

DAILY QUIET TIME GUIDE

BREVARD COMMUNITY CHURCH

ASKING FOR A FRIEND – WEEK 1

ADAPTED FROM: FACING FOLLY AND EVIL WITH THE SPIRIT'S WISDOM



HOW TO HAVE A DAILY QUIET TIME

The QT Guide is designed to help you MOVE with God through Bible Reading, reflection and prayer. It can be completed in about 7 mins.

½ Minutes Preparing Your Heart: Invest the first 30 seconds preparing your heart. You might pray, “Lord, cleanse my heart so You can speak to me through the Scriptures. Make my mind alert, my soul active, and my heart responsive. Surround me with Your presence during this time.

4 Minutes Listening To God: Take the next four minutes to read the Bible. Your greatest need is to hear a word from God. Allow the Word to strike fire in your heart. Meet the Author!

2 1/2 Talking To God (Prayer): After God has spoken through His Book, then speak to Him in prayer.

DAY 1

Don't Let Life Decide Who You Become - Proverbs 9:6-9

Thomas, Susan, and Harold all grew up in the same home. Their father was an angry man who had allowed bitterness to infect his inner life as well as his outer life. On the worst days this dad would have too much to drink. Like a grenade with the pin pulled, he exploded over the slightest issue with anyone in the family. His wife and kids would run from the room because sometimes he would hit his children. As the three children grew up, they each responded very differently.

Thomas became just like his dad. When he married and had kids of his own, he sadly carried the sins of his father into his family. People feared him, but no one respected him.

Growing up, Harold decided he would be the funny one and try and make jokes and lighten the mood when his dad would start to rage. He never learned to deal with problems, but instead turned everything into a joke and made light of serious things. As an adult, Harold avoided doing hard things, and instead just acted foolishly. Always the life of the party, he could not hold a job or have a serious conversation and became the stereotypical happy drunk who ignored reality. Harold became foolish. Lots of people liked him, but no one respected him.

Susan met a girl at school whose family were Christians. As a teenager, Susan started hanging out at her friend's house a lot and before long, they were picking her up on Sundays to attend church with them. Then Susan met other kids her age and their families. As Susan observed other families, the unhealthiness of her own family grew obvious.

Over time she learned to forgive her father as God had forgiven her, and she decided to attend college and get a counseling degree. Today she is a mother with a healthy family and a licensed Christian counselor who helps abused children.

From this family, we learn that your experiences in life do not determine who you become. Instead, *how you choose to respond* to your experiences determines who you become.

Be Wise and Seek Wise People - John 7:20-24

Wise people are not the most intelligent or educated, but they are humble, godly, teachable, open, and responsible. These people meet reality and life's demands by changing their actions and attitudes as needed to align with what is true and good. They welcome correction, invite others to teach them, and build growing relationships by being honest.

Wise people also have empathy for others and consider more than just their own desires and feelings in a situation. Because of these character traits, there is always hope for a wise person to grow. The time you spend with them, instruction you give to them, and investment you make in them is worthwhile because they personally mature and your relationship grows and flourishes. Proverbs 9:8–9 says "... Correct the wise, and they will love you. Instruct the wise, and they will be even wiser. Teach the righteous, and they will learn even more" (NLT).

The way to respond to a wise person is with more — more time, more discussion, and more information. Wise people are a good investment of time and energy. A wise person lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. You can trust a wise person and enjoy a personal relationship with them.

We have all had the painful experience of someone wrongly judging us or not understanding us, and as a result, our relationship with them has suffered or was severed. Additionally, we have all had the painful experience of thinking we knew someone and put our trust in them, only to find out they were not the person we thought they were.

Jesus came to earth in large part for the sake of relationship, but even devout religious leaders were foolish or evil in dealing with Him. In John 7 they sought to kill Jesus rather than have a relationship with Him because they wrongly judged Him. Jesus then rebuked their poor relational wisdom, saying, "Look beneath the surface so you can judge correctly" (v. 24, NLT).

To properly deal with people and have healthy relationships, you must have the discerning wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God knows people better than anyone, and He will help you have healthy relationships. God wants you to be wise and seek wisdom so that you can know how to handle foolish and evil people.

How to Recognize Foolish People - Proverbs 1:1-7

Foolish people are not necessarily less intelligent or less educated, however, they are unteachable, defensive, unyielding, arrogant, irresponsible, and prone to make excuses for themselves. They wrongly blame others when things go poorly. If we are honest, everyone is foolish in areas and seasons of life. None of us are immune to folly.

