

WITHOUT ME, YOU CAN DO NOTHING

JOHN 15:5

LEARNING & GLORIFYING HIM



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Serge Lemée

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my lifelong friend, Mimi!

Michèle has always been there by my side, even in the most difficult times. In these moments that God had prepared for me, for my growth, He decided to keep close to me this most precious person in my life.

Since our beginnings together, and even before we found faith in Jesus Christ, we were searching together, always with a common passion to find God and to know Him better. With her I learned fidelity, because she does not doubt those she loves even if some have betrayed her. She practices self-denial, always ready to put herself second, even at the cost of her own desires, even her health, to meet the needs of others.

She has always kept the desire to learn from God and understand others, but there is one thing she has never understood... human wickedness. She did not understand it, never endorsed it, or imitated it. Who better could I have asked for a life's partner?

As for the subject of this book: "Daily personal time with God", there is no one who knows my thought and meditation of the day better, and with whom I had so much pleasure to share God's work in our lives!

Thank you again, my God, for your presence in my life every day and for the great friend that you placed at my side!

PREFACE

“...today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts...” Hebrews 3:7 NKJV

This book is a compendium of experiences, research, and down-to-earth examples that will break down the walls (or the fear) that anyone can build up when it comes to daily personal worship. The very word makes some shudder. It is with full humility that we approach our God; he is holy. But God knows very well what we need, which gives us great assurance.

Serge has this passion for teaching and helping others to learn for themselves. But generally, we don't want anyone telling us what to do, let alone in relation to our relationship with God. I know this, because I have this attitude, this desire for independence, which sometimes comes as an irritation that someone can tell me what to do on this level. Well, that's exactly what Serge doesn't want to do! He just wants me to take charge of my time with God and learn directly from Him, without any human intermediary. And he is persevering, my lifelong friend; it took years for me to understand how to put aside my pride and realize my weakness in this area. And when I finally understood that he only wanted to encourage me, when I began to put into practice the simple principles contained in this book, that is when I finally blossomed in my knowledge of my God and in my daily relationship with Him.

This book in no way replaces commentaries that can be written on the Bible. The goal is not the same. These commentaries are sometimes interesting, but often incomprehensible and make me feel that I will not be able to understand anything on my own without the interpretation of another. They rather intimidated me, because often the writings or the words of certain scholars caused me to give up in front of all this knowledge to finally leave the responsibility of the study of the Scriptures to them. Some might think that by reading commentaries on the Scriptures, it will all get easier to understand and that they will finally understand the Word of God. Unfortunately, the opposite happens for most of them. For my part, the more I read these commentaries, the less I understood and therefore the

less I studied. Eventually, by handing over all this responsibility to them, I had lost my ability to sit with my God, to listen to Him, to be nourished by Him and to listen to Him.

And here is the goal of this book, here is Serge's passion: that everyone finds the passion to read the Word of God and to listen to what God himself is saying in his own heart. Why does he have this desire? Because he tasted it. And finally, I understood and this is what also happened to me. I realized that understanding the Word of God can only come from Him, but above all that I would not understand without Him first and Him alone.

I can say now that I have this confidence to sit before Him knowing that He will speak to me. I approach the text as it is taught in the present book and God speaks to me. Not another man, not Serge, not anyone else than God himself. Open the door to your heart. He is faithful! He will accompany you every day and it is with his help alone that you will find the strength to continue, not only in your reading, but also in this life that He gave you. It is not complicated; God knows we are weak and easily distracted. This book will give you the means to stay the course, clues to facilitate your reading, and help you to persevere in this daily encounter with your God. A necessary meeting with Him, day after day.

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day comes on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." Luke 21:33-36 NKJV

Michèle

Friend, wife, and sister in Christ.

FOREWORD

In 1980, Michèle and I accepted salvation through Jesus alone, by faith. We then started attending local churches and I started serving at the Youth ministry level in 1986. A sister, Dorothée Marchildon, told me about an international ministry that served local churches with their ministries: Word of Life Fellowship. After a few years and, feeling a direction from God, I became, in 1994, a Word of Life missionary and until now.

But, after all these years of Christian life and as a missionary among youth, I can affirm that what influenced me the most was the daily personal time with God, which was a passion for Jack Writzen, the founder of Word of Life. In 1993, I attended a Quiet Time seminar given by Mike Nicholes. Subsequently, I translated this seminar and presented it myself since 1993, almost everywhere I served. After all these years, Mimi and I can say that this personal discipline was vital for our spiritual life.

We are convinced that this time is vital for the believer. We cannot do anything good without Him, without His presence, without His help.

“So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.” Mark 10.18; Luke 18.19 NKJV

“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. ... O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death ? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” Romans 7.18-25 NKJV

So, I come here to tell you that:

- If there is one thing that has kept me going all these years...
- If there is one thing that I wish to leave as a legacy to those who follow me...
- If there is one thing that has been the most important of all the tools, I have used...
- If there is a lesson that was the most important of all my life...
- If there is one thing that must be present when starting my day...

Here, then, is the key to success in the life of the believer, and that is to let Jesus work in my life. We will also talk about that intimate time when I can talk to Him because He is ready to hear my heart, and He will teach me and use me for His glory. For such is the goal of the believer's life: "To Glorify God"!

Not like those believers who always ask to be blessed. I am surprised at believers' constant desire to be blessed by God. We constantly hear them say, "May God bless you". They want to receive from God, as if they lacked something! Yet they have already received everything in Christ!

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ," Ephesians 1:3 NKJV

And Paul continues in the verses that follow to tell us about all that we have “in Him”. So why always ask for more, more, more... blessings? Subsequently, when the one who constantly wants to receive is not yet satisfied, he builds a religion for himself which will act in the place of God, desiring to be approved of God by his works and thus hoping to receive from Him. *“Religion wants to demonstrate to its God what it can do for Him; by faith I expect God to tell me daily how He will glorify Himself through my life.”*

This religiosity is not the Christian life that I know and that I will present to you in this book. I have received everything in Him and my desire now is for Him to use me for His glory, knowing that He glorifies Himself in the salvation of man, of the lost. So here is my second book, which focuses on what is probably the second passion of our ministry.

The first book is called: “Ministry among young people in the church” which you can easily find on Amazon, in paper or e-book format, in French or in English.

This book is part of a series on the subject of studying the Scriptures, which will be presented in full later.

I adapted the initial seminar I received in 1993 to arrive at the teachings that are presented in this book and which are the fruit of all these years of experience and blessings through our encounter with God, every day.

Good reading.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Of course, there are so many people who have helped me write this book, through their support and encouragement over the years.

However, there are people who have been powerful instruments in this vital subject that is our daily time alone with your God.

My Creator, of course, who holds each of the atoms of my body, in an incomprehensible grace, who gave me life on earth and eternal life through his Son. He is also the primary reason for this book because it is He who speaks to me every morning.

My wife, who has been my faithful companion for 41 years and whose love is more precious every day. It was to her that I most often shared what God was telling me, and also, she shared with me what God was telling her. We have learned together to draw closer to our God and this is part of all the reflections presented here.

Word of Life founder Jack Writzen, who couldn't meet you without asking, "How was your time with God today?" He was an example from the beginning and it is this passion that he was able to pass on to me.

Mike Nicholes who first introduced me to the Quiet Time Seminar in 1993. It is, based on his seminar that I built this book.

There are also all those who have supported us, with prayer, encouragement, and financial assistance. I consider them part of our team and in that way, they had a part to play in this book.

Finally, Elizabeth Lemée (graphic designer), Marc Lacasse (editor) and Randal Gilmore (online publication).

INTRODUCTION

“So that your trust may be in the Lord; I have instructed you today, even you.” Proverbs 22.19 NKJV

Here it is, my daily time of meditation of His Word. There are many other possible names, that we can give to this time, but they all come down to describing this essential moment when I take personal time with God every day. This moment when He wants to instruct me, even, me!

I have taught this subject, as a Quiet Time Seminar, for almost 30 years, and many adjustments have been made over the years. My wish was that this, so important moment of each day, becomes:

- As simple as possible;
- A moment to which we look forward to returning;
- A time of seeking and listening to God;
- An opportunity to, seek to do his will, and glorify him.

I will present to you here, the fruit of studies, experiences, and application of this time alone with God. A personal moment, in a personal relationship with my God. And for this same reason, I will not use a formal language but a more familiar and personal language throughout this book, as we do it during an intimate relationship with a sincere friend. If you are my brother or my sister in faith, this relationship between the two of us will be eternal. If you do not yet have this relationship where Jesus knows you and you know him, I wish you to find this personal relationship with this Friend who wants to speak to you every day, your God. So, let's start!

Why and how to have this time alone with God? We will study and ask ourselves the usual questions of those who have undertaken research: What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?

We will talk about the purposes of this time with God, putting it into practice, and witnessing its work in our lives. And here is how this book and our research will unravel.

This book is divided into two sections. The first will focus on theory and the second on practice. In a sense, the first section will make us reflect on our motivations and the second on the means employed.

And I know that some of you are already very motivated or have already received this theory. Or maybe, you are like those people who never read the instruction book but go straight to practice. And you're not necessarily wrong, because some people read too much theory and never put it into practice. So, go with what you prefer, as long as the result glorifies your God!

Here is the reason for the title of this book and I repeat, there is nothing good we can do without Him and this daily time with Him, represents the air and the food of the believer. As a born-again man and woman, the believer needs to feed on spiritual things to grow spiritually. It is the same principle as for the physical world. Yes, we need to nourish ourselves spiritually as well as physically.

To help you understand, where we want to go with all this, here is a summary of the plan of our approach.

FIRST SECTION

In chapter 1, we will try to understand what this daily time with God represents. The WHAT.

In chapters 2 and 3, we'll talk about the WHO. Is it for everyone? Is it for me? Subsequently, the WHERE (chapter 4)? Can we have this moment with God anywhere? And let's not forget that this is a personal encounter, so where am I going to meet my God? And of course, we move on to WHEN (chapter 5). What time of the day does He want to meet me, when can I meet Him?

And now that we've established, what it is, if it's for me, where and when that time needs to happen...would it not be natural to ask WHY am I having this encounter? The goals of my encounter with God. And let's not forget that this is a meeting between two people, so what are the purposes of God (chapter 6), and what are my aims or objectives (chapter 7).

SECOND SECTION

Now is the time to get down to business! Most important? Not really! Because without goals and objectives, you will not move forward very quickly, perhaps in the wrong direction, and certainly without great motivation. But as I said before, it is good to know the reason for doing, but it is useless if I do not do, or put into practice.

We will therefore learn, in chapters 8 and 9, to listen to God. Not hear Him but listen to Him. For this reason, I must prepare myself. One could say that I must first "wash my ears" to hear better. Well, I will have to prepare and "wash my soul" to better hear Him speak to my spirit. Then we will look for how we can listen to his voice. Remember when Elijah meets the Lord in 1 Kings 19:11-13.

The Lord said: "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the Lord!" And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; ... the Lord was not in the earthquake. ... the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire, a still small voice ... Suddenly a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

It takes certain conditions to hear this soft and light whisper that will speak to my spirit. Not physical conditions, but a preparation of my mind for this attentive listening.

