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**SILENCE AND SOLITUDE . . . “FOR THE PURPOSE OF GODLINESS”**

**Selected Texts**

“The word discipline has disappeared from our minds, our mouths, our pulpits, and our culture. We hardly know what discipline means in modern American society. And yet, there is no other way to attain godliness; discipline is the path to godliness” (Jay Adams). Many who profess Christ seem to live as though they believe Christian growth will occur automatically whether they do anything or not. But the only way to develop spiritually is made clear in the directive of 1 Timothy 4:7, “. . . discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” The classical methods of personal discipline which believers since biblical times have employed are collectively called the Spiritual Disciplines. Among the Disciplines which have been all but forgotten in our fast-paced modern society are silence and solitude.

## EXPLANATION OF SILENCE AND SOLITUDE

The Discipline of silence is the voluntary and temporary abstention from speaking so that certain spiritual goals might be sought. Sometimes silence is observed in order to read, write, pray, etc. Though there is no outward speaking, there are internal dialogues with self and with God. This can be called “outward silence.” Other times silence is maintained not only outwardly but also inwardly so that God’s voice might be heard more clearly. Solitude is the Spiritual Discipline of voluntarily and temporarily withdrawing to privacy for spiritual purposes. The period of solitude may last only a few minutes or for days. As with silence, solitude may be sought in order to participate without interruption in other Spiritual Disciplines, or just to be alone with God. These two are usually found together and complement fellowship.

## VALUABLE REASONS FOR SILENCE AND SOLITUDE

* 1. **To follow the example of Jesus (Mt. 4:1ff., 14:23; Mk. 1:35; Lk. 4:42)**
  2. **To hear the voice of God better (1 Kin. 19:11-13; Hab. 2:1; Gal. 1:17)**
  3. **To express worship to God (Hab. 2:20; Zeph. 1:7)**
  4. **To express faith in God (Ps. 62:1-2, 5-6; Isa. 30:15)**
  5. **To seek the salvation of the Lord (Lam. 3:25-29)**
  6. **To be physically and spiritually restored (Mk. 6:31)**
  7. **To regain a spiritual perspective (Lk. 1:20, 63-64)**
  8. **To seek the will of God (Lk. 6:12-13)**
  9. **To learn control of the tongue (Prov. 17:27-28; Eccl. 3:7b; Jas. 1:19, 3:2)**

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SILENCE AND SOLITUDE

1. **Consecrate the occasional “minute retreats” each day for silence and solitude.**
2. **Set a goal of having a time each day for outward silence and solitude with the Lord.**
3. **Try to get away for a few extended (half-day to overnight or longer) times yearly.**
4. **Locate special places which can be used for silence and solitude. Find them: within the home, within walking distance, within a few minutes’ drive, and for overnight or longer retreats.**
5. **Arrange a trade-off system of daily responsibilities with your spouse or a friend when necessary in order to have the freedom for extended times of silence and solitude.**

***MORE APPLICATION***

1. ***Will you seek for daily times silence and solitude?***
2. ***Will you seek for extended times of silence and solitude?***
3. ***Will you start now?***

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