**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

[**REVELATION 2:18-19**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%202&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 during the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [REVELATION 2:18-19](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%202&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. *“These are the words of the Son of God …”* This is the only time in The Revelation that we see Jesus as “The Son of God”. The gods that the city Thyatira worship, including emperor worship, are closely linked with Apollo, who is the son of Zeus. What do you think it means to the church in Thyatira, that this letter comes from the Son of God?
2. *“… whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze.”* What do “eyes like blazing fire” and “feet like burnished bronze” convey to you?
3. *“I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.”* What was good about the church in Thyatira? How would you describe the church in your own assessment?
4. Would Jesus say the same about you, that you are doing more than you did at first?

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**REVELATION 2:20-25**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%202&version=NIV)

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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 [REVELATION 2:20-25](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%202&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. *“Nevertheless, I have this against you …”* Why does Jesus raise matters that he is unhappy with about the church? Do you think Jesus is fault-finding? (See Revelation 3:19)
2. *“You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.”* How would you describe what was happening in the church? How is it that they could commit these acts? Most likely the name Jezebel is a reference to the character in the Old Testament. What do you know about her? Would who she was (wife of King Ahab) have any bearing on this character in Thyatira?
3. *“I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. I will strike her children dead.”* Why did Jesus give “Jezebel and her followers” time to repent? This was before the letter, so how would the message have been conveyed? Why would these people be unwilling to repent despite receiving Jesus’ warning?
4. *“Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.”* This is where the description “whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze” comes into play. What does Jesus want the church to know about him? How would you describe it in your own words?
5. *“Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan’s so-called deep secrets, ‘I will not impose any other burden on you, except to hold on to what you have until I come.’”* So not everyone in the church was involved with Jezebel’s teaching. What was Jesus’ message to them?

# Friday and Saturday

[**REVELATION 2:26-29**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%202&version=NIV)

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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 [REVELATION 2:26-29](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%202&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. *“To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end …”* What is the emphasis here?
2. *“I will give authority over the nations …”* Do you think this is to happen before or after the second coming of Jesus? What do you think this is intended to accomplish?
3. “I will also give that one the morning star.” What does the morning star convey (see also 2 Peter 1:19 and Revelation 22:16)? What does it mean to receive the morning star?

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# Sunday

**SATAN’S SO-CALLED DEEP SECRETS**

*“You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet. By her teaching she misleads my servants.”*

The free nature of the modern church, in that there is no formal control, has always been a source of problems for the church of Jesus Christ. Anyone can set up a gathering and call it a church. Any church can define itself in whichever way it wants. Anyone can declare themselves to be teachers, or prophets or even apostles. Anyone can claim a direct word from God. Anyone can interpret Scripture in whichever way they see fit.

The responsibility to ascertain truth, to know the true nature of God and his will, and to know the mind of Christ, who stands in the midst of the golden lampstands, seeing what goes on in his churches, commending what is good and right and condemning what is wrong, rests on individual Christians. One can be right; one can be wrong; but only Christ can mete out the praise and judgement that truly count.

The church in Thyatira allowed a woman, who claimed to be a prophet, to teach, in the name of God, ideas that allowed Christians to take part in the religious practices of the city—even in immoral sexual acts.

In this letter, Christ asserts his authority over his church which has been compromised by this woman. He did not tolerate what the church tolerated.

Jesus characterised the woman’s teaching as “satan’s so-called deep secrets” because that is often how such teachings are framed. Right from the beginning, when the serpent told Eve the secret that God was hiding from her, *“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil”*, this simple trick has been used to trick those who, in truth, want to be tricked. This is the secret; this is the way to do it; this is what will bring success; those who teach otherwise don’t really know God’s true intentions or want to hide them from you.

Today the world has many churches which are thriving, rich with resources, membership, and all the symbols of success, and they will say that their success is evidence that God is with them. In truth however, the free nature of the church, without a seeming central authority, is because the church belongs to Jesus Christ. He is the Living One and he walks among his churches. No one speaks on his behalf.

Therefore, what “the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze” says is the only thing that matters. People are standing in the place of God to proclaim that they know him, they know how he works, they speak with his voice, on his behalf. Ultimately they will be judged. Only the word of God speaks for God; even the Holy Spirit is subject to the Lord and acts as his agent on his behalf.

*“Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.”*

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.