CULTURE OF DISCIPLINE

Silence & Solitude

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life: Silence & Solitude

"It may well be that the whole trouble in our lives is that we give God no opportunity to speak to us because we do not know how to be still and to listen; we give God no time to recharge us with spiritual energy and strength because there is no time when we wait upon Him. How can we shoulder life's burdens if we have no contact with Him who is the Lord of all good life?" –*William Barclay*

"In a noise-polluted world, it is even difficult to hear ourselves think let alone anyone try to be still and know God. Yet it seems essential for our spiritual life to seek some silence, no matter how busy we may be. Silence is not to be shunned as empty space, but to be befriended as fertile ground for intimacy with God." –*Susan Moto*

Biblical Proof for Silence and Solitude

- Jesus inaugurated His ministry by spending 40 days alone in the Desert (Mt. 4: 1-11)
- Before He chose the 12, He spent the entire night alone in the desert hills (Luke 6:12)
- When He received the news of John the Baptist's death, He "withdrew from there in a boat to a lonely place apart." (Matt. 14:13)
- After the miraculous feeding of the 5,000 Jesus "went up into the hills by Himself" (Matt. 14:23)
- Following a long night of work, "in the morning, a great while before day, He rose and went out to a lonely place" (Mark 1:35)
- When the 12 returned from a preaching and healing mission, Jesus instructed them, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place." (Mark 6:31)
- Following the healing of a leper, Jesus "withdrew to the wilderness and prayed." (Luke 5:16)
- With three disciples He sought out the silence of a lonely mountain as the stage for the Transfiguration (Matt. 17: 1-9)
- As He prepared for His highest and most holy work, Jesus sought the solitude of the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-46).

Notes:

Fear of Silence?:
"Silence strips us as nothing else does, throwing us upon the stark realities of our life. And in that quiet, what if there turns out to be very little to 'just us and God'?" –Dallas Willard

I Kings 19:1-18
- Vv. 1-4- The Curses
- Vv. 4-7- The Comfort
- Vv. 9-14- Confrontation from the Lord
- Vv. 15-17- Commissioning by the Lord
- V. 18- Correction by the Lord

"The fruit of Elijah's willingness to remain open to God in the midst of inner chaos created by self-knowledge was that he came to understand through experience that he was loved and valued just as much when he was alone, exhausted and not performing very well as he was when he was standing on a mountain top calling down the fire of God in front of heathen prophets and fickle followers."
-*Ruth Haley Barton, Invitation to Solitude and Silence*

Luke 10:38-42
- The Complaint by Martha (vv. 38-40)
- The diligent student (vv. 38-39)
- The dutiful servant (v. 40)
- The Counsel by Jesus (vv. 41-42)

Points to Ponder as we Prepare to Part/God-given fruit of Silence/Solitude...
- Being attentive to the voice of Jesus
- Cleanses our soul
- Having freedom from negative habits of speech
- Freedom from addictions to noise and sound
- Receiving quiet from the chaos and the noise in your life
- Having deeper intimacy with God
- Growing in self-awareness as the silence invites the subconscious to move into deeper levels of knowing.
- Developing increased listening skills
- Freedom form having to be occupied and stimulated

Notes: