

In the first few weeks of doing the 8 minute time of stillness, I was honestly struggling. I had no idea it was going to be this hard to just sit still for 8 minutes meditating on hearing God's voice. Whenever I look at my phone or social media, 30 minutes just seems to fly by, yet being still before God for 8 minutes felt like 8 hours. Looking back now, I realized how little time I really spent before the Lord. Guyon's book on "Experiencing God through prayers" really helped me a lot. One thing that really struck me when I was reading the book was when Guyon mentioned how when we go before God and wait for Him, He will hear us and lead us. It is not based on my efforts or hard work that God will hear me. Instead of relying on my efforts and hard work, just relying on God and waiting for God will allow God to lead my life a lot better than if I were to go before God through my own efforts and hard work.

She also talked about the inner voice. The voice of peace, which is from God. It only comes from silence and stillness and waiting on God. This was very hard for me in the beginning because enduring silence was something I struggled with a lot. First few minutes of course I can try to really focus on hearing God but after a few minutes, my mind starts to wonder. Suddenly things I forgot to do, things I need to do, or even things I can do all start to boggle my mind. I believe it's the enemy trying to distract me from really concentrating on hearing the voice of God.

Guyon believes it is not just experiences like spiritual signs or miracles that will grant us an intimate relationship with God. Rather, it's about abandoning what's really inside of our hearts and just coming before God with a pure and simple desire to want a relationship with Him. In other words, there are no techniques or methods to prayer. This helped me a lot because it reminded me it is not my effort that God looks at or

even my results. What He looks at is my heart and whether I truly desire a personal relationship with Him.

Though the first few weeks were difficult, as weeks went by, things started to be different. As I tried to really depend on God and wait for Him in silence, I really felt the Holy Spirit moving inside of me. There were no longer struggles or hardships but peace. I felt the peace of God upon me. I knew this was the moment God was waiting for. He wanted me to wait for His presence. Not by my efforts. But through the Holy Spirit. Though I couldn't see God, I knew He was there. I knew He was really listening to me. And as I started to pray, I felt tears coming out of my eyes. I didn't feel numb or bored anymore. I just felt a pang of pain in my heart. I felt like I was naked and vulnerable. And I knew before God, I couldn't hide anything. He knew everything yet He wanted me to express them and talk to Him. Though it was hard at first, I started to feel more free. Because I knew God knew. And I knew God was the God of comforter.

Though I cannot practice the 8 minute time of stillness everyday, everytime I do it, I really sense God is with me. There are times where I feel lazy but I know that it is not my will but God's will. He desires to spend this alone time with me. And even though at first the 8 minutes felt like 8 hours, now the 8 minutes seem like 8 seconds. As I spend more time in the presence of the Lord, I realized that time just flies. Because I enjoy being in His presence. I am not trying to just buy time but as I truly enjoy communicating with Him, I realize how fast time goes by. Just like how when you spend time with your friends or even on the phone, you have no idea how fast time flies.

As I started reading more of the book, I became curious about Guyon. So I researched about her because I was curious as to why she would write such a book. I

learned that like John Hus and Martin Luther of those days, Guyon also had the same intimate relationship with God. Yet, like them two, Guyon was also seen as a threat by the Catholic Church. Thus, she became a target and was locked up. I learned that most of her writings were written when she was in prison, like Paul the Apostle. That's when I realized how she was able to come up with this kind of writing. It was in prison she was able to really spend alone time with God and hear the voice of God. Just as her book influenced many of the greatest followers of Christ like John Wesley and Charles Spurgeon, so did her book influence my life as well.