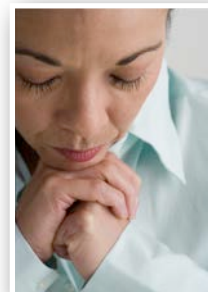


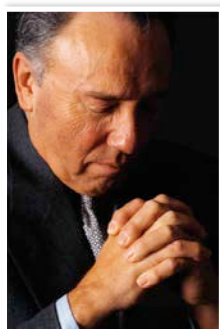
# PREPARING TO SERVE

One of the most difficult spiritual disciplines for most people is the development of a personal devotional life. While the majority of Christians would claim to aspire greater personal worship, they would also admit that they often fail in this quest. Thus, many Christians do not regularly spend time in God's Word and pray as they want and as they ought. The goal of this lesson will be to help us develop our personal worship.



1. As we begin this study, think about your own personal devotional life. Is it what you want it to be? Why or why not?
2. Read Mark 1:35. What is Jesus doing and why? What important details do you see?
3. Read Matthew 6:6. What does Jesus expect from us?

A daily devotional life (or quiet time or personal worship) is a private meeting each day between the believer and his Lord. For this to happen it must be planned and it must be important. This devotional life will include reading the Bible carefully and thoughtfully (see Joshua 1:8) and will include a period of prayer. Our desire for this time and our willingness to make it a priority is one of the indicators of our own love for Christ. Note that this is a “private” time. While group prayer and devotion or prayer-time with your spouse is good, you also need time to be alone with God.



4. What “things” can come between us and our desire for personal devotion?

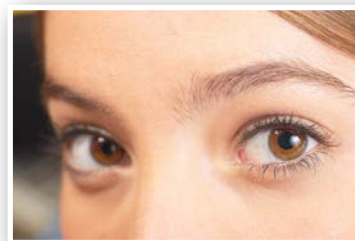
5. Why would one of the disciples of Jesus ask the question that he did in Luke 11:1? What do you think he expected Jesus to say?

Don DeWalt (Personal Worship Vol. 2) gives a list of statements or encouragements to personal worship. These can help us develop our own spiritual lives. This list (with some modification)

1. Recognise that Jesus was involved in personal worship and expects we will too. (Mark 1:35; Matthew 6:6; Luke 5:16; Luke 11:1)
2. The Apostle Paul demonstrated personal worship. (Romans 1:9; Ephesians 1:16; 2 Timothy 1:3)
3. Jesus prayed aloud and Paul wrote his prayers. We will be aided in developing our devotional life if we pray aloud and/or keep a prayer journal. (We know that Jesus prayed aloud because we have some of his prayers recorded verbatim.
4. To develop a successful personal worship time, we must make a “no exception” commitment to a specific daily time of personal worship.
5. Review the benefits of personal worship and you will be encouraged.
6. Start now or you may never start. (21 days makes a habit.)

6. Read Psalm 1:1-3. What does personal devotion do for the believer?

The Scripture encourages us to private times of worship and the example of Jesus illustrates the value and necessity of being with the Father. In our times of personal devotion, we learn facts from the Bible about Jesus and how to live for him and within this world. We receive encouragement that helps us through difficulties and struggles and we are strengthened when we consider the hope that we have in Christ. We also gain a great amount of personal enjoyment from communing alone with the Father. In our prayers, we are able to thank God for his faithfulness and love. We are able to lift up the needs of others to a God who hears our pleas. Finally, we can ask God for those things that we need knowing that He is able to supply them.



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<sup>1</sup>Ogden, Greg. *Discipleship Essentials: Expanded Edition*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2007.

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To be successful at developing personal worship we must set aside a specific time every day. This must be planned into our schedule or we will fail. We ought to enlist others who will pray for us and encourage us in this endeavor.

Suggested Activity: Men and women divide into separate groups and pray for one another and if you will, please agree to hold one another accountable to developing a personal devotional time every day for at least 15 minutes over the next 21 days.)

### **Digging Deeper**

1. Write down 2 verses which have to do with the importance of the Bible.
2. **Memorise** 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
3. What do you learn from the passage above?

