

Go On Up – Taking a significant block of time to talk the Lord

1) Book the Time

Clear space in your calendar. Find a private location where you can be undisturbed for a block of time – ideally 2-8 hours. Commit to the Lord that you will do this at that time and place. Write down your commitment and set reminders so you don't miss it!

[I WILL GO ON UP on _____]

2) Preparation

Gather any material you may need. You will absolutely want a Bible, some notepaper or a notebook, a pencil or pen. You may want headphones and some Christian music, a hymnbook or your favourite devotional book. Some will want to bring a communion fellowship cup or similar.

At the appointed hour and place, set your phone to “do not disturb.”

3) Begin

Take a very deep breath. Hold it for a bit and then exhale slowly. Repeat three or four times. Close your eyes and ask the Lord to help you use this time with Him wisely. You may want to read a hymn of dedication or softly sing a worship chorus or listen to a meditative worship song. Thank the Lord that He is always ready to receive His children, always gracious and kind to us, and always merciful and forgiving. Begin by focusing on the holiness of God.

4) A Time of Confession

As we focus on God's holiness, we become mindful of our unholiness. Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart, and to reveal to you any unconfessed sin – both sins of commission (things you did) and sins of omission (things you should have done but did not). Ask Him to do so one by one. As He brings each matter to your mind, ask Him to reveal to you the motives and intentions you had at the time. As the Spirit reveals these things to you, you may have a heavy heart. That will pass as you confess to Him and put each matter under the blood of Jesus. Ask the Lord to forgive you, to wash the shame and guilt of the evil you did away and to give you in its place more of His holy character, that you might be free of sin, shame and guilt going forward. When you have finished with one thing, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal another. This process can be deeply emotional and lengthy.

Confession is not usually the bulk of your time, but do not rush it - for this is your spirit feeling the grief His Spirit feels, and if this is all you have time to do, you have made significant spiritual progress!

As you go through this process, you may feel as if weight is coming off your shoulders. Thank the Lord for that.

After some time, you will find nothing else coming to mind and sense that your time of confession is done. That is Spirit affirming you may move on in your time with Him. Thank the Lord for His costly sacrifice for your sin.

You may wish to do that more formally in celebrating **communion** with Him through reading from Matthew 26:26-30 or 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

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5) A Time of Praise and Thanksgiving

Here is where we want to bring out the hymnal, if you have one. Spend a block of time in praise and worship.

OPTIONS:

- i) Listen to worshipful music.
- ii) Meditatively read from the book of Psalms.
- iii) Write a song or poem of praise and thanksgiving.

6) A Time of Reflection and Petition

Here is where we want to bring out your pen and paper (or equivalent). Either prayerfully reflect or write a letter to God on what brought you to this place and time. Write about:

- i) How you are now and have been feeling.
- ii) How you've been spending your life up to this point, and how you'd like to spend your life going forward.
- iii) Tell the Lord about your struggles and disappointments.
- iv) Tell the Lord about your fears.
- v) Tell the Lord about your hopes.

Again, take your time. Ask the Lord to speak to you about each of the above, remembering that He speaks not just through His Spirit (internal prompt), but also through the visceral experience of your senses (what you smell, what you hear, what you see, what you feel and taste). Take time to listen to Him by sitting in silence until you are sure He would have you move to the next part of your day.

Note that hearing the Lord's voice to us (however He speaks) can be a very emotional and cathartic experience. Write down any prompts He gives you, any words or impressions you sense. Complete this time by asking Him for His encouragement, strength, spiritual gifting and anointing to both do all He is asking you to do, and to reflect Him and His character as you do so, such that you might bring Him glory in this present season of life.

7) A Time of Intercession

After you have prayed for yourself, pray for others you know:

- i) Pray for family members: those you usually pray for and those you rarely pray for.
- ii) Pray for your friends, coworkers and acquaintances.
- iii) The church, including God's workers who have helped and encouraged you in your walk with Him (teachers/pastors/missionaries)
- iv) Pray for opportunities to share the Gospel, both to those of your own culture, and to those of other cultures.
- v) Pray for your community, our city, nation and the world.

8) A Time of Closure

Pause. Again, sing a song or listen to a worship song. Read through all you wrote down from your time of reflection and petition. Make a to-do list of action items arising from your time with the Lord. Thank Him for all He has done in and through you today, and for all He said to you. Praise the Lord for a good time on the mountain with Him!