

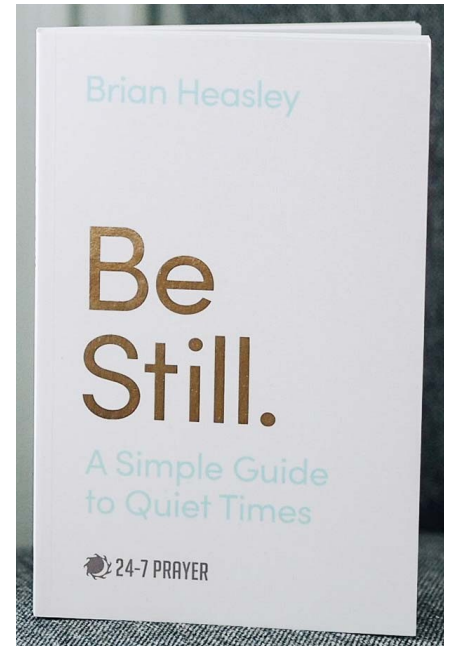


Be Still

A simple guide to quiet times

Brian Heasley

24-7 Prayer



Last week: Encounter

- Where are you? Where are you at?
- Where is your chair. Where is your garden?
- When is the best time to go there?
- Do you need to change the time or the place of your encounter with God?

Last Week: Distractions

- When we pray we can get distracted
- We need to be intentional
 - location, action and interaction with the King
- Dealing with distractions
 - Name and tame them
- Practice holding something when you pray

This week

**Scripture,
Memorize and Meditate**



Read quote from Ch 3, p31

Scripture

**Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light for my path**

(Ps 119:105)

Quiet Time:
Prayer and Scripture
Scripture and Prayer

- Read quotes from top of page 32
- Need Bible readings as part of our quiet times
- Cannot separate prayer and scripture
- Respect?
- Gandhi: Christians have a document [with] enough dynamite to blow all civilisation to pieces, turn the world upside down and bring peace to a battle-torn planet
- But they treat it as any other form of literature
- Need to give Bible weight in our lives
- Challenge, inspire, and shape us
- Gutenberg Bible arrived in New York, everyone stood when it was brought into customs
- In Jewish Synagogues, people stood to read the bible. Jesus did (Luke 4:16)
- But what stops us engaging with the Bible?

Scripture Questions (1)

- Boring?
- Religious?
- So many versions in English?

- Boring?
- Not every passage is always as engaging or life changing or giving new revelation
- We can be in a hurry, milk on cornflakes is sour or we slept in
- But there is mileage to make reading your bible a habit
- 30 days rule for a habit
- Religious?
- “I don’t want this to become a dull lifeless routine, or obligation”
- But is it to hide our reluctance to commit to routine and discipline?
- Negative connotation
- “Relating to or manifesting faithful devotion to an acknowledged ultimate reality or deity”
- I want to be devoted to God!

Scripture Questions (2)

- Boring?
 - Religious?
 - So many versions in English?
- Versions: over 400 different version
 - All translations – and translation is different by time, culture and is also interpretation
 - Different versions give different perspective
 - Start with the more interpretive versions
 - The Message, New Living Translation
 - Helps you to understand a passage afresh even if you have learned it in one version
 - Ex Ps 23 in KJV
 - Try progress to the more literal translations
 - NIV, NRSV, ESV
 - Get a study bible with notes!
 - And take notes in your bibles, but do not cross anything out

Approach to read the Bible

- Mindset: thirsty, hungry
- Prayerfully: directly ask the Author for explanations of things we do not understand

- Mindset
- How do we read our bibles
- Do we want to learn
Do we expect to be changed
- Or see something new everytime?
- Brian' hostel experience: he was thirsty, hungry, parched and starving
- He needed God and found him in the Bible
- Prayerfully
- Speak Lord, for your servant is listening 1 Sam 3:10
- Ask God to illuminate the text for you
- Sometimes this can take days
- Allow ourselves to struggle with texts
- Turn a verse you do not understand in prayer
- Write it out in your own language
- Speak it aloud a few times and try to say it back to God
- The Lord is my Shepherd: You are my Shepherd

Practical tips

- Read the bible in a year
 - Schedules and apps are available
 - Nick Gumble's Bible in a Year app
- Read books in one sitting
 - Mark's gospel can be read in about 4 hours
- Read slowly
- Read it yourself
 - Before consulting other sources like commentaries

Summary: Do not stop reading the Bible

- Pray before you read
- Determine time, place and how much to read
- Try reading a whole book at once
- Listen to audio versions of the Bible
- Buy a year through the Bible / Download app
- Find online sermons, commentaries & study books
- Do not be afraid to make notes in your bible
 - Do not cross things out though!