WARNING! You will be surprised by God. Personally, I'm surprised every day that I meet Him, and for me, a WOW comes out of my head - and sometimes out of my mouth - that I cannot hold back.

Now that you have listened to God, He has taught you, He has nourished you and He has even dazzled you, what will you do with all this? Very simple! Glorify God through your life during this day, which is in front of you. In chapter 10 we will try to understand the Why of this purpose of my life, which is to glorify him. Then, in chapter 11, we will find ways to glorify him. How to put into practice, day after day, what he taught me.

We have come to the last part of this time with God, which is, ... praying! First, it is like talking to God (chapter 12). Of course, he is my Friend, but He is also my King and Lord, and there is a way to talk to a King. And if you do not understand this, if you do not accept that there is a deference to have before such a King and Creator, your Lord, you have perhaps not understood who you are before Him. Review Scriptures where men have encountered God: Moses, Elijah, John, Paul and so on. Immerse yourself in the grandeur of these encounters and the humility it aroused in them. It is, this God, to whom you speak and who deserves your deference.

After talking about “how to talk to God,” we will look in chapter 13 at what topics of “discussion”, what can you present to God? And it is not as if God does not know your constant thoughts, which are often futile. He is always there and hears your every word and thought. But when you approach Him to pray, you must know what you will say: the subjects that interest your King who is before you and wishes to hear you, and even answer you, if such is His will.

We have completed the presentation of this book. It's time to start. I hope you have as much fun reading it as I had, writing it, knowing that you might get something out of it that will bless you, as I am every day by my encounter with Him. Good reading!

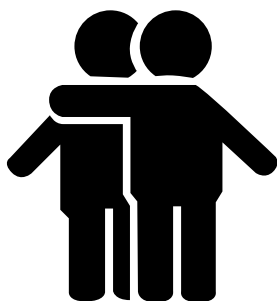
SECTION 1- THEORY – UNDERSTANDING

We will study, in this section, the subject of knowing His Word and His will for us personally today. We will therefore do like any good researcher and student, that is to ask the usual research questions: What? Who? Where? When? Why? and the How? However, we will save the “How” for the second section of this book. In this first section, we will establish what this “time alone with God” means and its priority for our lives. How can we give to that time its priority in our life if we are not convinced of its importance?

CHAPTER

01

What? A time alone with God



CHAPTER ONE

I told you already about the importance of this time alone with God.

Let me give you a short testimony:

My wife and I accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord in 1980. But, in the early years were taught by men, who tried their best, but it wasn't enough.

In 1989, we got to know a ministry called "Word of Life" (not the church, which I prefer not to associate myself with, but the ministry that works with young people. I specify this, because in Canada and in Africa, where I also serve, these Word of Life churches are known, but for sad reasons.)

And, through the founder of this ministry Jack Writzen, I heard about the daily Quiet Time, because Jack knew its importance and he had a passion to share it.

In 1993, I attend a Quiet Time Seminary, in a very personal setting, from Mike Nichols, late a missionary in South Korea, and now responsible of Pacific Rim for WOL.

That's when I started having that daily time alone with God. I found this teaching so interesting that I translated it and began to present it to others. After several years of experience and teaching, I made some adjustments. You now have a version of the Quiet Time Seminar, which reflects my experience of almost 3 decades enjoying this time with God in the morning.

Here is the beginning of this book which is a much more in-depth version of the Quiet Time seminar. Each course will be important, but it is especially important here to establish the basics.

"Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, for in You do I trust; Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to You." Psalm 143.8 NKJV

So, let's start by explaining what this "alone time with God" is all about.

WHAT? - WHAT DOES THIS TIME REPRESENT?

How do I call this "time alone with God" that I need every day? In the English-speaking world, we often speak of Quiet Time, which we could translate as "personal worship" or "daily meditation on the Word of God". But none really reflect what it stands for. For many years in Quebec, we called it the "daily personal cult", which represented a worship of the believer towards his God every day. But our ministry in France changed it to "Vital Connection" since the word cult had too negative a connotation in France, as in English. I would like to say that it is a "daily time alone with God", but a bit of a long title. Well, I think the name might not matter, and there will always be people who don't like the title. Much more important than finding a name for it, is knowing what we are talking about. What is a daily time alone with my God? So here is the definition:

SIMPLY, a time alone with God!

And there you go! All this to return to this simple sentence? Yes, because above all we must remain simple in understanding what this time represents. And this concept of simplicity, in the complexity that surrounds us, is very important to understand.

We live in a world of incredible instability. A time when there are so many people talking about conspiracies. You have certainly heard them! You know those hidden things that only they know, secrets and complicated theories? And all these conspiracies only increase people's instability and fear. All those who convey these ideas prefer what is hidden, complicated, incomprehensible. The less we understand, the more important it seems, and the more they make us believe they have discovered the truth.

God doesn't do that! (Amos 3.7) He desires to reveal, to simplify, to make things comprehensible. My main domain of study was to become a teacher. Making understandable is what a good teacher does. And as I often say: God is the best teacher, let's learn from Him!

But the world we live in complicates everything. And not only conspirators. It seems that we are invaded by the academic world. Of course, I have nothing against education and studies. They are necessary, but they try to replace all forms of study and learning, trying to make us believe that all knowledge passes through these schools of knowledge. "The less we understand the smarter it must be!" This is what we have learned in school since we were very young. So much so, that we end up believing it and being convinced that we are not intelligent enough to understand, because only an elite can understand this complexity.

Illustration: Do you remember the teacher at school, or at university, that no one understood? His course was so difficult to understand that few managed to pass. Everyone said that this professor was the most knowledgeable and the most intelligent. "He is so clever, that we don't understand when he teaches!"

Well, I come to offer you another form of intelligence: that of God! Do we all agree that God is the smartest? Sure! In any case, that's my God and if yours is not the smartest in the universe, and even beyond, I advise you to find another one!

So, this God, creator of the universe, took what is most complicated, the salvation of man, and made it so simple that even a child can understand and present it to others. That's the intelligence of God. Not an intelligence that confuses others to elevate itself, but an intelligence that simplifies what is complicated, and is ready to lower itself to men to achieve it. Jesus came among us, the Holy Spirit dwells in us believers!

And that is what "daily personal time along with God" represents: spending time with the One who will explain to me the most important things and what I must do, day by day. It is He who makes the complicated simple!

Jesus, before leaving His disciples, prepared them for His departure. He told them how they would receive the teachings that are essential to salvation, and to the life of the believer. That would be through God himself, the Holy Spirit. Not brothers and sisters, teachers or pastors, theologians, or universities, but God himself, who gives to all his children without exception.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you." - and, further on - "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.." John 16.7-15 NKJV

Rest assured that Jesus is not only talking about his apostles, but about **every believer**. We are not in the period of the Old Testament where God's Spirit dwelt upon chosen individuals, but we are in the period of the Church where God dwells in **every believer**.

So, learn directly from Him during that daily time alone with God. Not from men, but from Him. Listen to the smartest Person, God, and learn directly from Him.

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;” Philippians 3.10 KJV

By receiving the knowledge of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, I will be nourished by Him and can thus become conformed to Him, through Him. We will talk more about what this time represents in chapter 6.

CHAPTER

02

**Who?
Only believers**



CHAPTER TWO

WHO...should have a daily personal time with God?

First answer: only believers!

I may offend some people here, but I can only say what is obvious, in light of what we have said previously. If it is time alone with God that I desire, I must first have a relationship with God, in order to have that time alone with Him and for Him to speak to me.¹

He reached out to me first. I accepted this open hand, where I abandoned my life. A fellowship has been established and now He will teach me.

¹ As we have said before, true Christianity speaks to us of a personal relationship with Him.

- In religion, I try to approach God. Something that is impossible for the sinner. By faith and through faith, God has come near to me.
- Through religion, I sacrifice myself for my God. By faith, God sacrificed his Son for me.

By the way, if God does not feed the unbeliever, is it because He does not love him? On the contrary, He loved him by giving his Son for him. He made this sacrifice for each one of us, but He will not force your hand. If therefore you will not believe (hence the term non-believer) in His sacrifice for you, your sin remains, and you cannot approach God. So, we come back to the obvious fact that God speaks and feeds those with whom He has a relationship... only!

“... For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ... Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. ... But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

1 Corinthians 2.10-14 NKJV

It is therefore this Spirit, who dwells in the believer and only the believer, who will allow me to know God. Not me, by my own strength or intelligence, but (by) the Spirit of God. And now, which believer?

LAST ELEMENT, TO POSSIBLY SETTLE A FRUSTRATION THAT I COULD HAVE CREATED, WITH WHAT HAS BEEN SAID:

The unbeliever might feel left out, rejected, when I said that the time to be fed each morning is only for believers!

Quite the contrary, it is not a question of being put aside, because God wants to speak to you today, now. We are not talking here about those religions where their god is accessible only through sacrifices, long teachings or, even worse, only through other men, such as gurus.

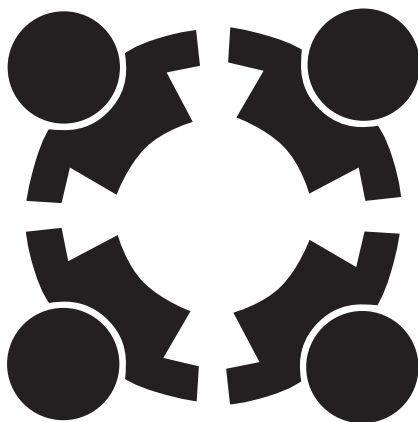
Here we are talking about a relationship and God is ready right now. He is only waiting for your faith, your heart. He did it all. He sacrificed His Son, He is ready to dwell in your heart, but you must open your heart. By faith let Him in and immediately you will be able to be fed as you need.

CHAPTER

03

Who?

All believers



CHAPTER THREE

WHO...should have a daily personal time with God?

Second answer: all believers

All believers, without exception! Even children, even those who have not done a doctorate in theology! I am a little ironic, but it is in reaction to a current thinking of some, and that has developed among the religious world or schools, seminaries, university departments, etc., in short, all those who devote themselves to the study of the Bible in recognized institutions, believing that they alone can understand and explain these sacred texts. They have become exclusive knowledgeable about the Word of God and the only able to transmit wisdom. This line of thinking has taken on proportions unequalled in history, which as the result of the believer no longer studying the Word of God by himself, being convinced that he cannot understand it. Nothing is more false and more destructive than this attitude and teaching. But in reality, we are warned of this by the Word of God itself.

“Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.”

1 Corinthians 8.1 NKJV

We must be careful of some who like to call themselves pastors, missionaries, and even prophets or apostles. All of these titles are not meant to distinguish some men from the “average believer.” This will result in an impression that these are “men of God” as some like to call them...

Why am I putting so much emphasis on this point? Because I believe that it harms the Church and the work of God. All believers should feed on the Word of God and be fed by Him. And this is our hope of growth in Him, because now this teaching does not depend on your abilities, but on the desire of God to teach you, and his desire is to personally teach each believer. He desires to feed you directly, personally. During this daily personal time with God, we do not concentrate our understanding on another man’s commentary, no matter how good or smart he is.¹ If another man has learned of God personally, it belongs to him. Now, I need to learn from Him directly.

