# Six Secrets to a Powerful Quiet Time

Catherine Martin




PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA

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Week One

# THE GREAT ADVENTURE



*Days 1-6*

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*Day One*

# THE INVITATION TO RADICAL INTIMACY

*I have loved you with an everlasting love.*

JEREMIAH 31:3



God wants you—not a part of you but all of you, every day and all the time. When you open your mind to this truth and surrender to it, your devotion to God will begin to deepen. There is no one He would rather spend time with than you. He says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3). God desires something astounding with you: radical intimacy.

When we think of intimacy, we usually think of marriage. Intimacy with God is much deeper than surface acquaintance, and it is marked by friendship and emotional closeness. It is private and personal, with love, warmth, and intense joy. Intimacy with God is real, revolutionary, radical, and relational.



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- It's real because it's not theoretical but a true experience.

- It's revolutionary because knowing Him intimately will transform your life.

- It's radical because as it changes your life, your intimate relationship with God will have an impact on the world.

- It's relational, implying an exchange and interaction with the Creator of the universe.

Radical intimacy with God is a deep, abiding sharing of hearts no outward circumstance can touch. There is a mutuality in your relationship with the Lord; it is not one-sided. Scripture confirms this as we see God constantly initiating relationships with men and women such as Abraham, Moses, Hagar, and David. When we cry out to God, an amazing thing happens. He responds to our prayers. When King Hezekiah was threatened by an enemy, he took his trouble to the Lord. God responded by rescuing him from impending danger. Scripture corroborates over and over again that radical intimacy is not merely perfunctory but something God invites you to enjoy—a pleasure. However, it takes time. It grows through experience and engagement with God.

At the heart of your relationship with the Lord is time with Him—quiet time. Quiet time with God every day is initiated by God, led by God, and enriched by God. He has provided everything necessary for intimacy: the Word of God, prayer, the indwelling Holy Spirit, the companionship of Jesus, and the fellowship of good friends. All the men and women who have gone anywhere with the Lord have always cultivated time alone with Him in His Word and in prayer. This is the most important part of your day. Lots of people talk about spending time with God; very few actually do it. Rarely will this practice be encouraged in church. That may sound like a harsh commentary of our day and time, but how else can we account for the fact that only 45 percent of church attendees open their Bibles outside of church?[1]



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Rarely do people in church talk about what they learned in their quiet time. Rarely do pastors speak of their time with God. There is sermon preparation, hospital visitation, and ministry organization, but where is the presence of God? Has God left the church? No. I would venture to say that the church has, in a fashion, stepped away from God. This is not a new thing. People have been neglecting their own personal relationships with God since the beginning of time. Even in the garden of Eden, Adam hid from God after eating the forbidden fruit rather than showing up for their daily walk in the garden.

I remember sharing a devotion in seminary on the subject of quiet time. When I sat down, another student stood up in front of the class to give the next devotion. He said, "I don't think I have ever understood what it means to have a quiet time." Then the next classmate gave his devotion. As an introduction, he said, "I've never had a quiet time like that before." I was so surprised by their words. A friend leaned over and whispered to me, "Most of these guys don't know anything about spending time with God." These were people who were studying to be pastors and full-time workers in Christian ministry, and yet they knew very little about time with God.

People often acquire academic facts about God without a real, vital interaction or experience with Him. Yet God desires a dynamic, authentic relationship with us. God said to the people of Israel, "Here am I, Here am I…I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people" (Isaiah 65:1-2). What He seemed to be saying to them was, "Where are you? I want you with Me. I want to share life with you. I have much to give you. I want you to know Me."

Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20). Oh, what a picture this paints for the people of God! Jesus wants to sit down at the dinner table and talk with you over a good meal. His words point to intimate conversation and a sharing of thoughts and ideas. They also imply radical impact and transformation. Can you imagine the difference in your life if you spend time every day with Jesus? You will never be the same.

God is extending an invitation to you to be intimate with Him. To



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know Him. To walk with Him. It is an invitation to radical intimacy. It is written all across the pages of His Word.

- In Psalm 46:10 (NIV) God says, "Be still, and know that I am God."

- In Jeremiah 9:23-24 He says, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things."

- In Matthew 11:28 Jesus says, "Come to Me, all you who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

- In John 7:37 Jesus says, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink."

- In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me."

The Hebrew word for "know" in Jeremiah 9:23-24 is *yada* and implies an actual experience with God, not an academic acquiring of facts. He wants you to know Him in your everyday experience of life. Day by day, in your quiet time with God, you will learn about His attributes, His love, His power, His wisdom, His peace, His sovereignty, and more. You will understand the magnificence of His ways and purposes. As you learn these truths, you will trust Him to work in your life. You will talk with Him moment by moment. With time, you will begin to recognize His presence and power in your own life. This firsthand experience with God is incomparable, and once you have enjoyed His presence, nothing else will come close to satisfying the needs of your heart and soul.



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Remember, God is the One extending this invitation to intimacy. That is important. It is not just an acquaintance extending an invitation to meet with you. It is not your neighbor. It is not the pastor of your church. It is not even the president of the United States. It is God Himself, the Creator and CEO of the universe, the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Men and women whose lives are displayed in the Word of God understood the delight and priority of intimacy with God.

- Moses said to God, "Let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight" (Exodus 33:13).

- David, the man after God's own heart, said, "Make me know Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths" (Psalm 25:4).

- Hosea said, "Come, let us return to the Lord…So let us know, let us press on to know the Lord" (Hosea 6:1,3).

- Paul said, "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Philippians 3:8).

