



B3-C05-S02

Solitude and Stillness Learning to Hear God Clearly

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Solitude

We tend to associate seasons of solitude with loneliness, isolation, and even hopelessness. So, it's no wonder that when Christ calls us away to spend time alone, we often resist the call. But when at last we answer, we're surprised to find that the solitude Christ wants for us is not a futile exercise in loneliness but rather a life-giving practice that enriches our hearts with the powerful gifts of clarity, cleansing, and strength.

Matthew 6:6 (KJV) But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

Christ was not commanding privacy for its own sake but obedience that is unseen by men and fully open before God. He taught that the power of prayer is not found in the public display but in the private surrender, where the heart becomes honest before the Father. Every secret moment with God builds visible strength in the open. True solitude trains the soul to depend on heaven rather than human approval.

Solitude, the state of being alone, is often considered one of the traditional spiritual disciplines. Many times, it is associated with silence. The idea is to be alone with YHWH, to pray, to meditate on His Word, and to simply enjoy His presence. Some people use solitude as a way to distance themselves from people and the distractions of the world, acknowledge the interior of their hearts, and hear YHWH speak. Being alone can also be used as a time of rest and refreshment.

The Gospel certainly supports the benefit of solitude. **Psalm 46:10 (KJV)** still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

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Solitude is not escape but encounter. It teaches us the rest described in **Isaiah 30:15**, which says, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." In stillness, the noise of fear and ambition fades, and we begin to recognize the presence that never left us.

Habakkuk 2:1 calls every believer to stand watch and wait for God's instruction, not to imagine it but to hear it through obedience.

We see examples of God's people practicing solitude in the Bible. For instance, Moses met regularly with the Lord at the tabernacle (**Exodus 33:7, 11**).

YHWH spoke with Elijah (**1 Kings 19**) and Jacob (**Genesis 32:24–32**) while these men were alone. The best example is Christ, who "often withdrew to lonely places and prayed" (**Luke 5:16**). "Christ" (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach), the only begotten Son of YHWH, spent time alone with His Father. We see Him seeking out solitude after performing miracles (**Mark 1:35**), in times of grief (**Matthew 14:13**), before choosing the twelve apostles (**Luke 6:12–13**), in His distress in Gethsemane (**Luke 22:39–44**), and at other times. Solitude was a consistent practice in Christ's life.

"Christ" (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach) often invited His disciples to share times of group solitude with Him. Sometimes because they were so busy, they did not even have time to eat, He would say to them, 'Come with me to a quiet place and get some rest'. So, they would go away by themselves, sometimes even on boat to a solitary place. **Mark 6:31–32 (KJV)** And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. **32** And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

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The Clarity of Solitude

There are some things you cannot know except through stillness, like the glory of a flower, the calming music of the surf upon the sand, or the deep beauty of His infinite power in your heart. We might be conscious of YHWH while rushing about in our typical flurry of busyness and demands, but it's only as we willingly step into seasons of stillness and solitude that we truly come to understand who He is.

To know Him truly requires a quiet space and attentive focus - a willingness to watch and listen until the revelation comes. **Psalm 123:2 (KJV)** Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us. Some of His most beautiful gifts come only through stillness.

The stillness of solitude brings clarity to more than just our knowledge of YHWH. It also awakens our awareness of our own hearts. And that's perhaps why we avoid it. We run from solitude to the degree that we run from ourselves. For solitude opens the window to your soul and releases all that has been quietly sealed up and hidden away inside. We fear what might be there, lurking in the dark, hidden by our busy lives—sorrow, loneliness, desperation, grief, and weariness. But we do not understand that YHWH's call to solitude is not a call to go off by ourselves to face our struggles alone. It's the call to come away with Him, so that He can minister to our souls and give us the healing gift of Himself.

False Solitude

Not every silence is holy. The world now calls isolation “self-care,” but solitude apart from YHWH's Word only deepens the self we are called to crucify. When the mind seeks relief without repentance, it enters the silence of deception, not the stillness of revelation. True solitude begins with surrender. It does not seek peace apart from the cross but through it. It is the place where self-dies and the Spirit speaks.

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Matthew 11:28-29 (KJV) Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

When was the last time you went off alone to sit in stillness before the Lord—with no agenda at all other than to watch and listen for what He wants to reveal?

