

*A Night of Abiding:*  
SOLITUDE AND SILENCE

*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. - Jesus (John 15:4)*

The call of Jesus is one of abiding, drawing near to Him, and allowing intimacy and dependence to grow in Him as the relationship grows. Through Spiritual Rhythms such as celebration, the study of Scripture, prayer, and silence and solitude we are able to draw near to Jesus. As a biblical community, we can learn together how to draw near to Jesus in our personal relationship with Jesus and all together as a community.

Tonight, the challenge is to engage in the Rhythm of Solitude and Silence and see what the Spirit of God might reveal to you through the Scriptures and through the quiet.

## THE WHY

According to theologian Donald Whitney, there are many many biblical reasons to engage in these rhythms:

### **1 | Follow Jesus' Example**

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus regularly enters into times of solitude and silence with His Heavenly Father (Matthew 4:1, 14:23, Mark 1:35, Luke 4:42). Each time He drew near to His Father in intimacy and intentionality and that is a model worth following.

### **2 | Minimize Prayer Distraction**

Our world is filled with noise and busyness, even when we are alone it can take a detox period to quiet our minds from the flood of things waiting to be done or worried over, making prayer difficult to concentrate on. In times of solitude and silence, detoxification can take a while but the sweet moments with Jesus on the other side are worth killing the distractions.

### **3 | Be Physically and Spiritually Restored**

We were created to not just work, but to rest. We were created to spend time with our Creator. Our world values neither of those things. Instead, when we take time away to rest our minds, hearts, and bodies with Jesus we return to an essential part of what the human experience was meant to be.

### **4 | Regain a Spiritual Perspective**

Where we spend our time influences the direction of our souls. We live in a world of brokenness and beauty, but this world is no longer our home (1 Peter 2:11). When we spend time in silence and solitude we refocus our minds, hearts, and bodies toward our true purpose and our ultimate delight in Jesus.

## THE HOW

*Silence and solitude can be entered into while we are driving to work, at home in a quiet space, on a walk around the neighborhood, and anywhere else you can find moments throughout your day to quiet your mouth and your mind and draw near to Jesus. It can be at set moments sprinkled throughout the day, but it also can be an intentional time of a few hours, a whole day, or few days of silence and solitude.*

The only items on your packing list necessary for this journey are silence (*being in the midst of quiet*) and solitude (*doing so alone*).

The challenge for this moment will be 2 hours or so of Silence and Solitude and is a great monthly practice to embrace.

So, find a location that is quiet, alone, and allows you to either sit undisturbed or gives you the freedom to walk—whichever is more natural to you.

## A FEW ENCOURAGEMENTS

- 1 |** Don't Bring Technology. All of it is a distraction. Life can wait two hours.
- 2 |** Bring a physical Bible, a notebook, and a pen.
- 3 |** Before you enter into Silence and Solitude, create a Worry List (*see page 5*).
- 4 |** Divide up your time in the prompts on the next page in whatever way you are led as you pray. You don't have to set a timer.
- 5 |** Be gracious with yourself. Detoxification of your thoughts is tough and your thoughts might bounce around as you learn these rhythms.

## EXTENDED TIME OF SILENCE AND SOLITUDE

Below is a prompt that has served my relationship with Jesus well over the past few years, and my hope is that it would be an encouragement to you as well. Feel free to make whatever adjustments would be meaningful to you.

### 1 | Wait on the Lord

- a. Read Psalm 139 repeatedly and focus on realizing His presence
- b. Read Psalm 139 repeatedly and focusing on being cleansed
- c. Read Psalms 103, 111 and 145 repeatedly and focus on worshipping Him

### 2 | Pray for Others

- a. Ask specific things for them and write them down in your notebook
- b. Look up some of the prayers of Scripture and write them down
- c. Ask for other's what you are praying for yourself and write them down

### 3 | Pray for Yourself - Focus on the question, "Lord, what do you think of my life?"

- a. Pray for Guidance and Wisdom
- b. Pray for Growth in Godliness
- c. Pray for Richness in Abiding
- d. Pray for Concerns and Needs
  - i. Ask what promises of God do you hold onto?
  - ii. Pray over your schedule
  - iii. Pray over any problems or decisions in your life

### 4 | Answer the following questions in your notebook

- a. "Who are you, Lord?"  
*What facets of God's character do you need to be reminded of today?*
- b. "What shall I do, Lord?"  
*In response to who I know God to be, what is the response of my life being called to be?*

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