The exciting part about quiet time is that the Lord's invitation is a winning proposition. Why? Because God wants to be intimate with you—radically intimate. David knew this very well. He said, "Friendship with the Lord is reserved for those who fear him. With them he shares the secrets of his covenant" (Psalm 25:14 nlt). Only intimates share secrets. And God desires to share His secrets with you.

Think about Zaccheus. He wanted to see Jesus in person, but some obstacles made this desire seemingly impossible. He was a chief tax collector with a lot of responsibility and power—time was precious. He was rich, and Jesus seemed to spend time with those who were poor. Then too, Zaccheus was small in stature and struggled to catch a



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glimpse of Jesus in a large crowd. But he wanted to see Jesus so much that he became creative. He ran ahead of the crowd, climbed up a sycamore tree, and waited eagerly. Jesus walked right under the tree where Zaccheus was perched, looked up, and said to him, "Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house" (Luke 19:5). What would you do if Jesus walked into the room where you are right now, looked into your eyes, and said, "Today I would like to spend quiet time with you"? Here's what Zaccheus did. He hurried down and received Him with great joy. Will you do the same?

What does God's invitation to radical intimacy really mean for you in your own life?

- God invites you to a pilgrimage of the heart (Psalm 84:5), to find your home in God while journeying in a foreign land until you reach your grand destination: heaven.

- God invites you to personal, spiritual revival (John 7:37-38), to constant renewal, and to a restoration of God's purpose and plan for your life.

- God invites you to share His heart (Psalm 46:10), to move in perfect step with Him as He leads you through life, and to enjoy intimate fellowship with Him.

- God invites you to influence the world (Luke 24:32) with a heart burning with a contagious love that spreads to those around you.

- God invites you to an eternal perspective (2 Corinthians 4:18), seeing life from God's point of view, looking beyond the temporal to the eternal.

- God invites you to radical discipleship (Matthew 4:19), paying the price in time and energy to sit at His feet and learn from Him.



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(These thoughts are developed more fully in my books of quiet times: Quiet Times for the Heart—*Pilgrimage of the Heart, Revive My Heart, A Heart That Dances, A Heart on Fire,* and *A Heart to See Forever,* A Quiet Time Experience—*A Heart That Hopes in God, Run Before The Wind, Trusting in the Names of God,* and *Passionate Prayer.*)

At the outset of your journey into quiet time with the Lord, you must make a decision. Will you be that rare person who, with a longing heart, will open the pages of your Bible, day by day, to hear and respond to what God has to say? Will you be radical for Him and say yes to this invitation to engage in radical intimacy? If so, write a prayer of commitment to the Lord in the space provided under "My Response" on page 28. This does not mean that you will never again miss a day of time with the Lord. It means that your heart's desire is to know the Lord, and you will endeavor to set aside time with Him and pay the price in time and energy to know Him. It is a commitment to intentional devotion.

These pages contain something of my own passion and pursuit of God. This is a sharing of ideas, a guide into the presence of the Lord—how to get there and what to do when you meet together with Him. Imagine that we are fellow pilgrims, climbing the great mountain of God. We are going to sit together on the mountaintop for a while, savor the vast expanse of God, and talk about practical ways to draw near to Him. We will think together about many things: What is this radical intimacy? What makes it surpass a simple devotional life? How can you achieve it? Once you do, how will you keep it going? What should you do to have a deeper knowledge of God? If desire is necessary, where do you get the desire? The very fact that you are reading this book is proof that you are already on the journey. But there is much to discover. And God will guide you. Developing a deep devotion to God is not a passive process. You cannot experience God through osmosis. This book contains time-tested disciplines of devotion. Experiment with them, experience the adventure of knowing God, and enjoy the journey along the way.



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# My Response

DATE:

KEY VERSE: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10 NIV).

FOR FURTHER THOUGHT: Will you write a letter to the Lord in response to His invitation to radical intimacy? Include your own dreams and desires for your relationship with Him. If you have never established a relationship with God and desire to know Him, will you pray to Him now and invite Jesus Christ into your life? If this is the desire of your heart, you may pray the following prayer: *Lord Jesus, I need You. I invite You now to come into my life, forgive my sins, and make me the person You want me to be. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

MY RESPONSE: *A Letter to the Lord*



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# Viewer Guide—Week One

## The Quiet Heart

In our time together in this message we are going to look at an incredible invitation from Jesus that will take you to a quiet place where you can have a quiet heart and develop radical intimacy with Him.

"Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and rest a little while" (Mark 6:31 Williams Translation).

*Principles of the Quiet Place*

1. Jesus is inviting you to a _____, resolve to be responsible for making devotional life a _____.

2. In Jesus' words, you an invitation to _____, solitude, and a spiritual inner life of reflection.

3. The Lord desires to spend _____alone with you.

4. It is important to find a quiet _____ to spend time with God.

5. Jesus wants you to take _____ time alone with Him.

6. _____ is a necessity for every child of God.

*When do you need the Quiet Place?*

1. When you get _____ news. Matthew 14:3



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2. In a time of popularity and _____. Mark 1:35

3. After a time of intense _____. Mark 6:31-32

4. When there are huge _____ on you and you have had little time to yourself. Luke 4:42

*Where are you going to go for your Quiet Place with God?*

*What kinds of things will you do in the Quiet Place?*

The PRAYER™ Quiet Time Plan
Prepare Your Heart
Read and Study God's Word
Adore God in Prayer
Yield Yourself to God
Enjoy His Presence
Rest In His Love

*What will the Quiet Place do for you?*

*What are the Basics?* A Time, A Place, and a Plan with the PRAYER™ Quiet Time Plan



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