

QUIET TIME

Theme: Fellowship with God

- Try to make a specific time every day to meet Jesus Christ through reading and meditating his Word.
- Pray, talk with Jesus Christ and make a few short notes about this Bible passage in your notebook.
- Record what you discover, what speaks to your mind and heart, what you find difficult or what you understand.

- Day 1 Psalm 1:1-6
The two ways
- Day 2 Psalm 5:1-3
Quiet time is a dialogue
- Day 3 Psalm 16:1-11
No good thing apart from God
- Day 4 Psalm 18:25-36
God trains me for battle
- Day 5 Psalm 23:1-6
The LORD is my shepherd
- Day 6^{BS} 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Serve the true God
- Day 7 Psalm 25:8-15
Confidential fellowship with the Lord
- Day 8 Psalm 27:4-10
One thing I seek
- Day 9 Psalm 34:7-18
The Angel of the LORD encamps around you
- Day 10 Psalm 40:1-3
The Lord lifts you out of the muddy pit
- Think about Psalm 27:4.
How important is fellowship with God for me?
 - Pray every day for someone or something specific and wait in expectation for what God is going to do (Psalm 5:3).

STUDY

Theme: Quiet time: why and how

Read study 31 carefully before the next meeting. If you have questions, write them down and mail them to one of your group leaders. We will seek an answer together.

BIBLE STUDY

Theme: Fellowship with God

If you like, you may already prepare the Bible Study for the coming meeting by reading through the Bible passage. Make use of the 5-step Bible Study method. The Bible passage is: **1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**

MEMORISATION

1. Motivation

Jesus memorised Bible verses (Luke 4:4-13). Are you doing that?

2. Memorisation

Memorise this verse in the Bible version of your choice.

QUIET TIME

Revelation 3:20

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock.
If anyone hears my voice and opens the door
I will come in and eat with him and he with me.

Revelations 3:20 (NIV)

3. Review and back-review

Review the last 5 memorised verses once every day and *back-review* all other memorised verses once every three weeks.

31. Quiet time: why and how

A. DAILY FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST. WHY?

1. The illustration of 'eating together'

Read Revelation 3:20.

Why do people like to eat together? Is it not because they love to fellowship with one another? In the Bible eating together is an illustration of fellowship with one another. Jesus Christ does not want to stand outside the door of the Church. He does not want to be excluded from your meeting together. He wants to enter your life and fellowship with you and with all his own people. That is why he is calling out and knocking, first on the door of the congregation and then on the door of your heart.

When you hear him calling and open the door of your heart, he will come in. The first thing Jesus Christ desires is to fellowship with you personally. When you receive Jesus Christ, you receive no one less than God himself (Matthew 10:40; Luke 10:16; Colossians 1:15). Whoever has fellowship with Jesus Christ, has fellowship with God through his Holy Spirit (John 16:13-15).

2. What do you do when Jesus eats with you?

a. What do people do when they eat with one another?

They do two things: they take food and they talk! Spiritual fellowship with Jesus is exactly the same: you take spiritual food and you talk with Jesus Christ.

b. What does Jesus Christ regard as spiritual food?

Read Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2; John 4:34. God talks with you by means of the words in the Bible and by means of his Spirit in your heart who causes you to hear God's words. Spiritual food is God's Word as he revealed it in the Bible. You really begin to live when you eat the words of the Bible – when you do what the Bible says. God – through Jesus Christ – has fellowship with you when you absorb his words in your mind and heart. You must learn to eat God's words: chew it, swallow it and digest it (Joshua 1:8; Mark 4:20). You only begin to live (spiritually) when you listen to the words in the Bible and begin to practise them.

c. How do you talk with God?

Read Genesis 5:22; Psalm 62:8; Luke 11:1. How do you talk with God? You talk with God through prayer. Prayer consists of listening to God and responding to God. God (Jesus Christ) has fellowship with you and you with him when you listen to one another and talk to one another. This is something everyone must learn to do: learn to listen to him and learn to talk to him – learn to understand the Bible and learn to pray.

Christians do not pray like the other religions do.

Christians do not have a set of prescribed prayers which one must say three or five times a day at set times together with prescribed positions or movements of the body. Christian prayer is "walking with God" (Genesis 5:22). Christian prayer is "friendship with God" (James 2:23). Christian prayer is "opening your heart and pouring out your heart to God" (Psalm 62:8). Christian prayer is a voluntary and enjoyable time of fellowship with the One and Only God through Jesus Christ.

