



BIBLE STUDY

FINDING TIME FOR JESUS IN THE FRINGE HOURS



MARETHA RETIEF

Copyright ©: 2017 Maretha Retief

Cover page design and illustration: Jeanne de Villiers

Typographical layout: Jeanne de Villiers

CONTENTS

DAY 1: WHY IS THE BIBLE SO IMPORTANT?	1
DAY 2: POSITIONING GOD IN FRONT	2
DAY 3: HOW TO FIND TIME FOR GOD'S WORD IN A BUSY DAY	3
DAY 4: HAVING AN ENDLESS CONVERSATION	5
DAY 5: CHEWING ON THE WORD	6
DAY 6: SEEKING GOD'S THRONE	7
DAY 7: BE STILL	8

DAY 1: WHY IS THE BIBLE SO IMPORTANT?

Every word is God breathed scripture

Do you sometimes wonder whether it is worth it to spend time in God's Word? Have you ever felt like you are just reading but not getting anything from it?

We have all felt that way before and maybe still now at times. Before we dig into the practical tips on finding the time to spend in God's Word to get to know Jesus better, I want to take us back one step: how important is the Bible?

Rhetorical question right? Well, if so, why are we not making it first priority in our lives but instead slotting it in when we find a gap?

The answer: life happens.

Today, I want us to remind ourselves as to why the Bible is so important and vital to our walk with God and why it is worth it to make time for it.

Practical exercise: look up one or as many as you can of the verses below and write down the promise in each one:

Psalms 19:7-9

Psalms 19:10-11

Hebrews 4:12

Psalms 119:18

Psalms 119:105

2 Timothy 3:16

Matthew 24:35

Psalms 119:11

James 1:21

Isaiah 55:11

Romans 15:4

Luke 11:28

Matthew 7:24-25

Matthew 4:4

1 Peter 2:2

Proverbs 2:6

Romans 10:17

John 8:31-32

John 17:17



DAY 2: POSITIONING GOD IN FRONT

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (Matthew 6:33 ESV)

Finding time for God is a real challenge, but if you want to, you can. Are you willing to give up some time in order to get more in return?

Here is a promise that gives you a guaranteed reward in this life. It does however require a positive action from you: choosing to put God first. Choosing to give Him your first of everything: your time, value, family, relationships, finances or whatever it may be. As you decide to put God first, everything else you need will be ADDED unto you.

How do we place God first?

The Bible tells us that we ought to seek His kingdom and His righteousness. Our goal each day should be to seek God's righteousness that speaks of Jesus (1 Corinthians 5:21). As believers, we became righteous before God because Jesus took all our sins on Him. Everything we are and everything we have are vested in Jesus, our righteousness. As we seek Him, everything else will be added unto us.

When God gives, He gives in abundance. If you give Him the little you have, whether it is 5 minutes or 1 hour, He will give you more available time to get everything done what needs to happen.

How do we apply this on a daily basis?

As you get up in the morning, place your first thought on Him as you thank Him for a new day with fresh grace. Give Him the first of your earnings. Bring Him into your meetings and daily chores. Honor Him in everything that you do. As you close your eyes before you fall asleep, let your thoughts be consumed with God's love for you.



DAY 3: HOW TO FIND TIME FOR GOD'S WORD IN A BUSY DAY

Is your time with God operating during the fringe hours of your day? Do you have to squeeze in your time with Him during a few spare moments, if any?

If so, that is okay. You, like most of us, are facing the same struggle to find time for Jesus.

Maybe you feel like if only you can have an extra hour during the day, if only you can have five minutes for yourself, if only things will calm down, then you will be able to give God the attention He needs? The desire is never the problem, but the time.

Jesus knew the battle we were going to have to find time with Him. Our own human nature, life's demand and the enemy may come in our way. None of that is a surprise to Him and He does not even hold it against us as there is no condemnation for us in Christ (Romans 8:1). He knows our schedules and the demands we are facing, but even in five minutes with Him, He can still bless us and help us live the abundant lives He came to give us. His revelations to us are not always measured in the time we spend with Him but through the desire in our hearts to see and have more of Him.

Staying true to the fact that Jesus is the answer to any question we may have and the solution to every problem that may cross our paths, Jesus Himself showed us the way to make time for the Father and how to go about our days, no matter how busy they become.

