

GOD  
TIME



GOD  
TIME  
YOUR  
FIRST  
31  
DAYS

BRIAN WANGLER



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## DEDICATION

To my wife, Lindy, for all of her work in the Kingdom. For twenty-five years you have labored by my side in service to the One who redeemed us and I am grateful. Thank you Lindy for your life, your love, and three great children!

To my parents, Bill and Hilda Wangler, for instilling in me early on a passion for seeing people come to Christ. You believed and lived out the Gospel in such a way that I found my way home, and for that I am eternally grateful.





## GOD TIME: YOUR FIRST 31 DAYS

**GT** is a daily guide that will help you to establish a time with God in your life. It will acquaint or reacquaint you with the Word of God and introduce important biblical characters and themes that you will enjoy unpacking the rest of your life. Some basic guidelines include:

1. Select a time and place where you will daily spend fifteen to thirty minutes uninterrupted.
2. Secure a Bible, this devotional, and a pen to jot down ideas or things you need to talk to God about or that God has talked to you about.
3. Develop a process.
  - a. Start **GT** by asking God to open your eyes and heart to what He wants you to know each day. Give Him the most anxious thought in your mind, perhaps the last thing you thought about last night and the first thing you thought about this morning.
  - b. Use the table of contents in your Bible. Look up the Scripture for the day and read the text.
  - c. Read the Scripture slowly; make notes when a particular verse or word captures your attention.
  - d. Read the devotional for the day.

## GOD TIME: YOUR FIRST 31 DAYS

- e. In the space provided, briefly answer the questions at the end of each day's reading.

*What do I want to say to God today?*

*What is God saying to me today?*

These brief answers are for you so don't worry about how much or how little you write or about grammar or spelling concerns. Relax. These next thirty-one days are going to be exciting! Enjoy them. Your journey has begun. May God richly bless you as you begin your new life in Christ Jesus.

Because of His mercy (Titus 3:5),

Pastor Brian



## GOD TIME: YOUR FIRST 31 DAYS

### The Secret

*I met God in the morning  
When the day was at its best,  
And His Presence came like sunrise,  
Like a glory in my breast.*

*All day long the Presence lingered,  
All day long He stayed with me,  
And we sailed in perfect calmness  
O'er a very troubled sea.*

*Other ships were blown and battered,  
Other ships were sore distressed,  
But the winds that seemed to drive them,  
Brought to us a peace and rest.*

*Then I thought of other mornings,  
With a keen remorse of mind,  
When I too had loosed the moorings,  
With the Presence left behind.*

*So I think I know the secret,  
Learned from many a troubled way;  
You must seek Him in the morning  
If you want Him through the day!*

—Bishop Ralph Cushman  
*Pocketbook of Prayer, 1941*





## CONTENTS

God Time: Your First 31 Days . . . . .	vii
Frequently Asked Questions . . . . .	xv
Day 1: Born Again . . . . .	17
(John 3:1-16)	
Day 2: 15-31-3. . . . .	21
(Luke 15:1-31)	
Day 3: Got Questions? . . . . .	25
(Matthew 4:18-22)	
Day 4: Your Bible. . . . .	29
(Hebrews 4:12-13)	
Day 5: What Just Happened to Me? <i>Forgiven</i> . . . . .	33
(1 John 1:9; Psalm 103:11-12)	
Day 6: What Just Happened to Me? <i>Alive</i> . . . . .	37
(Ephesians 2:1-10)	
Day 7: What Just Happened to Me? <i>Justified</i> . . . . .	41
(Romans 3:21-26)	
Day 8: What Just Happened to Me? <i>Adopted</i> . . . . .	45
(Romans 8:15-17)	

Day 9: The Plan . . . . .	49
(Jeremiah 29:11-13)	
Day 10: From Now On . . . . .	53
(Luke 5:1-11)	
Day 11: Invited . . . . .	57
(Matthew 5:1-10; 2 Timothy 3:14-17)	
Day 12: Church: Why? . . . . .	61
(Matthew 16:13-20; Hebrews 10:19-25)	
Day 13: The Greatest Rescue Mission of All Time . . . . .	65
(Luke 19:1-10)	
Day 14: Blessed, Broken, and Given Away . . . . .	69
(Matthew 26:26-30; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)	
Day 15: Baptism . . . . .	73
(Matthew 3:13-17, 28:16-20; Acts 8:26-39)	
Day 16: Overhaul . . . . .	77
(2 Corinthians 5:17)	
Day 17: Who Started This? . . . . .	81
(Philippians 1:3-6)	
Day 18: Mysteries . . . . .	85
(Proverbs 16:11; 1 Corinthians 13:12)	
Day 19: Daniel's Decision . . . . .	89
(Daniel 1:1-17)	
Day 20: Nehemiah—Every Heart Has a Call! . . . . .	93
(Nehemiah 1:1-11, 2:12)	
Day 21: What if I Blow It? <i>Sin</i> . . . . .	97
(1 John 2:1-6)	
Day 22: The Holy Spirit . . . . .	101
(John 14:15-26, 16:5-15)	
Day 23: Sanctification . . . . .	105
(Romans 7:21-8:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)	

