

What's in It for Me?

Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

One of the major reasons people experience a sense of frustration and failure in their devotional life is because they don't understand why such a habit is important. As a result, there are sincere believers who have (or try to have) daily devotions for all the wrong reasons.

Then what is the purpose of devotions? What makes it worth making the effort to get up earlier in the morning, to find time in an already hectic schedule, and to prioritize a daily quiet time? What are we hoping to see accomplished through that time? And why is this habit such a crucial one in the life of a believer? I'd like to suggest eight purposes I have discovered. The first four relate primarily to our inner life with God, and the other four affect not only our inner life but flow out into our lifestyle and our relationships with others.

Communion

The ultimate purpose of spending time in God's Word is to get to know God! What an awesome privilege it is to be invited to be a friend of the God of the universe and to walk with Him in a close, personal relationship. The goal is not to check one more thing off our to do list, but to meet with Him; it is not to "have devotions," but to experience true "devotion." (Ex. 33:13)

Purification

As I spend time alone with God in the morning, I ask Him who sees and knows all to expose anything in my heart that is not holy. He knows me better than I know myself. My natural tendency would be to cover my sin, so I ask Him to shine the light of His holiness into my heart and to show me what He sees there. Through worship, prayer, and the Word, I step out of the darkness into His light. (Ps. 19:12; 139:23–24)

Restoration

As we walk through each day, responding to the needs of those around us, we can become physically, emotionally, and spiritually depleted. God has a never-ending supply of grace, strength, and wisdom available that He wants to flow through us to others. And we need to keep coming back into His presence to get our supply replenished. (Ps. 23:1–3)

Instruction

Wouldn't it be great if there were a class you could take that would teach you everything you needed to know and provide answers for all your problems? The fact is, there is a "course" that addresses every issue we will ever face. The Teacher loves to meet one-on-one with His students, so that He can tailor the course to our needs. He is willing to hold class every day that we are willing to meet. We already have the Textbook, which was written by the Teacher Himself. Parts of it can be difficult to grasp. But the Teacher is always available—twenty-four hours a day—to help us understand. (Ps. 25:4–5, 9, 12, 14)

Submission

Over the years, I have learned a foundational truth. Whether the problem is earth-shattering or a mere blip on the radar screen of our lives, ultimately the real issue is this: "Will I surrender to God's hand and purposes in my life?" Those who refuse to relinquish control become emotionally and spiritually bankrupt—bitter, demanding, impossible to live with. Those who say in simple surrender, "Yes, Lord," emerge from the experience spiritually rich, and their lives become a source of grace and encouragement to others who are hurting. (Ps. 40:8)

Direction

God wants us to seek His counsel and direction in relation to the matters that concern us. During our quiet time, we enter into His presence and lay our lives before Him—our schedules, our questions, and the circumstances and decisions we are facing. Then with His Word open before us and our hearts open before Him, we seek to discover His heart on the matter. We trust Him to shine His light on our path. (James 1:5)

Intercession

Most of us are born "fixers." Our natural tendency is to take matters into our own hands, to fret and worry, and to demand solutions. In the process, we often bypass the one truly effective means we have of impacting the lives of those around us. I am convinced that if you and I would spend a fraction of the time praying about our concerns for others that we do worrying about them, talking about them to others, and trying to fix them ourselves, we would see a whole lot more results. (Mark 2:1–5)

Transformation

God doesn't want us to masquerade as "good Christians." He wants us to be metamorphosed—to be transformed from the inside out into the likeness of the Lord Jesus. We can masquerade in the energy of our own flesh but are likely to end up frazzled and frustrated. Only the Spirit of God can metamorphose (transform) us into the image of Jesus. (2 Cor. 3:18)

Adapted from [A Place of Quiet Rest](#) by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth.