

God Time

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1

**Lesson 7****Focus:**

Being alone with God is important.

Lesson 7**Bible Basis:**

Mark 1:35-38; 6:46;
Luke 5:15-16; 6:12-13

Lesson 7**Memory Verse:**

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you. —Psalm 32:8

Your teens will discuss the importance of solitude in their lives, analyzing the elements of a healthy prayer life before understanding the things that are standing in the way of their isolation.

Materials:

Internet access

Open today's lesson by asking your class the following question:

➤ **Think about your life over the last few months. When was the last time you were truly alone for more than a few minutes?** (If your teens are like most young people, it's been a long time since they were really alone. Sure, there's time when there's no one physically with them, but because of smartphones we're always in contact with others.)

At any given time, you have the ability to reach out to hundreds of different people. You always know what your friends are thinking, and they always know what you're thinking because you're posting about it.

Most people would probably say that they use their phones a lot, but understanding exactly how much was, for a long time, pretty difficult to quantify. Certain smartphone software updates in recent years allow you to use built-in tools to track exactly how much time you're spending on your phone across different apps.

Ask a few volunteers to pull up Screen Time stats on their phone (Settings>Screen Time on iPhones) and share with the group their weekly total usage, number of pickups, and notification counts.

The average teenager in the U.S. spends 7 hours and 22 minutes per day using screens.

➤ **How do your numbers compare with the national averages? Do you wish they were lower, higher, or the same?**

According to 2024 Pew Research study, 39 percent of teens report taking intentional breaks from social media, and 36% of teens report taking intentional breaks from their smartphones.

➤ **Is this true in your own life? Do you wonder what life would be like without all of this connection?** (Accept all reasonable responses.)

Back in 1989, a man named Mauro Morandi's boat docked on Budelli Island off the northern coast of Sardinia, Italy. Discovering that the island's caretaker was retiring within the next two days, Mauro decided to extend his stay indefinitely. He stepped into the role himself. Mauro built a small, simple life for himself on the island, collecting rain for drinking water, and building solar panels for electricity. Living alone, his love for his island paradise ran deep, and he hoped to stay as long as his health allows it.

➤ **What do you think about this kind of lifestyle? What are the pros and cons of a life of isolation?** (Allow your students to speculate; there are no right or wrong answers here.)

Sadly, after over 30 years living alone on the island, Morandi was evicted in 2021. "The national park authorities argued that Morandi made changes to the building without the required permits. He moved to a small apartment on the island of La Maddalena, a popular tourist town with around 15,000 permanent residents..."

He still enjoys solitude and spends most of his days reading and sitting on his balcony, looking out at the sea. It may not have the peace and quiet of Budelli, but he realises the slightly larger Italian island is still a beautiful little slice of earth and that "things in life change... I've learnt to adapt. La Maddalena is my new home now, and it's okay."

➤ **If you had to live like this for many years, how do you think the experience would change you?** (Students might comment negatively or positively; positive comments might include slowing down and appreciating things they overlook now, a sense of calm or peace, being more thoughtful and finding new interests.)

➤ **What if someone in your life asked/required you to be truly alone whenever you wanted to be with them? Would you do it?**

God calls us to set aside time to be completely alone with Him. Let's explore why that's important and what that might look like.

Sources:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2024/03/11/how-teens-and-parents-approach-screen-time/>

<https://explodingtopics.com/blog/screen-time-for-teens>

<https://greatbigstory.com/mauro-morandi-budelli/>

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

Lesson 7 / January 12, 2025

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STEP 4 

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So far, we've looked at how God calls us to set aside time to be completely alone with Him, and let's say that you've successfully completed this task. You've turned off your devices, found a quiet space, and opened your Bible. Now what? What do we actually *do*, apart from nothing?

While the busyness of our lives can certainly make this first step—the step of actually finding time to be alone—challenging, the next step—what to do when we are alone—is equally difficult for many Christians.

➤ **This begs the question, are there any guidelines to follow for your time alone with God?** (Yes! There are hundreds of resources that can provide a framework for this quiet time and to close today's lesson, we'll work through one of them together.)

Display the following link with suggested ways to connect with God:

<https://www.billygraham.ca/stories/4-ways-to-connect-with-god/>

Have your students get in small groups and read through the suggestions out loud, commenting about things that have worked for them or asking questions about what each segment might look like when practically applied. Be sure to circulate among the groups during this time so that you are available should questions arise. Encourage your students to start small. They might try one new suggestion (from this list or their peers) in the coming week. When that seems comfortable, they can increase their time. But they shouldn't set themselves up for failure by attempting a lengthy period of time alone with God until they are used to the process.

Once your small groups have worked through this list, challenge them to pick a time each day that they can commit to alone time with God. Encourage them to make this time a priority above their other obligations, and to keep a journal to record things they spent time with God about each day.

Close in prayer.

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