Illustration: As I have often said that some people are like baby birds who eat food already predigested by their mother. Some believers take the food that God has given to another and eat it again themselves! yuck! As when they uniquely reading these commentaries of well-known authors or teachers. You can read them but learn from God first.

¹ I have nothing against teachers, they are necessary. I am one myself. And we can take advantage of the teaching abilities that God has given to a brother. As we can take advantage of the abilities that some have of working with wood, electricity, food, etc. All these abilities that God has given to other brethren. One has no more merit than the other because all have received it from God and all these capacities have been given for the edification of each and all. You can see that I am all for teaching...but not during my daily time alone with God. At this moment, I no longer have or want to listen to anyone, but only God. No, not reading a commentary, but listening to what God is saying to my heart, because He wants to give me the food I need today.

Story: Let me tell you a story. A few months after giving the Quiet Time Seminar in a church, I met the pastor at lunch. He thanked me for the seminar and told me that since that time, he finally had some time alone with God to be fed! I was a little surprised and he noticed it. So, he said to me: "Serge, understand that I study the Word of God every day and with passion. But I always studied the Word of God for others, to nourish the brothers and sisters of the Church as a pastor. Now I have a time with God each morning where I am personally fed. I had forgotten this: I need to be nourished personally by Him if I hope to be able to nourish others."

So, in summary, daily Quiet Time is a time alone with God to be nourished by Him alone. Now is not the time to consult anyone but God Himself. And we'll talk in the next few lessons about how to do that.

LAST ELEMENT, TO POSSIBLY SETTLE A FRUSTRATION THAT I COULD HAVE CREATED, WITH WHAT HAS BEEN SAID:

Now, for the believer who has lived his whole life without this time every morning and who would hesitate to start because he would feel frustrated, not having known this sooner.

Illustration: What if I took you to a fantasy island and made you taste some amazing fruit for the first time? You wouldn't want to leave this place any more in order to continue to eat these fruits. So, would you be frustrated because others found out about these fruits, and before you? Would you say? "I will not eat it, because others have tasted it before me!" I do not think so. Did you just find this fruit? Finally, did you feed directly from God? Do not look to the past, which is so short, but to the future, eternity in the presence of your God, and that can begin today, now!

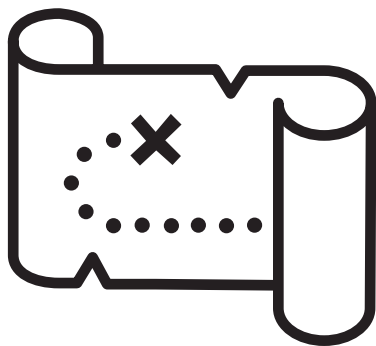
I repeat, no, there is nothing good we can do without Him and this time with Him every day is like air and food, for a believer. This believer needs to be fed spiritually as much as he needs air to breathe and live.

Personally, this is what has allowed me to persevere, during all these years and in the face of hardship. So, let's go my friend, let's be nourished by God every day!

CHAPTER

04

**Where?
A private place for
the two of you.**



CHAPTER FOUR

WHERE... should we take this daily time with God?

It is usually best to establish this time of fellowship with God in the same place, every day. Indeed, we get used to a familiar place and will be less easily distracted by the environment. For the same reason a child might ask: "Why do I have to close my eyes to pray?" Well, you'll be less easily distracted with your eyes closed than your eyes open with the ability to look all around you.

But this is not necessarily the case, because more than the place, what matters is the state of mind in which we are having this time. I can close my eyes to pray and let my thoughts travel at 100 kms/ miles per hour in all directions. Am I ready to meet my God and give Him my full attention?

Personally, I am often on the road, traveling and I find myself in very different places. But, when I'm at home, I always take that time with my God, at my desk. But I can also be at my desk and let the sound of my incoming emails bother me!

Again, what is essential is that your personal time with God is in a **quiet and private place**. So, I should do everything in my power to find that place where I am alone with my God. Let's look at some examples in the Bible.

In the book of Exodus, we can read about Moses meeting God on Mount Sinai. A private place to meet your God. God had fixed an appointment for him in this place. Do you have such a place where God has given you an appointment? If so, you must be there. But, if you don't have such a **quiet and private place**, your duty is to find that place where you can be alone with God.

And if you can't find that place, create it in your environment? I once read the story of a mother (Mrs. Wesley) who had seven children and, of course, couldn't find that quiet, private place. So, she agreed to sit on a chair in a corner of the house and pull her big kitchen apron up over her head, and under that apron she could meet God. And the children? They knew this place was private, and when she had her apron on, they didn't bother her.

Take the example of Jesus. He had no place to lay his head (see Matthew 8.20 and Luke 9.58), but He did everything to find that place.

"Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.'"
Luke 11:1 NKJV

"And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray." Mark 6:46 NKJV

"Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."
Luke 6:12 NKJV

"Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray." Luke 9:28 NKJV

"So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed." Luke 5:16 NKJV

You can read that there was sometime a precise, adequate place. At other times, he created this quiet place by going to the mountains or to a deserted place. We know that everyone always wanted his attention. So, Jesus found places where people had to make a special effort to be able to disturb him, when he had that time with his Father, the desert, the mountain!

We also, must find the places where no one will dare disturb us, because this time is the most precious moment of my day. And if the people I love know me and know that this time is important to me, they will respect it. Like the disciples with Jesus:

“And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed,” Luke 22:41 NKJV

What is the distance of a stone’s throw? 30, 40, 50 meters? Just enough so that Jesus did not hear their words and their arguments, as they wondered who would be the greatest among them!

And you, who or what can disturb you like this? Maybe your phone, especially in this “smartphone” era. Be smarter than your phone and don’t let it bother you. Maybe you need to throw it away from you, a stone’s throw away! Of course, I’m kidding. Don’t throw away your phone, but make sure to turn it off or move away from it if you can’t resist touching it.

CHAPTER

05

**When?
Nothing like
the present**



CHAPTER FIVE

WHEN ... should we have that daily time with God?

Of course, it will not be a question of legalism here, but of understanding what will be preferable so that this time is precious, private, and effective. To begin, let's look at some examples of biblical characters, who chose to have a daily time apart with God.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES:

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days" Daniel 6:10 NKJV

"Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice." Psalms 55:17 NKJV

"Also day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day there was a sacred assembly, according to the prescribed manner." Nehemiah 8:18 NKJV

"And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the LORD." Genesis 19:27 NKJV

“Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.” Mark 1:35 NKJV

“Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.” Matthew 14:23 NKJV

“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” Matthew 6:6 NKJV

So, what was important to them, as much as it will be to you, is to make an appointment with God now. The most important planning for your day is planning your time with Him. Because this appointment with Him will determine the course and the success of your day. In other words, God already has a plan for your day, and He wants to reveal it to you but will not force your hand. His plan is the best you can follow, because He loves you and wants the best for you. It is therefore important to consult Him to understand his plan for your day. In my opinion, the best time is in the morning, surely the best time to prepare your day.

But let's not make it a law! If you cannot have that quiet time in the morning, because, you are not sufficiently awake, too busy, or some other good reason, it is also possible to prepare it the day before, the evening before your “day for His Glory”. I will not judge your reasons because they are certainly excellent. But the fact remains that every day God helps me prepare for the day ahead, so whether it's in the morning or the night before, find the best time to prepare for the day that is about to begin for the Glory of God.

So, if you can only have that quiet time in the evening, here is my suggestion. Take your time alone with God in the evening, but according to the day to come, the next day. God will prepare your

heart in the evening, for the next day. When you get up in the morning, you only have to revise what God said to you the night before to start your day with these thoughts in mind.

So, you want to have time with God on a daily basis? It's time to plan it.

Illustration: If you were like Moses, you would have heard the voice of God who sets an appointment to meet you (Exodus 24. 12-13). It is a different context of course because we do not all live near Mount Sinai! Maybe He will meet you at a Tim Hortons near you (in Quebec), or at the bakery (in France), or at the cyber near the main road (in Togo). What would you do? Would you be there? I don't know about you, but would be there! Those who know me, know that I can easily be late. But there, meeting God? I would not be late and besides; I don't think I would sleep through the night. This time I would arrive early. At least to see how and with what kind of car God would come to the rendezvous! ;-) I would be shaking, but I would be there. So, for this appointment that you have given to God each morning, try to be there, because it is certain that God will be waiting for you there!

I invite you here to read "MY HEART – CHRIST'S HOME."¹ The chapter about "the living room" is one of the most beautiful texts that I know, and which illustrates the importance of this appointment with God.

We walked next into the living room. This room was rather intimate and comfortable. I liked it. It had a fireplace, overstuffed chairs, a sofa, and a quiet atmosphere.

¹ Robert Boyd Munger, "MY HEART – CHRIST'S HOME.", revised edition, 27 pages.

He also seemed pleased with it. He said, "This is indeed a delightful room. Let us come here often. It is secluded and quiet, and we can fellowship together." Well, naturally as a young Christian I was thrilled. I couldn't think of anything I would rather do than have a few minutes with Christ in intimate companionship. He promised, "I will be here early every morning. Meet me here, and we will start the day together." So, morning after morning, I would come downstairs to the living room and He would take a book of the Bible from the bookcase. He would open it and then we would read together. He would tell me of its riches and unfold to me its truths. He would make my heart warm as He revealed His love and grace toward me. These were wonderful hours together. In fact, we called the living room the "withdrawing room." It was a period when we had our quiet time together.

But, little by little, under the pressure of many responsibilities, this time began to be shortened. Why, I don't know, but I thought I was just too busy to spend time with Christ. This was not intentional, you understand; it just happened that way. Finally, not only was the time shortened, but I began to miss a day now and then. It was examination time at the university. Then it was some other urgent emergency. I would miss it two days in a row and often more.

I remember one morning when I was in a hurry, rushing downstairs, eager to be on my way. As I passed the living room, the door was open. Looking in, I saw a fire in the fireplace and Jesus was sitting there. Suddenly in dismay I thought to myself, "He was my guest. I invited Him into my heart! He has come as Lord of my home. And yet here I am neglecting Him."

I turned and went in. With downcast glance, I said, "Blessed Master, forgive me. Have You been here all these mornings?"

"Yes," He said, "I told you I would be here every morning to meet with you." Then I was even more ashamed.

He had been faithful despite my unfaithfulness. I have asked His forgiveness and He readily forgave me as He does when we are truly repentant.

“The trouble with you is this: you have been thinking of the quiet time, of the Bible study and prayer time, as a factor in your own spiritual progress, but you have forgotten that this hour means something to me also. Remember, I love you. I have redeemed you at great cost. I value your fellowship. Now,” He said, “do not neglect this hour if only for my sake. Whatever else may be your desire, remember I want your fellowship!”