Schedule a few hours this week and disappear from your life.

Find a beautiful place and let yourself be silent before Him.

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The Cleansing of Solitude

What was it that compelled “Christ” (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach) to spend so much time alone? What was the hunger that drove Him to solitude? You will notice that on many occasions, He withdrew to lonely places when He was weary or when people began to press Him.

Mark 6:31-46 (KJV) And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. **32** And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. **33** And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. **34** And “Christ” (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach), when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. **35** And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: **36** Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. **37** He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? **38** He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. **39** And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. **40** And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. **41** And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. **42** And they did all eat and were filled. **43** And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. **44** And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men. **45** And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. **46** And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

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John 6:14-15 (KJV) Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that “Christ” (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach) did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. 15 When “Christ” (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach) therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

We all need times of cleansing and refreshing seasons in which we get away from the pressures and burdens that the world continually tries to lay upon our souls. We need to reconnect with what’s most true and real about whom we are in the world and who YHWH is in our lives.

For “Christ” (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach), these solitary escapes were a regular and frequent part of His life. How much more, then, they should be for us. Surely the responsibilities of our lives are not more vitally important than His were. He was responsible for the salvation of the world. And yet He made the time for solitude because He knew it was critical to the success of His calling.

How would your life be different if you could escape from the world one full day out of each month and refresh your soul in solitude with our heavenly Father? What do you imagine would change? What would have to change to allow that time to happen?

Reflect and Apply:

- What burden have you carried so long that it has shaped your identity?
- When did you last silence every voice, including your own, to let the Father speak first?
- Choose one morning or evening this week to turn off every device and remain in quiet for one hour, speaking nothing but “Your servant is listening.”

“Christ” (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach) has provided an example to follow. He has issued the invitation. What will it take for you to say yes?

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The Power of Solitude

Solitude creates spiritual sustenance. It gives us much needed time to meditates and reflect. It's our opportunity for long ignored thoughts and feelings to emerge. It's a chance to quietly acknowledge silent fears that linger below the surface, that weaken our emotional and spiritual foundations. Reflective, thoughtful time on our own can surface the understanding of YHWS promises of a better future. It can support the knowledge and understanding YHWH has given us, by opening our mind so we can visualize and live His Gospel. It will encourage us to continue the hard work by expanding our spiritual horizons through understanding. Something we can't do while in the business and noise of this dying world.

The experience of **purposeful** solitude reconnects us with ourselves and YHWH. It brings clarity to our minds and refreshment to our spirit. Anyone who pursues solitude—even for a short season—will experience this. But for those who embrace the practice of solitude as a regular discipline in their lives, there's a deeper and more powerful gift to be received.

For those who make solitude a habit, the discipline becomes more than merely something you do. Solitude becomes a time for meditation and a place you go - a sacred space set apart from the world and reserved for you and YHWH alone. Like Moses in the tent of meeting, our solitude becomes a private, holy place of intimacy with YHWH. And as with Moses, it brings not only clarity and refreshment to our spirit but also transformation and power.

The practice of regular solitude with YHWH changes us. We come to know that we're loved in a way we never imagined. We see not only who He is and who we are but also who we're becoming because of Him. Through the spiritual closeness of solitude, we come to bear the power and love of YHWH within ourselves in a way that no other means can accomplish. Rather than using solitude as a means to escape the world, it becomes the means by which the kingdom of YHWH is brought into the world. For we become the vessels through which His power and glory are expressed.

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Elijah learned this truth when he fled to the mountain in fear. The wind tore the rocks, the earthquake shook the ground, and fire passed before him, yet God was not in them. Only in the still small voice did he hear the truth that restored his courage (**1 Kings 19:11-13**). Solitude trains the ear to recognize God's whisper above every storm around it. It is not meant to remove us from the world but to send us back with revelation.

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Meditation

Strong's Definition: reflection; by extension devotion.

Strong's Definition: to {ponder} that {is} (by implication) converse (with {oneself} and hence aloud) or (transitively) utter.

Strong's Definition: to murmur (in pleasure or anger); by implication to ponder.

