

## CONNECTING WITH THE LOVER OF OUR SOUL EVERY DAY AND THROUGHOUT THE DAY

### SPENDING TIME ALONE WITH GOD

- **FOCUS ON BEING GOD-CENTERED.** No matter how you feel, God is always happy to spend time with you. Whatever is going on in your life, you can always discover something new about Him that is worthy of your honor and praise.
- **RESIST RELIGION:** we have to continually remember that this isn't about meeting some standard, but about fulfilling our destiny as the beloved of the Almighty God. Religion makes us feel good about ourselves and proud when we have quiet times or it makes us feel guilty and self-condemned when we miss. Relationship is about longing for all we were created for — delighting when God has given us grace to come to Him, and sad and needy when we've gone our own way instead.
- **EMBRACE YOUR WEAKNESSES HONESTLY:** God is attracted to weakness, not strength, to honesty, not hypocrisy. So come to Him as you are, admitting your need and knowing that He loves you passionately and already knows all your flaws. Be real, and He will meet you right where you are at..

### BOOKENDS: CONNECTING WITH GOD THROUGHOUT THE DAY

**UPON WAKING:** Before you do anything else, connect with the presence of God. Interact with Him about your night and about the day ahead of you. Give Him thanks for another day and offer Him all the parts of what you will be doing. Ask Him to make His presence real as He walks with you today.

**BEFORE YOU GO TO SLEEP:** Look back over your day and thank God for at least 5 things He gave you or did for you (even the air you are breathing counts!). Confess any areas where you've lived apart from Him and receive His forgiveness. Offer Him your night to do with as He wills.

## **FIVE MINUTE BOOKENDS (Recollective Prayer)**

### **MORNING: Upon Waking**

- Plan to spend your first conscious moments in communion with the Lord. If you wake up before your alarm or if you don't normally set one, quietly affirm that God is present with you as soon as you begin to stir, thanking Him that He has been here throughout your night. (If you wake up to an alarm, seek to quiet your mind first by taking a few deep breaths.)
- Spend a couple of moments acknowledging the beauty of Jesus, perhaps by focusing on one of His many names in Scripture. You may want to plan for this in advance by choosing one name to focus on for a week or more (see appendix for a list with Scriptures).
- Consider your time spent sleeping – did God speak in any way? Did you have a dream that may have spiritual significance? Pray about these things. (A good habit to get into is to write down dreams that might mean something as soon as you awake, even during the night, and then pray over them in the morning).
- Offer the Lord your day as you quietly ponder the plans you have. Seek His face for any words of guidance or encouragement. Listen for His voice.
- Thank God for all that He will do this day. Ask Him to make His presence known in and through you as you interact with others.

## **BOOKENDS PAGE 2**

### **EVENING:**

#### **Before Going to Sleep:**

- Praise God for the ways He has blessed you today. Try to name at least five things (these can be anything from food and drink to answers to specific prayers etc.)
- Look back over your day as you commune with the Lord. Ask Him to reveal any ways in which He worked in and through you, and thank Him for these. Then ask if there are occasions of sin or disobedience. If there are, receive His forgiveness and cleansing.
- Ask God to speak to you about those on your mind – your children, spouse, roommates – and pray for them accordingly.
- Offer your own sleeping hours to the Lord. Affirm that He is your protector, that He never slumbers or sleeps. Ask Him to speak to you even as you rest – in revelations or dreams. Ask God to enable you to awaken mindful of His presence.

## MEETING PLAN

### 6:00-6:45 Large Group Teaching

Part 1: Glory of God (Joe)

Part 2: Experiencing His glory (Tricia)

### 6:45-7:30 Manifest Presence Worship

### 7:30 – 8:15 Small Groups

Questions to Discuss:

Do you feel like you grew in intimacy with Christ through His Word this week? If so, how? If not, why not?

In what ways did you struggle to connect with Him? Which is harder for you – the ‘every day’ part or the ‘throughout the day’ part?

Where have you landed with the ministry covenant?  
(How’s that going?)

Listening Prayer for each other: “Lord, what do you want to say to encourage \_\_\_\_\_ in their journey of intimacy with You?”

Leaders: have them listen for a few minutes for each one, jotting their answers down. Then have them all share with each other and give the cards to the person prayed for.

### 8:15 – 8:30 Intimacy Assignment and Closing

JOE & JESSICA MUELLER

Vanessa Allbert  
Jonny Jacoub  
Molly Howat  
Jonathan Falconer

JERRY & ANGELA PRESLEY

Kylie Gowen  
Frank Fournier  
Erin Rozelle  
Sheri Griswold

KEVIN & LINDA JAHNKE

Kaleigh Goggins  
Wes Cornue  
Grace Hofseth

YALE KIM/VICKIE HICKS

Lauren Thompsen  
Paolo Fusco  
Bryan Hicks  
Wendi Paden

OTHER POSSIBLE:

Coy  
Mike Howat  
Raechelle