You know, the truth that Christ desires my companionship, that He loves me, wants me to be with Him, wants to be with me and waits for me, has done more to transform my quiet time with God than any other single fact. Don't let Christ wait alone in the living room of your heart, but every day find some time when, with your Bible and in prayer, you may be together with Him.

So, God wants to meet you every day. And He lets you choose the time and place. Now close your eyes for 30 seconds and plan this time, before God.

Time : _____

Place : _____

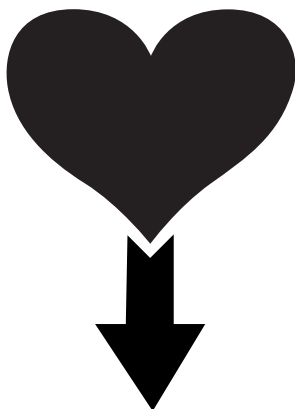
I can assure you that God has heard you and that He will be there, waiting for you. There may be days when you will miss the appointment, but He will never miss it. He loves you and wants to see you, hear you.

CHAPTER

06

Why?

God's purposes



CHAPTER SIX

WHY... do we need daily time with God?

We often think of our desire to be fed first and God's desire to meet us second. And here is how this way of thinking develops.

We know that we must be nourished by God in order to live our Christian life. We also know that it is his Word that feeds us. So, we ask God to feed us. Since we present this time as food of the spirit and compare it to the physical food of the body, let us develop the meaning of this illustration!

Many of us have been on diets in our lives. Either to lose weight or improve our health. Unfortunately, few succeed in persevering with diets. We try one, we fail, but we still need help, so we try another one, fail, and so on. And here is why there are so many diets and so much money being made taking advantage of our weakness.

It is the same with our spiritual food. So many methods and tools to try to acquire this discipline. But when it becomes clear that we are not even able to take care of ourselves, we try to turn to the love of God to motivate us. And we're talking about doing it for God who sent his Son for us. And so, in a sense we continue to center our lives on ourselves first, because we tell ourselves: "I have to do this for God.", putting the emphasis on the I!

But, in his natural selfishness, man, who is unable to make the right decisions for his own health, will have little reason to do so for anyone else, including God.

I therefore propose here to restore the divine order. God first (chapter 6), then me (chapter 7). He taught me this by dying first for me, and thus allowing me, afterward, changes in my life. So, let's look first at **God's purposes** (chapter 6) and then at man's (chapter 7). Of course, this proposal as its limits and I try to humbly present it, only trying to find a way to opt for simplicity and the essential.

GOD'S PURPOSES:

To sum up, God has two purposes for this daily time with Him: first because God loves me and second because He wants to feed me.

1. BECAUSE HE LOVES ME!

Let's look to this first reason, which is the basis of my salvation.

God loves me so much that he gave his Son for me, and He wants to have fellowship with me.

Munger's text (read in the previous lesson) describes it well, in my opinion.¹

So, out of love for Him and because He is my Savior and Lord, I must seek to have this time with God every day. And here are some verses that deal with this subject of our relationship.

¹ For those who have done a critique of this text by Munger, we would like to provide a clarification. It is clear that, when Munger speaks of inviting Jesus into his heart, he is speaking of the believer, during this time of daily life with Him, and not of inviting him for salvation. And, in the light of the rest of his text, I personally understand that Munger understood the grace of God and his salvation.

“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” Luke 6. 46 NKJV

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.” John 4. 23 NKJV

2. BECAUSE HE WANTS TO FEED ME!

Here are some teachings from the Scriptures that compare the food of our soul in relation to physical food.

BREAD

“ So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.” Deuteronomy 8.3 NKJV

“But He answered and said, ‘It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’” Matthew 4. 4 NKJV

MILK AND MEAT

“as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” 1 Peter 2. 2, 3 NKJV

“I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;” 1 Corinthians 3.2 NKJV

EVEN HONEY!

*“More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.”
Psalms 19. 10 NKJV*

What is the difference here with the selfish way of thinking that we talked about at the beginning? Well, it's not for me anymore, but for Him. No longer for my benefit first, but out of obedience, because that is what He wants. He wants to meet me and feed me, and for that I will obey and meet Him. It is time to act out of obedience as a believer. Not trying to make it look like as if I am meeting him because I love him, as if I would try to show that I have a “God-seeking heart”, and we full well know that it is not the case (Romans 7:18). Make no mistake about it, I remain a sinner, who seeks his needs first, and who cannot do anything good without Him. But, if I simply obey His will, I am not floating at the whim of my passions, but living by his will, which is best for my life!

CHAPTER

07

Why?

The goals of men



CHAPTER SEVEN

Now, having satisfied God's will, through obedience, we can focus on our needs. And by the way, submitting to His will make our goals and objectives similar to His.

The goals of man:

I know some will say we can't do anything without Him, and therefore to think our choice matters is pride! This way of thinking is not ours and we do not think it is consistent with sound doctrine. Rather, it is a teaching that prevents us from giving glory to God: but we will save that for another moment, because this subject is too important to mention briefly.

We will only summarize our thought by saying that God has already given us what we need to glorify him at the time of our salvation. He gave us the tools that come from Him, and all the glory goes to Him. Now we must use these tools and if we don't, all the shame will be ours.

So, now that we have sought his will, our heart draws closer to His heart and desires what he desires. Then our goals will come closer to his.

The first objective of personal worship is:
Listen to God and to be nourished by God.

The second purpose of personal worship is:
Glorify God

The Third Purpose of Personal Worship is:
Talk to God

1. LISTEN AND BE NURTURED !

It may seem selfish to say that your first personal goal is to be nourished, but you need to take care of yourself to grow in Him, that is obvious:

“For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it ...” Ephesians 5:29 NKJV

And here is the reason: “If you don’t eat you will die!” As the body needs to be nourished, your spirit also needs to be nourished by God for its survival and growth.

Illustration: How many meals do you eat a day? Some eat less than others, but it is obvious that if you do not eat or eat poorly, you will weaken and eventually you will become disabled, and even die.

By the way, you have been given authority and responsibility over the physical and psychological aspect of your life, and this applies even to this earth where we live. Of course, God will destroy this earth in His time, but personally, I do not want to be among those who contributed to destroy his creation, before He does it by himself. We had the responsibility for it and obviously we missed the mark and are still missing it, but that is a whole other matter for reflection and study.

As for your spirit, it is eternal. It is dead, that is to say, separated from God and you await the final judgment. However, Jesus came to give you abundant life and eternal life. This life is intimately linked to the source which is in God. You therefore need this spiritual food to be able to grow and fulfill the purpose of your life, which is to glorify God. You can't do any of this on your own (Romans 7:18). All that is good comes from Him but you have the responsibility to nourish this spirit that you have.

*"Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?"
1 Corinthians 6:15a NKJV*

So, that is the first goal of our daily time with God. To be nourished and grow to fulfill the second purpose and glorify Him. But, as with the physical part of us, if we are not nourished spiritually, we weaken, become handicapped and die. Obviously, as we just said, the spirit will not die and we know that eternal life does not end (God is faithful, 1 Corinthians 1:8-9). As believer we have eternal life, but without spiritual nourishment our spirit can be "like" a dead body in the grave, present, but useless, i.e. without the efficiency to glorify God. And many believers walk through their lives like some form of living dead (very popular in movies these days, and completely wrong in every way, but could illustrate this believer that do not want to feed in His Word). Living in Christ, but dead in his service.

You are therefore responsible for nourishing yourself at the source and the daily personal time with God represents this nourishment at the source. As we said before, God will not miss an appointment with you. Sometimes you will not be there, but he will be waiting for you, ready to meet you and feed you.

"Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts." Jeremiah 15:16 NKJV

“These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.” Acts 17:11 NKJV

2. GLORIFY HIM !

After listening to Him and being nurtured by Him, now is the time to put the word into practice and glorify Him. We call this part “the personal application”.

Application is essential to the life of the believer. If the reading and the meditation represent “feeding”, the application or the practice represents the exercise. Because it is not a question of simply listening, but also of putting into practice. We don’t want to be stubborn people, deceiving ourselves by being hearers only and doers, acting on what we’ve heard and what convinced us.

“ But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” James 1:22 NKJV

Illustration : If you eat without exercising, you will become obese, and eventually you will have difficulty even moving. Are you spiritually obese? Feeding yourself, but not putting into practice? Everything becomes good, indiscriminately, as long as no effort is required. It sounds like the “liberal” Christian.

If you don’t eat, but exercise anyway, you lose weight, weakening to death. It happens for some and anorexia is an example of this kind of behavior. Are you spiritually anorexic? Always ready to do a good work, but never feeding on the Word of God? Nothing is good and you never do enough. It sounds like the “legalistic” Christian.

¹If you are interested, I have produced a dissertation on this subject. It will soon be available on my blog.

3. TALK TO GOD !

Perhaps the simplest, but also the most difficult of the three goals: prayer.

“Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,” Luke 18:1 NKJV

*“I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;”
1 Timothy 2:8 NKJV*

The goals are now clear, I hope. Get ready to reach them, or at least try to do so, which will be a good start!

We have completed the lessons that represented the theory. Now let's move on to practice, where you will learn how to feed yourself, glorify Him and talk to Him.

Remember that God wants to speak to you because He loves you.

Let's Go! Let's meet you God and be nourished!

SECTION 2- PUTTING INTO PRACTICE – HOW?

We now come to the second section which will touch on the practical aspects of the approach presented to you in this book. The “how” of this time of communion with my God. In chapters 8 through 10, we will look for the best ways to listen to God and be nurtured by Him.

Later, as we have been nurtured by God, we will seek ways to put this teaching into practice. How, can we now glorify Him in action during our day? After being nourished, we will do what we call “the exercise of the believer’s life.” And there are many kinds of exercises that the believer can do. As in everyday life, some prefer running, others swimming, and others lawn bowling! According to what God will show you personally, you will be able to apply his teaching, during your day and thus performing your exercise spiritually. And this learning from God is not meant to teach others, but rather that each one seeks what is most important in his activity for God: to glorify God!

Finally, in chapters twelve and thirteen, we will talk about our last goal, talk to God, the subject of prayer. So much has been said on this subject, and so many books written! Is there still something to say or understand? Of course, because, like all areas of spirituality, even after having assimilated and deepened them, it is so easy to fall back into an unfounded or even misdirected routine, making it lose its true meaning.

CHAPTER

08

Listening to God - A Prepared Heart



CHAPTER EIGHT

Every worker must prepare for work. Find the right tools, learn how to use them properly, keep them in good working order, and even prepare yourself to do the job well. In short, what are the things to do to prepare yourself to serve Him, to glorify Him.

1- A BIBLE

Which Bible? Which version? Electronic or not? All of this is of relative importance. Remember that it is God who will speak to you, through this text and He can use any medium to speak to your heart.

Of course, there are many versions of the Bible and some are better translations than others, but do you really think God will allow slight differences in translation to interfere with His communication with you? The important point is that this version, this medium, inspires you to study His Word and does not become an obstacle to your search for His will.