“Meditation” is another word people often use about prayer. But Christian meditation must not be confused with yoga, Eastern meditation, or transcendental meditation. For unlike these disciplines, Christian meditation has nothing to do with emptying our minds. Christian meditation engages every part of us-our mind, our emotions, our imagination our creativity and, supremely, our will. Our bodies, mind and soul are involved in meditation.

“Meditation is a piece of straight thinking under YHWH’s guidance”.

We meditate to give YHWHs’ words the opportunity to penetrate, not just our minds, but our emotions-the places where we hurt-and our will-the place where we make choices and decisions. We meditate to encounter the Living Word, “Christ” (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach) Himself. We meditate so that every part of our being, our thoughts and our affections and our ambitions, are turned to face and honor and glorify YHWH. Yet another reason for learning to meditate is so that we may become conversant with the will of our creator.

Psalms 4:4 (KJV) Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

Psalms 46:10 (KJV) Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

Psalms 84:4 (KJV) Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

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Ps 119:48 (KJV) My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

Psalms 119:148 (KJV) Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

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How to Meditate

The English word “meditation” may be variously translated by words like muttering and murmuring, reflecting, and recollecting, musing, and pondering. With these hidden meanings in mind, it becomes apparent that “Christ” (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach) meditated on the Scriptures.

The best way to prepare to meditate is to respond to the invitation YHWH gives us. **Psalm 46:10 (KJV) Be still and know that I am God.**

In the stillness we can shed some of the pressures which would prevent us receiving YHWH’s Word into the innermost core of our being. We can focus away from the mundane and the everyday busyness and onto YHWH. Such stillness is to Bible studying what preparing the soil is to good farming. Essential for fruitfulness.

In the Bible, one of the Hebrew words for “meditate” is ‘hagah’ (הָגָה). “Hagah” is used around 25 times in the Old Testament and it is translated as “meditate”.

According to Strong’s, “hagah” means to moan, growl, utter, speak, muse. So, in Hebrew, there’s a verbal and a mental aspect to meditation. It’s about pondering and thinking but it’s also about saying and groaning.

Biblical meditation involves more than silent prayer.

Perhaps you’re more used to praying alone and in your head. That may be fine in prayer, but that’s not meditation. The ancient Jews were not so concerned about quietness in meditation. As you’re considering how to mediate, keep in mind meditation includes both contemplative and verbal aspects. **Psalms 19:14 (KJV) Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.**

One of the reasons and or results about meditation is that it allows us to replace indoctrination lies with biblical truth. It allows us to reflect and accept that we need correction in certain areas of our life.

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Part of the reason we struggle is we believe lies the enemy tells us. Satan is always changing the truth of the gospel but will also tell us something about our value, something about our security, or something about our future that simply isn't true. And we internalize it and worry about a fabrication. As disciples, we are not immune to the enemy's attacks.

But we do have plenty of resources to fight back.

One helpful way to fight back is to replace the lies of the enemy with YHWH's truth is by studying and then meditating on a relevant passage.

YHWH knows you. He knows your situation and has a storehouse of truth available to the seeking disciple in His word. Whatever you're struggling with – anxiety, marriage issues, singleness, lust, dishonesty, or something else – His word addresses it.

Psalms 143:5 (KJV) I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

Psalms 5:1 (KJV) Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.

Psalms 5:1 (KJV) Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.

Psalms 19:14 (KJV) Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Psalms 49:3 (KJV) My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

Psalms 104:34 (KJV) My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.

Psalms 119:97 (KJV) O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Psalms 119:99 (KJV) I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.

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Contemplation:

“Meditation and contemplation” are often used interchangeably. This is understandable because certain similarities suggest that the two forms of prayer are synonymous. Like meditation, contemplation involves putting ourselves into the hands of YHWH so that He can change us and transform our attitudes, perceptions, and behavior. Like meditation, contemplation involves listening intently to the Word of YHWH. And like meditation, contemplation requires stillness in order that we may open ourselves to YHWH and His penetrating, powerful Word.

But meditation and contemplation are also marked by certain differences so they should not be confused with each other.

Contemplation is nothing else but the perfection of love. Or as others have defined it, contemplation is the prayer of loving regard, the prayer of loving attentiveness, the art of paying rapt and loving attention to YHWH and His world. Contemplation is about growing in love.

