

## Meditation – Silence and Solitude - A study taken from Psalm 1

**Psalm 1:1**... Blessed *is* the man that **walketh not** in the counsel of the ungodly, **nor standeth** in the way of sinners, **nor sitteth** in the seat of the scornful.

Truly blessed –“oh the happiness of the person”

Seeing the godly person from a negative perspective... i/e .. what he does not do  
Negative commands are with us from the beginning in Eden.... “Thou shalt not”

It is inferred that Adam & Eve would be influenced or tempted by the attractiveness of the fruit. The attraction could be a negative influence & temptation, which it became.

We are all impacted and influenced by other people and things. We were not made to be loners or isolationists. “It is not good that man should be alone” We all need & desire influence from others. That influence can be good or bad.

- What or who are the major influencers in your life?
- What are the sinful influences that I am tempted to let sway me?

Illust of “stiff arming” What influences do I need to stiff arm?

- Old friends to a previous lifestyle, drugs, crude jokes, sexual immorality, being negative, criticism, suspicious attitudes, backbiting, or just being a spiritual rabble rouser?
  - \*\*\*\*\* **These are rampant among us....**
- TV shows (what, when, how much, why) internet addiction, pornography, sports, entertainment, stats...

### Progression of Psalm 1...

- **Illustrate letting air out of a balloon.** No one abandons God in an instant like an exploding balloon.
- Progression... Thoughts – Actions – Attitudes

The blessed man, the anointed person, the happy person will consciously decide to stiff arm sinful thinking, ways and attitudes.

### Positive Meditation - fill our minds and lives with Godly thoughts, actions and attitudes

**Illustration**---- of casting out a demon & not filling up the space results in a worse case.

Biblical meditation means that we empty our mind of sinful clutter & “sins that so easily beset us” & fill it with biblical truth.

- Sinfully angry --- don’t say “that’s just the way I am” think gracious thoughts toward them
- Lustful thoughts – don’t just say “no” pray for that persons soul, family & spiritual life
- Spend hours on TV, sports, whatever time waster.... Exercise, memorize scripture,

### We think about and do, what we love and are emotional about.

- What do you love most in your life? Don’t give the SS answer...
  - What do you desire to spend your time doing? Hunting, fishing, gym, car, motorcycle,
  - Thinking on those things repeatedly is a form of meditation. Do we do that on the things of God?
- \*\*\*\* Pray... ask God for grace to repent, to be broken and the grace to change and grow up spiritually.

## Building a Healthy Spirit Filled Life

Tim Grover, Sports Illustrated Online said this about Michael Jordan, arguably the best BB player to date. *“Michael Jordan was relentless about consciously developing new aspects of his game. **He’d start by himself, one-on-zero**, working on something different. Then he’d use it against Others in the gym. Then in an actual practice, and finally, he’d unleash it in competition. By then he’d worked on it so intensely—over and over and over—until it became so natural and instinctive he didn’t have to think about it. Prepare, learn, study, perform. The ability to jump high or dunk a ball is meaningless if you can’t do anything else.”*

Spiritual health begins in solitude. One person - alone with God.

**“Meditation is the skeleton key that unlocks the greatest storeroom in the house of God’s provisions for the Christian.”** Unknown

Meditation... by its nature, implicates and involves 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. Three brief thoughts before proceeding in depth.

Western culture conditions us to be comfortable with noise and crowds, not with silence and solitude. In her book, *Living the Christ-centered Life Between Walden and the Whirlwind*, Jean Fleming observes, "We live in a noisy, busy world. Silence and solitude are not twentieth-century words. They fit the era of Victorian lace, high-button shoes, and kerosene lamps better than our age of television, video arcades, and joggers wired with earphones. We have become a people with an aversion to quiet and an uneasiness with being alone." Therefore be careful not to let the world prejudice you against the Biblical witness on these matters. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Matthew 11:15).

