

## Solitude & Silence (Part 3)

### The Benefits of Solitude

1. **Identity: Unmasking the False Self (Mark 1:12-13)**
2. **Deep Encouragement When Overwhelmed by Others' Needs and Brokenness (Mark 1:35)**
3. **Grieving & Healing (Matthew 14:1-12)**
4. **Rest & Rejuvenation (Mark 6:30-31)**
5. **Preparation and Guidance (Luke 6:12-13)**
6. **Overcoming Fear and Anxiety (Luke 22:39-44)**
7. **Building Endurance (Luke 5:15-16)**

### Practicing Solitude

#### 1. Solitude Doesn't Require Silence

Silence and solitude are complementary disciplines that aid our communion with God. But while silence almost always requires solitude, solitude does not necessarily require silence. We can use our time of solitude for prayer, verbal meditation on Scripture, singing psalms or hymns of praise or any other form of “noisy” activity. Solitude doesn't require either silence or a hushed solemnity.

#### 2. Solitude Requires Planning

Our lives tend to be filled with people and events, making it unlikely we'll accidentally stumble into solitude. Being alone with God requires planning. Choose a place where you can be intimate with God and free from distractions. This “special place” doesn't need to be special — it just needs to be a place where you can remove yourself from the world for as much time as needed.

#### 3. Solitude Requires Time

On most days the best we can do is to get away alone for a few minutes, or even an hour. We should cherish these times and guard them carefully. Yet while these solitary moments are necessary, they're hardly sufficient to meet our need for closeness with our Creator. Commit to finding creative ways to be alone with God for extended periods of solitude, ranging from a few hours to a few days.

#### Practical Examples of Solitude in Your Life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

#### Be Sure to Remember:

- Solitude Amplifies Other Disciplines (Prayer, Meditation, Worship, Fasting, etc.)
- Solitude is Not About Being Alone, but Being Alone with God.
- Solitude is Not Always About Comfort, Physical Rest, or Unplugging.
- Solitude Will Expose Your Idols (False Self, Addictions, Substitutes, Coping, etc.) – So, Don't Quit!

## The Spiritual Discipline of Silence

*It is difficult to find silence in an age of technology and information. Silence challenges our cultural addiction to amusement, words, music, advertising, noise, alarms, and voices. Silence asks for patience and waiting...and that makes us uncomfortable. So, when we come upon Silence, we cram it with something else we can learn, do, or achieve. We break the silence of travel with an iPod, the silence of the evening hours with the TV or computer...Every part of our life is inundated with words—urgent words, random words, trivial words, hurtful words, managing words, religious words...and in the midst of so many words it becomes difficult to know which messages are real and important.*

Adele Calhoun

*Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us*

- Silence is a regenerative practice of attending and listening to God in quiet, without interruption and noise. Silence provides freedom from speaking as well as from listening to words or music.
- The purpose of Silence is to free myself from the addiction to and distraction of noise, so I can be totally present to the LORD; open myself to God in the place beyond words.

**Habakkuk 2:20** “The Lord is in his holy Temple. Let all the earth be silent before him.”

### **Ecclesiastes 5:1-2**

Guard your steps as you go to the house of God, and approach to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know that they are doing evil. <sup>2</sup>Do not be quick with your mouth or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few.

### **Discuss the Significance of:**

**Revelation 8:1**

**1 Kings 19:9-12**

### **Practicing Silence**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3
- 4.