In prayer God speaks to you and you respond to what he says. In prayer you pour out your heart, your thoughts, feelings, needs and requests and God (Jesus Christ) answers you in his own time and in his own surprising way (Ephesians 3:20). Therefore, learn to respond to what God (Jesus Christ) is saying to you in the Bible. Learn to express your thoughts and feelings and wishes to him. Christian prayer is part of the Christian life-style and this must be learned. "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1).

3. Both Jesus and you have a responsibility

In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says that he will first come to eat with you and then that you are invited to come and eat with him.

a. First Jesus wants to come and eat with you.

You invite him to come to be with you and eat with you. Then you are the host and he is the guest. Then it is your responsibility to give to him whatever you have! And what can you give him? You have time and you can give him your attention. You have a will and you can give him your eagerness, enthusiasm, dedication and submission. You have a heart and you may also give him your anxieties, problems and all your sins! He really wants to share these with you!

b. Thereafter Jesus wants you to come and eat with him.

He invites you to come into his holy presence and eat with him. Then he is the host and you are the guest! Then it is his responsibility to give to you whatever he has! And what can God (Jesus Christ) give to you? Very much! Then you may expect very much from him! As his privileged guest you may expect him to talk to you personally and intimately. And as his guest you may expect that he will give to you everything that you really need that day! "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:15-16).

4. Eating together requires time

a. Eating: an important human custom.

How many times do you normally eat every day? Most people eat two or three times every day and some eat throughout the day. *Why is it important to eat regularly?* Because that is the only way to grow and stay healthy! You

must eat in order to receive energy, to study, work and play. You must eat healthy food and you must eat regularly! *What does the illustration in Revelation 3:20 imply?* It implies that Jesus Christ invites you to fellowship with him regularly. Eating together is something you do at least once every day.

b. This was also the custom of Jesus himself. Read Isaiah 50:4-5; Mark 1:35. Which custom did Jesus have when he was still on earth? In the Old Testament Jesus Christ is called 'the Servant of the LORD'. Jesus is then viewed according to his human nature on earth in relationship to God the Father in heaven. Isaiah 50 is a prophecy about Jesus Christ more than 700 years before his first coming. Every morning Jesus listened to what God was saying to him and he talked to God. Jesus had fellowship regularly with God in the morning. Jesus was never rebellious against God and he also never drew back from meeting God.

c. This was also the custom of a king. Read Psalm 143:8,10; Psalm 1:1-2; Psalm 5:3. Which custom did King David have? In the morning David expected to hear God's words of love towards him. He expected God to show him the way that he should go. He expected that God's Spirit would lead him on a way in which he would not stumble. That happened when he meditated about what God was saying to him in the Bible. And in his prayers he laid his requests before God. Also King David had a regular time of fellowship with God in the morning. He expected God to respond to his prayers! Throughout the day he looked forward to what God was going to do in response to his prayers!

We call this regular time of fellowship with God (Jesus Christ) 'a quiet time' (a devotional time). Make quiet time also your regular habit. 'Eat' the words of God in the Bible and 'talk' to God when you fellowship with him.

YOUR CHOSEN BIBLE VERSE OR FAVOURITE TRUTH METHOD OF QUIET TIME

B. DAILY FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST: HOW DO YOU DO THIS PRACTICALLY?

Practise using 'your favourite truth' or 'your chosen Bible verse' method of quiet time.

1. Pray

Begin your quiet time with a short prayer in which you deliberately and consciously enter into God's presence. Ask God to speak personally to you through the words in the Bible and through his Spirit who lives in you. Ask him to renew and strengthen your life by meditating on his

words. You could pray: "Take the covering away from my eyes and let me see the wonderful things you have written in the Bible" (Psalm 119:18).

2. Read

Every day read a paragraph or about half a chapter from the Bible. You could make use of a Bible reading programme. In every lesson of the Delta Course there is a quiet time programme of 10 times every 14 days (or 5 times every week). The themes have been selected carefully and correspond to the theme of that lesson. The intention is that all the members of the discipleship group (Delta group) have a quiet time from the same Bible passage between every lesson.

3. Choose

Choose a Bible verse that speaks to your mind or heart that day. Which truth in it is important for you that day? Why is it important? Your chosen Bible verse or your favourite truth is that Bible passage which stimulates your mind or touches your heart!