But people who are primarily foolish have an ongoing pattern of folly that infects and affects most, if not all, of their lives. Rather than changing, they want everyone and everything to change to accommodate them. Efforts to correct and instruct foolish people result in a fight or flight response where they fight back or run away. They have low empathy and tend to see themselves as morally superior to others but yet a constant victim.

When dealing with a foolish person, you tend to have the same conversation over and over, and to them, it sounds like nagging. The more you address the errors a foolish person keeps making, the more conflict and disagreement ensues, which causes the relationship to deteriorate.

The way to respond to a foolish person is with less — less time arguing, less time having the same frequent conversation, less time being on the defensive trying to get them to come around and take responsibility for their own life. This response sharpens through consequences and boundaries. Proverbs 1:7 provides a reason when it says “fools despise wisdom and discipline.” Because a foolish person will not change but instead plows ahead in the same direction of destruction, the best thing to do is to impose consequences and limit the ability they have to harm themselves and others.

A foolish person pushes their responsibilities and the consequences of their folly onto responsible people, and the best thing to do is push the responsibilities and consequences back onto them.

A foolish person lives by the power of the sinful flesh (our sinful human nature). A foolish person will waste what you give them because they do not embrace it. They are like a bucket in which the bottom has rusted out; anything you pour into it just spills onto the ground. Peter started out as Jesus’ most foolish disciple. Jesus helped Peter move from foolish to wise by rebuking him and inviting him to change. Jesus knew Peter was foolish and asked Peter to walk with Him toward wisdom.

DAY 4

Run From Evil People - Proverbs 2:10-15

Some people have a hard time thinking that a professing Christian can be evil, but the Bible shows otherwise. In Acts 5:3, Peter says of one church member, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...?”

Evil people do not cause harm unintentionally as fools do. Instead, evil people intentionally plot harm, scheme to bring pain and destruction, and feel vindicated in doing so because of their hurt, self-righteousness, or corrupt nature.

The way to respond to an evil person is with nothing — the exact opposite of our response to a wise person. Draw near to a wise person and run from an evil person. Give more information to a wise person, and no information to an evil person. Deal directly with a wise person, and let the cops and lawyers deal with an evil person.

A wise person can be influenced toward godliness, and a fool can perhaps be brought toward wisdom after they have sat in their mess for a while, but an evil person has to be considered hopeless apart from a dramatic intervention from God. An evil person is not beyond God’s ability to help, but they are probably beyond your ability.

At this point, you separate, protect yourself, and establish a definite ending to the relationship with no contact or information going forward.

Evil people live by the power of demonic forces to harass and harm. Because of their demonic empowerment, they are far more powerful when seeking to cause harm than they otherwise are in normal life. Evil people

who move into ministry leadership become wolves who strike the shepherd in an effort to scatter the sheep. Evil people require a professional relationship with someone trained to deal wisely with their issues.

DAY 5

Six Kinds of Relationships - Proverbs 13:16-21

The first key to healthy relationships is to accept that not everyone is Spirit-filled, wise, responsible, teachable, or a good investment of time and energy. We must determine which category we are in and invite wise people who love us enough to tell us the truth to help us see ourselves more clearly.

Every one of us has at least some areas of our lives that are foolish, if not even evil. We are all works in progress.

Wise + foolish = parental relationship

Irresponsible people seek out overly responsible people and dump their responsibilities on them. You know you have picked up a relationship like this when you are doing for someone things they should be doing for themselves.

Wise + evil = distant relationship

When an evil person seeks to build a close relationship with a wise person, the wise person maintains the distance. Aided by the discernment of the Holy Spirit, Jesus kept His distance from evil people, and we should do the same.

Foolish + foolish = codependent relationship

When two foolish people come together in a close relationship, they multiply their folly. Jesus was friends with foolish people and even attended their parties but only to help make them wise. He never acted foolishly or sinfully.

Foolish + evil = abusive relationship

Foolish people are often gullible and vulnerable. Because they do not deal with reality or have much of a plan for their lives, they are easy prey for evil people. Sadly, foolish people allow this kind of abusive relationship to continue for far too long and pay a steep price.

Evil + evil = dangerous relationship

When two evil people come together, they are like two barrels on a gun. If you get in front of them, you are likely to get shot. United by their common goal, when two evil people come together, they make it their life's mission to do the same thing as the devil—steal, kill, and destroy.

Wise + wise = healthy relationship

When two wise people walk humbly together, they make the good times twice as good and the bad times half as bad, as the old saying goes. Proverbs 13:20 speaks of this kind of relationship saying, "Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise."

How about you? Which of the six kinds of relationships do you most commonly find yourself in?