



## Solitude and Silence ~ February 10, 2019

### OPEN

“Amid the confused restlessness of modern life, our wearied minds dream of simplicity” wrote Charles Wagner in 1895. Life has always been full of complexity. Our modern world just offers the “flavor of the day” in the age-old problem of finding a way to cut through all the clutter of life. Where can meaning, rest, and calm be found? Spiritual disciplines or practices provide us with both a proactive and restorative response to life’s complexity and clutter. One such practice is that of solitude and silence.

### DIG

#### What is the nature of solitude and silence?

Is the practice of solitude and silence dependent upon human effort? What did Paul say about his source of energy in Colossians 1:29?

Read Philippians 4:4-9 and consider how believers are invited into a place of calm by doing four intentional actions: ✓ rejoice in God ✓ release fears to God ✓ receive peace from God ✓ reorder thoughts around God

**Solitude** is the practice of setting aside human activity to appreciate the activity of God

**Silence** is the practice of setting aside the many voices to hear the one true voice of God

*Attention, all! See the marvels of God! He plants flowers and trees all over the earth, bans war from pole to pole, breaks all the weapons across his knee. “Step out of the traffic! Take a long, loving look at me, your High God, above politics, above everything.*

Psalm 46:10 MESSAGE

Christians should bear in mind two important considerations about the practice of solitude and silence...

1. Solitude and silence are not just about the **absence** of sound or people.
2. Solitude and silence in our experience may not be **absolute**

#### Why is there a need for solitude and silence?

Read the story of Elijah in I Kings 19:1-21. God showed Elijah by letting him see how divine energy is not always present in our noisy, crowded activity. Elijah experienced an intense season – God directed him to work in opposition to Ahab, King of Judah who “*did more to provoke the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before Him.*” (I Kings 16:33).

Chapter 17 - miraculous provision and healing

Chapter 18 - powerful confrontation and victory

Chapter 19 - experience of solitude and silence

What does the experience of Elijah teach us about silence and solitude?

- *We need solitude and silence to recover from the heat of spiritual battle*
- *We need solitude and silence to settle our hearts in when persecuted*
- *We need solitude and silence to discern the presence of God in our lives*
- *We need solitude and silence to prepare for a season of transition*

### REFLECT

Can you identify with the experience of Elijah in one or more of these areas?

What might help you in finding solitude and silence in your life?

- Place – it could be the public library or the Gold Creek trail.
- Activity – listen to music, journal, read, walk, sleep.
- Content – you can engage with something life-changing.

*Speak, Lord, in the stillness, speak your word to me  
Hushed my heart to listen in expectancy  
Speak, O gracious Master, in this quiet hour  
Let me see your face, Lord, feel your touch of power*

~ Emily M Crawford (1864 - 1927)

[listen to the music](#)

#### Some additional reading...

- Read about Brother Lawrence who “[practiced the presence of God](#)”
- Read the Navigator resource “[How to Spend Extended Time In Prayer](#)”