

Personal Devotional Time With God

Personal time with God, on a daily basis, is the cornerstone of spirit filled Christian life. But most people have a hard time sustaining any sort of devotional life because it seems to have no vital connection to recovery, restoration or protection of their perceived inner strength, or self.

From my own experience and perception devotion time felt about as important as flossing my teeth. Don't get me wrong, flossing is important for good dental health and studies show that it helps to keep you out of the dentist's chair, but as important as it is, I think we all, when pressured by time or worldly circumstance, would and have skipped it. The fruit of our decision not to floss our teeth is painfully brought to mind through the process of drilling, filling or pulling of teeth, the results of our lack of dental discipline. The fruit, (**results**), of most of my life have proved to be the confirmation of this prophetic word. I mean my Christian walk has consisted of many fits and starts, (**mostly fits!**), backsliding, frustration and in turn, open rebellion towards God. I am speaking of my own experience but I think we all go through this processing of the spirit by God through his righteousness and love for us.

God has revealed to me that he isn't after ritual or obligation but that he wants relationship in the true sense of the word. Relationship means that we have to interact on many different levels with God. He wants a relationship based on mutual respect, admiration, love, emotional stability, trust, honesty and intellectual equality. He created Adam fully mature and intellectually capable to subdue the earth, (**Gen. 1:28**), and to name all the animals and creatures God had formed. (**Gen. 2:19-20**) In my opinion God meets us right where we are, on any level. He doesn't belittle or talk down to us but encourages and demonstrates his love for us by not condemning us for exercising our free will. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin in our lives as our God consciousness. This produces the emotion of Godly sorrow, (**2 Cor. 7:9 & 10**), leading us to acknowledge sin and in turn repent. Repentance, or letting go of self to allow Jesus/God to live in and through us, is the ultimate act of our free will. The result of that choice to act is salvation, and that is eternal! That is a gift from God. My position is that we can not turn away from sin and ourselves and turn towards God without entering into his presence. Paul puts it like this; The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know, (**1 Timothy 2: message**). Christ is our strength and our victory, not to mention our only means of adoption as children of the most high God. This means that we must develop our relationship with God through daily devotion to him by connecting with Him in prayer and meditation on the word of God. I think that if we all looked at our life as a great battle and we knew we needed time with God daily for our very survival, we would do it! Maybe not perfectly-nobody ever does and that's not the point anyway- but we would have a reason to seek Him diligently. We give a half-hearted attempt at the spiritual disciplines when the only reason we have is that we "ought" to. But people will find a way to make it work when they are convinced they're history if they don't.

Soldiers, athletes and other professionals discipline themselves through rigorous physical, mental and intellectual exercises in order to attain a goal. So if our goal as Christians is to allow Jesus to live in us and to overcome the enemy it only stands to reason that spiritual discipline is required.

Jesus demonstrated on a daily basis how important it is to make a connection with God not only through his personal devotional time, (**Mark 1:35**), but by his words, (**John 5:19-23**), saying he only does “what the Father shows him to do”, and again by saying; “I am in the Father and the father is in me”, (**John 14:7 & 10**). Time with God each day is not about academic study or getting through a certain amount Scripture or anything like that. It’s about connecting with God. We’ve got to keep those lines of communication open, so I say use anything that helps. Sometimes I’ll listen to music; other times I’ll read Scripture or a passage from a book; often I will go off by myself and pray in the spirit; maybe I’ll go for a walk or exercise; then there are days when all I need is silence, solitude and the rising sun. The point is simply this; do whatever brings you back to your heart and in turn the heart of God. Do it because you love Him more than life itself; because if we don’t we die; because without God we are nothing.

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour”. (**1 Peter 5:8**) Against the evil one we wear the armor of God. I wonder how many Christians have read over those passages about a shield of faith and the helmet of salvation and never really known what to do with them. I think we’ve all said; what lovely poetic imagery, I wonder what it means. Well it means that God has given you armor and you’d better put it on.