**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 and Tuesday

[**ROMANS 5:1-5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+5&version=NIV)

Please go to this page, [New Format](http://timealonewithgod.org/new-format/), where I explain the rationale for this new format. Let me know whether you find the changes helpful or not. Thanks.

Remember this is your time alone with God. It is a time to tell God what is on your mind (thinking back over the past day), listen to him speak to you (reading and meditating on a bible passage), and finally, to respond to him (prayer). The questions are there to help you do this. Ignore them if they do not help. If your time is limited, I suggest that you don’t do everything in one go but spread them over the two days.

1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you during the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [ROMANS 5:1-5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+5&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God.”* A simple way to understand this is that God is no longer at war with us. Instead, *“we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.”* Grace, as we have noted before, is positive; it is not about saving us from a bad situation, but putting us in a good position, beyond what we deserve. In other words, not only God is no longer at war with us, instead he is now on our side and wants to bless us. Paul tells us that all these are “through faith”, “through our Lord Jesus Christ”, “through whom we have”: Why does Paul emphasise so strongly that what we have gained is by faith through our Lord Jesus Christ?
2. *“And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.”* But even more than just grace, which is already fantastic because God is now on our side and willing to bless us, we have the hope of the glory of God. What do you think this “glory of God” is all about and why is it even greater than the grace that we already have?
3. *“Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”* In the context, which is about being justified, at peace with God, standing in God’s grace and hoping for the glory of God, what do you think is the suffering that Paul is referring to here? Is it the suffering of persecution, the suffering that life brings or the suffering that the process of sanctification (getting rid of sin and our sinful nature) produces? Do you think that as we persevere in our struggle with sin we will grow in hope that we will succeed? What would be the basis of our hope?

(Note that we had spent time on the rest of Romans 5 and 6 in [2022 Week 17](http://timealonewithgod.org/2022-devotions-week-17/).)

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**ROMANS 5:6-8**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+5&version=NIV)

Remember this is your time alone with God. It is a time to tell God what is on your mind (thinking back over the past day), listen to him speak to you (reading and meditating on a bible passage), and finally, to respond to him (prayer). The questions are there to help you do this. Ignore them if they do not help. If your time is limited, I suggest that you don’t do everything in one go but spread them over the two days.

1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [ROMANS 5:6-8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+5&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.”* Why is “when we were still powerless” just the right time for what Christ did for us all? What does this tell you about the basis of our fundamental relationship with Christ and God?
2. *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* If this is a demonstration of the nature of God’s love for us, what is to you the most compelling aspect of God’s love for you?
3. If when we were still sinners God reached out in love to us, if when we were helpless God decided to help us, what do you think is the basis of God’s actions towards us? If now, after he has acted, we respond to him in faith, how can we be sure he will accept us? Are you confident of God’s love for you?

# Friday and Saturday

[**ROMANS 5:9-11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+5&version=NIV)

Remember this is your time alone with God. It is a time to tell God what is on your mind (thinking back over the past day), listen to him speak to you (reading and meditating on a bible passage), and finally, to respond to him (prayer). The questions are there to help you do this. Ignore them if they do not help. If your time is limited, I suggest that you don’t do everything in one go but spread them over the two days.

1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [ROMANS 5:9-11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+5&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. In vv9-10 Paul structured his argument around the phrase “how much more” to emphasise that Christ’s death is not ONLY about justification and reconciliation; there is much more about it. What do you think is the “much more” that Paul alludes to (the clue is in all he has been talking about from verse 1)?
2. *“Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* The ESV translates it as “rejoice in God” while the NASB, “celebrate in God”, and some commentators put it as “glory in God”. The idea is that through our Lord Jesus Christ, God is now our most precious jewel, our crowning glory, our greatest asset, our boast. Taking into consideration Paul’s “much more” argument and his assertion here that God is now the most important and positive reality in our lives, what do you think is the Christian life that Paul envisages? How would you describe it? How does that compare with your idea of the Christian life? How does that compare with your experience of the Christian life?

# Sunday

##### MUCH MORE

*“For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!”*

These 3 paragraphs overflow with Paul’s eagerness to tell us that God’s blessings to us in Jesus Christ are lavish and generous. This is not a project that is reluctant, grudging or half-hearted. When God brought Jesus into the whole scheme we must appreciate it in the way Paul described in Romans 8: He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

And so here Paul paints a picture to help us capture the generosity of God and the blessedness that all of us who put our faith in Jesus are now in. There is justification, there is peace, there is grace, there is hope, there is glory and at the heart of it all, there is our Lord Jesus Christ.

If he acted in love when we were sinners, how will he act towards us who are now justified by Christ’s blood? If by Christ’s death we are now reconciled with God, how about now when Christ is alive and seated at God’s right hand interceding for us? If our perseverance in suffering can produce character, how much more when we have the Holy Spirit in us, overflowing us with God’s love? And if God has given us his Holy Spirit how can we not be assured that we will be like him, reflecting God’s glory?

If God is for us, who or what can be against us?

To be saved by God is not about escaping hell or about going to heaven; it is about who we will become as God is now for us, the Holy Spirit is in us and Jesus intercedes for us. Paul does not spell it out but asks us to imagine. Much more. How much more?

What do you imagine your destiny to be? What do you hope for? Remember God has already given you his Son. What more does he have in store for you? If God is now on your side ready to answer your prayer, what will you pray for? Is all this about making you feel good when things are going badly, or about the problems you are currently facing in your life, or about your ambitions, your status in life, your financial situation, your career? Is it about this life at all? Or is it much more?

*“Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”*

1. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down in the past week. Read the short sharing above. Does it add anything to your own thoughts?
2. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.