

15 Ways to Enhance Your Quiet Time

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1. Make an appointment. If possible, have a regular time and place to pray and read your Bible (1 Tim. 4.7b).

2. Start by preparing your heart. We prepare our hearts by confessing any known sin (1 Jn. 1.9) and by asking God to show us those things we don't see (Ps. 139.23-24).

3. Include worship music. Find songs, hymns and artists that help you enter into the presence of God. Make up your own playlist. If you're distracted by words, choose instrumentals.

4. Use written prayers or acronyms. For me it's "The Lord's Prayer." You can use it as an outline, adding your own comments along with each verse. For more information check out my post, "An Outline for Prayer." (donnareidland.com)

5. Find a good Bible translation that's readable for you. My top three are the New American Standard (NASB), English Standard Version (ESV) and the New King James (NKJV). Many people like the New Living Translation (NLT), the New International Version (NIV) or the New Century Version (NCV).

6. Study Bibles and commentaries. While someone else's interpretation of God's Word shouldn't be our sole source of spiritual sustenance, there are men and women who have devoted their lives to the study of the Scripture. We can benefit greatly from their work.

7. A Bible reading plan. All of God's Word is valuable in our walk with Him (2 Tim. 3.16-17). Yet, too often our knowledge of Scripture consists only of key passages. Find a plan to read through the Bible.

8. Use Bible apps. While I'm not advocating that you limit your Bible reading to one verse that shows up on your phone each day, Bible apps can make God's Word readily accessible no matter where you are. Many have Bible reading, study and devotional plans available.

9. Know the principles for sound Bible study and interpretation. You might want to check out my post, "10 Principles for Bible Study" (donnareidland.com)

10. Ask good questions. What does this passage tell me about God and His character? Is there a command to obey? A promise to remember? Some sin of which I need to repent? A relationship I need to reconcile? Someone I need to forgive? Something I need to change or do? If so, what is my plan to do so?

11. A notebook or journal. You might write down and answer the questions above, write out passages you want to learn, record insights, quotes or other thoughts, or write out your prayers.

12. Sticky notes. These come in all shapes and sizes. You can record your thoughts or leave yourself a reminder for additional study.

13. Highlighters and a good pen. Many insights are lost if we don't make notes.

14. A prayer list. Most of us have families and ministries. Our plates and our minds are full of information. Too often we promise to pray for someone and then, sadly, forget.

15. Devotional books. These should not replace your Bible, but can add to your reading and understanding.