**Why would you agree or disagree with Fleming’s statement?** *“We have become a people with an aversion to quiet and an uneasiness with being alone.”*

## Values in practicing Silence and Solitude

1. To follow the example of Christ... Mt. 4:1; Mt. 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 4:42
2. To hear the voice of God – Elijah on Mt. Horeb - Habakkuk – 2:1 Paul in Arabia Gal. 1:17
3. To express worship to God - Hab 2:20 “ Wordless worship”
4. To express faith in God
5. To seek the salvation of the Lord
6. To be physically and spiritually restored Mark 6:31
7. To regain a spiritual perspective Luke 1:20 and then Luke 1:63-64
8. To seek the will of God Luke 6:12-13 (Jesus choosing the 12)

## Quotes:

“It takes a great man to be a good listener.” — [Calvin Coolidge](#)

“Most of the successful people I’ve known are the ones who do more listening than talking.” [Bernard M. Baruch](#)

“There's a lot of difference between listening and hearing.” — [G.K. Chesterton](#)

“You're short on ears and long on mouth.” — [John Wayne](#)

“The word 'listen' contains the same letters as the word 'silent'.” — [Alfred Brendel](#)

“It takes two to speak the truth - one to speak and another to hear.” — [Henry David Thoreau](#)

“Friends are those rare people who ask how we are, and then wait to hear the answer.” — [Ed Cunningham](#)

**John 10:27**... “My sheep hear my voice” Hearing requires silence.

516 Verses tell us to hear

188 tell us to listen

92 “The word of the Lord came”

**Richard Foster in “Celebration of Discipline” offers a few ‘Steps into Solitude’.**

- Take advantage of the “little solitudes” that occur during our day. Upon awakening, sipping coffee in the morning, commute to work, join hands and be silent rather than a vocal prayer over a meal, step outside just before retiring for the night, silent games in the car.
- Find or develop a “quiet place” designed for silence and solitude
  - A closet in the house, a small outbuilding, a special chair, corner of the garage, park, church,
  - I would love to have 5-6 such places around the state for FWB people to go
- Practice using fewer words... Become known as a people who have something to say when we speak.
- Live an entire day without using words.
- Four or five times per year retreat for 4-6 hours for the purpose of reorienting and evaluating life goals and objectives.

Joel Comiskey says that as we listen to God in silence we need to learn some things about how God deals with us, contrasted with what Satan does.

### God’s Voice

- Accompanied with peace
- Gentle Wisdom
- Freedom
- Power to accomplish the task

### Satan’s Voice

- Accompanied with fear
- Confusion
- Pressure
- Guilt because of difficulty of task

## LISTENING

Mt. 13:9.... **Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

### Solitude involves listening

It is impossible to listen without silence. We listen to the silence and beyond the silence. Silence is uncomfortable. As we get alone and become silent we learn to hear the voice of God, Not an audible voice but His gentle whisper, promptings, nudges.

### Three Daily Practices

- Spend 2-3 minutes each day in silence. Listen for God, wisdom, word
- Reflect on what God has said. Respond to God
- Presence – enjoy being in God’s presence
- Avoid the noise of TV, music, activity,
- Be still & be silent

### \*\*\*Be humble about what God speaks to you...

**Illust.** Wrong – “God spoke to me and showed me that” “The word of the Lord came to me and said”  
Right - “I feel that the Lord is impressing me that” “I sense that God is leading me to...”

**Meditation** is a combination of reviewing, repeating, reflecting, thinking, analyzing, feeling and even enjoying. It is a physical, intellectual and emotional activity—it involves our whole being.

There are many ways to meditate on God’s Word. Some possibilities include:

1. Take time to read a verse or passage over and over.
2. Begin to memorize all or part of it.
3. Listen—quiet your heart to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through God’s Word.
4. Consider how it fits with the rest of the Bible and life in general.
5. Become emotionally involved—allow yourself to feel what God feels, his desires expressed through his words.
6. Move from meditation to application—connect your thoughts to action. Consider how the truth and power of the Word of God should affect your behavior. (*biblegateway.com*)

**Bob Sorge:** *“Things don’t change when I talk to God; things change when God talks to me. When I talk, nothing happens; when God talks, the universe comes into existence. So the power of prayer is found, not in convincing God of my agenda, but in waiting upon Him to hear His agenda.”*