



Matthew 6:5-13

Quiet time with God – Leaders version

For a one hour study, just do the starred * questions

Check in – with the group sitting in a semi circle go round and ask everyone, including leaders, how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

1. Do you ever spend time alone with God? What does this look like for you?

What does the passage say and mean?

60 minutes

2. Why is it important to spend time, and stay in touch, with people that we love?

*3. Why do you think it is important for Christians to spend time with God?

If we don't spend time with God, we will drift away from him, and from living for him.

4. **SHOUT OUT** – What do you think a Christian does when they spend time alone with God?

Ask the group to shout out answers and write them on a flip-chart. If no-one says anything, start them off with 'pray' etc.

*5. Read Matthew 6:5-6. What does Jesus tell his disciples to do, and why?

Pray ('when you pray...'). Pray in private. Because private prayer should be only for the benefit of the pray-er and God. The hypocrites in v5 were praying on the street corners, wanting to be seen. Jesus says that this is wrong. Verse 6 does not mean that we can't pray in public (Jesus and his disciples prayed together, as did the early church), but that our personal time with God should be just that – personal.

6. Read Matthew 6:7-8. What else does Jesus have to say about prayer and why?

Not to babble. Because God knows what we need before we ask; we do not need to pray an impressive or long prayer in order to be heard. We just need to pray.

nb. The word 'pagans' does not refer to the Pagan religion of today, but to any people who did not believe in God – the use of the word has changed over the centuries.

Explain: We're going to think about what a 'quiet time' with God is, look at a simple plan for a quiet time, and then we're going to put it into practice.

***7. STICKERS** When is the best part of your day to spend time with God?

Encourage them to think of the part of their day that they are most likely to have a bit of time on their own, when they are fully awake, not likely to be disturbed etc.

***8. Read Psalm 46:10.** Think about the first line of this verse quietly in your head. How does this verse help you to focus on God?

9. Read the first phrase of Psalm 46:10 to the group repeatedly, each time emphasizing a different word. How does this help you to understand more about what it means?

Be still; and know that I am God,
Be **still**; and know that I am God,
Be still; **and** know that I am God, etc

***10. Read Psalm 139:23-24.** Read it aloud slowly as a group and as you read it, let it become a prayer.

11. Now we'll read the passage that we're going to study in our 'quiet time with God' today. Read Matthew 6:9-13. Jesus is teaching us how to pray. What do you think is the main message of these verses?

***12. Read v9 – Who does Jesus tell us to pray to and what should we remember?**

God. Remember that God is our Father and remember who God is. 'Hallowed be your name' = may your name be praised / respected / may your name be number one in my life.

***13. Read v10.** What does Jesus tell us to pray for and why?

For God's kingdom to come, meaning 'for everyone to know God through Jesus'. For God's will to be done – meaning for God's people to live lives that honour God in obedience to his word. God's will is already done perfectly in heaven, and when God's will is done perfectly on earth, it will mean that God's kingdom has come and we are in heaven!

14. Read v11. What does Jesus tell us to pray for?

Daily bread – i.e. What we need for today (this refers to necessities, not desires!).

*15. Read v12. What does Jesus tell us to pray about and why?

To pray that our sins will be forgiven (so we need to confess our sins daily and ask for forgiveness) and that we are able to forgive those who have sinned against (hurt) us. In fact, the language shows that we have to forgive others first! (see also v14-15)

16. Read v13. What is the final part of this prayer and what do you think it means?

That we will not be led into temptation. (Remember, God never tempts us. This is not asking God not to tempt us, it's asking God to protect us from succumbing to temptation from elsewhere). And that we will be delivered from the evil one – again, protected from Satan's attack. We need to ask daily for this protection.

*17. Think quietly about what you have learnt as you have worked through Matthew 6:9-13, and write it down here:

How can I live according to these truths in my life?

20 minutes

*1. Do you want to start spending time regularly with God?

Offer suggestions and ideas – Bible study notes, read a gospel one chapter a day, pray, try to learn a verse that has stood out today etc.

2. If you already spend time with God each day, has this study given you any ideas of new things that you could do (or use) to help you?

*3. Is there anything that you feel that God is asking you do as a result of studying Matthew 6:5-13? How are you going to put it into practice?

As a group, spend some time praying about things that people have learnt and intend to put into practice, and spend some time thanking God for what he has done for you.

Check out – with the group sitting in a semi circle go round and ask everyone, including leaders, how they found the study and if they are safe to go back to the cell.

You might like to print these helpful guidelines for participants to take and use:

- Find the best bit of your day and give it to God – when you are most awake and least likely to be disturbed.
- A simple plan helps.
- Expect to hear God.
- Be still – relax. Psalm 46:10.
- Focus on God and commit the time to him. Psalm 139:23-24.
- Have a Bible with you – read it!.
- Meditation is “seriously contemplating a thought over and over in your mind.”
- Write down what you've learnt (but remember that in prison, nothing is personal).
- Pray about what you've learnt.
- Be willing to obey.
- Put what you have learnt into practice.
- Pray about other things on your heart, and give thanks to God for what he has done for you.

Remember your main purpose: to get to know Christ. Don't let your quiet time become an exercise in “doing your duty.”

adapted from www.purposedriven.com/article.html?c=115094&l=1

As you read...

A. – ask questions

B. – pick a “best” verse for the day (the verse you will carry with you in your head or in your pocket)

C. – consider what you could do or focus on as a result of what you have read – how is your life going to be changed by what you read?

adapted from <http://citylifelearning.navigators.org/Files/Quiet-Time>



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3. Why do you think it is important for Christians to spend time with God?

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16. Read v13. What is the final part of this prayer and what do you think it means?

17. Think quietly about what you have learnt as you have worked through Matthew 6:9-13, and write it down here:

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Bibliography

Green M (2000), *The Bible Speaks Today, Matthew*, Nottingham: Inter Varsity Press

www.purposedriven.com/article.html?c=115094&l=1 (viewed 16/7/12)

www.navigators.org/us/ministries/college/resources/7-minutes-with-god.pdf (viewed 16/7/12)

<http://citylifelearning.navigators.org/Files/Quiet-Time> (viewed 16/7/12)