



Daily Quiet Time Guide Viral, Week 2

Devotional Adapted From: The Invitational Life

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 minutes.

½ Minute 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!

2.5 Minutes Talking to God: After God has spoken through His Book, then speak to Him in prayer.

DAY 1

Acts 13:42-44, Matthew 5:14-16

This Invitational Life

It’s not always easy to share our faith with others. Actually, it’s not easy to gain the trust and respect so we can talk with people about faith in a way that they’ll respond positively. The world we live in today is fast-paced and impersonal. We get to peek into one another’s lives from a safe distance as we scroll and click and “like” what’s presented online.

We are losing the art of relationship. It is a gift to be invited into the life of another—invited to see the flaws and failures along with

the joys and successes. The invitational life is not just about finding ways to invite someone into your faith, it's also about discovering how you can be invited into the lives of those around you.

The fundamental progression of an invitational life can be broken down into four movements:

Live. Get swept up in God's great love and know your own relationship with him. This invitational life begins with you going deep with Jesus.

Show up. Live a life that demands an explanation. Live openly and transparently before others, so they see a difference in you and wonder what you have.

Relate. Engage in other people's lives. Listen to them and relate to their stories. Become interesting to people by being interested in them.

Risk. Trust God by leaving the familiar and stepping into the unfamiliar; risk yourself to align with God's heartbeat for humanity. Make the difference you were created to make in the world.

Each of us must commit to be open to new perspectives, challenges, and ways of thinking. This process will demand that we focus on the faces God is showing us and the places He is sending us. Commit to pray boldly for those folks who need to hear the invitation to life with Jesus. Look for opportunities to join God in bringing healing into your neighborhood, school, church, city, and throughout the entire world.

When you say yes to this invitational and intentional way of living, you're saying yes to a front row seat to seeing lives absolutely restored as they are brought into relationship with God. As you learn to hear his voice guiding you throughout your day, your impact in our world will be unprecedented. And while you're watching this transformation happening in the lives of those you've been praying for, God will be busy transforming your life from the inside out.

Genesis 1:27-31, Titus 3:1-2

Jesus and Immanuel

Some of us live with a mighty-to-save approach to relationships. We forget about time, conversation, and trust building, and we skip straight to the need for a savior. Sometimes we drop a Jesus bomb and walk away. We don't want to be known. We don't want to be seen. We just want to drop some truth and say, "I'm done." But you can't really be a part of saving someone if you're never with him. You can't save a drowning person unless you jump in the water with him. And you can't speak into somebody's life without first learning who they are and what motivates them.

Then there are some of us who love to be with people but never want to talk about Jesus being mighty to save. We're afraid that if we bring up Jesus in a conversation, people won't want to be around us. We don't want to be pushy. We don't want to be rejected. We silence the story of redemption that God has written for us so we can avoid awkwardness or separation. But you're not really friends with someone if you're unable to talk about what matters most to you.

For many Christians, the Bible doesn't start in Genesis 1; it starts in Genesis 3 with the fall. When that happens, we are living without the goodness of our origin. Instead, we are living within the pain of our fall and struggle. From that broken perspective, we approach the people in our lives as threats to hide from, just as Adam and Eve did when God came looking for them. We build walls to keep people out, and we look for reasons to separate ourselves from those who are different.

Sharing our faith is about the power of bringing the two amazing names—Jesus and Immanuel—together. God saves *and* God with us. Every person was created in the image of God. That

means whether someone is a follower of Jesus or not, that individual has something to teach me about God. And if I want to be an influence, I am more effective if I first let the person have an impact on me. Imagine if Jesus-followers lived their day-to-day lives with this perspective.

Imagine if we all approached the people we encounter with the awareness that they have something to teach us about God.

DAY 3

Matthew 7:1-6, Galatians 2:20

Taking Down Barriers

When we experience redemption in our story, when we learn to trust God and let him into our fall and struggle, he begins to heal us and make us new again. He brings us back to the garden, before the fall, when things were good. He calls us good, he sees us as good, and he invites us to share his good news with others. So we must begin our relationships in Genesis 1, with trust, acceptance, and peace.

If we call ourselves reconcilers of God but do not engage the pain of another's story, we'll do nothing to nudge that person toward redemption and restoration. We will end up reinforcing the shame, the wound, and the fall in that person's story, and we'll enable them to continue in their struggle without hope for redemption. But a relationship that begins with trust is a safe place for us to open up and share the struggle in our lives.

When someone trusts that you are for them and see the good in them, they can stop hiding and let you see their wounds and shame. Practice sitting with people and simply asking, "Will you tell me your story? Will you tell me about your life?"

This is all about embodying the name of Immanuel—God with us. As we get to know others and they trust us with their story, we

start to see their behaviors as part of their struggle. We won't be tempted to judge or condemn them. We want to get beneath the surface to discover why they are choosing to live as they do. When that happens, people feel like they've been seen and known by an ambassador of the true, holy God.

