[**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

[**JOHN 15:18-25**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+15&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. *“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.”* Having spoken of the Father’s love, and his love, and his command to love one another in the previous passage, Jesus now turns to the rejection by the world. Do you think this is Jesus’ way of reminding us of the resources available to us as we face a world that hates us? What reason does Jesus give for the world’s rejection of us as Christians? What do you think of this picture that when we respond to Jesus we are in actual fact leaving the world—we no longer call it home? How should this impact you?
3. *“A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.”* You as a Christian are a representative for your Lord. How people respond to you is a measure of how people will respond to Jesus. Would this be true of your life as a Christian and as a witness for him?
4. *“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.”* In coming to the world, Jesus gave the world the path unto salvation. But in doing so, he also took away all excuse if they rejected him. How can this shape the way you view your role as a witness for Christ in helping others to come to know Christ? Should this constrain your efforts to share the Gospel?
5. Who in your circle do you think is open to Christ? Who is closed to him? Write down a prayer in response.

# Tuesday

[**JOHN 15:18-25**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+15&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

[**JOHN 16:1-11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2016&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. *All this I have told you so that you will not fall away.* The difficulties and persecution that Jesus described were what his disciples had to face in those times. Do you think a more general notion of persecution would also apply to us as well? Would it be normal for a Christian to face opposition and even persecution because of who he is? In what way would knowing what to expect help us to remain faithful to Jesus?
3. *But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.* According to Jesus, having the Holy Spirit is even better than having Jesus physically around. Why is this so? Jesus is convinced that we are better off with the Holy Spirit than with him. Do you think so? Why?
4. *“When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment.”* How would you understand the role of the Holy Spirit as explained in vv8-11?
5. *“None of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’”* Where was Jesus going? Why is that important to us? Write down a prayer in response.

# Thursday

[**JOHN 16:1-11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2016&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

[**JOHN 14:15-17, 25-27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2014&version=NIV)**,** [**JOHN 15:26-27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+15&version=NIV)**,** [**JOHN 16:12-15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2016&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. *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth.* According to John 14, what will the Spirit of Truth do for us who are Jesus’ disciples?
3. *When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.* What else will the Spirit of Truth do? How do you think he will do this? What are we supposed to do as well?
4. *But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*  What else will the Spirit of Truth do? What does Jesus mean that the Spirit will not speak on his own? How does that help us in knowing the Spirit’s voice?
5. *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”* Write down a prayer in response.

# Saturday

[**JOHN 14:15-17, 25-27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2014&version=NIV)**,** [**JOHN 15:26-27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+15&version=NIV)**,** [**JOHN 16:12-15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2016&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

**OUR ADVOCATE IN A HOSTILE WORLD**

*“But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.”*

Jesus tells us that having the Holy Spirit is better than having him still around. Of course part of that is because Jesus is going to the Father and there he will be our intercessor. But you can’t escape his meaning that the Holy Spirit is vital to us as disciples. It begs the question “what role does the Holy Spirit play in your Christian walk?”

Jesus does not elaborate as to how the Holy Spirit will interact with us. All he said was “But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” It would seem that we do not need to know and so we should trust that the onus is not on us but on the Holy Spirit.

What he does elaborate in detail is what the Holy Spirit will do.

Firstly, he “will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” Jesus makes it very clear that what the Holy Spirit teaches and reveals will be consistent with Jesus. “He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.” It is an important marker that helps us know the voice of the Spirit.

Secondly, “he will testify about me.” One way to understand this is that the Holy Spirit will work to attest to the truth of Jesus. Another way is to say that he will be your great resource as you testify about Jesus. Whether it is through miracles that support the preaching of the Gospel, or it is wisdom and insight that make the preaching of the Gospel effective, or it is working directly in the hearts of hearers, to convict them of their sin and open their hearts to the love of Christ, help them to be aware of the judgement of God, or in ways unknown, the Holy Spirit is to be your most important resource in witnessing for the Lord.

Finally, “he will tell you what is yet to come.” Jesus is very careful to emphasise that the Spirit will never go outside of what is already revealed in Christ, will never undermine the authority of Christ, and the supremacy of Christ; ultimately Christ is the One to whom all things belong. But we cannot avoid that one of the Spirit’s roles is to reveal what is yet to come—prophecy. Knowing how this can be used by the evil one to deceive, my only word of caution is that prophecy from the Spirit of Truth must bear the mark of truth.

What is the prophecy for? “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.” It would seem from the context that the prophecy is to prepare disciples to face difficult times so that they will not fall away. I do not believe that the Spirit will prophesy for frivolous and trivial purposes.

The Holy Spirit keeps our memory and understanding of Jesus alive and fresh. He enables us, in word and life, to testify of Jesus, and as a result challenges people’s ideas about themselves, about God and about Christ. This, Jesus tells us, will result either in hostility or receptivity, but mostly hostility.

In this world of hostility, Jesus spoke of leaving us peace and giving us peace that is unlike what the world gives. The Advocate is the source of this peace. In all that he does, he strives to bring us to peace and leave us in peace. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. This is our Lord’s lasting gift for us all.

*“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”*

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.