



# SILENCE + SOLITUDE

**“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”**

Mark 1:35

“

Without solitude it is virtually impossible to live a spiritual life.

...We do not take the spiritual life seriously if we do not set aside some time to be with God and listen to him.

Henri Nouwen

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Truth be told, we live in a busy, distracted, digital world where some sort of noise is almost a constant. God is pursuing you, moving towards you, is with you, and wants you to be with him. Silence and solitude is where we can have this uninterrupted time with him.

In silence, you can sit in God's loving presence; in silence, you can rest in God. It may not always feel this way, but this does not mean nothing is happening.

Both silence and solitude make space in our souls, minds, and lives in general. The space they create gives room for the Lord to meet us in a particular way, and to do a deep work in us and then through us in our relationships with others. At first, silence and solitude is a training that can be difficult, but over time it may become a sweet and cherished space.

The point of your time in silence and solitude is to do nothing and to not try and make anything happen. In silence and solitude you cease to plan, entertain yourself, doing, etc. in order to be present to God who is with you. Longer times of solitude and silence, and rest, can be very fruitful.

Solitude refers to going to a place where you can be (mostly) alone for a given amount of time. Silence refers to a quiet place, not necessarily that you need to be silent the entire time.

## PRAYER & PRACTICE

### About 10 minutes:

Read Mark 1:35 & Luke 4:42. Then ask the Lord,

- *"Lord, why did Jesus often withdraw to places of solitude?" And, Lord, "what challenges could Jesus have faced when trying to be alone with you? Do I have similar challenges?"*

### About 10 minutes: Ask the Lord...

- *"Lord, what fears do I have about spending time in silence and solitude? How do I avoid silence?"*
- *"Lord, what is currently hindering my time in silence and solitude?"*
- *"Lord, who is in my community? Does my community really know me? Do I really know them?"*

### About 10 minutes: Ask the Lord...

*"Lord, what is a soft goal I can set for practicing silence & solitude?" How long? Where?"*

- Now, open your calendar and look at the next month.

**When:** what is a day you can set aside a longer period of time in solitude and silence?

**Where:** choose a place where you can be with the Lord and less distracted (park, beach, backyard, room in your house, etc.)

**How Long:** what is a reasonable time I can begin with practicing solitude & silence?

**Soft Goal:** what can I do now to help myself show up with an honest heart, ready to be with the Lord in this way?