



# Daily Quiet Time Guide

## The Art of Being Unordinary, Week 4

### Devotional Adapted From: Radical



#### 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 9:57-62

#### “The Shocking Truth About Following Jesus”

At the end of Luke 9, we find a story about three men who approached Jesus, eager to follow him. In unordinary fashion, though, Jesus seems to have tried to talk them out of doing so.

The first guy said, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

Jesus responded, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” In other words, Jesus told this man that he could expect homelessness on the journey ahead. Followers of Christ are not guaranteed that even their basic need of shelter will be met.

The second man told Jesus that his father had just died. The man wanted to go back, bury his father, and then follow Jesus.

Jesus replied, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” If you’ve lost your own dad, it’s hard to imagine hearing these words from Jesus.

A third man approached Jesus and told him that he wanted to follow him, but before he did, he wanted to say good-bye to his family.

Jesus wouldn’t let him. He told the man, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.” Plainly put, a relationship with Jesus requires total, superior, and exclusive devotion.

Let’s put ourselves in the shoes of these would-be followers of Jesus in the first century. What if you were the potential disciple being told to become homeless? What if you were the one who was supposed to let someone else bury your dad? What if we were told that we couldn’t even say good-bye to our families?

This is where we come face to face with a dangerous reality. A relationship with Jesus requires us to be unordinary. We have to give up everything to follow him. We have to love him in a way that supersedes our closest relationships in this world. For that's what it means to live out the biblical gospel rather than our cultural assumptions of what it means to follow Jesus.

Let's spend our lives being unordinary so we can make an impact living the life Jesus called us to.

**Think on this:**

What should you cut out of your life, starting today, if Jesus is your overriding priority?

## DAY 2

Matthew 13:44-46

### **“Infinite Treasure”**

As we saw in yesterday's devotional, Jesus's claim on our lives is exclusive and demanding. And so, if we are not careful, we can misconstrue Jesus's radical statements in the Gospels and begin to think that he does not want the best for us. But he does. He is not trying to strip us of all pleasure.

Instead he is offering us the satisfaction of eternal treasure.

In Matthew 13, Jesus tells his disciples, “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.”

Don't you love this image? Imagine walking in a field and stumbling upon a treasure that is more valuable than anything else you could work for or find in this life. It is more valuable than all you have now or will ever have in the future.

You look around and notice that no one else realizes the treasure is there, so you cover it up quickly and walk away, pretending you haven't seen anything. You go into town and begin to sell off all your possessions to have enough money to buy that field. The world thinks you're crazy. “What are you thinking?” your friends and family ask you.

You tell them, “I'm buying that field over there.”

They look at you in disbelief. “That's a ridiculous investment,” they say. “Why are you letting go of everything you have?”

You respond, “I have a hunch,” and smile to yourself as you walk away.

You smile because you know. You know that in the end you are not really letting go of anything at all. Instead you are gaining. Yes, you are abandoning everything you have, but you are also gaining more than you could have in any other way. So with joy—with joy!—you sell it all, you abandon it all. Why?

Because you have found something worth losing everything else for.

This is the picture of Jesus in the gospel. He is something—someone—worth losing everything for. If we walk away from the Jesus of the gospel, we walk away from eternal riches. But if we abandon the trinkets of this world and respond to the unordinary invitation of Jesus, we discover the infinite treasure of knowing and experiencing him.

**Think on this:**

How does knowing Jesus satisfy the deep needs in your soul?

**DAY 3**

Matthew 28:16-20

**“Christ’s Plan for Us”**

Loving Jesus enough to radically follow and obey him leads to unordinary priorities in our lives, including making disciples.

First, picture Jesus in the upper room as he prepares to go to the cross. Praying to the Father, he begins, “I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do” (John 17:4).

What is shocking is that when Jesus summarizes his work on earth, he doesn’t start reliving all the great sermons he preached and all the people who came to listen to him. He doesn’t talk about the amazing miracles he performed—giving sight to the blind, enabling the lame to walk, feeding thousands of people with minimal food, bringing the dead back to life. Instead he talks repeatedly about the small group of men God had given him out of the world.