Contemplation is to know and love YHWH perfectly in the depths of your being. And to love YHWH is to be obedient to His commandments. So as we understand this, we study, meditate and contemplate on His precepts, finding truth and understanding while adapting it into our lives.

Contemplation goes further and deeper than meditation. While the person meditating mutters and muses on YHWH's word, the contemplative pays silent attention to “Christ” (יהושוע) Jehoshua Hamashiach), as the living Word on which is central to our prayer. Contemplation goes beyond words and symbols and concepts to the reality words and concepts describe.

There are so many believers who do not realize the amount of possibilities YHWH has placed in the life of protection, for joy in the knowledge and love of Him.

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There are so many believers who have practically no idea of the immense love of YHWH for them, and the knowledge that there is always more to what is preached at the pulpit.

Contemplation is the work of the Holy Ghost acting on our souls through His gifts of Wisdom and Understanding with special intensity to increase and perfect out love for YHWH. These gifts are part of the normal equipment of Discipleship. We are given all in Baptism, and if we are given it is because YHWH wants us to be established and devoted. Our growth will always remain the gift of YHWH and at the same time He measures His gifts by our desire to receive them, and by our obedience toward Him.

Most believers willfully remain at a distance from YHWH, by confining their interior life to a few routine exercises of piety and a few external acts of worship and service performed as a matter of duty. Such people are usually careful to avoid sin.

They respect YHWH as a type of Lord and Master. But their heart does not belong to Him.

They are not really interested in Him, except in order to insure themselves against losing heaven and going to hell.

In actual practice, their minds and hearts are taken up with their own ambitions and troubles and comforts and pleasures and all their worldly interests and anxieties and fears.

YHWH is only invited to enter this charmed circle to smooth out difficulties and to dispense rewards.

Little do this type of people know that we all deserve hell but heaven has not been attained because of the lack of Godly knowledge.

Godly knowledge and Godly understanding is what separates a true disciple from a simple believer and what directs our path to either hell or heaven.

Where do you stand?

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Contrary to much current thinking, contemplation has nothing to do with making our minds blank or having beautiful, sweet thoughts. Its primary aim is to encounter Christ so that our love for Him is renewed.

If this is to happen, we need to set aside uninterrupted time for contemplative prayer. Such prayer begins by preparing our hearts to pray even before we enter our place of prayer. We can do this while we tidy our room or drive home from work because it is an attitude of mind rather than an activity.

When we enter our prayer place, we need to give ourselves time to relax in YHWH's presence. One of the best ways of doing this is to make sure we are not stressed or tense. Because any worry, pressure of things to be done, the quarrel we just had with our spouse or colleague will make it very hard to contemplate. So, we have to make sure these pressures have been handed over to YHWH. When we transfer them to Him, we find ourselves gloriously free with an uncluttered expanse of time in which to be met afresh with Him. **1**

Peter 5:7 (KJV) Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

And even then, Satan may have a hold on our identity and beliefs because of our lack of Godly Knowledge, wisdom and understanding. So we have to work on making it a habit on making time for contemplation even if at our first tries we seem to fail. For example, when I am praying and images or whispers are placed on me, I would restart the prayer, and restart every time that happens. There will be a moment those images or whispers will stop. In a sense it is telling ourselves or Satan that what we are doing (Prayer) is more important than anything else at that moment. All the knowledge we have means nothing if we do not put it to work. Practice makes perfect.

The next phase of prayer involves becoming aware of the presence of YHWH. "Christ" (יהושוע Jehoshua Hamashiach) has promised that He will never leave us or forsake us (**Heb 13:5**). We take time to tune into his presence.

In the quietness, while aware of His presence, we open our hearts to receive His love. The prayer or conversation on which is usually wordless and fed by a

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deep desire for Him, leads us to a place where instead of seeking YHWH, we are found by Him. We discover that, long before we came to our place of prayer, He was waiting for us. So, He responds to our longing and we bask in the warmth of His love.

The purpose of all solitude, meditation, and contemplation is not silence itself but revelation. Stillness is the doorway where revelation becomes transformation. The disciple who learns to listen in solitude begins to carry that same clarity into the noise of daily life. The quiet room becomes the training ground of prophets, where the heart learns to hear, obey, and reflect the voice of God.

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