

Sermon Title: Time and Space for God

Reference Scripture: Mark 2:2-9

- **Introduction:**
 - Reflecting on President Bush's response to 9/11.
 - Traditional approaches to Lent: giving up or adding on activities.
- **Going 'Apart' with God:**
 - Jesus' practice of taking time apart for prayer and reflection.
 - Importance of creating space for God in our lives.
- **Prioritising Time for Prayer:**
 - Story of Saint Francis de Sales' advice on prayer amidst busyness.
 - Questioning our busyness and reevaluating priorities.
- **Understanding the Nature of Time:**
 - Time's flexibility and perception in different situations.
 - Importance of quality time over quantity in prayer.
- **Simple Acts of Devotion:**
 - Story of the French parish priest and the man in the church.
 - Emphasising the value of quiet contemplation in God's presence.
- **Lessons from Humble Examples:**
 - Example of Susanna Wesley finding time for prayer amidst a busy household.
 - Shifting focus from what we can do for God to what God might want to do with us.

Discussion Points / Points to Ponder:

1. How do you currently prioritise time for prayer and reflection in your daily life?
2. Reflect on a time when you felt overwhelmed with busyness. Could you have created more space for God in that situation?
3. Share experiences where a brief moment of prayer or reflection had a significant impact on your day.
4. Discuss the difference between giving the impression of having no time versus genuinely making time for others.
5. Consider practical ways to carve out moments of solitude and reflection amidst the noise and distractions of daily life.
6. Reflect on the examples of President Bush and Susanna Wesley. What lessons can we learn from their approaches to prayer and devotion?
7. As Lent approaches, how can we shift our focus from self-improvement to openness to God's work in our lives?
8. Discuss potential barriers to making time for God and strategies for overcoming them within your community or group.

Alternative Questions:

1. How does the story of President Bush's response to the 9/11 crisis relate to the concept of setting aside time for prayer and reflection, particularly during Lent?
2. Reflecting on traditional approaches to Lent, such as giving up or adding on activities, how effective do you find these practices in deepening your spiritual connection with God?
3. In the sermon, it's suggested that Lent can be a time to create space for God rather than simply adding more tasks to our schedules. How might you practically implement this idea in your own life during Lent?
4. The preacher talks about the importance of "quality time" with God rather than focusing solely on the quantity of time spent in prayer. How can we ensure that our time with God is meaningful and impactful?
5. The story of Susanna Wesley finding time for prayer amidst a busy household illustrates the significance of prioritising moments of solitude and reflection. How can we emulate her example in our own lives, especially in today's fast-paced world?
6. As Lent approaches, how might shifting our focus from what we can do for God to what God might want to do with us change our approach to the season? How can we actively create space for God to work in our lives during this time of reflection and preparation?