

Prioritising God Every Day

I don't know about you, but my diary has a habit of filling itself up before I've even had a chance to say yes to anything. Between work, family, the endless list of jobs around the house and the general noise of modern life, it can feel as though there isn't a spare minute left in the day. And it's in that gap, or rather the lack of one, that my time with God is often the first thing to get squeezed out. Not because I don't want it there, but because everything else shouts louder and demands attention first.

I think most of us would say, if we're honest, that we want God at the centre of our lives. We'd say it without hesitation in a church service or in conversation with a friend. But wanting something and actually living it out day to day are two very different things. Busyness has a sneaky way of pushing even our best intentions to the margins. We tell ourselves we'll pray properly tomorrow, we'll open the Bible once things calm down, we'll find that quiet moment once the kids are older or the workload eases off. The trouble is, life rarely calms down on its own. Jesus put it plainly when He said, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33). Notice He doesn't say seek it once everything else is sorted. He says seek it first.

What I've come to realise is that prioritising God isn't really about finding extra time that doesn't exist. It's about being intentional with the time we already have, however limited it feels. God doesn't need us to carve out three uninterrupted hours before He'll meet with us. He meets us in the car on the way to work, in the queue at the supermarket, in the two minutes before the household wakes up and the day properly begins. David understood this rhythm well, writing, "in the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly" (Psalm 5:3). It wasn't a lengthy retreat he was describing, just a habit of turning towards God before the day took over. Some of the richest moments I've had with God haven't been in a peaceful study with candles lit and the perfect playlist on. They've been messy, snatched moments in between everything else, and somehow He's still been there, patient and present, waiting for me to notice Him.

That said, I don't think we should let ourselves off the hook entirely by only relying on these snatched moments. There's real value in choosing, deliberately, to protect a bit of time each day, even if it's small. Fifteen minutes with a cup of tea and an open Bible before the phone comes out can shape the whole tone of a day. It's not about ticking a box or feeling guilty if we miss it, but about building a rhythm that keeps us anchored when everything else is trying to pull us off course. Proverbs puts it well: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6). That submitting happens as much in the small, hurried decisions of a busy day as it does in any quiet moment set apart. Busyness will always find a way to justify itself. If we wait for the perfect moment to prioritise God, we'll be waiting forever.

I've also found it helpful to stop thinking of my faith as one item on a very long to do list, competing for space alongside emails and errands and everything else demanding my attention. When it's just another task, it's the easiest one to postpone, because unlike a deadline at work, nobody is chasing me for it. But when I start to see my relationship with God as the lens through which everything else is viewed, rather than one more thing to squeeze in, it changes the whole picture. Suddenly work becomes an act of worship rather than a distraction from it. Family time becomes an opportunity to reflect His love rather than competition for His attention. The busyness doesn't disappear, but it stops being the enemy of my faith and starts being the very place where that faith gets worked out.

There's a real temptation, especially when life is full, to treat prayer and scripture as something reserved for the quiet seasons, and to assume God understands when we're too stretched to show up. And of course He understands our limitations far better than we do. But I don't think that means He wants us to wait until life is calmer before we come to Him. If anything, it's in the busy, overwhelming seasons that we need Him most, and where the habit of turning to Him first, rather than last, makes the biggest difference. Paul's instruction wasn't reserved for calmer days either: "do not be anxious about

anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6-7). In every situation includes the rushed and overloaded ones, not just the peaceful ones. A quick prayer before a difficult meeting, a moment of gratitude on the school run, a verse read while waiting for the kettle to boil- none of these is grand gestures, but they keep the connection alive when a longer, quieter time isn't possible.

I've also learned, sometimes the hard way, that guilt is not a particularly good motivator when it comes to faith. If prioritising God becomes another source of pressure and self-criticism, it starts to feel like a burden rather than a relationship. God isn't standing over us with a checklist, disappointed every time life gets in the way. He's far more interested in our hearts turning towards Him, even imperfectly, than in a flawless routine performed out of obligation. However badly yesterday went, "because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23). That's a fresh start on offer every single day, not just the ones we manage to get right. Some days that looks like a full, unhurried time of prayer. Other days it's just a whispered thank you between meetings. Both matter.

In the end, I think prioritising God in the busyness of life is less about finding more hours and more about training our hearts to notice Him in the hours we already have. It's a daily choice, often made in small and unremarkable moments, to turn towards Him rather than away. Some days we'll manage it well, other days we won't, and that's simply part of being human. But the invitation is always there, quietly waiting in the middle of whatever the day brings, for us to pause and remember who we belong to.

Questions

1. Where does time with God usually fall on your list when life gets busy? (**Matthew 6:33**)
2. What moment in your day could you turn towards God? (**Psalms 5:3**)
3. Where are you leaning on your own understanding instead of God's? (**Proverbs 3:5-6**)
4. What worry could you hand over to God this week? (**Philippians 4:6-7**)
5. How does a fresh start each morning change your day? (**Lamentations 3:22-23**)