Personally, I like the “Louis Segond” which is a French version, but sometimes I take the “Darby” in French, sometime English Bible, or something else. Moreover, the fact of changing version helps me not to be too attached to a particular version, and sometimes to see the text under another eye. Anyway, remember that none are perfect. Do you prefer one? You can get attached to it, but make sure you are ready to listen to the Word of God in your heart, more

than the written version read by your brain.

I also like to read my Bible written on paper, because I like to turn the pages. Is an electronic Bible good too? Of course, but, once again, provided that the book or the medium becomes a help to continue to listen to God, rather than an obstacle.

Therefore, we will not enter here into a debate, as to the choice of the version. It is more important here to focus on the desire of the heart to listen to God. We will talk about specific needs regarding the study of the Scriptures another time. (In another book that will concentrate on studying the Scriptures)

As we discuss the topic of the text, which text is most appropriate for our daily time alone with God? Between us, do you really think that when you meet God and he wants to speak to your heart, he cannot use any book of the Bible, His Word, to do so? If stones can shout praises to the Son of God, your heart can be touched by any text when you are in His presence!

On the other hand, this is a very personal question, and you will have to answer it yourself, according to your conviction or the desire of your heart, taking care that they do not come to interfere with what God wishes to teach you.

A man once told me that at his age and maturity, the psalms were the texts that could speak to him. I advised this man to continue since he finds a particular interest in it. Others have already told me that they prefer to choose their text personally, and not follow a list from someone else. That is good too, but in this case, you just must be careful that this choice does not represent a form of individualism, that could be the expression of a desire not to share your daily time with God with others.

And some would tell me that after all personal worship is an encounter with God for oneself alone. This is true, but let's not forget two important points. First, even though this reflection and its application is personal, the Christian life and the blessings of God must be shared for the mutual edification and exaltation of His work in

my life. Second, let's not forget our nature which tends to put God aside and isolate itself. Sharing my Quiet Time with others will help me persevere in being, in some way, accountable to someone else. Not wanting to do so may reflect an unhealthy independence that is not characteristic of the Christian life.

In summary, a personal relationship with my God... YES, but departing from the community, brothers and sisters, with whom we will share eternity... NO.

So, find at least one person who will read the same texts as you and to whom you will be indebted for your readings and your application.

Some groups like to jump from one text to another, without systematically reading the books, but according to a chronology that they prefer. Others prefer to read a whole book before moving on to another book, thus being able to better understand the context of the texts they will read. These are all good choices, if they allow you to listen to God and share with others how God has touched your heart.

Personally, I prefer to use the same text as my wife, or friends, with whom I share what God has told me. In the same way, a Youth Group can read the same texts in order to be able to share together what God has shown them individually. To this end, "Word of Life fellowship" presents a 6-year reading plan, which I present here as a suggestion.

A final comment or warning on this topic. Some people read very short passages of Scriptures, thus dividing the Bible into well-defined sections. They think it might be best for them and I respect their choice, but we think it's better to read a bit longer text and let God speak to you through it. This avoids limiting the meditation to a too precise text, which would leave only one possibility of putting the text into practice for the day. We do not forget that it is God who will speak to our heart, do not limit God, even with our good intentions!

2. NOTEBOOK AND PENCIL

Some people prefer to write in a notebook with a pencil or pen. Personally, I prefer to write on my computer, because it's easier to correct, erase, retouch, but again, it's a matter of choice. However, writing down your thoughts, reflections and application is important for several reasons that we have already seen. Importance should be given to the content rather than the container.

And remember that it will also be interesting to come back to your texts one day, and, because of that, you must write it in a place that you will find easily. For this reason, the electronic format allows you an easier search. Be careful not to have to regret your choices now in several years. It is worth thinking about it carefully.

A few years ago, a director of "Word of Life fellowship" who was retiring, mentioned that he regretted not having written his thoughts during his life. Unfortunately, he was struck by Alzheimer's at the end of his life and could not do it later. Your life is a testimony of God's goodness throughout your life, let's tell others. I must add, for those who recognized this man, that his life was a testimony to the glory of God. I remember some parts of his life where I was witness, but I would have loved to read more and be encouraged.¹

¹This leads me to personally encourage you, again, to keep your written notes in a place where you can find them and compile them, for feedback on your thoughts and their evolution, but also for others! Here is another reason! I do not think my grandchildren will know me in depth. They will probably only remember my simple games with them, my invented stories that I like to tell them so much, how I understand them when they speak a language that no one understands (Maverick, Ella, Killian and Liv will surely remember this). But maybe one day these thoughts that I write can be a testimony in their lives, to the glory of God! I believe that God speaks to me personally every morning. It is therefore precious and worthy of sharing.

3. A QUIET PLACE AND A DEFINITE TIME

This place, you have already chosen in chapter five, and have already fixed this appointment with God. Remember that God is already waiting to meet you. He will teach you.

4. YOURSELF (YOUR MIND AND THOUGHTS)

You need to be present in mind where you will be to meet him! It may seem obvious, but as we have already mentioned, we can be present in body but absent in mind. Are you ready to meet your God? Nothing should disturb you at this moment, not even your thoughts!¹

5. MY HEART (MOST IMPORTANT)

“Keep thy heart more than anything that is guarded; for out of it are the issues of life.” Proverb 4:23 ASV

“My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” Psalm 42:2 ASV

It is not to your ears that God will speak to, but to your heart. Is it ready to meet your God?

“let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water,” Hebrews 10:22 ASV

¹A simple trick: May be a particular thought cannot leave your mind, and it prevents you from having all your thoughts fixed on your personal moment with God? Immediately write this idea or thought down on a piece of paper and set it aside. You are no longer afraid to forget it and you will come back to it later. Now you can get back to what's important and focus on that precious time of...listening to God.

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13 ASV

IS YOUR HEART CLEAN TO RECEIVE GOD?

Now is the time to prepare your heart to receive God. You would not invite someone to your house if the house were dirty and messy? Even less if your guest is God! We often invite God into our heart, into a dirty place full of thoughts or things that cannot sustain His presence. It's time to clean up, because your most worthy guest is coming to your house!

And what an advantage when our guest is God... it is He who will clean up your heart! On the other hand, only one condition is necessary, confession.

“Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me.” Psalm 51:2-3 NKJV

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
1 John 1:9 NKJV*

There is only one way to come to the light, for God to reveal the truth to you: Confess your sin! God will purify you and enable you to receive Him. God, the perfect guest, whom your heart will now be ready to receive. I am also convinced that in the following text, the psalmist is preparing for his time alone with God!

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” Psalm 51:10 NKJV

This passage is the very essence of preparing for a time with God. A washed heart and a mind ready to listen and receive from Him. So, after confessing your sins to Him, pray to ask God to help you understand what HE wants you to understand today and what HE wants you to do today.

"I am a stranger in the earth; Do not hide Your commandments from me." Psalm 119:18 NKJV

Now that your heart and mind are ready, meditate on his Word.

CHAPTER

09

Listening to God - A time for meditation



CHAPTER NINE

So, we are at the point of reading the Scriptures and meditating on what is taught to us by God.

HOW THEN, DO WE LISTEN TO GOD?

No, I will not hear his voice in my ears, but rather in my heart. And by faith even more clearly than if it was by my ears. Here, I can only tell you about my personal experience and the method I use. And this method is so valuable, and it has been so effective for me since 1993, as well as several other people I have introduced it to, that I can only repeat it, over and over again, hoping that others will be blessed as I have been and still continue to be, day after day.

A METHOD

As soon as I wake up in the morning, I get up eager to meet Him. Of course, it's not every morning that I wake up fresh and ready to meet God. Sometimes I'm still very tired and sleepy.

So, where was I? Ah yes... I get up. You see how easily I can be distracted! To help my brain, I make myself a good coffee and I do whatever is necessary to be wide awake and have all my thoughts available to meet Him. Coffee is not an obligation of course! It's up to you to find what is best for you.

Then I sit down, and above all I prepare my heart, as mentioned before, getting it clean. It is usually not long, because my list of sins is from yesterday and therefore easy to enumerate, confess. Unless of course you haven't spent time with God in a long time and in that case your list of sins to confess may be very long!

Then, I begin to read the text for the day, of course, bearing in mind that a day is ahead of me, and I know what is planned there (work, school, meeting, family, etc.).

"Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, For in You do I trust; Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, For I lift up my soul to You."

Psalms 143:8 NKJV

TWO BOOKS

Imagine that you have two books in front of you. In one hand the Bible, and in the other the book of your life, which looks a lot like your agenda for the day. You know the book of your life, knowing how your day is planned, but God knows it even better knowing, not only what is planned by you, but what will really happen today, beyond your planning.

He will therefore use the Bible, which is in one hand, with the passage of the day, to reveal to you His plan for you today and how your plan (in an imaginary way the book in the other hand, that is your diary) can adapt to His plan. There, He will reveal to you what He wants you to do, that is far better than your own plan.

I don't know why, because I know God is all-knowing, but every morning I am amazed to realize that He already knew my plan for the day and is speaking to my heart based on that plan. Yes! He already knew my plan and always speaks to me in a very personal way. Sometimes I even have the impression that this text of the Bible, which I am reading today, was written expressly for me today. And there, it is certain that I exaggerate, because I know that His Word is not only for me, but I live it like this in this moment of intimacy with Him. His Word to my heart is all that matters at this time of my day.

Moreover! If you are in the habit of meeting Him every day and listening to His plan, it will become clearer each day and will allow you to put your plans aside to come closer to His plan. This is the grace of God! You will not only be nourished but you will be able to grow day by day, by Him.

MEDITATION

Now that you have these two books in your hands, you begin to read and meditate on the Scriptures. So, start by reading the biblical text of the day and you begin your meditation.

WHAT IS MEDITATION?

A definition: to focus one's thoughts on: reflect on or ponder over; to plan or project in the mind.

And There you go! A focusing of our thought on the biblical text, on God's plan for me, on His life plan for you today.

You are then going to read the text of the day. And meditate... focus your thoughts, reflect, plan. You ask yourself questions: What is the author of the text saying? and above all, what is the author, God, is telling me?

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," 2 Timothy 3:16 NKJV

Reread the text... focus, reflect... reread... focus, reflect...etc.

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Sometimes the reflection and the projects are immediate, but most of the time I have to reread the text a few times, saying to my heart... "listen to your God", and to my God... "speak to my heart". Samuel said :

"Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears" 1 Samuel 3:9 NKJV

Sometimes, I'm just not at my best mentally! But God knows me, and he will be able to use even my small brain with my weak capacities of the moment. I must always remember that it does not depend on my intelligence, but on the power of God to speak to my spirit, and He does not lack power.

Other times, I will even have another coffee to help me wake up! And other times, very rarely, I will let the text mature in my mind, but this method is very risky. Indeed, like any normal person, when I started my day with all its worries, I forget what was most important... my plan written by God. So, most of the time, I only leave His presence, my personal time with Him, when I have received His plan for my day, when He has spoken to my heart. And it is usually not that long because, without fail, God will speak to me.

Did I say it? I reread the text... I reflect... I reread... I reflect... etc.

Inevitably, there is a moment in my reading where I am surprised, amazed at what I read. A moment when I say to myself... WOW! For you it may be another word, but for me it's WOW! At this moment, I just realized that this part of this text is specifically for me. As I told you above, this is the moment when I tell myself that this text was only written for me today!

