commandments. *“Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God.”* “Shabbat”, the Hebrew term translated as “Sabbath,” literally means rest or cessation. What does the commandment tell us the 7th day rest is for? Who does the 7th day belong to?
3. Why do you think this commandment is a part of the 10 commandments? Do you think this commandment is one we should keep as much as we should keep the rest of the 10 commandments?
4. *“On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns.”* Very clearly God takes the 7th day and frees everyone from work. *“Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”* My simple understanding of this is that you have 6 days in the week to work to feed your mind and body and God (takes and) gives you 1 day to feed your soul and spirit. How would you feed your soul and spirit?
5. Do you keep a sabbath rest? What do you do on that day? Write down a prayer in response.

# Thursday

[**EXODUS 20:8-11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ex+20&version=NIV)

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

[**MARK 6:30-34**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+6&version=NIV)

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. Vv6b-13 tells us of the mission trip that Jesus sent the disciples out on. And now they have returned and were clearly excited by all they experienced. How did Mark describe the situation (v31a)? How did Jesus respond to the situation (v31b)? Why? Isn’t the work more important?
3. *“Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”* What are the 4 ingredients that Jesus prescribed? Go through and explain what each is intended to achieve.

1. *“But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.”* Circumstances overtook them however. How did Jesus respond? Do you think he abandoned his disciples’ needs?
2. Did Jesus tell his disciples to rest but neglected to do so himself? Does Jesus’ example here show that the needs of the mission field supersede the needs of the Christian worker?
3. What have you learned about work and rest? Write down a prayer in response.

# Saturday

[**MARK 6:30-34**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+6&version=NIV)

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

##### CREATED FOR REST

Jesus’ instructions to his disciples, as they were still caught up in the “high” of a successful mission trip, to separate themselves from the work, to be alone with him, to be quiet and to rest, has taught me that my Lord’s priority is firstly for his disciples. The work is important, as he later demonstrates, but not at the expense of the needs of his disciples.

But did Jesus neglect his own needs? No. He was not a part of the mission trip. And his example in Mark 1, keeping his time alone with God and moving to the leading of the Holy Spirit rather than the demands of the mission field, tells me that he regularly takes care of his soul and spirit. And no, he was the one teaching, not the disciples, and they only got involved at the end of the day when they themselves needed food. His sheep needed their Shepherd, and he responded to their need.

This recognition of the needs of man, both the mind and the body (productive work) and the soul and the spirit (nourishing rest) stems from the days of Creation, telling us that God has created us for work and for rest. Paul in 2 Thessalonians 3:10 raises this principle: “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.” So one is not more important than the other. Man is made for work and for rest.

But what should that sabbath rest consist of? In my imagination (and so it is debatable), God savoured his Creation. We catch glimpses of this in those terse “and God saw that it was good” revelations almost on a daily basis and we saw the “very good” at the end of the 6th. In Genesis 2, it seemed that God spent time regularly with Adam and Eve in the Garden, and also interacting with Adam and helping him get acquainted with the rest of Creation. There was deep fellowship and I’m sure that these were times when Adam and Eve’s souls and spirits were nourished.

To me, the seventh day is a day for God, for family, for friends, for love, for laughter, for warmth, for kindness and generosity, for blessing: to give and so to receive. The Preacher wrote in Ecclesiastes 3, to “find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God.” This is not to be limited to the seventh day but where possible, everyday we should look to feed our soul and spirit; but the Sabbath is God’s command.

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.