

A DAY WITH OUR KING

Introduction

Jude did not have much to say. At least we can assume as much since his letter was only 25 verses long. But he did have some profound encouragement for us — pay attention to the love of God. Verses 20-21 state, “[20] *But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, [21] keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.*” In a world of let downs and disappointment we, even as Christians, need built up. We are clued in to how that happens in verse 21- “keeping ourselves in the love of God.” But how do we do that? We are keeping ourselves in the love of God through experiencing his powerful presence in our lives. That means spending time with him, reflection upon his truth and learning to speak and listen to God.

The following document is to help cultivate an extended period of time with our Lord Jesus Christ. If you are anything like me, you tend to get distracted easily and need heavy guidance as you move through long moments of reading and reflection. There are many guides you can find and many voices you can learn from. “A Day With Our King Jesus” is simply my guide I leave to you.

NOTE BEFORE STARTING

This guide is for a four hour day. In my experience you will come under great pressure as you prepare to make this happen. You will doubt whether it is wise to take a vacation day from work. You will doubt if the location you are going to will truly be helpful. You will question if you should follow through with this considering all the other demands on your schedule. Nearly every temptation will come at you to bailout on this important day. Be ready!

It is important for you to see that you are preparing for warfare. It is important you know what’s in front of you—time in the presence of your King Jesus! As you set everything up for your day away consider asking a close friend or family member to pray for you as well as spend time reading and praying through Ephesians 6:10-20,

[10] Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. [11] Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. [12] For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. [13] Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. [14] Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, [15] and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. [16] In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; [17] and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, [18] praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, [19] and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, [20] for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

Setting

Choose a place away from home or work. Somewhere you might be somewhat familiar with so there are no surprises but a setting that sets you up to rest. If you live in the city, consider driving out to the country, finding a park or a long hiking trail you can walk along and stop throughout to write and read. But choose a setting that you are comfortable with and will keep you from distraction.

Bring the following with you in a backpack so you can move around...

- Bible, a study bible may be helpful for some of the 'study' time.
- Journal & pen
- Snack & Drink (unless you are fasting)
- Blanket

Remember our goal: In this day, we seek God. God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We don't seek peace alone, quiet alone, enlightenment alone. Those are by-products of time with our King.

Hour One

20 Minutes: "Palms Up, Palms Down"

1 Peter 5:7 calls us to "cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you." Follow this simple practice to demonstrate this call.

1. Hold your palms up as if you are carrying something. What are you carrying—Decisions at work? Family dynamics? Relationships? Financial burdens? Habitual sins? Look at all those things, recognize them as burdens you are carrying.
2. Hold your palms down as if you have just dumped everything on the floor. Imagine all those heavy burdens falling to the feet of Jesus. Hear Jesus speak his word, "*Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.*" Matthew 11:28-30 (The Message)
3. Hold your palms up again, this time empty of burdens, ready to receive what the Holy Spirit desires today. Anticipate his filling you not with burden's, tasks or more 'to do lists', but with Himself. Wait with joy before our King

20 Minutes: Read Aloud

1. Read through several Psalms out loud. Start with Psalm 16, 19, 42 and 51. If you have other Psalms that catch your attention read those out loud as if someone is speaking them directly to you.
2. What is God saying to you? Is there any one word or sentence that is particularly stirring to you?

20 Minutes: Walk

1. Take a walk in silence. Simply be with God. Imagine him walking with you, pointing out signs of his love in creation, his scripture for us, ways in which he has never left you in trouble.
2. Stop at points in your walk and listen. If you feel yourself drifting in distraction, read a Psalm again or reflect on that one word or verse that stirred you earlier.

Hour Two

20 Minutes: Reflect

1. Take a posture of reflection. Kneel, lie face down, stand with your arms open, look to heaven, etc. Pray, seek God.
2. Focus more on the attitude and posture of your heart than 'what's next.' What attitude is the Spirit wanting you to hear? Humility? Joy? Celebration? Brokenness?

10- 20 Minutes: Feast

Though you may have been led to fast from food during this time, if you have not take some time to eat a snack.

1. Remember the feast that Jesus is preparing for us. Revelation 19:9 states, "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." You are invited and this small snack is a representation of what is to come.
2. Reflect that as your body needs food, water, proper nutrients, your soul needs God's Word.

20-30 Minutes: Rest

1. Are you sleepy? Take a nap— Seriously! Consider taking 20-30 minutes to sleep. Go back to your car if you are at a park, bring a blanket to lay down where you are—find a way to rest. The truth is one of the most spiritual things God may be calling you to do is simply take a nap.
2. As you prepare to sleep remember that God enjoys giving rest to those he loves (Psalm 127:2) This is one of the most powerful practices of displaying that God has everything under control, even if I am completely checked out of this world.

