



guidelines for living

a 5 minute message

December 6, 2017

ALONE WITH GOD

“But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.” (Mark 4:34b NIV)

Research reported in the Harvard Business Review stated that despite our increasing connectedness via technology, more and more people are desperately lonely. Virtual “friends” come without shoulders to cry on or hands to hold. Feelings of loneliness drive home the sense for many that we are on our own in this increasingly complex, frightening and unstable world. The number of people who report having a close confidante in their lives has been declining over the past few decades, says former US Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy.

Do you have a “close confidante” in your life that you can turn to when you’re feeling alone and overwhelmed? Jesus did. He turned to God, His Father, modeling spending time alone with Him by jumping into a boat to leave the crowds across the Sea of Galilee or heading up into the Garden of Gethsemane to be alone in prayer with God. When we are by ourselves, we seem to be able to do our clearest thinking and listening. Amazingly, the same Confidante who heard Jesus’ prayers offers us relationship and longs to ease the loneliness of our modern lives. We need to be alone with Him...every day.

“Come to me, all you that labor,” reads Matthew 11. “Come, everyone who thirsts,” God calls in Isaiah and He draw us, in John 6:44, to be with Him. We read: “But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Luke 5:16 NIV); and “Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed (Mark 1:35b).

The great Christian writer, Oswald Chambers said that when we are too busy to commune alone with Him, “God will keep harrowing us in until He gets us alone...He will take us through the disappointment of a wounded pride of intellect, through disappointment of heart. He will reveal inordinate affections—things over which we never thought He would have to, to get us alone.”

It’s because of love. When two people are in love, they want to be alone together, to focus only on each other. So, God’s love for you and His plan for you is intensely personal.



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Today's Guideline #1 is: Ask yourself where you can go to spend some time along with God and His Word. You might remember the old King James Version of Matthew 6:6a: But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." For several years, my "prayer closet" was, well, a real clothes closet where I could sit and close the door behind me!

Then #2: Ask yourself what, if anything, is stopping you from spending daily time alone with God and His Word? Pray, "Lord, Help me to order my life in a way that allows time for me to hear Your voice." Pastor John MacArthur said, "Our fellowship with God is not meant to wait until we are in heaven." Do what you have to, to completely stop, and get alone with Him. You can pour out even all of your frustrations, hurts and disappointments. And then listen.

We all feel lonely from time to time, especially if we are tired, haven't taken good physical care of ourselves or have let relationships with others decay. But God longs for us to come spend time with Him. If you don't have relationship with God, you can today. Jeremiah 29:13 says "You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart." Get alone with God today.

Resource reading: Psalm 42