

Principles for Individual Personal Time with Jesus, Learning to Observe His Commands

Jesus calls His disciples to **BE WITH** Him. The most important thing we must do as His disciples is to spend time **WITH** Him so we can hear His voice and follow Him. It does not matter what it is called – Quiet Time, Devotions, Personal Time, Listening Room, Inner Room, or whatever. The key is spending quality time with Jesus. Just as we need air, water, and food to live every day, Jesus is our daily spiritual air, water, and food. Our personal, quiet time is the most important part of each day.

What it is:

- Private in a secret place, Jesus and you together
- Daily time set aside and devoted to focusing on Jesus and His word
- Focused without distractions
- A spiritual activity from the heart and spirit
- The highest priority
- Flexible, dynamic, alive, spontaneous
- Worship, prayer
- Listening and speaking, a dialog between Jesus and you
- Asking, seeking, knocking
- A love relationship between Jesus and His closest friend – you!

Mindset:

- Spending time with Jesus is my highest priority
- If I do not make time, I will not have time
- If I am too busy to spend time with Jesus consistently and daily, I am too busy
- I will give Jesus my best time – whenever that is for me
- I will do whatever He says, without questioning or hesitating
- I need the Holy Spirit's help to be able to understand with my spirit, not just with my human mind
- I will be still and listen and be attentive to His voice and His prompting
- I will worship God in spirit and in truth

What it is NOT:

- Optional or occasionally
- A Bible "study"
- Simply mental or intellectual activity
- Rigid, static, boring, routine
- A set length of time or time of day or just one place
- An item on a to-do list

Following are suggestions for things you can do in your personal time with Jesus. They are not intended to be rules, items to check off, or steps to follow in a program. They are principles and suggestions that will enable you to be a disciple who truly worships God, does the word, and keeps the command, not simply a hearer or a collector of intellectual knowledge.

Worship

- Worship does not mean "music" – it is a bowing down before God, acknowledging Him as your highest, most worthy Sovereign and King

- Physically bowing down (not music) is the most common form of worship in the Old and New Testaments
- Be still before the Most High King of Kings and set your heart and mind on Him
- Ask the Holy Spirit to prepare your heart and mind to hear and receive His Word that day

Command

- Read the command in its context. Read before and after as far as needed to grasp the situation – who is Jesus talking to, who else is there, who is not there, what is the situation,
- Practice saying and writing it so that you have it memorized and can say it. Some people like to use a familiar tune or rhythm. Be prepared to recite it when you meet with your DNA partners
- Study the key words, especially the command verbs
- If the command is also in other Gospels, read those passages to get additional insights into the situation and context
- Read other Bible versions of the command to get some additional insights and nuances
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what He wants you to do in response to the command and how to keep it at this time
- Use the questions that are included with the month's commands and stories as a way to dig deeper. You could do one question each day.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to show what He wants you to focus on that day in your quiet personal time
- Keep a journal and write down your insights, what you need to do to observe and keep the command

Story

- Read the story in one sitting
- Get the context – read before and after to figure out who the key people are and what is happening
- Practice telling it so that you will be comfortable – and be ready to tell it when you meet with your DNA partners
- Write out the main points or outline the story
- Meditate on how the command and story relate to one another

Additional Passages, when included

- Read these after you have studied the command and story
- Read one additional passage per day
- Carefully consider how the passages expand on or support the command
- Are there other passages that you can think of that would support the command?

Looking Upward – focus on Jesus, worship, love, dependence, abiding in Him

Looking Inward – listen to what the Holy Spirit wants to say or do in you – your heart, your mind, your focus. Repent when He speaks and pinpoints specific areas.

Looking Outward – what does He want you to say or do outside the quiet place? In your DNA? In the ekklesia gathering? To your neighbor (in the Biblical sense, not just the people who live near you), family, coworkers, friends?

Resources for study:

Biblehub.com – can help for word studies on the original Greek, other versions

Commentaries – may help with cultural context or difficult passages, but do not rely on them for your understanding. The Holy Spirit is our Teacher and He will lead us into truth.