Hour Three

30 Minutes: Study

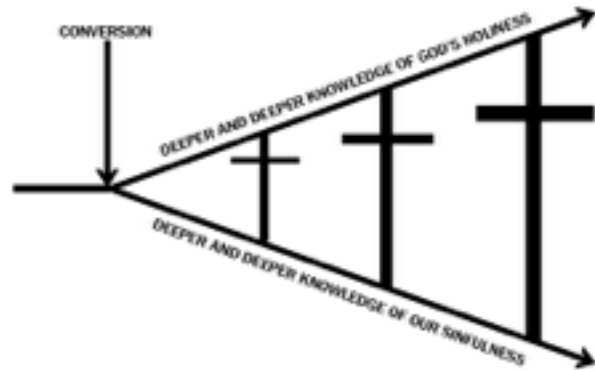
1. Read the book of Jude. Outline the entire book in your own words. Highlight/underline key words or sentences. Explore those words.
2. If you have a study bible, read through the notes and write down questions you have from the passage.
3. From those questions- try to answer them on your own. Look up other scripture (cross referencing).

30 Minutes: Journal

1. Write the phrase or word that stood out to you most in your time in the bible. How is this passage life giving to you?
2. Write some important events in your life over the last 1-6 months. How have you seen God using those for his glory and your good?
3. Where are you finding yourself feeling sad? What are you seeing in your life that is giving joy?
4. What events or situation are coming up that you need to pray for?

Hour Four

Look at this chart. For the last hour of our time, let us reflect on what this picture is painting by looking at the holiness of God in worshiping him as he is and confessing our sinfulness. We will then end our time celebrating the cross of Christ. Jesus has risen and fills in the gap for us!



20 Minutes: Worship God

God has many names throughout the bible. These names reflect characteristics and the nature of God. Spend 20 minutes slowly reflecting on these names in worship to God. (See “Name’s for Worshiping God” in Spiritual Disciplines Handbook by Calhoun)

- | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Trinity: Father, Son
Jesus Christ and Holy
Spirit | • Creator
• Defender
• Everlasting | • Key
• Long-Suffering
• Meek | • Ruler
• Treasure
• Unhurried |
| • Alpha (beginning) &
Omega (end) | • Finisher
• Gracious | • Near
• Only-Begotten | • Vine
• Wise |
| • Abba | • Hallowed
• I Am | • Provider
• Queller-of-Storms | • Yours
• Zealous |
| • Brother | • Justifier | | |

20 Minutes: Confession

1. Honestly look at your sins and confess them to the Lord. Invite God to look deep into your soul and reveal sins you may not be able to see. This is an intimate time, take it slow and seek to listen. Continue to write words and attitudes that come to mind.
2. Ask these questions of yourself for self-examination:
 1. What occupies most of your thoughts and attention throughout the day?
 2. What spending patterns do you have that can point to idols?
 3. What relationship with others has occupied your attention?
 4. What things seem to knock you down?
 5. Where are you blame shifting?
 6. What do you regularly deny?
3. Read David’s confession in Psalm 51.

20 Minutes: Celebrate

Say aloud: “Because Jesus Christ died on the cross for the forgiveness of my sins and has risen from the dead. I now stand before you, God, blameless, righteous and completely forgiven.”

1. Thank God for sending Jesus Christ into this world
2. Reflect on Jesus’ words “It Is Finished” (John 19:30) - What does Jesus’ words say to you?

Hour Five

30 Minutes: Ponder

1. Take time to walk around and reflect on this experience.
2. How has this time been? Has it been different than you expected? Write down what you would do differently next time?
3. How can you recalibrate your normal daily rhythms to seek Jesus regularly?
4. As you return home, what things do you want to leave with God? What do you want to take home?

30 Minutes: Explore

1. Consider writing poetry, drawing a picture, taking some photo's with your phone or simply capturing a memory that expresses this day.
2. Take time to let out some creativity or reflection.

Conclusion

I confess that this was written for me. I needed this kind of structure and guidance but I realize this isn't the structure for everyone at every season in life. Not many of you will take five whole hours. That's okay. There is no right way or wrong way to spend time with God. But there is always and will always be an invitation to relationship to God. You may not feel the 'spiritual high' you expected from this day. I warn you—you may even feel discouraged from this time. Maybe you didn't focus enough or flaked out half-way through. Again, it is okay! It takes a lot to follow this plan perfectly (I don't), and I don't want you seeking one day as a make it or break it experience.

Adele Ahlberg Calhoun shares, "Trust that a moment will come when the seeds planted today will sprout. Perhaps days from now you will have an insight that comes from a deep insight you didn't have before. Or perhaps in stressful times ahead you will notice an inner shift toward patience and kindness. Bonding with God will bring forth fruit in due season." (Spiritual Discipline Handbook, pg. 280)