



Harvest ABC's Lifestyle Handbook

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

Ephesians 3:14-19

Preparing for Sunday, November 11, 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 3:14-19 ESV

Prayer for Spiritual Strength

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,
15 from whom ^w every family [3] in heaven and on earth is named,
16 that according to ^x the riches of his glory ^y he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit ^z in your inner being,
17 ^a so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being ^b rooted and ^c grounded in love,
18 may have strength to ^d comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and ^e height and depth,
19 and to know the love of Christ ^f that surpasses knowledge, that ^g you may be filled with all ^h the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:14-19 NLT

Paul's Prayer for Spiritual Growth

14 When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father,
15 the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth.
16 I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.
17 Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong.
18 And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is.
19 May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

Footnotes

[3] 3:15 Or *fatherhood*; the Greek word *patia* is closely related to the word for *Father* in verse 14

Cross-references

- w. Eph 1:10, 21
- x. Eph 3:8
- y. 1 Cor 16:13 Eph 6:10, Phil 4:13, Col 1:11
- z. Rom 7:22
- a. Eph 2:22
- b. Col 2:7
- c. Col 1:23
- d. John 1:5
- e. Rom 8:39, Job 11:8, 9
- f. Phil 4:7
- g. Col 2:10

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 we as elders and pastors would continue to grow more and more effective in how we communicate, work together and lead our body.

Alone Time: Optional Complementary Passage

Romans 8:35-39 English Standard Version (ESV)

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?**36** As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. **38** For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, **39** nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 15:8-11 English Standard Version (ESV)

8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. **9** As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. **10** If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.**11** These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

1 John 4:7-12 English Standard Version (ESV)

God Is Love

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. **10** In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.**12** No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

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 November 4th

Dear Parents,

This week we turned our attention back to Judah and picked up the big story with God's people in quite a bind. The prophet Joel spoke to the Southern Kingdom of Judah at a time when the nation faced a crisis. The land had been invaded by locusts; swarms of the insects had devastated the plants. Judah was also affected by a severe drought.

Joel looked back on these events and announced that these were not mere natural disasters—the Lord was judging the people for their sin.

In Deuteronomy 28, God told His people, “If you do not obey the Lord your God by carefully following all His commands and statutes I am giving you today, all these curses will come and overtake you ... You will sow much seed in the field but harvest little, because locusts will devour it” (vv. 15,38). That is exactly what happened.

These disasters were a wake-up call. Joel told the people to repent. He told them to fast. He told them to gather and repent together, crying out to God and asking Him to show them mercy. Then Joel looked ahead to the future. In essence he said, “You think this is bad? This is only the beginning!”

God's judgment of Judah was not over. The Day of the Lord was coming, a day when God would show His strength through an invading army. For those who were not right with God, this was bad news. God's power would be against them. So Joel implored them, “Return to the LORD your God. For He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, rich in faithful love, and He relents from sending disaster.”

God had pity on His people and promised to restore them. God would rather forgive His people than punish them.

Joel warned God's people about the Day of the Lord—a day when God will judge His enemies, free His people, and make the world right again. Those who trust in Jesus will escape God's punishment for sin. Jesus was punished in our place, and we share in His righteousness.

Help your kids see that God takes sin seriously, but at the same time, He showers grace upon those who trust in Jesus. God sent His Son, Jesus, to die for sins so people could be right with God. An ultimate Day of the Lord is coming, and everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

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.
- Joel was God's prophet.
- Joel said God wants to forgive people.
- God forgives us through His Son, Jesus.

Preschool

- What is God like? God is merciful and loving.
- God warned His people to repent.

Kids

- What is God like? God is slow to anger, merciful, and loving.
- God warned His people to repent before the Day of the Lord.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

Joel 2:13