Mark 1:35 says, *"In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there."* (NASB)

Jesus rose early in the morning before any of the demands of the day and gave thanks to God for another day. He obtained the strength He needed for His day and He waited for God to reveal His will for the day before Jesus endeavoured towards it. In the same way, we can seek our strength, guidance and direction for the day from God, even in a few minutes in prayer before we put our foot on the floor.

In everything Jesus did, His mind was on His Father and what His will was for Him. Jesus did not keep Himself busy with people's opinions and expectations. He kept His mind on God every

step of the way. Spending time with God is not only when we sit down and read our Bibles, but every waking moment is an opportunity to become aware and enjoy His presence. As we make breakfast we can meditate on a scripture, as we drive to work we can praise God for His goodness or we can talk about Him with our children or whoever is with us while driving. We can find a hymn and recite it to ourselves in our minds as we sit at our desks to work or waiting for an appointment. We can pray in every quiet moment. When we have to attend meetings, we can see Jesus sitting there with us as our wisdom. When we have to encounter difficult conversations or situations, we can invite Jesus to be there with us and let Him lead us to the outcome He desires. In all these ways we make Him part of our day as we choose Him above ourselves or anyone else.

Jesus did not wait for the perfect moment to talk about the goodness of His Father. He did so at every encounter or place He went. We do not have to wait for everything to be perfect before we open God's Word. We should place it in every room of our house, so when you pass by it, your mind shifts to God, when you find a minute, open and read a verse. Place one in your car so when you wait you can seek God's face, even if it is only through one verse. You do not need perfection to find time for God's Word, you only need to be willing to turn your thoughts to Him and be conscious about using every possible moment to turn your thoughts to Him.

When you consciously make an effort to turn to God, you may find that you get even more time to finish everything you had to do and find more and more slots for Him. God honours our decisions to seek Him above all things, even if it is during the fringe hours of our days.



DAY 4: HAVING AN ENDLESS CONVERSATION

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 NKJV)

All relationships are built on communication, whether verbal or non-verbal. If there is nothing to “say”, there is nothing. It is the same with our relationship with Jesus. We talk to Him through our prayers and praise.

The Bible tells us to always pray, to always praise God and in everything to give thanks to Him. Jesus gave us the perfect example as He began His days in prayer to His Father (Matthew 14:22–23) and He did nothing without the leading of God. He also gave thanks to God even in the smallest things like thanking God for the bread and fish before the miracle took place and the multitude was fed (Luke 9:16).

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (Colossians 3:17 NKJV)

God wants to speak to us and He wants us to desire His audience in everything we do.

So how do we fit this into our busy schedules?

- As you get up in the morning, thank God for a new day.
- When you see you spouse or children, thank God for the blessing you have in them.
- As you have breakfast, thank Him for His provision.
- As you drive to work, thank Him for having one.
- When you encounter challenges, praise Him that He will give you a positive outcome. And if it does not turn out as expected, continue to thank Him that He will turn everything for your good.
- As you walk into a meeting, thank Jesus that He is your wisdom.
- Let your mind be established in thankfulness and always ... pray.

People do not have to hear you, these moments of interaction are between you and God and your thoughts are loud and clear before Him.

DAY 5: CHEWING ON THE WORD

Blessed is the man ... his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. (Psalms 1:1-3 NKJV)

The key to walking in God's blessings are simple...remain in God's Word. But what do you do when your time is so little, you barely have 5 minutes for yourself?

Take God's Word with you, wherever you go. When you tuck His Word deep into your heart, any situation can present itself to you and you will know and have the truth that will keep you free from any lies and bondages.

To meditate on God's Word is like a sheep that chews on a piece of grass, digest it, bring it up again and chews again. So we do the same as we read, rethink and read, rethink until the verse is fastened in our deepest parts.

Jesus also made it a priority to keep God's Word close to His heart and before His eyes. At the age of 12 He was able to teach the people in depth of God's Word. When He was tempted by the devil, He was able to defend each attack with the Word through His responses "It is written..."

So how do you go about to keep God's Word before you in the little time you have?

Have a Bible in your handbag or backpack. Put one in your bathroom, kitchen and every other room, if possible. Whenever you have a few minutes or waiting for something or someone, open His Word and read, even if it is only one word.

Write down verses you want to remember and throughout the day, at every possible opportunity, take them out and read them, think about them and let them sink into your heart.

To help you get started, I have made available for you 6 bible verse cards that you can download and print out. Keep them nearby and whenever you find time today, read them and memorise them as you stay close to God's Word.