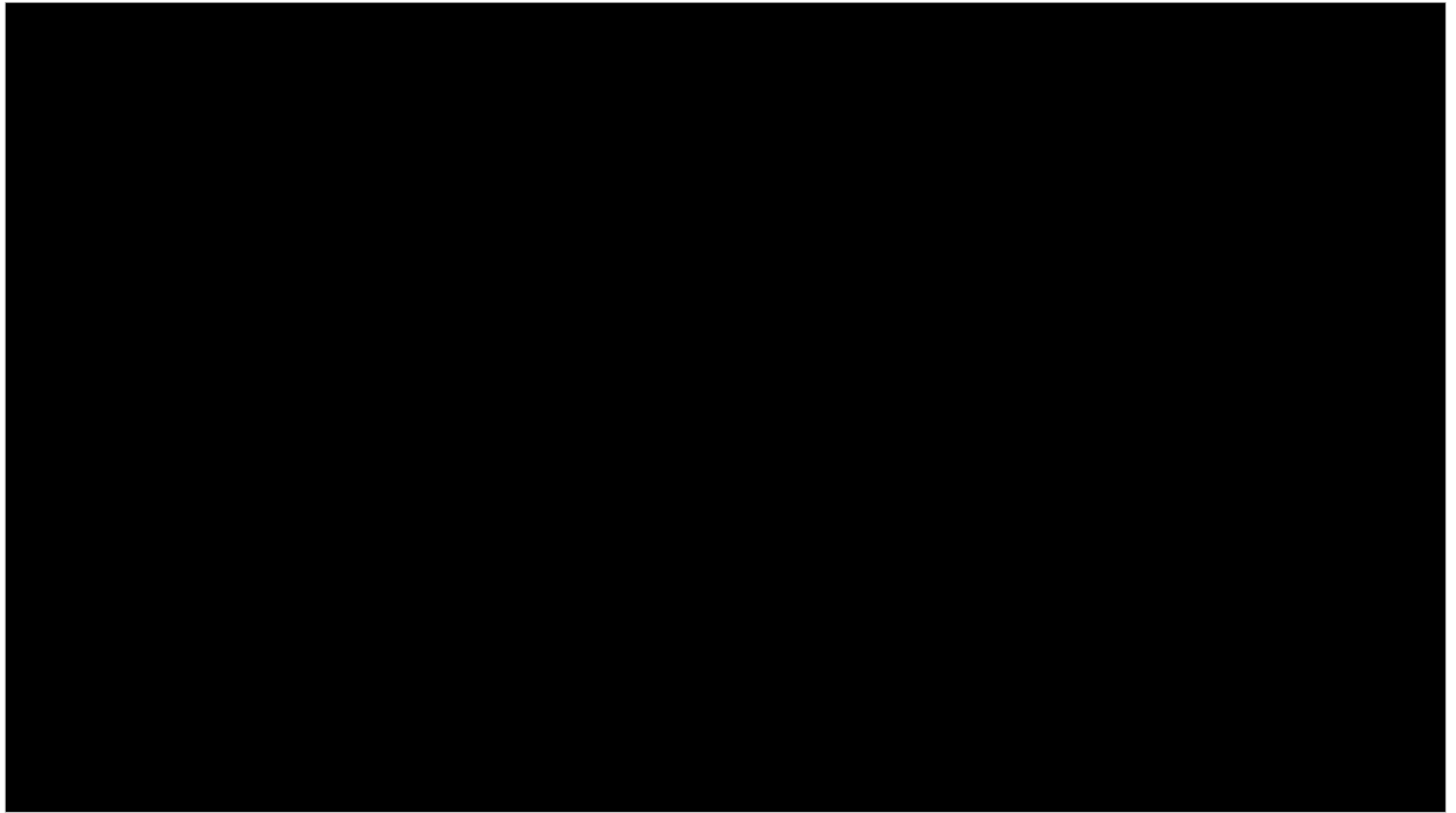
Read quote from Ch 3, p31

Memorise

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

(Heb 4:12)

- Memorise not rely on books or apps
- Let the verses dwell deeply in you
- Hidden in your heart in times of trouble
- Brian was in Spain as a missionary. With not a lot of money
- “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? (Matt 6:25)
- Pick some verses learn them and write them out from memory – as a Quiet Time exercise
- Often Bibles have guides with key verses
- Or Google “Top ten Bible verses to memorize”



Meditate

Ps 1:1-3

- It is **not** transcendental meditation!
- Meditation has deep roots in Christian faith

Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and **who meditates on his law day and night.**

- Meditate: chewing the cud
- Repeat – like memorising
- Like pigeon cooing, a gentle murmuring
- Sucking a sweet rather than crunching it
- Treasuring the reading

- Not an emptying of mind but of filling of one's mind and thoughts with the word of God
- Permeates our senses and become embedded in our hearts
- Simple repetition

Another way: Lectio Divina

- Read
- Meditate
- Pray
- Action

Let's try it with Psalm 1:1-3!

Read

- Read the passage in a slow and measured way,
- Read it more than once, maybe three or four times.
- Try to get the sense of what is happening and who is speaking.
- Take your time.

Read Ps 1:1-3

Blessed is the one

who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,

² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.

³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of
water,

which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—

Meditate

- Think about it, allow the flavour of the text to seep out.
- Don't try to insert too much meaning at first, but mull it over and see what God draws to the surface.
- Approach this prayerfully, asking the Holy Spirit to be with you, trusting that illumination will come.
- Don't rush it. Ponder, weigh, consider

Meditate on Ps 1:1-3

Blessed is the one

who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,

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and who meditates on his law day and night.

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Pray

- You've allowed God to speak to you from the text, now it is your turn to speak to him.
- Have a simple conversation with him about what you have just read, explain how it made you feel, what you noticed as you read.

Pray using Ps 1:1-3

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Action

- Identify how you might need to respond.
- Sometimes this will be a specific action to take;
- Sometimes it may be a shift in attitude or behavioural pattern that needs to be addressed;
- Sometimes it will simply be a reassurance to continue on a path you've already decided to follow.

What action? Ps 1:1-3

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Summary

- Memorizing and meditating are related / blend
- Pick a Bible verse to memorise this week
- Write a Bible vs on post-it somewhere visible
- Practice Lectio Divina once a week for 30 min
- Exchange a vs of the week with each other!