Day 24: Temptation . . . . .	109
(1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 4:15; James 1:2-4)	
Day 25: Jesus and Temptation . . . . .	113
(Matthew 4:1-11)	
Day 26: The 23rd Psalm <i>Verses 1-3</i> . . . . .	117
(Psalm 23)	
Day 27: The 23rd Psalm <i>Verses 4-6</i> . . . . .	121
(Psalm 23)	
Day 28: Faith . . . . .	125
(Mark 9:14-27; Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:1)	
Day 29: Prayer . . . . .	129
(Luke 11:1-4; Acts 12:1-18)	
Day 30: How Do I Know God Is Talking to Me? . . . . .	133
(John 10:1-5, 14:24)	
Day 31: Do Whatever He Tells You to Do . . . . .	137
(John 2:1-11)	





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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What if I have trouble reading?** You are not alone! Many people struggle early in their Christian journey with reading since it may or may not be something they have done a lot of in previous years. There are other ways of getting into the Word, such as audio Bibles. Be patient; it will come. If you need help, ask your pastor or a Christian friend.
2. **What time of day should I do devotions?** There is no wrong time to do devotions. As long as you are in the Word and looking to God, anytime is the best time. The important thing is to schedule thirty minutes into your day when you will focus on your relationship with God. Some prefer morning and others evening. Choose whatever works best for you.
3. **What if I miss a day?** Pick it up the next day and go on.
4. **What if I encounter something I don't understand?** You will; we all do. That's what is so special about a local church. When you encounter a difficult question, ask a pastor, a teacher or a Christian friend for help.
5. **What else can I do to further my walk with God?** The following are four important tools a church may provide early on to assist you in the journey:

## GOD TIME: YOUR FIRST 31 DAYS

- a. Sunday worship services are an important part of hearing the Word of God.
- b. Becoming a part of a Sunday school class that is for people who are starting out or starting over.
- c. Participation in a basic Bible study with a personal mentor has proven to be very valuable.
- d. Becoming a part of a small group is also a great way to continue to walk with God as you walk with others. Accountability and help are important as we go forward.





## BORN AGAIN

### **Read John 3:1-16.**

I've only played paintball once. Our youth group was going on an outing and I was invited. We separated into two teams and the games began.

Cautious, since many of these kids had played a lot more of this game than I had, I lay down behind a log and waited on an unsuspecting adolescent “enemy” to fall into my trap. About thirty seconds into the battle, I realized there was a better place to hide just a few feet away. Carefully, I lifted my head to make sure the coast was clear when, splat, someone shot me in the face. Luckily my mask took the hit; unluckily, the game was over for me.

I wanted a do-over. What ensued was pretty pitiful: a forty-something man yelling he wants a do-over. I was quickly informed the game wasn't played that way, and they proceeded to shoot me a few more times. Finally, I begrudgingly took my seat on the sidelines to wait for the next skirmish.

There was a man named Nicodemus who came to see Jesus. He came at night because he didn't want to tarnish his reputation by being seen with the young radical who was making waves in Jerusalem. Something about Jesus made Nicodemus want to get to know Him better. What Jesus said to Nicodemus that night changed Nicodemus; it also changed the world. A world made up of people who desperately

## GOD TIME: YOUR FIRST 31 DAYS

needed and wanted a do-over. The phrase “born again” was used for the first time that night.

When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we begin a process of transformation. All things become new. It is our spiritual birthday.

### **Happy Birthday!**

A friend of mine walked into my office just a few days after accepting Christ and handed me a cigar. With a smile on his face he said, “I’ve been born again and I’ve decided to celebrate.” I thanked him and placed the cigar in my desk drawer. He returned a few weeks later to apologize. Sheepishly, he said, “I didn’t realize Nazarene pastors aren’t supposed to smoke.” I told him I hadn’t smoked it, but wanted to keep it. He agreed to let me keep it if I promised not to smoke it. We laughed together celebrating his new life all over again.

I kept the cigar for a long time, but somewhere in a move I lost it. I regret losing it. Every time I opened my desk drawer and smelled the cigar, I was reminded of the amazing transformation God does in all of us. God is good. And by the way, ***Happy Birthday!*** Enjoy!

## BORN AGAIN

*What do I want to say to God today?*

*What is God saying to me today?*