We are all in a constant struggle to live from Genesis 1, believing and searching for the good rather than the pain of Genesis 3. But you don't need to have it all together before you can start living a redemptive life. Thankfully, God doesn't need you to be perfect before he can use you.

Ruth Bell Graham's tombstone reads, "End of Construction – Thank You for Your Patience." That's awesome. Billy Graham's wife joined with God in the restoration of all things for the majority of her life, and yet her humble heart recognized that we are all in process. We are all "under construction." Even as we heal and grow, we are also being used to bring restoration to this world.

If you're still wondering who you are and why you're here, consider this: You are a child of the living God, created for relationship with God and others. You're here to make a difference. You're here to show others Jesus—God saves. And you're here to show people Immanuel—God with us.

People want to understand how God met you in your addiction, how he met you in your abandonment, how he met you in your pain, or how he met you in your sin. They want to know how God restored you and invited you to lead others to restoration.

DAY 4

Matthew 28:19-20, Isaiah 41:10

Fearless

Striking up a conversation with a perfect stranger can be awkward and scary. If you're nervous about it, consider praying a similar

prayer before you walk into an environment where God might prompt you to connect with someone new. Say to God, “Lord, would you guide me through this? Would you give me your heart, your eyes, your ears? Please allow me to have conversations that will encourage people to keep searching for you.” Building relationships isn’t something you do and check off a list. It’s a marathon that has potential to last a lifetime.

Let’s not be like a slick salesperson who slides in to close a deal. Instead, look for ways to build consistency, make the most of every opportunity, walk into places you’ve been praying about, expectant for opportunities to strike up grace-filled conversations.

As you are creating relationships with others, ask God, “What is the next best right step for this person? I know their name. I know their story. Is the right step to invite him to church? Is it to invite her to my house for dinner? Is it to tell him my story? Is it to tell her God’s story?”

There’s a world of hurting, confused people out there so let’s be bold and fearless with our faith. Let’s take risks to reach as many as we can. Don’t risk loudly or obnoxiously, instead, risk with grace and truth.

Ask God for opportunities to declare fearlessly, with love and compassion, the reality of good news.

DAY 5

Romans 15:13, 1 Peter 4:7-11, Philippians 4:6-7

Seeds of Grace and Joy

Do you want to live your life freely, to delight in the moment, scattering seeds of joy and grace everywhere you go? Sadly, some of us are afraid there might be an end to joy, a limit to grace. We become stingy with our happiness, keeping it to ourselves, refusing

to spread it without exception. We end up rationing our energy, refusing to live as if there will always be enough. The truth is, you can't run out of seeds of grace and joy.

Unfortunately, within our modern society, a subtle message of "Safety Above All" has been perpetuated. We pray for safety. We tell our children to be safe, and we use the adage "safety first." Pain is a terrifying subject that we go to great measure to avoid. Our mantra is, "Shield yourself from all forms of risk, and risk only if there is a good chance the calculations will come out in your favor. Don't step out. Don't fail. Don't put yourself in danger. Don't be fully seen. Don't risk. There's only so much joy."

A pain-free life sounds nice, doesn't it? The problem is, this message is nowhere in the New Testament. A life based on the gospel of safety is sure to be a long and boring one. Life happens in the mess; character is built during struggle. We get knocked down only to discover the strength we have to rise again. All throughout the New Testament, you see people compelled by love and grace to risk it all and proclaim with their one and only life, "Not on my watch."

The truth is, any situation we walk into has potential for eternal impact. All of humanity is in search of grace; we are all desperate for good news. As followers of Jesus, we can be conduits of grace, sharing God's love with others.

What happens when Christ-followers become averse to risk? What happens when the church is okay with standing on the cliff and watching? We can't be afraid to let our life get messy. We get to toss seeds of grace and joy to those who are hungry for it.

DAY 6

Matthew 9:37-38, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

My Entire Self

An invitational life--one that is open, rooted, accessible, and brave--is a beautiful life. It is a life filled with deep connection to the heart of God, a life that knows what love and grace feels like. It is a life that promises you a front row seat to watch God at work in the people you're relating to. Life with God is your Land of Promise.

What do you need to walk away from that is keeping you from living a life like that? What keeps you from taking the risks to align yourself with God's heart? Is it fear of rejection? Fear of being misunderstood? Intimidation? Are you worried you won't do it right or will lose status? When was the last time you shared a meal with a nonbeliever? What was it like?

If it's been a while since you've spent time with someone who is far from God, perhaps it's time to leave the mountain.

Consider the faces and places you are feeling called to. What do you have to offer them? Your time? Your energy? Your story? Your insights, giftedness, and friendship? If God places someone in your life, He will reveal questions to ask and ways to listen. God wants to work through you so that others might hear the greatest story ever told.

You are closer than you think to living this invitational life. It's in you. God hard-wired you for this. His heart beats for people, and so can yours.

Jim Harbaugh said, "Attack each day with an enthusiasm unknown to mankind." Sounds like a good starting point to do what we are called to do: share the life-giving promise of Jesus Christ!