



Harvest ABC's Lifestyle Handbook

Loving God during Alone Time, with
Believers in Small Groups, and in
Corporate Worship

Ephesians 1:7-10

Preparing for Sunday, September 23, 2018

Harvest's Believers Lifestyle Essentials

The ABC lifestyle encourages us to grow in loving God more fully in a unified way. The hope is that we all will get back to the basics as a church and growing in unity as we study God's word together by studying the same verses.

LOVING GOD DURING ALONE TIME is to retreat to a quiet place, in an attitude of surrender and trust, for an unhurried time of communion with God through His Word, prayer and other spiritual disciplines.

Biblical Basis: Josh 1:8, 1 Tim 4:7, Ps 91:1, Matt 6:5-6.

LOVING GOD WITH BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN SMALL GROUPS is to gather together, in an environment of love and trust, with a small group of believers who are growing in intimacy with God through the ABC's, in order to spur one another on to love God more fully through sharing, accountability, and prayer.

Biblical Basis: Prov 27:17, Heb 10:24, 1 Thes 5:11.

LOVING GOD IN CORPORATE WORSHIP is to gather together as a church family on a weekly basis to worship God and delight in His presence; in song we express our love for Him and through the preaching of the Word we hear His voice.

Biblical Basis: Ps 22:22, Heb 10:25, Rom 12:4-5.

The Practice of "Loving God during Alone Time"

There are four key components in the practice of "Loving God during Alone Time" that we encourage each person to do on a daily basis:

PRAY. Settle into God's presence by expressing to Him where you are right now. Ask Him to draw near to you as you draw near to Him.

The following is a suggestion: "Father, my desire is to draw near to You and commune with You during this time. Create in my heart and mind a quietness and rest as I place my burdens and concerns, and confess my sins..."

Protect this time from interruption and distractions. Allow this to be more than a discipline, but an encouragement with You where I delight in Your presence as You delight in me. Give me ears to hear Your voice as I read Your Word. Teach me, rebuke me, correct or train me so that I will be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16) Holy Spirit fill me with Yourself, refresh my soul and nourish my spirit. My heart's desire is to enjoy loving intimacy with You now and throughout my day. In Jesus name I pray. Amen."

READ THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE MEDITATIVELY. Sink into the sermon-based scripture for a number of days, until you have plumbed the depths of it. Use the cross references. Once you have plumbed its depths, move on to another bible passage (i.e. the complementary passage, or one of your own choosing) and sink into that for the remainder of the week.

- Study the passage of scripture to gain an understanding of the context of the passage and the key point(s) of the truth taught in the passage.
- Listen to God's personal word to you through His written Word; attend to and linger over a word/phrase/verse that catches your attention.
- Ask God to show you how this word/phrase/verse connects with your life right now.
- Record what God is saying to you.

RESPOND TO GOD IN PRAYER. Allow your God-led ponderings be a catalyst to prayer, talking to Him about what He has revealed to you. Take time to intercede for your own accountability partners or small group members.

CONTINUE TO MEDITATE ON THIS WORD/PHRASE THROUGHOUT THE DAY. Allow God to further form, shape and apply these words in your life as you go into your day. James 1:23-24

WORK ON THE MEMORY VERSE. It is important to equip yourself with God's word. Biblical basis: Joshua 1:8 "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." If you want to be successful in life Joshua 1:8 makes it clear that success in life come through memorizing and meditating on God's Word.

Ephesians 1: 7-10 ESV

7 In him we have ^r redemption ^s through his blood, ^t the forgiveness of our trespasses,

^u according to the riches of his grace,

8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

9 ^v making known [3] to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he ^w set forth in Christ

10 as a plan for ^x the fullness of time, ^y to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Ephesians 1: 7-10 NLT

7 He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

8 He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

9 God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan.

10 And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth.

Footnotes

[3] 1:9 *Or he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known...*

Cross-references

q. Col 1:14

r. Rom 8:29, 30

s. Acts 20:28

t. Acts 2:38

u. Eph 3:8, 16, Col 1:27, Rom 2:4

v. Rom 16:25

w. Eph 1:11, Rom 8:28, 9:11

x. Mark 1:15

y. Col 1:16

Alone Time: Journaling

As God speaks to you through His Word write down what is impacting you, what He is saying to you personally and/or your response back to Him.

Scripture Memorization: Ephesians 1:3 (ESV)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,”

Prayer Focus:

Please pray all week that as a church we would embrace Jesus alone as the head of the church and submit our lives and desires to Him.

Alone Time: Optional Complementary Passage

Colossians 1:13-16 English Standard Version (ESV)

¹³He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Preeminence of Christ

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by^a him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

Footnotes:

- a. Colossians 1:16 That is, by means of; or *in*

Alone Time: Journal

What God is showing me through this passage? How is God's Word convicting me? How is God's Spirit leading me to respond? What did I learn today? How am I different as I go about my day?

Corporate Worship: Sermon Notes

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

Believers in Small Groups: Responsive Accountability

Pre-work before Small Group

Personal Reflection (5 minutes)

Prayerfully consider your practice of Alone Time over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you as you lived the ABC lifestyle. Is God inviting you to...

- Focus on your practice of Alone Time
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or do something else?

This coming week God is inviting me to.../ My response to God's invitation is to...

How I did with last week's accountability item...

Harvest Homes Supplemental : for the week of 9/16

Dear Parents,

The prophet Elijah had just witnessed God's great display of power over the false god Baal. God had sent fire from heaven and then ended a long drought with a great rain. Elijah must have felt a sense of victory; the evil King Ahab could not deny the one true God. But trouble awaited Elijah in the form of Ahab's wife, Jezebel.

When Jezebel heard what happened at Mount Carmel, she threatened to kill Elijah. Elijah ran away and hid in the wilderness. What a change Elijah experienced! He went from a man faithfully and confidently praying for God's glory to be displayed at Mount Carmel to a man begging the Lord to take away his life. (See 1 Kings 19:4.)

God was merciful to Elijah. An angel of the Lord brought Elijah food and drink while he rested. Then Elijah traveled to Horeb for a personal encounter with God. Horeb—another name for Mount Sinai—was a familiar place in the history of Israel. It was the place where God gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelites and where Moses met with God.

After the events in 1 Kings 18, Elijah might have expected a grand display of God's presence, but what he experienced was just the opposite. The Lord was not in the wind. The Lord was not in the earthquake. The Lord was not in the fire. God revealed Himself to Elijah in a voice, a soft whisper.

Elijah's circumstances were difficult, but God didn't leave him. God gave him Elisha, a friend and successor. God assured Elijah that he was not alone; there were 7,000 people in Israel who had not turned to worship Baal.

As a prophet of God, Elijah faced enemies who wanted to hurt him. Elijah's life points forward to Jesus, the greatest Prophet, who was hated and killed for sharing and teaching God's Word.

Help your kids understand that God's prophets suffered, but their lives and messages pointed forward to the ultimate prophet, priest, and king—Jesus Christ—who suffered for the sins of the world. Jesus was hated and killed, but His death and resurrection brought victory for God's people.

Check this session's Activity Page and Big Picture Card as well as the Gospel Project for Kids Family App for ways to interact with the Bible content this week.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

Babies and Toddlers

- There is one true God.
- God spoke to Elijah in a small whisper.
- Nothing can stop God's plan.
- Jesus is with us when we are afraid.

Preschool

- How many gods are there? There is one true God.
- God encouraged Elijah.

Kids

- How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.
- God revealed Himself to Elijah in a whisper.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

- **Hebrews 1:1-2**