



Daily Quiet Time Guide

The Art of Being Unordinary, Week 2

Devotional Adapted From:

The Cost of Following: Self or Christ?



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

Luke 14:27, John 12:24-26, Romans 8:9-14

Bearing the Cross

Jesus calls us to die to ourselves so that He might live in us. But sometimes the flesh doesn't want to die. It rages within. It kicks. It screams. We want to follow the Lord, but our flesh revolts. It whines. It complains. It wants comfort. It wants ease. It wants its own way. It wants to be satisfied. And it doesn't want to work hard.

And often we listen to our flesh. It's so hard not to listen.

But thanks be to God! He has not left us alone in the fight. We have His Holy Spirit who enables us to say no to the flesh and put it to death.

Think about ways you are still tempted to live according to the flesh. In what areas have you put the cross down, feeling like it's too heavy to bear? Confess these to God. He longs for us to be sorrowful and broken over sin so that we may find true rest and peace in Him, our Great Comforter. He will provide the solace and the strength we need to move forward in Him.

Trust in the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells within. And by His power, put to death the misdeeds of the flesh.

Prayer: Lord, please help me put my trust in the power of the Holy Spirit. Help me to believe I'm not alone and to understand that I don't have to overcome my sin in my own strength. When I don't "feel" like I can put to death the misdeeds of the flesh, help me stop and remember that the same power that raised Christ from the dead, lives and works in me. In Jesus's name, Amen.

DAY 2

Luke 14:33, Philippians 3:7-14

Renouncing Everything: Part One

Anyone who doesn't renounce everything, can't be Jesus's disciple.

This may feel like an extreme statement, but renouncing everything is required of all believers. We don't hear this statement very often even though it's a basic premise of real and true Christianity. Anything less is not really following Jesus.

Renouncing everything is extreme. Leaving everything to follow Jesus is extreme. The requirement is a lot to take in no matter where we are in our walk with the Lord. Praise be to God, there is a blessing on the other end. When we voluntarily give everything we love and care for over to the Lord, it's so freeing. Fear dissipates. Worry vanishes. Anxiety is done. We have nothing to lose because we have given it all to the Lord, everything is safely in His good hands. He will look out for our best interests far better than we ever could.

So what does it look like to renounce all you have for Christ? The apostle Paul, in his own personal circumstances, said that he counted everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus. He counted everything as rubbish in order to gain Christ.

Many centuries later, the great revivalist and preacher George Whitefield said it like this: "I am not mine, but His! I give up my body, soul, blood, all, to Him! I am a child! I desire to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth" (as quoted by Arnold Dallimore in his biography *George Whitefield*, vol. 1, p. 93).

What would this look like for you? What would it look like to really let go of all you have into His hands?

Consider all God has done for you. Now consider everything you have. Add up everything you own. Survey your holdings. Open your treasure chest. Look to see what is there. Evaluate your potential. Think about what you could do with it all. Then lay it all down before the Lord. Give it all over to Him. Trust Him with your finances. Trust Him with your situation. Trust Him with your life. Let Him do what only He can do with all of these things.

Then follow Jesus with absolute abandon. Accept His grace.

Prayer: O Lord, grant me the grace to love you above all things, to treasure you, to find all of my identity in you, and to submit all of my hopes and dreams to your wise care. Help me to renounce everything, even the things I don't know I cling to. Help me to entrust everything in my life into your wise and loving hands. In Jesus's name I pray, Amen.

DAY 3

Luke 14:33, Romans 5:1-8

Renouncing Everything: Part Two

So often we think giving everything to the Lord means moving to a foreign country, wearing sandals, eating bugs, and wearing a burlap sack. And the Lord does call some people into situations like these. But the high price of discipleship doesn't have to do with where we live in the world, what food we eat, or what clothes we wear or don't wear. True discipleship can involve many locations, diets, and modes of dress, but it doesn't have to.

True discipleship is less about the externals and more about the internal. In fact, we can even excel at the outward actions and still not really understand true discipleship because true discipleship has to do with the heart.

It's really quite amazing how many things we can give up, how many religious activities we can engage in, how many hours we can volunteer, days we can fast, dollars we can give, times we can evangelize, and mission trips we can go on and not ever really begin to be a disciple of Jesus. It's so much easier and less costly to do any or all of the above than to do what Jesus calls us to do - truly and deeply love Him more than anything and everything else.

Have you thought about the cost of following Jesus? Have you counted it all up and laid it down at His feet?

Maybe you've tried. Maybe you've spent time thinking it through, but when it came time to make a final decision, you put it aside for another day. Why? Are you too busy? Are you afraid to really let go and surrender everything to the Lord because of the unknown? Fearful of what He might require of you?

Many of us have had those same thoughts and fears, but when we love Jesus and put Him first, He can banish all those anxieties.

Prayer: Lord, I entrust my heart, my life, my future, my plans, my things, my very self to you. I place it all into your hands. I am yours. Help me be fully yours. In Jesus's name, Amen.

DAY 4

Isaiah 53, Romans 8:31-39, 1 John 4:9-11, 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

The Cost to Jesus

As we think through the cost of following Jesus, let's consider one final question. What did it cost Jesus to save you?

He came to live and die for us. He suffered deeply on that tree. His actions are an overflow of His heart. He loved us, and because of His great love for us, He gave himself for us. Because of the love that Jesus first gave to us, we can follow where He leads as we follow how He led. He led out of love. Sacrificial love. The love of God.

Take a moment to reflect on Christ's love for you. Consider the height, width, length and depth He went to redeem you. He who knew no sin *became* sin, bore the wrath of God that you deserved, and paid the penalty you owed.

Please don't wait another day to thank Jesus for what he did on your behalf. Take the time to consider these things and settle them with the Lord. Even if it takes days or weeks to work through this, don't put it aside. Ask Him for His help. Remember the price Jesus paid for you.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me see you and all you've done for me. I want to understand the great price you paid on my behalf. Help me know your deep love for me. I pray I'll grow to love you more as I gain understanding of how much you love me. May I draw closer to you and trust you more fully each day so I'm able to deny myself, take up my cross and follow you. In Jesus's name I pray, Amen.