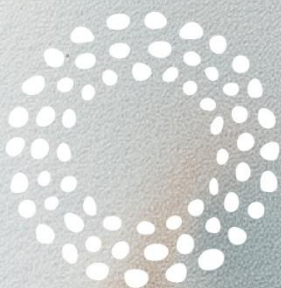


finding God in the quiet



Finding God in the Quiet

Rediscovering Solitude in a World Addicted to Noise

Introduction

When Silence Becomes Uncomfortable

Silence has become surprisingly difficult.

Stand in a checkout line and hands reach instinctively for phones. Sit in a waiting room and screens immediately appear. Drive somewhere alone and music, podcasts, news, or phone calls fill the space. Even the final moments before sleep are often occupied by glowing screens.

Modern life has become extraordinarily good at eliminating silence.

But perhaps the greatest problem is not simply the amount of noise surrounding life.

Perhaps it is what the noise prevents people from hearing.

Constant distraction can keep difficult emotions beneath the surface. Anxiety, fear, disappointment, regret, unanswered questions, and spiritual restlessness can remain hidden as long as another distraction is available.

Silence removes those escape routes.

And that is precisely why silence can become sacred.

Christian solitude is not isolation. It is not withdrawing from responsibility or rejecting relationships. It is intentionally stepping away from distraction in order to be alone with God. The two source messages emphasize this distinction repeatedly: Jesus withdrew not because His responsibilities were unimportant, but because communion with the Father prepared Him to fulfill those responsibilities faithfully.

Jesus modeled this rhythm in Mark's Gospel:

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he got up, went out, and made his way to a deserted place; and there he was

praying.”

—Mark 1:35 (CSB)

There were people waiting for Jesus.

There were sick people who needed healing. There were crowds wanting His attention. There were disciples looking for Him.

Yet Jesus withdrew.

That moment reveals something desperately needed in a distracted generation:

Sometimes the most productive thing a person can do is stop.

Solitude creates room to remember who God is, who His children are, and what truly matters.

The world is loud.

God invites His people into the quiet.

Chapter One

The Addiction to Distraction

Technology is an extraordinary tool.

It connects families across continents. It provides instant access to information. It allows people to work, communicate, learn, create, and accomplish things previous generations could scarcely imagine.

The problem is not necessarily the device.

The problem begins when distraction becomes a way of life.

Many people no longer consciously choose to reach for a screen. The movement has become instinctive. A few seconds of boredom appear, and the phone comes out. Silence arrives, and something must immediately fill it.

Gradually, the mind becomes accustomed to constant stimulation.

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And eventually, quiet begins to feel unnatural.

The danger is spiritual as well as emotional. Both source messages stress that removing distraction is necessary because attention is constantly being contested. If thirty seconds of silence becomes intolerable, sustained attention toward God becomes increasingly difficult.

Scripture offers another rhythm:

“Stop your fighting, and know that I am God, exalted among the nations, exalted on the earth.”

—*Psalms 46:10 (CSB)*

Knowing God requires more than collecting information about God.

Relationship requires attention.

Friendships cannot flourish when one person never listens.
Marriages cannot deepen when every conversation is interrupted.
Children cannot feel known when a parent's eyes constantly drift toward a screen.

The relationship with God deserves no less attention.

What Silence Reveals

There is another reason distraction is attractive.

Noise can keep people from confronting what is happening inside them.

When everything becomes quiet, thoughts surface.

Fear surfaces.

Anxiety surfaces.

Questions surface.

Pain surfaces.

The temptation is to turn the noise back on.

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But silence does not create these things. It often simply reveals what was already there.

And when those hidden places surface in God's presence, they can finally be surrendered to Him.

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns.”

—*Psalms 139:23 (CSB)*

Solitude is not escaping reality.

It is allowing God into reality.

Chapter Two

Jesus Chose the Quiet

Mark 1 describes an astonishingly demanding period in Jesus' ministry.

He taught in the synagogue. He confronted spiritual darkness. He healed Peter's mother-in-law. Then, as evening arrived, crowds gathered.

People needed Him.

Yet after this exhausting day, Jesus did something unexpected.

He withdrew.

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he got up, went out, and made his way to a deserted place; and there he was praying.”

—*Mark 1:35 (CSB)*

The disciples eventually found Him.

Their message was urgent:

Everyone was looking for Him.

The implication was obvious. There was more work to do.

Serve Like Jesus

Yet Jesus had already established the proper order.

Presence before productivity.

Communion before activity.

The Father before the crowd.

Jesus did not practice solitude because nothing needed to be done.

He practiced solitude while enormously important things needed to be done.

That changes the way busyness should be understood.

A crowded schedule is not necessarily evidence that there is no time for God.

It may be evidence that time with God is needed even more.