And, when I get to that moment, faced with this WOW, I know that I just heard God speak to my heart. This is the time when the Holy Spirit teaches me, testifies to me of Christ, convicts me, leads me into truth, will tell me things to come.

« Mais le consolateur, l'Esprit-Saint, que le Père enverra en mon nom, vous enseignera toutes choses, et vous rappellera tout ce que je vous ai dit. » Jean 14. 26

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”
John 16:7-13 NKJV

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
Hebrews 4.12 NKJV

God has just spoken to your heart. It's time to take a paper and a pencil... or a computer, or whatever you prefer to write this text and what touches you in this text according to your life plan today. It's time to write your plan, your agenda... according to God.

Now, we are going to find the application. How to put into practice what He has just shown you. Let's take another step in daily personal time with Him. **Put His Word into practice.**

CHAPTER

10

Glorifying God - Why?



CHAPTER TEN

Now, the application of the Word of God, putting into practice, the actions that will glorify God during this day.

Let us learn, in this lesson, to fulfill the second purpose of this daily time with God: **to glorify God**.

Let's first look at this purpose of **glorifying God**, and its importance.

I have come to realize lately that I often say "God bless you" in my letters or communications. I lingered one day over this expression so frequent among believers, especially in North America. But I realized that this phrase, and even the concept of seeking God's blessing, is an Old Testament concept and not a New Testament concept. Why? For we have already been blessed in Christ. We have already received the essentials for our lives and indeed for our eternal life.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ," Ephesians 1:3 NKJV

Let's not forget that we have been enriched by salvation in Jesus Christ... if we have known him, but much more, if he has known us. So, as we have already said, there is a relationship between God and the believer.

*“But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.”
1 Corinthians 8:3 NKJV*

*“...But now after you have known God, or rather are known
by God ...” Galatians 4:9a NKJV*

By his impoverishment we are rich, rich with eternal life.

I will continue to say to the unbeliever, “God bless you!” because he needs this salvation that we have, this eternal blessing. But should the believer always seek riches and blessings, if he has already been blessed in Christ? Beware of always wanting to be blessed, as we see in those who spread the gospel of prosperity. They are always looking for more, always more healings, wealth, blessings. The only thing they really need is the blessing of salvation. Unfortunately, they think that blessings, through wealth and health are signs that God has approved their deeds, their “great faith”. How foolish and how disappointed they will be when they realize that it was a test, and they have failed if they have not shared. As Paul thought us:

*“For I do not mean that others should be eased and you
burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your
abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance
also may supply your lack—that there may be equality. As
it is written, “He who gathered much had nothing left over,
and he who gathered little had no lack.”
2 Corinthians 8:13-15 NKJV*

So, let's not be like those who always want to be blessed, more and more, and always more. Always wanting to receive.

*“Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to
enter the kingdom of God!” Mark 10:24b NKJV*

Why this long explanation and warning about the believer's constant desire to be blessed? So that we remember the purpose of the believer's life? What is his hope if he already has all the riches in Christ? **To bless God.** Here is the preferred expression in the New

Testament by the believer.

SO, YOUR GOAL AS A BELIEVER? MAY GOD USE YOU FOR HIS GLORY.

That is what I wish to you. Not to be blessed, but to glorify your God. Because, glorifyng God is the real joy of the believer.

And let's seek contentment:

"... Give me neither poverty nor riches —Feed me with the food allotted to me; ..." Proverb 30:8-9 NKJV

May we realize that we already have all wealth in Jesus Christ. Now we must share. And this sharing, according to what God will show you today, will represent the practice of each day. And so, God will be glorified by your life.

CHAPTER

11

Glorifying God - How?



CHAPTER ELEVEN

How to put into practice what God has taught me and thus glorify Him.

After listening to God, (chapter 9) it is better to write down these thoughts, these reflections, this meditation.

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS.

Do you have a notebook, paper or electronic? Write down your thoughts.

There will be two elements to write, two questions to answer:

- “What is the author saying?”
- “How am I going to put this into practice in my life today?”

1- “WHAT IS THE AUTHOR SAYING?”

Here you will write that part we talked about in the last lesson. You know that moment when you heard a WOW in your heart and mind? This part of the text that is for you today. Do not rewriting the biblical text of the day, but only that part of the text which is associated with this WOW!

By the way, there is no “WOW” smarter than others. This WOW belongs to you, because it is what God taught you, **to you today**. It will even be able to change for the same text, from one reading to another. For example, when this text will come back in your reading, in a few years. This WOW will change, because God is connecting the text to what you are going to experience today. The text will not change, but your life context will change. And so, the application will change.

2- “HOW AM I GOING TO PUT THIS INTO PRACTICE IN MY LIFE TODAY?”

This time of application of the Word of God to you, will represent those actions that will **glorify God today!**

After listening to Him and being nurtured by Him, now is the time to put the word into practice and glorify God. We also call this part **“the personal application”**.

WHAT IS THE PERSONAL APPLICATION?

As we have already said: application is essential to the life of the believer. If the reading and the mediation represent “feeding”, the application or the practice represents the exercise. Because it is not a question of simply listening, but also of putting into practice. We remind you, that you do not want to deceive yourself like those who only listen and do not act according to what they have heard and been convinced, by God himself.

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” James 1:22 NKJV

“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.” Luke 6:46-49 NKJV

Maybe you say to yourself: “Yes, this text, that I read in the Bible, is for me, but how to put it into practice today?”

Do you remember those two books you had in your hands at the beginning of your meditation? In one hand the Bible and in the other the book of your life, which can also be your personal agenda for the day that begins.

Well, to put it into practice, we suggest a method that will help you find what God is revealing to you today.

And I would have to say that this part is probably the most complicated but the most glorious to God. Not complicated to understand but to apply because, as we used to do it differently, and most often, not to really applying our passage practically, on the same day. So, **I ask you to be very attentive here. This is the key to this important part of Glorifying God.**

To remember it, we will concentrate on three words starting by the letter P to facilitate our application of the Word of God for today:

Personal;
Possible;
Practical.

PERSONAL

We have talked about it extensively, but let's say it again! This time with God is personal. For this same reason, God speaks to you, and you only. Of course, you are encouraged afterwards to share with others how God has touched you and how He is working in your life. However, what God shows you and the application are for you only.

Too many people are "touched by the Word to make others change their lives!" They think they have understood what others should do. Remember that other believers also have the Spirit of God, and He will speak to them personally.

Focus on understanding what God wants to say to you today. And it doesn't have to be a world-changing element, just you. Besides, unfortunately too often, we tend to find beautiful applications that change the world. Changing the world sounds great, but it is you that God wants to change today. God speaks to you today to make changes today, to glorify Him today.

Let's take an example. If today's text speaks to me of "justice," my practice tends to be:

- The world must experience justice today.
- I must teach justice around me.
- I will pray for justice today.

These things are all good, but should already be present every day, in your life and everywhere in reality. This is God's plan for mankind. Now, what is His plan for you today? You must ask yourself: How can I personally practice righteousness today? Maybe like this:

- To correct today an injustice that I have already committed.
- Ask forgiveness today for a past injustice.
- Speak up, to protect someone when I see an injustice today.
- And even, maybe, donate today, to someone who has experienced an injustice (money, time, object, help).

All of these applications can be done today. You see that putting into practice is for you, today. Not for “one day in the future” and not for others.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE THAT DOES NOT MEET THE CRITERIA OF THE “PERSONAL” APPLICATION

You think you are called of God to become a missionary and go to another country for which you are touched. You feel that it was the message of God for you today. In your zeal you may want to announce this to your spouse (if you are married), as the new direction for your life, of your family!

Do not forget that she too, if she is a believer, is indwelt by the Spirit of God, and if the Spirit really wants you two to go on mission, He will touch her too, without your help. Of course, I hear that... you are the authority in your home and she should submit to you. And many wives have done so because they are good wives. But not is not the time to think about your authority, but the authority of the Holy spirit. If she is not touched by Him, it may be that this project does not come from God, but from the enemy! If it comes from God, it will be clear to both of you, you will not have to impose it. If you feel that God is imposing it on you, wait for Him to impose it on others, if that is His will. Faith is not simply believing that God wants to change my life but that he will act in His time to change the life of everyone. I need faith to act for Him, and to patiently wait for Him to touch others.

So, in summary...personal application... means... personal... personal!

POSSIBLE

There is also another concept that can easily destroy your application of God teaching. It is to find an application that is impossible to accomplish. So, we are going to look for a possible application to accomplish TODAY.

I have often given the following example. If you have never memorized the Scriptures on a regular basis and one morning, in your time alone with God, you realize the need to start memorizing the Scriptures. So, you give yourself the application of memorizing one verse a day! **Impossible !** Well, it is possible, but so difficult that it will be the best way to discourage you and stop your effort to put it into practice. Of course, if you had only decided to memorize a verse, or even two, it would be possible. But since you have been convinced to start a memorization plan, you must think about what is possible for you to continue this wonderful work, all your life.

So, why not a new verse per month? You think that is not much? Well, it is better than what you were doing before... which was NOTHING. Ok, you could memorize one a week. But beware! You must find the right balance so that your application remains possible.

Some will say: "But Serge, you seem to lack faith in what God can do?" Yes, I have faith in God, not in myself and my abilities. I want to remain objective about my abilities. God asks me to serve Him and He has given me everything I need for that. I just have to listen to Him and obey Him. The impossible is His domain and for the impossible I have faith in Him. (Hebrews 11.6).

So, in summary... a possible practice... possible... possible... today!

PRACTICAL

Another mistake we make in finding an application, would be to find something, that I would describe as, too “spiritual”, or lacking in **practicality**. You know, those good intentions that are too perfect. They make you “look good” when you say them, but in reality, they cannot apply to you today. Which means that your application will still become “a good way to do nothing”. Let me explain with another example.

If God, one morning, convinces you to love your neighbor, here are some applications that are not “practical”:

- Today I should love my neighbor.
- Today I must begin to love every man.
- Love will be the goal of my life from today.
- Love is the most important thing for man (this application is also not personal).

All these proposals are good, and sound very good to try to demonstrate to other that I am a “spiritual” man. No one can oppose that with these very good intentions. But nothing practical is presented here!

How are you going “love of neighbor” in a practical way, today?

This is what you must find to glorify God today, through an application linked to the teaching of His Word to your heart. Here are some practical suggestions:

- Help the first person who asks me for help today (even a beggar)?
- Help the first person I see needing help?

And maybe you don't have to wait to see that person, or that someone ask you for help, because you surely know someone already, in your entourage, who needs your help, your practical love?

Can you see how this application will become alive and effective?

It will change, not only your life, but the life of the world around you,

by your action. And this will be the result of the teaching of God in your life, in your heart. What a great and beautiful application of the Word of God, for His Glory!

So, in summary... practical... practical... practical!

ONE THING TO REMEMBER IS TO SHARE WITH OTHERS:

- How did God touch your heart?
- How you desire to glorify him today?

