

## **What should a Christian's devotional life look like?**

There is no single text in the Bible which provides a concise answer to this important question. And while a number of beneficial elements to the devotional life are possible, what elements are essential?

I am writing with the presupposition that God knows how He wants to be worshiped better than we know. Moreover, I believe that He has not left us to grope in the dark on this issue, but that He has revealed in Scripture how He wants us to worship Him. In other words, God's Word should regulate our worship. Put another way, we should worship only in ways whereby God has expressed His approval by command, example, or principle in Scripture. And this is true whether that worship is experienced in the church, in the family, or in private.

Based upon this, the essentials of the Christian's devotional life become clearer. There are some worship activities, of course, such as the preaching and our participation in the ordinances, that are congregational by nature. But three elements of biblical worship—reading and meditating on Scripture, praying, and singing praise—can be practiced whether one is worshiping God alone, with the family, or with a crowd.

With each of these three elements, there is a great deal of freedom and flexibility in terms of form, duration, and other aspects of the devotional experience. For instance, one may pray while sitting, kneeling, or walking. The entire event may occur in only a matter of minutes or be enjoyed for hours.

Probably every Christian experiences relatively dry seasons in his or her devotional life. Don't conclude in the dry times that one of these biblical elements isn't for you. Talking to a wise, more mature Christian may help. But don't doubt that the Lord knows—and has revealed in Scripture—the most God-glorifying and soul-refreshing ways to experience Him.

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