

5 Easy Steps to Begin a Daily Quiet Time

The way you begin your day often determines its quality. For this reason, throughout my adult Christian life, I've tried to spend some time focused on the God I love and trust. It truly does make a difference.

I often encounter people, however, who want to begin a daily quiet time but aren't sure how. Maybe they've tried before, but it didn't last.

It really isn't as complicated as we often make it out to be. The main thing is simply to do something, but in case you're one of those who want to but aren't sure how, let me offer a few suggestions.

Here are 5 easy steps to begin a daily quiet time:

1. Find the right place. Pick a place where you'll be every day for your quiet time. If you travel frequently, this is more difficult, but the more routine you can make this the better. Your place should be as free of distractions as possible. It will soon become very comfortable to you. I realize, too, you may feel your life is too busy. I get it—I've lived in those seasons—and many times, I still do. Don't stress over perfection here; just strive for routine.

2. Schedule time. Pick a reasonable amount of time and put it on your schedule. If you use an electronic calendar like I do, you can set it to repeat the appointment every day. Start with 15 minutes, maybe even 10. Five minutes in your "place" is better than nothing. The key at this point is consistency, so make sure you don't burden yourself with something you won't do. By the way, having a daily quiet time will most likely seem like a sacrifice at first, but keep the objective in mind. You need this. As you accomplish discipline, in a little

time it will be easier to increase the time you spend.

3. Choose your goal. Ask first what you hope to achieve and base your format around it. For example, if developing intimacy with God in prayer is your goal, then you will probably choose to spend more time in prayer. You may also want to write down your prayers. If Bible knowledge is your goal, then you may want to do a Bible study. And if memorizing Scripture is one of your goals, you're likely to write numerous verses on index cards. You can change the goal over time and do combinations of each of these. It's not what you do but that you do it at all that matters most.

4. Plan activities. Now that you have a goal, decide the specific ways you will use your time. Will you do a Bible study or simply read Scripture and pray? If your time is 15 minutes, for example, you could spend 6 minutes reading the Bible, 3 minutes talking to God, 2 minutes in silence, asking God to speak to you, and 4 minutes writing out your thoughts. If you choose the structure of a Bible study, you may need to allow more time, but again, the key is deciding what you're going to do before you start. The idea is not to be mechanical or punch a clock but to provide structure, which will lead to productivity in your God-relationship. Again, don't worry too much about what activities you're doing at this point; just do something.

5. Discipline. This is the most important part. Commit to doing something consistently for at least 30 days. Every day—without exception—do it—whether you “feel” like it or not. If you miss the exact time, make it up later in the day. Again, it will require sacrifice. Habits and lifestyles form this way and you'll need this discipline, because as soon as you attempt this dozens of obstacles will stand in your way.

Now I realize “easy” is not the best choice of words for this post, but I did want you to read it. Developing this time into your daily schedule will not be easy. Nothing of value is ever

easy. The main objective for any of us, including pastors, is disciplining ourselves to do something every day. Over time, it becomes a habit that is easily repeated. Even better, it will soon become the best and most productive part of your day.

What tips do you have? When do you have your daily quiet time? What format are you using? {eo}

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