Solitude Clarifies Purpose

Something significant happens after Jesus prays.

He tells His disciples:

“Let’s go on to the neighboring villages so that I may preach there too. This is why I have come.”

—Mark 1:38 (CSB)

The crowd had one agenda.

Jesus understood His mission.

Solitude helped protect the difference.

Without spiritual clarity, urgent things can easily replace important things. Other people's expectations can become louder than God's direction.

Solitude restores perspective.

It reminds the heart:

Not every opportunity is an assignment.

Not every demand deserves a yes.

Not every voice deserves equal influence.

And not everything urgent is ultimately important.

The quiet place often becomes the place where purpose becomes clear again.

Chapter Three

Make Solitude a Priority

Most people do not accidentally discover an hour of unused time.

Schedules fill themselves.

There will always be another email, appointment, project, program, conversation, notification, household responsibility, or entertainment option.

That means solitude requires intentionality.

Jesus deliberately “got up” and “went out.”

He chose a time.

He chose a place.

He withdrew.

The goal is not to create a legalistic requirement about early mornings. Five o'clock is not inherently more spiritual than eight o'clock.

The principle is priority.

God deserves more than leftover attention.

Jesus also taught:

“But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret.”

—Matthew 6:6 (CSB)

This does not mean prayer can happen only behind a closed door. Scripture encourages continual prayer throughout life.

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Rather, Jesus identifies the value of undistracted communion.

There should be moments when nothing else is competing for attention.

Create a Sacred Rhythm

A practical rhythm can begin simply.

Choose a consistent time.

Choose a consistent place.

Remove unnecessary distractions.

Bring Scripture.

Then arrive without an agenda demanding that God perform.

Ten intentional minutes can become the beginning of a profoundly different way of living.

Consistency matters more than intensity.

Some days will feel meaningful.

Others may feel ordinary.

Both matter.

Relationships deepen through repeated presence, not merely dramatic experiences.

Solitude is not about finding spare time. It is about deciding what deserves time.

Chapter Four

Find a Place Free from Distraction

Environment affects attention.

Jesus went to a deserted place.

The location itself was not magical. Its value was that it removed Him from competing demands.

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Modern believers need their own version of the deserted place.

It might be a chair beside a window.

A porch.

A backyard bench.

A quiet office before everyone arrives.

A walking trail.

A kitchen table before the household wakes.

The important thing is creating an environment where attention can settle.

This may also mean leaving the phone somewhere else.

The phone is not inherently evil. It is a tool.

But it is an unusually powerful tool designed to compete for attention.

A Bible application can become a text message. The text leads to an email. The email leads to the news. The news leads to social media.

Twenty minutes later, the quiet place is no longer quiet.

Sometimes spiritual maturity looks remarkably practical:

Turn it off.

Leave it behind.

Open a physical Bible.

Sit down.

Be still.

Alone Is Not the Same as Lonely

Christian solitude must also be distinguished from loneliness.

Loneliness is the painful experience of disconnection.

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Solitude is intentional withdrawal for communion with God.

Healthy solitude should eventually make people more relational, not less.

Time with God prepares the heart to return to family with greater patience.

To work with greater clarity.

To difficult conversations with greater grace.

To ministry with greater dependence.

Jesus withdrew from people and then returned to people.

The quiet place was preparation for mission.

Solitude is not running away from life. It is learning how to return to life with God at the center.

Chapter Five

Learning to Live from the Inside Out

Much of life is reactive.

Someone criticizes, and anger rises.

Traffic slows, and frustration appears.

An email arrives, and anxiety takes over.

A child misbehaves, and impatience erupts.

Bad news comes, and fear begins writing tomorrow's story.

In those moments, external circumstances are determining internal conditions.

Life is being lived from the outside in.

Solitude begins reversing that pattern.

As attention settles upon God, His presence becomes the center from which life is approached.

Serve Like Jesus

Circumstances still happen.

Difficult people still exist.

Bad news still comes.

But reactions no longer have to be automatic.

There is room to respond.

“You will keep the mind that is dependent on you in perfect peace, for it is trusting in you.”

—Isaiah 26:3 (CSB)

Solitude creates space between what happens and how a believer responds.

That space can become holy ground.

Instead of immediate anger, there can be prayer.

Instead of panic, trust.

Instead of retaliation, wisdom.

Instead of impulsive words, silence.

This does not mean Christians never experience strong emotions. It means emotions no longer have to become masters.

God becomes the center.

When God Feels Silent

There will also be times when solitude feels remarkably uneventful.

No overwhelming emotion.

No extraordinary insight.

No dramatic answer.

Scripture may seem familiar rather than revolutionary.

Prayer may feel dry.

That does not mean the time has been wasted.

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Mature faith eventually learns to trust God's presence without requiring the emotional sensation of His presence.

