

A Day Alone With God



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Taking an entire day or even part of a day to be with God may be a great experience, or a frustrating one. The pace and pull of our lives and the constant connection with our world that technology brings means it will take a very intentional effort to unplug from our typical daily patterns and engage a space that may feel foreign to most.

In order to engage with the One who created us, who knows us better than we know ourselves, it helps to quiet the noise and be one-on-one with our Maker. This will mean a place that a conversation can happen between you and God, whether you use words or remain silent. Having something to write on and a Bible or Bible App are particularly helpful, and for some music may play a part.

Preparation

- Pick one (or more if you have a full day) of your favorite spots. A place that you can rest, relax and drink in your surroundings. Over the course of the day, take a walk, ride a bike, whatever activity brings you energy and life.
- Turn off your phone! You can check it mid-day but turn it off for just a while trusting God can handle your world.
- Begin by focusing your attention on God. Below are some scriptures that may help you focus.
- Then, pick one or more of the activities below. If you only have a half day, or a couple of hours, just pick one exercise below and save the others for another time.

Scriptures that speak to who God is:

Eternal (Psalm 90:2)	Author of Life (Acts 3:15)	Jesus Christ Our Lord (Romans 6:23)
Wise (1 Timothy 1:17)	Bright Morning Star (Revelation 22:16)	King of Kings (1 Timothy 6:15)
Sovereign (Isaiah 46:9-11)	Creator (1 Peter 4:19)	Light of the World (John 8:12)
Holy (1 Peter 1:15)	Comforter (John 14:26)	Man of Sorrows (Isaiah 53:3)
Righteous and Just (Psalm 119:137)	Deliverer (Romans 11:26)	Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)
True (John 17:3)	Everlasting Father (Isaiah 9:6)	Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4)
Faithful (Psalm 89:1-2)	Faithful and True (Revelation 19:11)	Savior (Luke 2:11)
Good (Psalm 107:8)	God Who Sees Me (Genesis 16:13)	Teacher (John 13:13)
Merciful (Psalm 103:8-17)	Holy One (Acts 2:27)	Vine (John 15:15)
Giving (Psalm 136:25)	Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14)	Wonderful (Isaiah 9:6)
Love (John 3:16)		

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Reflect on your own life journey. How god has molded your personality? How events and circumstances have shaped you?

After focusing on who God is, the question is: Do I trust Him enough to surrender? Hearing God, sensing His presence begins with a willingness to let go of our grip, our control, and asking Him to reveal Himself to you. The truth is, He has already done that and is doing that. The problem is we typically are not aware of it. God has been revealing Himself uniquely in our story, we are often just unaware of it.

A good exercise is to go back in our story to remember or piece together the fragments of our life. Ask God for the grace to remember the fragments of your life in a way that will reveal patterns that uncover the truest you. You can write down your discoveries in the notes section at the end of this guide.

- Remember the exterior events of your life and your reactions to them. As you remember these events, notice the gifts that you have received: skills and talents, gifts of personality, gifts from your circumstances—education, family, friends, jobs, your whole situation in life, gifts of people who have become significant to you. It might help to take this a decade at a time.
- Notice now how God has been constantly present, not just in the special moments. Notice especially how with hindsight, periods when He felt absent may have actually prepared you in some way for further growth. Notice how periods of difficulty strengthened you in certain ways and how new strength has come sometimes when you were at the end of the line. (This is not to say to yourself that everything, with hindsight, was good. That would be dishonest and untrue, because we live in a broken world where evil is an epidemic.) Where honesty prevents you from seeing God in parts of your life, tell Him so and express your anger and/or pain freely.
- Consider how God touches your unique personality and brings you to life, how he speaks to you through your own personality, your gifts, and your decisions. Can you see any concrete examples of how God is using your gifts or working through your decisions now, in your immediate experience?
- Try to describe—or draw—your own images of God. How does He appear to you—a father figure, a policeman, a friend, a doctor, distant or close, firm or gentle, judging, guiding, or apparently ignoring you? It may be helpful to remember how you thought of God when you were a child and compare those images with the way you see Him now. Your childhood images may express more honestly what you still, deep down, truly feel. There is no one right answer.
- Pray. You can pray for yourself, the people around you, your church, the world, or anything that God has put on your heart.

At every point in your remembering, express your feelings to God without fear and without holding anything back. Consider that God has emotions, He created us with emotions and relates to us in our feelings giving us pointers to who we are as a reflection of Him. (**Isaiah 54:10, Hosea 11:8-9**)

Take a Break. Eat. Rest.