“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.” John 15:26-27 NKJV

And this sharing of your personal time with God, with others, can edify them, encourage them in their walk with God, and motivate them to persevere themselves in this precious daily time with their God. But beware! You share with them to glorify God and edify them, not to teach them and show them how to apply the Word of God. This part is between that person and God, personally!

FOR COUPLES OR FAMILIES

How do you make, this daily personal time with God, valuable to a couple or to family life? As we just discussed, sharing God's work in my life can be uplifting for my spouse and my family.

Mimi and I have our personal time with God separately of course. And generally, we try to take time to share what God has taught us respectively. We discover that most of the time, our WOW and our application will be very different. Sometimes I'm really touched and impressed by the WOW that was given to Mimi, but it is not mine, it is for her! But I remain touched by the way God is working in her life, as she is touched by the way God is working in my life.

This sharing time is a blessing and a cause for praise for both of us. A joy to witness the work of God in the life of another, especially with the person God has given me to share my life with. I need her in the physical and psychological aspects of my life, but also in this spiritual aspect, and that is why it is so important that we can share how God speaks to our hearts, individually.

And the same can be done as a family. Our personal time with God will remain personal, for each one of us, but we can have an excellent daily family time, where each one will share the food that has been given to them by God, and the way in which they have been able and will be able to put this Word into practice to glorify God.

FINAL WARNING/REPETITION

Here is a simple reminder of two important elements so as not to undermine the effectiveness, and especially the goals of this time alone with God, and its application. I will try to be clear and brief.

1. This time alone with God and application is essential for the growth of any believer. No believer can do without it, if he wants to grow and glorify God with his life.
2. This time is for you alone and the application is also for you alone. Not to change other people's lives, but your own life, one day at a time. Study for the teaching of brothers and sisters, or as part of the community that is the church, is another subject that we will touch at another time.

In summary, this is an essential time for me, and only for me.

Now it's time to put it into practice. May God use you for His Glory.

Next and last lessons: talking to God. Prayer!

CHAPTER

12

Speaking to God - How ?



CHAPTER TWELVE

Let us learn, in these last two chapters, how to fulfill the third purpose of daily personal time with God, which is to talk to God.

SO HERE IS THE PLAN THAT WAS PROPOSED HERE:

- Listening to God and being nourished by God;
- Put into practice the Word of God to glorify God;
- Talk to God in prayer.

Interestingly, but sadly, there is a tendency for many believers to reverse this process to adopt the following plan:

- Pray to ask God for help;
- Trying to do good deeds to satisfy God (hoping that, through deeds, God will answer prayers better);
- And finally, realizing that the first two points cannot force the hand of God, if he is repentant, the believer will recognize the need to listen to God and be nourished by Him.

And here is one of the purposes of this book: to restore the proper and necessary process for every believer. And so, having:

- listened to God and be nourished;
- applied His Word and glorified Him;
- we have now come to the part of prayer, which is talking to God.

But prayer is a subject that I find so difficult to explain, since it is so intimate. And this is, moreover, one of the main reasons for the difficulty of speaking about prayer, its intimacy. Of course, many teachings and books have already studied and talked about this subject. We will therefore simply give an overview of the important elements of prayer.

PRAYER IS AN INTIMATE TIME BETWEEN:

- God, the Creator and man, the creature;
- Jesus, the Savior and the believers, the saved;
- The Holy Spirit, the Teacher and the heart of the man who learns.

And the relationship with my God, in prayer, must remain intimate and private. So, I will not talk to you about my time of prayer, because it is too intimate, but let's find out how to develop this time of prayer so that the relationship between your God and you is one of communion.

HOW TO PRAY?

That is what we will talk about now. The how, not the what.

Notice that Jesus taught his disciples "how to pray"?

"In this manner, therefore, pray..." Matthew 6:9-15 NKJV

He did not talk to them about his private times with his Father. No unnecessary details, such as duration, location, etc. Some wonder if they should pray: standing, hands up, sitting, kneeling, lying on the ground?

On this subject, it is obvious that certain positions are related to the doctrine that you are taught. Unfortunately, many support these doctrines on one or two verses, often taken out of context, and they end up making it a rule, impose it and judge those who do not follow these rules. I will not enter a debate here, because the important thing is **the attitude of the heart rather than the position of**

the heart. If therefore your heart is pure before God, your position will be secondary, and in any case, it should not be seen by others since it will be done in the secret of your time with God.

And if your prayer is in community, as for example, among the members of the church, the attitude will be one of humility and self-effacement of man before his God.

*“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. **But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.** And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.” Matthew 6:5-8 NKJV*

If this position serves to make you visible in front of men, I advise you to rethink it otherwise your prayer would become odious in the eyes of God. Just like the Pharisee who stood before God, compared to the tax collector who did not even dare to look up. (Ref.: Luke 18:10-14)

We do not seek, in this moment with our God, to adopt an attitude to please men, but to please God. And I can assure you that this must always be with respect for others and not fueled by pride!

Sometimes I can talk to my God while walking, sometimes lying face down, sometimes it's at a specific time, other times it's all day long. You will establish it together, God and you. According to the prayer and the relationship of the moment between you two.

And the attitude that should characterize prayer is described to us in the passage from Matthew 6: 16-34

- Not to influence others, not to look good like hypocrites;
- Not for gain, for treasure (your heart will be where your treasure is);
- Not worried about your life (but seek the kingdom and justice of God);
- Not worried about tomorrow.

PREPARATION FOR PRAYER

PRAY WITH A PURE HEART.

*"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear."
Psalm 66:18 NKJV*

*"Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him."
John 9:31 NKJV*

"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." Isaiah 59:2 NKJV

PRAY WITH A PREPARED MIND.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind." James 1:5-6 NKJV

"And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." 1 John 3:22 NKJV

PRAY IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." John 14:13 NKJV

PRAY ACCORDING TO HIS WILL.

“Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:10 NKJV

*“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”
1 John 5:14 NKJV*

*“He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”
Matthew 26:39 NKJV*

PRAY WITH FAITH.

*“So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God.”
Mark 11:22 NKJV*

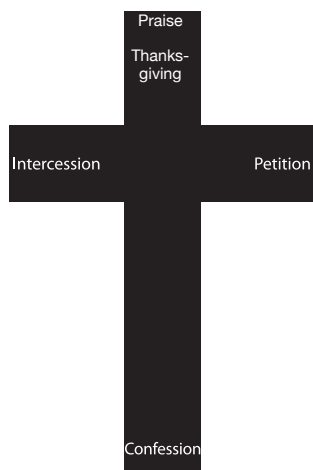
“And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” Matthew 21:22 NKJV

And now that you have the “how” and the right attitude, what can you “talk about” with your God?

CHAPTER

13

Speaking to God - What about ?



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

What to say to God?

Let's look at the 5 types of prayers and their order of priority. Why an order of priority? For prayer has the same priorities as the life of the believer:

- God first.
 - Praise,
 - Thanksgiving,
 - Confession (my heart before His justice)
- The other in second.
 - Intercession
- Me last.
 - Petition

Let's look at these prayers in detail.

1. PRAISE

RECOGNIZE WHO HE IS!

It is important here to read the Bible to know him and marvel at who he is... the God of the universe. And that is what praise represents.

We can also see the attributes of God through his creation. Heaven speaks to me of His greatness, the beauty of His creation, justice, and its necessity in our lives. This time is for the creature to marvel at what he cannot understand, but does not need to understand, in order to marvel. To understand, I need to grasp a principle, a thing, a person, as a whole, but this is impossible for man, to grasp God! But I only need to understand WHO, according to what he reveals to me in his Word and his creation.

Finally, there are so many things that allow me to praise Him for who He is. Here nothing else must come to mind than His person and wanting to know Him. Some need solitude to worship Him, others can worship Him every moment of their lives. Praise is something very personal and intimate.

“Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; And His greatness is unsearchable.” Psalm 145:3 NKJV

“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.” Psalm 100:4 NKJV

“I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.” Psalm 9:2 NKJV

2. THANKSGIVING

THANKING HIM FOR ALL HE DOES!

Very simple. Thank you, God, for...! There are so many things to thank Him for, including the trials that are proof of His love! Here again, His creation is a source of thanksgiving, so blessed are we that He makes it accessible to us. There are so many things that amaze me day in and day out, of the past, present, and future, by faith. Again, this is a very personal and different prayer for everyone. Everyone has their own way of perceiving the past, present, and future and of appreciating them. Do I need to receive to say thank you or do I have a grateful heart at every moment? It varies a lot from person to person.

“The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.” Psalm 18:2 NKJV

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18 NKJV

“... speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,” Ephesians 5:19, 20 NKJV

3. CONFESSION

COME OUT OF THE DARKNESS AND REVEAL WHAT YOU HAVE DONE, SAID, OR THOUGHT!

Forgiveness can only come through confession. If you are His child? One day you have confessed your sins to Him, recognized that you deserved death and eternal separation from your God, you abandoned your life to Him to do with He as He saw fit. The son paid, to expiate your sin and redeem you for eternity with Him. Yes, it is done!

Now, even though sin is forgiven, its action now takes you away from Him, from His love, from peace and justice. You must now confess to return to the presence of the light, when you have gone away into darkness.

Confession is easier and faster for some, and for others so difficult that there will only be trials to push them to confess. So, confess your sin, as soon as you realize what you have done, said or thought, if you want to stay in His presence.

“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.” Psalm 51:5 NKJV

*“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
1 John 1:9 NKJV*

4. INTERCESSION

CRY OUT FOR OTHERS!

An intercession is a approach in favor of someone. There are so many people with so many different needs. Intercession is to present them to God, and especially when, e sometimes, they cannot do it themselves.

But beware not to abuse this right of access to the Father, and of the heart of him who presents you to his Father, his Creator, his God. Many ask for prayers without realizing the seriousness of intercession. This intercession is my plea to the King of my life, to perform a miracle in your life. Indeed, God has already given us everything we needed and if we obey His Word we are in His ways and on His way, in happiness or in sorrow. On the other hand, sometimes you feel that you can no longer continue with the strength he has given you and you need an intervention from him, a miracle, to be able to continue. This is what supplication to your king represents. A supplication that is an intercession for the other or a petition for you (we will talk about this later).

Besides, if you take prayer seriously, when you ask to be prayed for, let the person know about your situation, the progress, or resolution. Or if you realize that it is no longer necessary to pray to remove this trial from you, because it is God who has allowed it in your life. And in the latter case, he will not remove it before confession has been made.

“And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 NKJV

Too many people ask to pray for their problems and forget to let those prayer soldiers know when the problem is solved! These brethren continued to pray for subject that have been solved already! What happens to those useless prayers that have already been answered? This characterizes a lack of respect for the brother who prays and for the seriousness of the prayer. Show faith and respect in intercession.

“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:1-4 NKJV

“...you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many.” 2 Corinthians 1:11 NKJV

“Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” Matthew 9:38 NKJV

5. PETITION

ASK FOR YOUR NEEDS!

