

Tuesday Quiet Time - Super Summer 2021

Hey, guess what? You're busy! I truly feel our current culture is one of the busiest to ever exist. Ballgames, work, school, jobs, hobbies, chores, friends, lunch, make videos, exercise, text, game, sleep...it's a never-ending list. Although this type of hectic and busy lifestyle has been around a long time, there are so many distractions in your life right now. Competing for attention during all the other chaos is your faith and attention to God. So, a big question is, "How do we stay focused on God in the daily grind?" During our week here at Super Summer, we will explore simple, foundational, but important ways to stay focused. Today, we will look at **BIBLE STUDY**.

I know what you're thinking, "Wow! Revolutionary..." but before you dismiss something that sounds so simple, think back to your most recent quiet times. What have you been studying? Why are you studying that? What has God been revealing to you about yourself? What has God been revealing to you about Him? Simple questions that should be easily answered by a short time of reflection but often...these are difficult because although we might **DO** our quiet times we aren't focused on the right thing. It has become more of a routine than a time set apart, more of a checked box than a changed life. So how do we stay focused?

READ JOHN 15:1-11

There is an old saying that goes, "something repeated twice in the Bible is something to pay attention to." Well, if that's the case then this passage has a huge magnifying glass over it. Do you notice a word being repeated? **ABIDE**. Jesus uses the word **abide** or **remain** several times in this passage, so what does it mean. To "**abide**" is to live, continue, or remain; so, to abide in Christ is to live in Him or remain in Him. This passage shows Jesus telling His disciples that drawing life from Him is essential; essential for salvation, essential for growth, and essential for bearing fruit. So, today's focus is, "are you **ABIDING** in Christ?" Again, this should be a simple yes, especially for leadership students but if you're honest with yourself, how many have been checking the quiet time box to complete a routine...and honestly, there are some who haven't even been checking the box much lately... Let's change that now by returning to a life that abides in Christ.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How have your quiet times been lately? (Depth, purpose, frequency, spurring change?)
2. What are things you can do to make your time with God more fruitful?
3. What was something that stood out to you from the passage you read in John 15? Why did it stand out?
4. Write down a verse from this passage you want to commit to memory and spend some intentional time today and this week reviewing the verse for that purpose.

PRAYER

End your time this morning by writing out and saying a prayer to God, asking Him to help you learn to truly **ABIDE** in Him.

Wednesday Quiet Time - Super Summer 2021

Isn't it nice to set aside some time each morning to spend with Christ? Yesterday we discussed how we can enrich our Bible study time by truly abiding in Christ. Today we will continue our foundational study on how we can stay focused on God by looking at **PRAYER**.

Again, prayer is not something you are unaccustomed to hearing about and you might be thinking that it's too simple a topic to study for leaders at Super Summer; but you'd be mistaken. In fact, you'd be absolutely, definitively wrong. Prayer is the lifeblood of a Christian's faith. After all, how are we to abide in Christ if we don't ever have conversations with Him? That's what prayer is, a conversation with the Divine. When I was young, my parents introduced me to prayer before meals, "Lord, thank You for the food before us, the family and friends beside us, and the love between us," and before bed, "now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." What a great way to expose a child to prayer. Putting it in simple terms and rhymes. Something memorized and repeated, perfect for young children; but how many let their prayer lives stay at that level?

We know prayer is important. We know it's talking to God. We need to remember though, to let God have His time to talk back to us. (That's the conversation part) We also need to increase our frequency of prayer. We need to move on from the old, memorized prayers of childhood and begin to express our heart and spirits. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 instructs us to, "pray without ceasing." This isn't talking about a rambling, never ending, run-on sentence of a prayer. Rather, this speaks to our attitude of prayer.

When we hear news that's concerning to us, we should stop and pray. When we hear of someone facing a problem, we should stop and pray. See an emergency response vehicle responding to a call, stop and pray. Someone annoying hanging around, stop and pray. Dealing with a personal issue, stop and pray. Stopping to ask God for help, whether it's for ourselves or others, asking God for direction, patience, help should be second nature to Christians. Prayer should always be our first step not our last resort. And when we pray, Jesus gives us this model in Matthew.

READ MATTHEW 6:9-13

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What is your earliest memory of prayer?
2. How is your attitude/frequency towards your prayer life?
3. What are steps you can take to strengthen both the depth and frequency of your prayer life?

PRAYER

Take extra time now to write out and say a prayer to God, focusing on letting Him answer and guide you.

