



STONEBRIDGE  
CHURCH

## StoneBridge Church Small Group Resource: Enjoying God through Silence & Solitude

Often in the gospels, we see Jesus stepping away from the work and responsibilities in his life to get away to a quiet place to pray and be with God (Mark 1:35). Jesus needed this time to be with God for the rest and rejuvenation that only God can give. Jesus lived by integrating God into all parts of his life. He showed us not what we can get from practicing spiritual disciplines such as silence and solitude, but how practicing spiritual disciplines is accepting God's invitation to join the rhythm and cadence of walking in step with and simply being with God.

To be with God means we become available to Him, and the discipline of silence and solitude is perhaps the greatest antithesis to our American culture.

Where the world yells, *"Prove Yourself! Earn your keep! You're only worth what you can do for me!"*, God's Spirit whispers, *"Come away with me, learn to be with me, and in my presence, you will be fully known by the living God."*

In His presence our Father in heaven shows us what He thinks about us, what value and worth He has given us, and we learn to see ourselves how God sees us.

The key is in pulling away from everything that fills our heart and mind so that He can do the heart, mind, and soul work that only He can do.

### *Helpful tips for Silence & Solitude*

Just like anything else you prioritize in your life, schedule a time and place that you can spend practicing silence and solitude. Make it realistic. Whether this is the first 5 minutes early in the morning in your living room, a half hour break from work in a spare room, or a longer part of the day outside at a park, ***schedule a time and place to be alone and quiet with God.***

### *When your mind begins to drift...*

- Know that our minds are always processing information, and it takes time and practice to still our minds. It is natural for us to drift in thought.
- Give the thoughts, concerns, fears, and worries that come to your mind over to God. This is time set aside for you to be with God so anything that comes into your mind, give back to him.

### *When the urge to do something (anything) comes up...*

- *Remember you do not have to do anything to earn God's love. This discipline gives us the opportunity to practice that reality.*
- *"God, give me the patience to stay in your presence, to stay with you"*
- *"God, you are the vine, I am the branches, help me to remain in you."(John 15:5)*

*Give yourself grace, it will take time to develop so start with a short time (5 minutes) and if you want to, practice spending longer time periods being with Him quietly and alone. This will look different for every person.*

For me in the season of young kids and graduate school, 30 minutes looks like a long period, and I'll spend this time sitting down in a room that I have to myself. I breathe deeply, "God, I want to be with you in this time." I don't set an alarm, instead I sit being present with God. I end the time without feeling like I should sit longer. Instead, I thank God for doing the heart, mind, and soul work that only He can do. It's a simple discipline because the power is in letting God do the real work within us and over time, we will see transformation in our lives.

You may have more time you want to spend in silence and solitude than me and that's great too. He's not looking for who can sit with Him the longest, **He just loves when His children come to sit at His feet.**

My hope is that you will enjoy being with the Lord, being rejuvenated and spiritually full of His presence when you spend time with Him. Don't look for just a feeling or only a word from God. Though He may show his presence in these ways, know that He is at work in our hearts, minds, and souls even when we are unsure what He is doing. Give Him space and time to transform your heart, because I know He will when we pull away and be with Him.