The right of petition was a right, granted to the populations, to make a direct request to the king. Here is the last prayer of the believer who presents his needs to God. However, as mentioned earlier, the believer knows that he already has everything in Christ and his requests will be only, through and according to the will of God. You have needs and desires, and you do not know if you can ask God for them? He knows even better than you these needs and these desires and knows, better than you, which ones will be useful and necessary to you. Pray to Him in faith for the answer He desires.

Again, think carefully before asking. Are you asking God to do a miracle, maybe even change the laws of nature? Maybe what you are going through is a choice of God, so why would you be delivered from it? Let's review above what Paul wrote in the text of 2 Corinthians 12:7-9.

Make sure that your petitions are not trivialities. Like this student who did not study out of laziness and who asks God to help him pass his exam. And I am sure you have heard and perhaps made such futile requests! Let us demonstrate our faith, but also intelligence and respect in our prayers.

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6 NKJV

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened." Luke 11:9-10 NKJV

So, these were the five types of prayers and their priority. Keep in mind that prayer is an activity, an intimate relationship between me and my God, my Creator, my Lord. Let's cherish this moment when I can talk to Him, because He cherishes this moment when He hears me talk to Him and when He looks into my heart that is turned towards Him.

Conclusion

And here is the end of this book whose subject fascinates me so much!

Now, how to be used by Him? This is the reason for this book about daily personal time with God. I could only be used by Him if I turn to Him every morning, listen to Him, learn from Him, and be nurtured by His presence. Thereafter I will put these teachings into practice during my day so that He may be glorified. No longer seek to receive only, but rather seek to be used by Him.

As you have understood, this is the personal work of my God in my life. My salvation is a relationship, not a religion.

Here is a book that wants to be very personal and that wants to help you maintain a personal relationship with your God. The most important relationship of your life, for your salvation yes, but also for eternity. Did I already say that? Yes, and more than once, and more than thousands of times in my life, but again and again I see unhappy believers who miss out on that time with Him. This most important moment of your day, the most important activity of your life as a believer.

Seeing this suffering world, I am surprised at so much confusion among believers. Some think that a better teaching, a more adequate doctrine can put us back on the right path, and they will pretend to be able to tell you the right teachings to follow. Yes, this is also what every religion preaches. And I have to say, evangelicals are no different. Everything must go through the brain, intelligence, knowledge and diplomas. Yes, these things may have their uses, but they are not vital to gospel growth. Every believer's daily personal relationship with his God is the only thing that will lead every believer to the right path. When every believer reads the Word of God every morning, and is fed directly from Him, and seeks to glorify Him, then we will have no more false doctrines that will turn believers away, for everyone will recognize the lie as soon as it comes out of the mouth, of the one who conveys religion and not faith... I'm sure of it.

I also hope that this book is concise enough: it is only a part of all that is the study of the Scriptures. Indeed, despite the plea I have made against the idolatry of knowledge, studies are useful and necessary, if they are done in submission to God and in faith.

I speak of course of theology, the knowledge of God, because as for any other knowledge, God has given the world an intelligence. If this world uses it properly, it can live with partial happiness, and understand its weakness and helplessness, and perhaps one day seek to know this God who created him. But in this study of the Scriptures, there is a minimum to know, to learn in order to deepen certain subjects. Like any in-depth study, this will allow us to better understand.

However, let me open a short parenthesis here. Theology cannot enable us to understand God. Understanding means identifying, encompassing, synthesizing complicated concepts. God is not one of these concepts. He cannot be encompassed, synthesized and therefore cannot be "understood". We can only try to get to know Him better, and again, it is He who empowers us to do this and sets the limits of what we will be able to know. As such, He can give all knowledge to an illiterate and non-learned (according to the values of this society), and his choice is the right one, because he is God.

He desires to be glorified and has called us, who are weak to Him, so that He may be glorified.

“For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;” 1 Corinthians 1:26, 27 NKJV

I am often reminded, and say, that God decided the time of the coming of Jesus and the writing of the Bible despite the limits that meant, the choice of that time in history. It would be much easier to have all the evidence on the coming of the Messiah, if he had been born in the 21st century. Why then these difficulties for us to know Him, that He has allowed and even planned? It is obvious that faith is the main factor in this choice. God desires my faith, to recognize without seeing, to accept before having the assurance.

That does not mean that we should not keep trying to better understand principles, form opinions, write doctrines, and choose areas of study. Apologetics is an important one for many, and it can be interesting to learn how to defend one's faith, but let's not fool ourselves into thinking that we can demonstrate or prove faith. When we attempt to do so, we lose the primary purpose of faith, and that is certainly not the will of God.

In summary, yes for study, but I am of the opinion that those who are good at studying and playing with abstract concepts must help others to study, within their limits, so that knowledge and the study of the Word of God are accessible to all. And my approach is in this direction, that is to say, in popularization and universalization of the knowledge that God has given us. And if some think they have a unique knowledge that the majority cannot appreciate, let him keep it, because in my opinion this knowledge is only useful to inflate pride. Personally, I do not need it, nor my pride which already likes to feed and grow too much!

So, this is to explain my desire to share with others, giving or receiving, so that the whole body of Christ benefits from this knowledge that God desires for all. Later, I will present to you other publications on the study of the Scriptures which I hope will contribute to this objective.

And, as I mentioned in the foreword, I would like your feedback, because many of these principles and the majority of what I write here are the result of working with others, like you.

Through your comments I will be able to make this book evolving, the internet and new technologies allow us so much flexibility for frequent updates and rapid communication. I will therefore be able to serve you better, you who have a passion for the knowledge of His Word.

I pray that you can always find this time with God every day and that He will use you for His glory!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Serge was born in 1957 and married Michèle Jubinville in 1980. They have two daughters, Marie-Hélène and Elizabeth, and now 4 grandchildren: Maverick, Ella, Killian and Liv. Serge is a Canadian citizen by birth and a French citizen by his parents.

Serge has enjoyed practicing sports all his life, such as volleyball, basketball, high jump (Canadian junior champion 1977), and Aikibudo (black belt).



After graduating from high school in Quebec in 1975, he studied in a wide variety of fields at university level, such as physics, neurophysiology and administration, and obtained degrees from the University of Montreal (BSc in physical education, in 1982), as well as Acadia University (Master of Theology, in 2017).

After accepting Jesus as their Savior and Lord in 1980, Serge and Michèle served the local church with passion. Serge's involvement was as follows:

- 11 years as a church leader/pastor (1985-1996),
- 24 years as a leader of youth groups in their local church (1986-2010),
- 26 years missionary in Quebec to serve at the level of the ministry at the local church, where he also organized more than 50 evangelical activities of importance, as well as missionary trips for youth groups, while being a preacher in camps for young people. (1994-2010)
- He finally served 15 years as an international missionary as a trainer and consultant (with training experience in more than 13 different countries) (2007-2022)
- With this experience he taught on the subject of “Ministry among Youth” in Bible institutes on three continents (America, Europe and Africa). (1993-now)

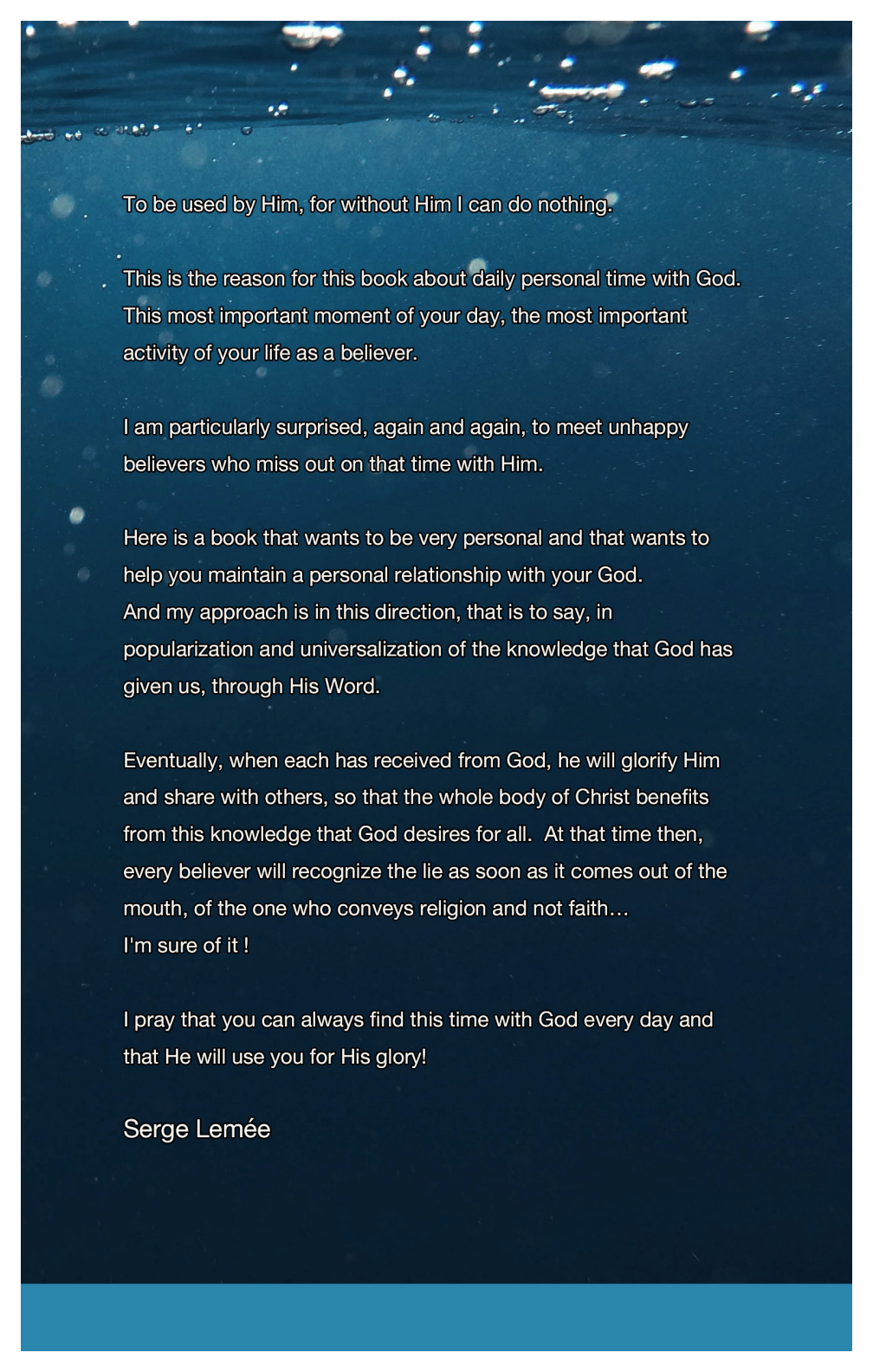
And of course, all of this could not have happened without the help and constant support of Michèle, during all these years.

Serge and Michèle's desire are to help young people to become disciples of Christ. To achieve this goal, they use their experience to help and support other leaders who have the desire to continue this fantastic ministry with these young people, who have so many needs, but so few people willing to help them. Do not hesitate to contact us at any time to advance this ministry towards this objective.

Serge Lemée
International Trainer and Consultant
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