DAY 6: SEEKING GOD'S THRONE

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. (James 4:8 NKJV)

Do you wish to see more of God in your life? You can. The answer lies in where you are.

God is constant and never moves away from us, but where are we in relation to Him? He promises that if we will draw near to Him, He will draw near to us. In everything He wants us to come to Him first before we seek help or advice anywhere else. So here is a call on us:

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16 ESV)

Jesus drew near to God for every step He took. He did nothing unless His Father wanted Him to do something. How much more should we seek His guidance in everything we do, whether choosing a job, a school, a spouse or a hobby? Jesus sacrificed Himself so that we can come near to God's throne (1 Peter 3:18; Ephesians 2:18).

How can we take this to our daily life?

In everything you do and in everything you need, first draw near to God. Pray and seek His Word. Look up you need in His Word, whether it is peace, wisdom, finances or protection (you can even do a Google search for bible verses on your need) and ask God to show you what you should do.

Hebrews 11:6 tells us that we should draw near to God in faith that He will reward us. Our faith pleases Him and He will respond so that we will begin to see more of Him in our daily walk.



DAY 7: BE STILL

"Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalms 46:10 ESV)

Finding time for Jesus is not only in the minutes or hours of Bible study or prayer or in attending church, it is even in the smallest acts and the shortest moments where He was placed the middle of your situation.

When we seek God's Word, we desire communion with Him and He honors that. The Word tells us that Jesus is the Word (John 1:1) and in seeking Jesus in every word we speak or action we take, we are heeding God's Word.

A last principle I want to close this bible study with is in your silence. The best way to hear God speak to you is when you are humble before Him in silence. As you silence the voice of the world, the enemy or your own flesh, your spirit is able to harken to God's Voice.

Jesus never spoke unnecessary words and He spent hours of silence in communion before God, just listening and waiting for God to guide Him in His daily tasks.

How do we seek Jesus in our silence?

Be still. Take five minutes a day and just put yourself at His feet. Just listen. Quiet down and allow Him to speak into the deepest part of your being. Making time for Jesus in a busy schedule is not only about doing something but also in humbly submitting and an omission of your efforts.

In 1 Chronicles 16:11 David urges us to *"Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually!"* As we seek Jesus' presence in our lives He will be seen.

If you continue to apply these principles I shared this past week with you, you will find more time not only for Jesus but for everything else that is required of you.

I pray that God will quicken your heart according to His Word as you continue to seek His presence in your life.



Psalm 23:1 (NKJV)

**THE LORD IS MY
SHEPHERD; I SHALL
NOT WANT.**



Psalm 103:10-11 (NKJV)



**HE HAS NOT DEALT WITH US ACCORDING
TO OUR SINS, NOR PUNISHED US AC-
CORDING TO OUR INIQUITIES.
FOR AS THE HEAVENS ARE HIGH ABOVE
THE EARTH, SO GREAT IS HIS MERCY
TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM.**

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

**FOR HE MADE HIM WHO
KNEW NO SIN TO BE SIN FOR
US, THAT WE MIGHT BECOME
THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD
IN HIM.**

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)



**FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE
FOR YOU,” DECLARES THE
LORD, “PLANS TO PROSPER YOU
AND NOT TO HARM YOU, PLANS TO
GIVE YOU HOPE AND A FUTURE.**

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)

**FOR IT IS BY GRACE YOU HAVE
BEEN SAVED, THROUGH
FAITH—AND THIS IS NOT FROM
YOURSELVES, IT IS THE GIFT OF
GOD—NOT BY WORKS, SO THAT NO
ONE CAN BOAST.**



2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

**BUT WE ALL, WITH UNVEILED FACE,
BEHOLDING AS IN A MIRROR THE
GLORY OF THE LORD, ARE BEING
TRANSFORMED INTO THE SAME IMAGE
FROM GLORY TO GLORY, JUST AS BY
THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD.**



1 Corinthians 2:12 (NLT)



**AND WE HAVE RECEIVED
GOD’S SPIRIT (NOT THE
WORLD’S SPIRIT), SO WE CAN
KNOW THE WONDERFUL
THINGS GOD HAS FREELY
GIVEN US.**

1 Corinthians 1:30 (NLT)

**GOD HAS UNITED YOU WITH CHRIST
JESUS. FOR OUR BENEFIT GOD
MADE HIM TO BE WISDOM ITSELF.
CHRIST MADE US RIGHT WITH GOD;
HE MADE US PURE AND HOLY, AND
HE FREED US FROM SIN.**