



Hi! How's your week been? Anything cool and exciting you'd like to share? Send me a text (916)300-8262 and I'd be happy to share it in the next lesson!

How often do you spend time with God? Do you read the Bible? How many times a week? How about prayer - how often do you pray to God? Do you find yourself praying only when you want something? Only when you are sad or upset? Happy or excited?

These are questions we should pay close attention to. When I was your age, I looked up to my leaders in my youth group and wanted to have a relationship with God like they did. They seemed to have it all together. They seemed to always point back to something in the Bible or something about God. Why? Because they read and studied the Bible and they prayed. So...I would spend time journaling and reading the book of James and Psalm too! Sometimes I'd even flip the Bible open and read whatever my finger landed on. I desired to be close to God. I wanted to be His friend, I wanted to hear Him, I wanted to be like Jesus to the people around me too. I found that as I opened the Bible and started reading, something would always stick out to me. Maybe it was a word or a verse I liked. I would write it down and doodle around it with all my different colored pens - not thinking much of it, other than trying to make my journal look pretty and cute. But as I look back, I realized I was spending time with God and He was with me during all that journaling and reading and praying. As years go on, your time with Him, or as I like to call it "quality time with God", may start to look different and that's okay. But something happens when we spend time with Him. Think of your best friend...do you guys like to hang out often? Do you like to talk to them? Do you share cool stuff with them? Do you think about them? The answer is probably yes to all... why? Because they are your FRIEND! Jesus is our friend too. Shouldn't we be doing the same? Hanging out with Him, talking to Him, thinking about Him? He is the ultimate friend because He is ALWAYS there for you. No matter what time of day, he is always there, listening and loving you.

I encourage you to open up your Bible. Make it a habit, maybe every morning when you wake up? Or every night before bed? Maybe in the afternoon? Focus on being friends with Jesus. Talk to Him about anything! Thank Him, ask Him for things, tell Him about your day! Whatever you want! It's so important to create a relationship with God. It all starts with making time for that.

Do you need help on what to read in the Bible? It's a big book so if you would like a little help on where to start let me know and I'd be happy to direct you.

*If you don't have a Bible, please let me know! I'll pick you up a special one just for you!

I'm grateful for each person who reads this and I pray it is encouraging and makes you excited to spend time with God today.

-Rilee Hodge