Thursday Quiet Time - Super Summer 2021

Wow, two days down. This week is flying by. Hopefully by today our time in the morning with the Lord is starting to feel more natural and becoming a good habit. Again, our goal this week is to find how we can stay focused on God. Let's review our first couple of days.

Take a moment and look back at your notes from the first couple of days. What does it mean to ABIDE in Christ? How has your scripture memory been progressing? Are you still working on it? How was your prayer life the rest of the day yesterday? Did you find it hard or easy to stay in an attitude of prayer?

We've made some good progress focusing on God, so today in our time together we will discuss **SERVING GOD**. Our teaching each evening during your school time has been talking about the Foundations of our faith. You have studied about the **UPward** focus on the Lord and the **INward** focus of living for Christ and today you will study the **OUTward** focus and how to take what you've learned home. Jesus' teaching on this topic is recorded in the book of Matthew chapter 6.

READ MATTHEW 6:24

This text is interesting. Read in our modern English, it's easy to see the warning; having two masters is bad. Depending on the version of scripture you are reading, the final thought, "You cannot serve God and money" is a little deeper than is on the surface. Using Old English, the New King James translation says, "You cannot serve God and mammon." Wait, what is mammon? The Enduring Word commentary explains it like this, "...the idea of **mammon** itself was morally neutral. The word was used in some ancient Jewish texts that showed this, translating Proverbs 3:9 as "*Honor God with your mammon*" and Deuteronomy 6:5 as "*You shall love the Lord your God with...all your mammon.*" Therefore, **mammon** itself represents material things we possess or want, and those things can be used for God's kingdom and glory or as idols."

That got deep fast. To simplify, you can't serve two masters, when we try, we make idols of things that should be used to glorify God. Talk about losing focus. Greedily focusing on things created instead of the creator. The temptation is to return home and live life unchanged. To focus on material and worldly things because they steal our attention. Put in their proper place, these items can be used to share the love of God with others, further the teaching of the Gospel, and help provide for the needs of the less fortunate. If we are serving God with our resources of time, energy, talents, and with our money, then staying focused on God will naturally follow.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What are "things" in your life that might be causing you to "serve two masters?"
2. How can you refocus those "things" to serve God?
3. Who is one person you can share the Gospel with when you get home?

PRAYER

Take time now to ask God to show you the areas of your life where you have been worship created things rather than the creator. Write and say a prayer asking for forgiveness and for direction for how you can change this problem.

Friday Quiet Time - Super Summer 2021

Today is the day. You go home. I'm sure many have mixed emotions; I know I do. It's been great to be at Super Summer again and to be able to learn more about God and interreact with other believers...but there is something to be said about home. What are some things you're ready to get back to? Your family, your other friends, your house, your couch, your bed, your mom or dad's home cooking? There are a lot of things and chances are you have some plans for when you return tonight. Hopefully included in those plans, is time spent each day in God's word focusing on Him. We've talked a lot about how to do that this week and today is just as important as we look at **LIMITING DISTRACTIONS**.

Growing up I played baseball and an important aspect of the game is something very simple...keep your eye on the ball. You can't hit it, field it, or catch it if you can't see it. The same is true of our relationship with God. We must keep our eyes on Him in order to continue to grow. When we get home, we need to make sure God is clearly visible to us. God gave the same instruction to the children of Israel.

READ JOSHUA 3:1-5

The command to keep 2,000 cubits (which is about half of a mile) between the ark of the covenant and the people might seem odd. Why such a great distance? The purpose was so the people of Israel would always be able to see the ark no matter the type of terrain they travelled through and know which way to go. It's the same with our spiritual lives. We live in a world of incredible convenience and distraction. The business of life makes it difficult and if we don't keep our eyes on the Lord, it will be all too easy to miss His direction. We can overcome this issue by limiting distractions and making a conscious effort to keep the Lord in the number one spot in our lives. When we overcome and follow the Lord's leading the words spoken by Joshua all those years ago become true for our lives as well, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What distractions are waiting for you at home that you need to eliminate?

2. What distractions are waiting for you at home that you can't eliminate but you need to put behind God in priority?

3. What wonderful thing do you hope to accomplish this year through God's power?

PRAYER

Take time to pray, thanking God for your ability to be at Super Summer this year. Ask the Lord to help you remove distractions and to help you continue to focus on Him as you return home to share what you've learned this week with the people in your life.