

How to Have a Quiet Time (part 5) by Meredith Nisbet

How long should I spend?

Children who are told to practice "a half hour" or some other time period, often end up clock-watching and paying little attention to what they are doing.

It is better to have a performance goal and then you know when you are done. Same thing for any kind of spiritual endeavor such as prayer or bible-reading, etc. Time spent is not the goal.

With some practice, you can determine some "**performance goals**" such as meditation, study, prayer, praise, etc. If you have a plan as noted in part four, following the plan should take care of the time appropriately.

Jesus exhorted his disciples to pray with him for an hour in Gethsemane. He had a goal, but they did not, so they fell asleep. (Matt. 26:36-46)

Hannah prayed for a child. Her faithfulness in prayer was rewarded with baby Samuel. (1 Samuel 1:1 - 2:11)

Jonah prayed for days that God would destroy Nineveh. His prayer was rewarded with some major learning about the nature of God and of God's kind of forgiveness and his sovereignty. (Jonah 3 - 4.)

Time spent with God and the Word is always rewarded, although the reward may be an unexpected one.

Some idea of the time can be helpful, however. Many people spend 15 or 20 minutes, or shorter, or longer. **Every moment spent with God is joyful and as important as a lifetime no matter how long it is.**