If you are spending a day with God and have not rushed the above exercise, you are probably ready for a lunch break. Take time to enjoy your food. Savor the flavors (make sure it is good!), and thank God for creating the hands that prepared it and the senses to enjoy it.

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Finding Your Story in THE Story

Scripture is a great place to find our story in the bigger story of God. To use scripture as a way to find ourselves, read the passage through carefully, several times at an unrushed pace until you feel at home with it. Ask God to open your heart to discern its personal meanings for you and your own life's journey.

The passages suggested below may help you to explore particular aspects of your own story, with God alongside you. They are only suggestions, so use them only if they are helpful. If there is a particular character or story in the Bible that you have always been drawn to, consider spending time in that passage and stay with it.

As you repeat it, notice any points where you experienced any kind of strong feeling. These strong feelings (negative or positive) are signs of deep inner movements in your heart and may be pointers to where God is acting in your life. They are signs that these are areas to look at more closely. Repetition like this can lead to great deepening and healing of a particular aspect of your life.

THE CREATION OF HUMAN LIFE (GENESIS 1:26-31)

- Reflect on your own beginnings, the “garden” in which your life has been planted.
- Notice how God’s creating energy and joy have been bringing you to life in so many different ways since you were first conceived.
- Notice verse 31 in particular, and receive its affirmation personally.

THE BIRTH OF MOSES (EXODUS 2:1-10)

- Reflect on your early years of growth and change. Let God lead you through any dark experiences of loss, fear, danger or threat. Moses was born into an extremely threatening situation. Are there “bulrush” times in your experience? Can you trace, with hindsight, the hand of God in the ways you were brought through them?
- Where, in the end, was the greater power: in the basket made of reeds or in the might of Pharaoh’s empire?
- Reflect on how God’s promise to Moses was brought to fulfillment, and reflect on the promise He has implanted in your own life.

THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND THE PILLAR OF FIRE (EXODUS 13:17-22)

- Desert times can be times of wandering, directionless survival, or even despair—times when you seem to be going round in circles and getting nowhere. Open up your own desert spaces in prayer, and ask the Lord to show you how to recognize your own pillars of cloud and fire in the confusion.
- Notice that Moses carries the body of Joseph, the dreamer, across the wilderness to the Promised Land. We, too, are invited to carry our dreams through our deserts. Notice the dreams that God is asking you to carry, and carry them joyfully.

LORD, YOU HAVE EXAMINED ME AND YOU KNOW ME (PSALM 139:1-6)

- Hear the words of the Psalm applied to the days of your own life. Reflect on the thoughts expressed in verses 13, 15, and 16, on the infinite value to God of your being, even when you were “being formed in secret” in your mother’s womb. Now reflect on the infinite value to God of your inner being, which even now is “being formed in secret” at the heart of your lived experience.
- Ask the Lord to lead you in prayer to share something of His own deep knowledge of you, that knowledge all of us long for, yet often seek to avoid.
- When you recall the dark and light times of your own experience, let the words of verse 12 set them into perspective for you.

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Finding Your Story in THE Story (continued)

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN (JOHN 4:5-30)

- Imagine yourself going to the well to draw the day's water. Encounter Jesus there, a stranger who knows you through and through. Let Him engage you in conversation, and let Him take you in that conversation wherever He wills.
- Then return to the village. What difference has the encounter made to your future journeying?

WALK TO EMMAUS (LUKE 24:13-35)

- Place yourself in imagination alongside the two disciples in their bewildered disappointment. Allow the stranger to come alongside you. He seems to know nothing about the events of your life, so tell him how it has been for you. Tell him how you are feeling about the course of your life so far, your hopes, your fears, and your expectations.
- When you reach the crossroads. . .what happens next?

Take a Break. Refresh. Snack. Walk.

You may need a break here to refresh—so again, take a walk, a drive, a run, whatever brings energy and life. To close your day with God, it is good to reflect back on what He has been revealing to you this day.

1. Are there patterns or themes in your life story?
2. Can you identify those moments in your life that you felt most fully alive, or the opposite? These are keys to your unique design.
3. Can you look back and see where God was with you even when you were not aware of Him? How does that make you feel?
4. How fully surrendered do you think you are to God? Are you willing to relinquish your ways of being and doing that are not in your “extraordinary” zone...the places that bring you life?
5. Can you recall moments of God's presence in your life and work here and now that you just know this is how you were meant to live and flourish? Thank God for them.