

MEN'S MINISTRY

Servant Warrior Ministries™ **REAL • RADICAL • RELENTLESS • RELEVANT**

Proverbs 27:17

Quantity vs. Quality By: Jeff Searcy

Hello, March. The year is now in full swing. Shamrock fields are abloom. St Patrick, a true servant warrior in every respect, is on everyone's mind. And our schedules are jumbled, tight, hectic, and overwhelming. Guess what ... that's life. We all get 24 hours a day and will give account for how we use them. Paul tells us in Ephesians 5:15-17 to "Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish but understand what the Lord's will is." But in our "burning the candles at both ends" lifestyle ... when do we have time to hear what the Lord's will is for our lives? When do we have time to hear the Lord at all? Bottom line: In order to hear Him and recognize His prompting, we have to be with Him. And being with Him must extend beyond the few minutes we may have taken over the past few days to read our '5 Minute Bible.' More and more we are trying to squeeze God into our schedules rather than being open and receptive to His. God-moments and messages come when He deems it appropriate. If we are not alert and ready to hear Him when He speaks, we'll miss them.

Quiet time is defined as the time we spend in prayer and communication with our Heavenly Father. If we are truly honest with ourselves, quiet time is likely to better resemble the few minutes, when we can spare it or remember it, that we jam in between something we are likely late for or looking towards, to turn off the radio, TV, computer, or put down the iPhone and read a short devotional and/or a verse or two ... perhaps even throw some prayers upward (usually a want-list or requests for Him to change something or others) and then wait ever so (im)patiently for the Lord to answer us, in a clear and audible voice, of course, because we only have a few minutes left in the allotted "quiet time." For those times we grab a few quiet minutes in the car between appointments and/or in route to somewhere important, an audible response from God is certainly desirable or one via billboard, burning bush, or some mega-phenomenon/life changing and cataclysmic occurrence that somehow no one else sees but us ... but one that we can definitely pin our God-

focused lifestyle and/or directional change to so when someone asks, we have a really cool answer (reason) to share with them. That is not to say that I don't believe "Road to Damascus" experiences still occur. I believe they do. What I don't believe is that they occur when it fits nicely into a time slot or a schedule ... of ours.

I have heard more times than I can count that quality time is more important than quantity time. I could not disagree more with that statement and approach. The longer I am on this spinning rock, I am absolutely convinced, especially as a parent, that life cannot be scripted. We don't get the opportunity to dictate when our kids will say their first words, take their first step, get their first base hit, or say or do the coolest thing we have ever seen (which is daily, by the way). We have to be there when it happens. Life, as a whole, happens the same way. The greatest, most rewarding, fulfilling, exciting, unbelievable God-facilitated moments happen when we least expect them ... and experiencing them, you guessed it, requires us being there.

Ever heard the phrase "priming the pump?" I just love that saying and use it often when talking to groups and companies, both for-profit and not-for-profit ones, about selling, donor cultivation, relationship building, etc. In essence, you just have to keep pumping that lever over ... and over ... and over ... and over ... because you never know when the well is going to produce water. But, you had better be ready with a bucket when it does. It's no different with hearing God's subtle messages, realizing God-moments, and sensing His nudges. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17 we are told to "pray continually." I love the Message version of, "Pray all the time." While it says the same thing, there's just something about it I can relate to. Maybe it's that I can't hear a southern preacher saying, "Pray continually." But I sure can hear one saying, with a smooth southern drawl, "Pray all the **TIME**." You can hear it too, huh. Anyway, let me do a little translating of that verse. It doesn't mean kneeling at an altar or bowed with our hands together 24/7. I take it to simply mean that God wants us to talk with Him ... all the time. He wants us to maintain an open line of communication with Him. Important point: Communication is a two-way street. Even more important point: God gave us two ears and only one mouth, so we should ... yep ... listen twice as much as we speak. I know. I'm with you. It's really tough for me, too.

God doesn't need us to fulfill His perfect plan and will. But He wants the best for us and wants us to experience all that He has in store for our lives. If we choose to follow Him ... to listen to Him ... we are the ones who benefit and experience an awesome and exciting life fulfilled when we give it up and jump into the raging river of God's grace, love, and plan for our lives. It's amazing how, if we will simply stop fighting and go with it, that raging river's current will actually hold us above the surface and give us the ride of our lives. Until next time, keep it real ... and Armor Up! **PS**

Jeff Searcy is a highly-energized and radical husband, dad, executive, speaker, strategist, minister of opportunity, outspoken and motivated servant of the Almighty, and an average golfer. For more go to www.jeffsearcy.net.