4. Meditate your chosen verse or favourite truth

Go deeply into what God says. You meditate because you really want to understand what God says and because you want to draw strength and renewal from doing what God says. Christian meditation has four parts:

Think

about the meaning of the words in your chosen Bible verse of favourite truth. Ask yourself the following questions: "Who?" "What?" "Where?" "When?" "Why?" "How?"

Pray

to God while you meditate about the truth. Ask God to speak to your mind and heart and allow you to understand what his intention is. What does God want you to know, believe, be or do? Respond to what God is saying you.

Relate

God's truth to your personal life or to the world in which you live. Ask yourself the following questions: "What is my need in the light of this truth?" "How does this truth strengthen or renew my life?" "What does God want me to know, believe, be or do?"

Record

the most important thoughts of your meditation.

5. Pray your chosen verse or favourite truth

Pray in response to God's Word. Pray what God said to you shortly for the following persons:

- For yourself.
- For a family member.
- For someone nearby (in your neighbourhood, town, church, school or work).
- For someone far away (in another city or country).

C. PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR QUIET TIME

1. Have a daily quiet time

Have a daily quiet time – alone or with another person.

You can have a quiet time in the morning, noon or evening.

Do it when you are at your best.

Make use of your chosen Bible verse or favourite truth method.

Begin with the suggested Bible passages in the Delta Course, because they deal with the topic of that lesson and you will understand better what the other group members are sharing. Later you may make use of a Bible reading programme.

Make use of a Bible marking system if you do not mind writing in your Bible. It is a system of symbols in the margin of your Bible which indicate different topics in the Bible (e.g. x=sin, +=Jesus' death on the cross).

2. Record your meditation

As follows:

The date.

The Bible passage which you read.

The Bible reference of your chosen Bible verse or favourite verse.

The most important thoughts from your chosen Bible verse or favourite truth, which you would like to remember, to do and to share with others.

Your prayer response or application.

Recording your meditation helps you to share during sharing time on your discipleship group. It will also help you to remember what God said to you in the past. When you read it again you may begin to discover a pattern in God's dealings with you or you may clearly see his guidance! You will discover that God always hears and often answers your prayers! You will become convinced that God is really involved in your life!

EXAMPLES

3rd July 2010 – 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Chosen Bible verse (or favourite truth):

1 Thessalonians 1:3. "We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Meditation:

I want my faith in Jesus Christ to become visible in my deeds. I want my love for God and other people to become a daily experience. Then my hope (expectation) will not fail!

My prayer:

*(for myself). Lord, please help me today to show my faith through how I live when I pay a visit to my neighbour.

*(for a family member). I ask you to bless the practical faith of my sister.

*(for someone near). Draw my friend Peter with love so that he may begin to believe in you.

*(for someone far away). Cause the faith of the house church in the Middle East to shine forth so that people in the neighbourhood will submit to you.

4th July 2010 – 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20

Chosen Bible verse (or favourite truth):

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12. "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory."

Meditation:

A Christian is for someone 'a mother' (verse 7) who feeds and cares for him. And he is for another person 'a father' (verse 11) who encourages and exhorts him.

My prayer:

*(for myself) Lord, help me to be an encourager to people today.

*(for a family member). Encourage my brother William today as he proclaims the gospel to people.

*(for someone near). Help my colleague John to be an encourager for the discouraged and dismayed people he meets today.

*(for someone far away). Give grace to the group leaders in country X to spur their group members on to persevere in following Jesus Christ and in being lights in darkness.

3. Quiet time in a group is very stimulating

Quiet time in a group.

Form a small group that meets every day or once a week to have a quiet time together. The small group may consist of family members, friends, or believers living close to one another. Some Christians meet every day for quiet time or prayer before they disperse to their jobs.

Method.

Split the small group into pairs. Each pair has a quiet time together by making use of the chosen Bible verse or favourite truth method. After 10 minutes every gathers into the small group and take turns to share the meditation of their chosen verse or favourite truth. At the close, split the small group into pairs or into threes and take turn to pray in response to God's Word.

4. Sharing with one another

Sharing in the discipleship group.

During the weekly or bi-weekly discipleship group meeting (the Delta group meeting) take turns to share one of your meditations during the past week or fortnight. If you feel shy to share, you may simply read what you have recorded.

Sharing via internet.

A couple of believers may like to form a small group who share their quiet times once a week via the internet.