At the end of the Son of God’s time on earth, he was staking everything on his relationships with twelve men. In the middle of his prayer, he even mentioned that one of them (Judas) was lost. So now we are down to eleven. Those eleven guys were the small group responsible for carrying on everything Jesus had begun.

One of his final moments with them is captured in Matthew 28. The eleven gathered around him, and Jesus said, “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

That was Jesus’s plan for them.

And for us.

If we were left to ourselves with the task of taking the gospel to the world, we would probably begin planning innovative strategies and plotting elaborate schemes. We would organize conventions, develop programs, and create foundations. We would get the biggest names to draw the biggest crowds to the biggest events.

The plan of Christ, in contrast, is not dependent on having the right programs or hiring the right professionals but on being the right people—a community of people who realize that we are all enabled and equipped to carry out the purpose of God for our lives: making disciples.

**Think on this:**

Whose life can you build into, nudging him or her nearer to Jesus?

**DAY 4**

Revelation 7:9-10, Luke 20:1-8

**“Jesus is Lord”**

The Christian life is about dying to self. It’s about giving up the right to determine the direction of our lives. Our God is our Lord, our Master, and our King. He holds our lives in His hands, and He is free to spend them in whatever way He pleases.

Several years ago many churches debated whether someone could know Jesus as Savior without knowing Him as Lord. This, at the heart, is really a question of authority. Could someone trust in Christ for eternal salvation and yet not recognize His authority in their lives by their absolute obedience?

Jesus walked, talked, taught, and healed with power and authority. He didn’t need to appeal to anyone else to justify His teachings; He was the authority. In Luke 20, that authority was threatening to the religious leaders. If Jesus’s authority was from heaven, they knew they had an obligation to obey.

Authority is like that. If you recognize that someone has authority, then suddenly that person has a claim on your life. Jesus knew it too, and that’s why He didn’t answer the religious leaders’ questions outright. Jesus knew they had ulterior motives in challenging His authority, but He isn’t interested in theoretical questions and mind games. He’s looking for followers.

To recognize the authority of Christ is to submit to the authority of Christ. To put it in terms of the argument about Jesus being Savior and Lord, there’s no difference. There’s no Jesus except the Lord Jesus. To follow Jesus at all is to follow Him completely. That’s what it means to be selfless. That’s what it means to be an unordinary disciple.

**Think on this:**

In what unordinary way are you obeying Jesus?

**DAY 5**

Matthew 10

**“Radical Risk and Radical Reward”**

Jesus said to his followers, “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” In this, Jesus clearly acknowledged that following him involves risking the safety, security,

and satisfaction we look for in this world. But in the end, Jesus said, following him leads to an unordinary reward that the world can never offer.

This challenge for the disciples to lose their lives came at the end of a startling speech he made to them, as told in Matthew 10. Sending the disciples into the world, Jesus outlined the risks they would have to undertake in following him.

*Go to need.* Jesus told his disciples that they would be surrounded by great need. His instructions? “Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons.”

Just imagine the people that the disciples were going to encounter—the diseased, the dying, the despised, and the dangerous. Not exactly the most appealing groups to be around. And yet people like these are the very ones Jesus is sending us to as well.

*Go to danger.* I can imagine the looks on the disciples’ faces when the next words came out of Jesus’s mouth: “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves.” Jesus was saying to his disciples then—and, by implication, to you and me now—“I am sending you to dangerous places, where you will find yourself in the middle of evil, vicious people. And you will be there by my design.”

We don’t like to think this. We say such things as, “The safest place to be is in the center of God’s will.” But what if the center of God’s will is in reality the most unsafe place for us to be?

Jesus followed his humbling call for his disciples to go to great need and great danger with overwhelming promises of his love and care for them. Three times he told them, “Do not be afraid.”

Unordinary obedience to Christ does not lead to comfort, nor to health, nor to prosperity in this world.

Unordinary obedience to Christ, in fact, risks losing all these things. But we need not fear. In obeying him, we can look ahead with hope and confidence. For in the end, the risks we take will find their reward in Christ. And he is more than enough for us.

**Think on this:**

Do you believe the reward found in Jesus is worth the risk of following him? How will you live out that conviction?