

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and dine with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20

Search Me, Oh God

Search me, Oh God, reveal my heart.
Expose my sin that it may be confessed.
Search me, Oh God unveil each thought,
And leave no hidden motive unaddressed.

Uncover every action born in pride-
Show me the worldly ways I still embrace;
May every anxious thought be brought to light.
and each unspoken fear, with faith replaced.

Search me, oh God, observe my life,
Bring to my mind each idle word I speak.
Search me, oh God, test my resolve,
And alert me where You find it weak.

Reveal all weakened walls within my soul,
Show me potential dangers unforeseen.
Then clothe my conscience with Your holiness.
Help me to guard it well and keep it clean.

Search me, oh God, that I may walk in peace.
Filled with the joy of knowing, "all is well".
My heart surrendered and my conscience clean,
So great a joy, my tongue can scarcely tell.
Oh what a joy to know that all is well!

(Words and music by Jon Mohr and Randall Dennis- 1991 Feed and Seed Music)

Pattern for a shorter Retreat

(Ideas from Lillian Foss)

1. Go or be somewhere quiet - somewhere that's personally pleasing - no interruptions
maybe a beach (me) or stream or on your deck or room in the winter
2. Start out with thanking God for his created place you are enjoying.
3. Be quiet in his presence. I usually have a scripture in mind, but through prayer ask the Holy Spirit to guide.

Just yesterday I went to the beach for an hour. I wanted to read the book of Revelation through. That was my goal, but I noticed my marker in the Bible in II Cor. I read a few chapters and came up to 6, where Paul says "The smallness you feel comes from within you. Your lives aren't small but you're living them in a small way. I'm speaking as plainly as I can and with great affection. Open up your lives. Live openly and expansively!" (from the Message)

4. As we meditate, we ask Him to convict, restore, encourage and challenge.
5. Linger with a scripture portion and journal.
6. Sometimes I sing an old hymn and pray through the hymn, could be a chorus too.
7. This is a design for a short retreat. I think if I were to go for a longer one, I would go to a retreat center where there are opportunities for prayer and encouragement. (probably another subject.)

Thanks from the inside out!! Lil

Pattern for a longer Retreat

Thoughts on Personal Retreats (by Kathy Wile)

Preparation: Mostly prayer for the weeks leading up to the retreat asking for ears to hear and a heart that is soft and tender to His leading / seeking God's wisdom for any particular topic or issue to pursue during that time (a couple of times I've had a very specific issue that needed the extended time for thinking and pondering and listening)

Transition: If traveling by car or train or car, try to listen to some good music or a good sermon that is settling to the heart. Definitely seek to be praying and turning the mind from all the stuff of life to the joy of personal time with the Lord.

Beginning: I always have to unpack and get myself settled into the place and do whatever I need to so it is "home" for the time I am there. / Take a walk or a jog or a bike ride or whatever is good for you and begin to be silent - I don't try to think about anything in particular but rather just enjoy being where I am / spend a bit of time reading in the Word - can just be a continuation of wherever you have been or something new. I like to be in the gospels so I might see Jesus.

Confession: Somewhere near the beginning I seek to sit quietly and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any sin that I've been ignoring or not seeing. I look for things that are more specific than general. Then I confess them. Then I read verses that speak of His forgiveness. Then I linger to enjoy His love so I might walk away with no guilt and no shame, just the joy of being loved and forgiven. Now I often build a fire and burn my paper of written sins but that might be a bit much for some and impossible depending on the situation.

Rest of the Time: I let the time emerge...I sleep when I feel tired. I eat when I get hungry. I go for frequent short walks and talk to the Lord as I do. I find being outside helps me to see and hear Him. I listen for His voice speaking to my heart. I read Scripture. I also read at least one book - various authors and definitely Christian. Sometimes I take a book of sermons (usually by Thielicke) or I listen to a sermon (many can be downloaded from the internet). I journal though I don't think this is necessary. I can't seem to think unless I am writing and John can't think if he is writing so we are very different in that regard. Oh yeah...music too (I don't have it on all the time but use it as one of the aspects of the day for letting the words and music touch my heart, so I sit and actually listen rather than having it in the background)

I do find that it is helpful to structure the day somewhat so that I spend a good bit of time in the Word and in reading or listening to a sermon and journaling.

Prayer: This is simply ongoing. I like to approach the time with the idea that Jesus is with me so I talk to Him all the time.

What is very important is to remember that God is in charge of the time and that I need to listen to Him so He can direct me to linger in a certain passage or to be quiet and listen or to sleep or whatever. Often what happens is nothing like what I had hoped or expected.

Suggestions for a Personal Retreat

(adaptable for long or short time periods)

.....a few thoughts for a personal retreat: (from Janet Kilde)

No set schedule.....except to begin by spending some time praising and thanking God for who He is and what He has done. Could be verbal....could write in a notebook.

Invite the Holy Spirit to be my teacher during this time. There is a "Prayer for Freedom" in the back of the book "Captivating" by Joni Eldridge that I like to pray at least once a week.

Bring with minimal amount of food.....

BIBLE, Notebook, worship cd's (I personally love Michael W. Smith's live).....there are at least 2.

I've been very blessed this summer in memorizing scripture...I used to do a lot of it , but had gotten away from it. For me...it's easier to memorize a chapter or large section rather than individual verses and references. Ask the Lord to direct me to the passages of His choice....knowing what I will be facing in the future.

Psalm 32, 34 and 121 have blessed me this summer as well as Isaiah 55 and Psalm 130. I plan to start working on the prayers of Paul for his churches in the epistles....Ephesians 1:15-23, 3:14-21

If doing this for 2 days, I would bring along a couple of inspiring dvd's.....The Last Sin Eater by Francine Rivers.....Beyond the Gates of Splendor.....and on a lighter note.....The Redemption of Sarah Caine by Beverly Lewis.....these are also books.

Might bring with a Bible StudyI've been especially instructed and blessed by really any of Beth Moore's....

However, the primary time would be spent in the WORD.....praying back Scripture to the LORD.....writing prayers in a journal.....seeking specific verses for each family member to be praying over them for a season.

Sounds like a great couple of days to me.....no telephone, no tv.