



Harvest ABC's Lifestyle Handbook

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

Ephesians 3:1-13

Preparing for Sunday, November 4, 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 presences 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. 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 3:1-13 ESV

The Mystery of the Gospel Revealed

1 For this reason I, Paul, ^o a prisoner for Christ Jesus ^p on behalf of you Gentiles—
2 assuming that you have heard of ^q the stewardship of ^r God's grace that was given to me for you,
3 ^s how the mystery was made known to me ^t by revelation, ^u as I have written briefly.
4 ^v When you read this, you can perceive my insight into ^w the mystery of Christ,
5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.
6 This mystery is [1] that the Gentiles are ^x fellow heirs, ^y members of the same body, and ^z partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.
7 ^a Of this gospel I was made ^b a minister according to the gift of ^c God's grace, which was given me ^d by the working of his power.
8 To me, ^e though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, ^f to preach to the Gentiles the ^g unsearchable ^h riches of Christ,
9 and ⁱ to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery ^j hidden for ages in [2] God ^k who created all things,
10 so that through the church the manifold ^l wisdom of God ^m might now be made known to ⁿ the rulers and authorities ^o in the heavenly places.
11 This was ^p according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,
12 in whom we have ^q boldness and ^r access with ^s confidence through our ^t faith in him.
13 So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering ^u for you, ^v which is your glory.

Footnotes

[1] 3:6 The words *This mystery is* are inferred from verse 4

[2] 3:9 Or *by*

Cross-references

o. Acts 23:18, Phil 1:7, Eph 6:20
p. Col 1:24
q. Eph 1:10, Col 1:25, 1 Tim 1:4
r. Eph 3:7, 4:7, Acts 11:23, Rom 1:5
s. Acts 22:17, 21, 26:16-18
t. Dan 2:29, Rom 16:25, 2 Cor 12:1
u. Eph 1:9,10
v. 2 Cor 11:6
w. Col 4:3
x. Gal 3:29
y. Eph 2:16
z. Eph 5:7
a. Col 1:23, 25
b. 2 Cor 3:6
c. Eph 3:2
d. Eph 3:20, 1:19
e. 1 Cor 15:9

Ephesians 3:1-13 NLT

God's Mysterious Plan Revealed

1 When I think of all this, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus for the benefit of you Gentiles...
2 assuming, by the way, that you know God gave me the special responsibility of extending his grace to you Gentiles.
3 As I briefly wrote earlier, God himself revealed his mysterious plan to me.
4 As you read what I have written, you will understand my insight into this plan regarding Christ.
5 God did not reveal it to previous generations, but now by his Spirit he has revealed it to his holy apostles and prophets.
6 And this is God's plan: Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God's children. Both are part of the same body, and both enjoy the promise of blessings because they belong to Christ Jesus.
7 By God's grace and mighty power, I have been given the privilege of serving him by spreading this Good News.
8 Though I am the least deserving of all God's people, he graciously gave me the privilege of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ.
9 I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning.
10 God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.
11 This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.
12 Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence.
13 So please don't lose heart because of my trials here. I am suffering for you, so you should feel honored.

f. Acts 9:15
g. Job 5:9, Rom 11:33
h. Eph 1:18, Rom 2:4
i. Eph 3:1,2
j. Col 1:26
k. Rev 4:11, Eph 2:10
l. Rom 11:33
m. 1 Pet 1:12
n. Eph 1:21, 6:12
o. Eph 1:3
p. Eph 1:11
q. Heb 4:16, 10:19
r. Eph 2:18
s. 2 Cor 3:4
t. Mark 11:22, Phil 3:9
u. Eph 3:1

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 3:20-21 (ESV)

20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, **21** to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer Focus:

That God would plant, grow and bless the church in Jamaica.

Alone Time: Optional Complementary Passage

Colossians 4:2-6 English Standard Version (ESV)

Further Instructions

2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. **3** At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— **4** that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. **5** Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. **6** Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

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?

Harvest Homes Supplemental: For the week of Oct 28th

Dear Parents,

Last week, we saw Hosea's amazing love for his unfaithful wife that provided a picture of God's greater love for His unfaithful people. This week, we looked at Jonah's lack of love as a contrast.

The Book of Jonah is not primarily about Jonah and a big fish. While those elements are important, Jonah's account centers around the compassion of God, not only for the people of Israel, but for people throughout the earth—even Israel's worst enemies!

God spoke to Jonah: "Get up! Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because their wickedness has confronted Me" (Jonah 1:2). God is the judge of all the earth (Gen. 18:25) and He is sovereign over all the nations. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, and the rulers of Nineveh were notoriously evil and cruel. No wonder Jonah ran the other way!

No one can flee from God's presence. (Ps. 139:9-10) Through a storm and some time in the belly of a fish, God got Jonah's attention. Jonah went to Nineveh. For three days, Jonah walked around the city. His message to the Ninevites was brief: "In 40 days Nineveh will be demolished!"

The people of Nineveh immediately repented, and God withheld His judgment. He passed over their sins and did not demolish the city. How did Jonah react? "Jonah was greatly displeased and became furious" (Jonah 4:1). Jonah refused to love the people of Nineveh, even when God did.

God rebuked Jonah and prompted him to examine his heart. He left Jonah—and the reader—with a question to consider: "Should I not care about the great city of Nineveh?" (Jonah 4:11).

God called Jonah to go to his enemies and call them to turn away from their sin, but Jonah refused. Instead, he ran away. Later, God sent Jesus to His enemies to call us to repentance. Jesus willingly obeyed. Jesus died on the cross to rescue us from sin.

Help your kids see that God's love extends to the nations and that like Nineveh, we are all enemies of God undeserving of grace and mercy. Jesus is greater than Jonah. (Matt. 12:41) Jesus came calling all sinners, Jews and Gentiles, to repentance. He didn't only bring a message, He truly loved us. He submitted to God's will with joy and laid down His own life for our sins. God shows His mercy in the gospel, forgiving those who trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior. God sends us out, like Jonah, to share the good news of salvation.

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

- God loves people.
- Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh.
- God sent Jonah to Nineveh because He loves people.
- God sent Jesus because He loves us.

Preschool

- What is God like? God is merciful and loving.
- God showed mercy to the Ninevites.

Kids

- What is God like? God is slow to anger, merciful, and loving.
- God showed mercy to the Ninevites.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

Joel 2:13