

A Script for Personal Devotions

Select a special time and a pleasant place in which you will be undistracted. You may share this time with a friend or two. Consider some well-established personal habit on which you might layer this devotional practice, such as the first cup of coffee of the day. If you like, add the ritual of a lit candle or enhance this time with some inspiring piece of art. Set this time apart as sacred.

To help you in this, find a piece of Christian music that stirs your soul: “Knowing You” by Shane & Shane, “Abide” by Aaron Williams, “How He Loves Us” by Crowder, “Bill Still and Know” by Steven Curtis Chapman, “Gratitude” by Brandon Lake, “Far Kingdom” by Gray Havens, “Is He Worthy?” by Andrew Peterson, “Still, My Soul, Be Still,” by Kristyn Getty, “Goodness of God” by Jenn Johnson, the list goes on. Make a list of your own and let it grow over time.

Don’t think about the challenges of the day just yet. Set all that aside. Set down every other vocation except for one, the call of Jesus, “Come to me...”

Do all you can to be focused, calm, and still. Settle in.

Rest your mind and your heart in the unfathomable grace of God. You are in the space to enjoy the presence of the King of the Universe, your Friend and Brother. A tender Father welcomes you.

None of this can be rushed. Remember to breathe. Be unhurried. Everything else can wait.

Take a few moments to adore your God for who he is and all that he has done for you. This is practice for a lifelong, game-changing habit of gratitude. “Lord, how good you are to me. Let me count the ways...”

Next, claim your secure identity as a child of the Most High God – this is who you are and nothing in heaven or on earth can touch it or take it away from you.

Next, embrace in the Spirit the full reality that you have been reconciled to him through Jesus. Nothing in your past, or present, or future, no sin of omission or commission, has not been atoned and resolved on his cross.

Next, linger in this, that your death will only be a sleep, and from it you will wake to glory that the Father and the Son have known for all eternity. Fix your mind on things above, on what is eternal and unseen, and try to imagine all that has been promised to you, though you cannot.

Now, let him speak to you by his Spirit through a portion of Scripture.

You might keep a journal that captures in a simple way the beautiful themes for each day. This can be a very personal record of your life in Christ as you meditate through the four Gospels, the

Epistles, or the Psalms. Simply turn to whatever Scripture is next according to your thirst. This isn't homework. It isn't meant to take the place of serious Bible Study. A single splendid verse that fills you with the beauty and majesty of Jesus will do.

You simply want at least one wonderful truth to grab onto and to hold in your mind as the theme of your day.

Tell him what's in your heart, whatever that may be.

Lay before your Lord what you need from him though he already knows. That may certainly include asking his mercy and forgiveness for anything that sits heavy on your conscience, and also for his wisdom and strength for the needs and responsibilities of the day. Ask him to be a part of it all, your Friend, your Brother, and your God.

Offer up a prayer for resiliency that may go something like this...

Dear Father, things will happen to me today, some I can control, most I cannot. But you are sovereign, Lord. Nothing will happen to me today that you don't already know. So, when an event occurs, help me to capture my thoughts with your promise to leave me forsake me and your promise to work all things for my good. Please, Jesus, today by your Spirit grant me feeling of joy and hope, peace and contentment. I don't ask these things only for myself. But with these I can best glorify you today and serve the people you will bring into my life today. Amen.

Ask him to have his hand on you until evening when your day will close, as it began, with a song.

Thank him for this time of sweet fellowship with him.

You are learning how to live your days with Jesus. He is your life, your all in all, and nothing else will do. And so, one day at a time, you can learn how not to let this beautiful devotional time end until your heart is full. The Spirit will help you.

Have this mindset that you are not ready for your day until the love Jesus has for you – “how wide and long and high and deep” – is *more real* to you than the sins of your past – they are tossed in the ocean of God's forgetfulness – *more real than* the promises and threats of Idols – “For me, to live is Christ” – *more real* than the future sorrows of your imagination – your God will not leave you or forsake you. That's what's real.

Not so long from now and you will see him with your own eyes. Your last moment can be a prayer that was the last words of a famous scoundrel: “Lord Jesus, receive my astonished soul!” Then, it begins.

Jesus is alive. It's going to be okay.