Feelings change.

God's character does not.

There are certainly times when sin, exhaustion, grief, or unresolved struggles need attention. But there are also seasons when God deepens faith by teaching His children to trust what is true even when they do not feel something extraordinary.

God's presence is not measured by goosebumps.

Faith says, *God is here because He has promised to be here.*

Chapter Six

A Simple Rhythm for Meeting with God

Solitude does not require complicated techniques.

A simple pattern can help.

Be Still

Do not immediately begin with requests.

Sit quietly.

Breathe.

Remember who is present.

The goal is not to empty the mind but to direct attention toward God.

“Be silent before the LORD and wait expectantly for him.”

—Psalm 37:7 (CSB)

Listen

Open Scripture slowly.

Do not read merely to finish a chapter.

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Ask what the passage reveals about God.

What does it expose?

What does it promise?

What needs to change?

Jesus said:

“My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me.”

—John 10:27 (CSB)

God's Word provides the sure foundation for recognizing His truth and direction.

Speak Honestly

Prayer does not require impressive vocabulary.

God already knows what is hidden.

Bring gratitude.

Confess sin.

Express fear.

Name disappointment.

Ask for wisdom.

Pray for others.

Honest prayer is more valuable than impressive prayer.

Surrender

This may be the most difficult step.

Prayer easily becomes an attempt to persuade God to execute a preferred plan.

Surrender changes the posture.

Jesus modeled it perfectly in Gethsemane:

Serve Like Jesus

“Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

—*Matthew 26:39 (CSB)*

Surrender does not mean desires disappear.

It means desires are placed into better hands.

Chapter Seven

Carrying the Quiet Into a Noisy World

Eventually the quiet time ends.

The phone comes back on.

Children wake up.

Work begins.

Traffic returns.

Responsibilities remain.

But something can be different.

The person who entered the quiet does not have to return unchanged.

Jesus went to the deserted place and then returned to His mission.

That is the purpose of solitude.

Not escaping life.

Preparing for it.

The awareness of God's presence cultivated in silence can gradually accompany ordinary moments throughout the day.

Before entering a meeting: *Jesus, You are here.*

During a difficult conversation: *Jesus, give wisdom.*

While walking to the car: *Thank You for being present.*

When anxiety rises: *This belongs to You.*

Serve Like Jesus

When irritation appears: *Teach this heart to respond like Yours.*

Paul writes:

“Pray constantly.”

—1 Thessalonians 5:17 (CSB)

A daily period of solitude can train the heart for continual communion.

Empty moments no longer have to become scrolling moments.

They can become sacred moments.

The elevator.

The stoplight.

The parking lot.

The few minutes before an appointment.

Instead of immediately reaching for distraction, those moments can become invitations to remember:

God is here.

Conclusion

Jesus Is Enough

The deepest purpose of solitude is not becoming more disciplined.

It is not improving productivity.

It is not becoming calmer, more impressive, or more spiritual.

It is Jesus.

The Christian does not practice solitude to persuade a distant God to come closer.

Through Christ, the way to the Father has already been opened.

Jesus invites weary people to Himself:

Serve Like Jesus

“Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

—Matthew 11:28 (CSB)

Notice the invitation.

Not fix yourself and come.

Not become more disciplined and come.

Not eliminate every anxious thought and come.

Simply...Come.

The world says another distraction is needed.

Jesus offers His presence.

The world says every empty moment must be filled.

Jesus says there is something sacred about being still.

The world trains people to react to whatever demands their attention.

Jesus invites His followers to live from a deeper center.

That is why solitude matters.

It teaches the heart that silence does not have to be feared.

It teaches the mind that every thought does not have to be entertained.

It teaches the soul that every moment does not have to be filled.

And eventually, something beautiful happens.

Silence stops feeling empty.

Because it is discovered that the quiet was never empty at all.

God was there.

The invitation is remarkably simple.

Ten minutes.

Serve Like Jesus

A quiet place.

A Bible.

No phone.

No performance.

No pressure to manufacture a spiritual experience.

Be still.

Listen.

Pray.

Surrender.

When the mind wanders, gently return attention to Christ.

Then do it again tomorrow.

Over time, solitude becomes more than a discipline.

It becomes a place of friendship with God.

A place where anxiety can be surrendered.

A place where identity is remembered.

A place where priorities become clear.

A place where strength is renewed before returning to the world.

Servanthood teaches that being noticed is unnecessary.

Solitude teaches that constant distraction is unnecessary.

Submission teaches that being in control is unnecessary.

Simplicity teaches that having more is unnecessary.

Why?

Because beneath every spiritual discipline lies the same magnificent truth:

Jesus is enough.

And sometimes the soul needs enough silence to **remember it.**

Serve Like Jesus