

You can't lead others well and help them to grow unless you're receiving input from God. That's why it's so important that you spend regular quiet times with your heavenly Father—it's necessary for both your personal spiritual growth and for your leadership.

4 Purposes of Spending Time with God

1. **Relationship** (Psalm 42:2)
God wants to spend time with you. He wants to build your relationship with him. As you spend time alone with God, you'll not only gain more knowledge *about* him, but you'll come to know him more intimately.
2. **Restoration** (Psalm 23:2-3)
God wants to replenish you physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Your days are busy. You probably often feel drained. You can be restored by coming to him daily for grace, strength, and wisdom.
3. **Direction** (James 1:5)
God wants you to seek his wisdom. A characteristic of intimate friendship is the freedom to discuss any issue and ask for advice and wisdom. Your relationship with God is no different.
4. **Transformation** (Romans 12:1-2)
God wants to make you more and more like Jesus. When people spend time together, they tend to become more alike. God wants you to be around him enough that you begin to think as he thinks, speak as he speaks, behave as he behaves, and value what he values.

Organizing a Quiet Time

Because quiet times are about a *personal* relationship with God, there's no formula for what one should look like. But, generally speaking, quiet times are made up of three elements:

1. **Prayer**
Prayer is an opportunity to speak with and listen to your heavenly Father. It's a priceless form of connection.
2. **Reading the Bible**
Scripture is God's story. It's full of his wisdom, truth, and power. It's impossible to know him without spending time reading his Word.
3. **Reflection**
You can't be changed by God's wisdom and truth unless you reflect on how it *applies* to your own life. Without reflection, reading the Bible isn't relational, it's just informational.

Making Quiet Times a Habit

All kinds of things can disrupt our quiet times or make it hard to create a quiet time habit—busyness, sickness, being stuck in a rut, not sharing our insights with others, or feeling alienated from God because of disobedience. Remember: nothing causes God to hold you at arm’s length. He *always* wants to spend time with you. So don’t cheat yourself out of the opportunity.

Paying attention to these three things will help you to make or re-establish a habit of spending time with God:

1. **Pick a Time**

You schedule time for the important things in your life. You write them in your calendar or jot down reminders on Post-it notes. You prioritize them. Picking a regular time prioritizes your quiet times.

Whether it’s in the morning, afternoon, or evening, choose a time when you can slow down, pray, read the Bible, and reflect on how what you’ve read *applies* to your life. Your quiet time may last for five minutes or it may last for an hour—duration is up to you—but choose a consistent time.

2. **Pick a Place**

Most people who spend time with God regularly will tell you that they have a specific place where they pray, read, and reflect. Find a place where you can clear your mind. It may be a favorite chair or a quiet room. It may even be your car.

3. **Pick a Plan**

To make the best use of your time, you need a plan. You’ll connect more easily with God if you find a plan that works for you. The best plan for you is the one that fits your way of connecting with God, that motivates you to pray and open the Bible on a regular basis, and allows you to experience the power and truth of Scripture. Your quiet times may feel like a chore at first. That’s okay. Remember, you’re creating a new habit. Soon enough, praying, reading the Bible, and reflecting on what you’ve read will begin to feel like an opportunity to spend quality time with your heavenly Father.

If you’re looking for a great plan to get you started, we recommend the 30 Days with Jesus plan we put together. Check it out by visiting:

groupleaders.org/30dayjesus

