



SOLITUDE

Slowing • Silence • Listening

Are you feeling ...

Overwhelmed and busy? Guilty about resting?
A desire to be with God? In need of quiet?

WHAT IS SOLITUDE?

The practice of solitude means to get away from everyone for a while to a place free of distractions so you can be alone with God, to wait and listen deeply for his still, small voice. Our lives tend to be too busy. It's when we cut out the noise in our daily lives that we can begin to find our true selves in God. Solitude reveals to us that being with God actually enhances our capacity for effective service.

We are good at doing and not so good at being. It is better when we have a balance between these two, and solitude helps us to do

that. When we are caught up with God we learn that it's OK to stop and just be in his presence. As Ruth Haley Barton writes in her book, *Sacred Rhythms*, "Solitude becomes a place of rest for us rather than another place for human striving and hard work." We read in the Gospels that Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed (see Luke 5:16). Through this he was able to remain connected to his Father and faithful to his purposes. Jesus modelled this for his disciples, including each of us.

WHEN DO I APPLY IT?

When you first try to practise solitude, you may not know what to do. It's normal to feel nervous and awkward. You may ask yourself in this place of silence, what now? What am I supposed to do? You may have a hard time initially freeing your mind of distractions or slowing down.

As you take time in solitude and silence, come before God with no agenda other than to be present with him. The issues of life will eventually begin to melt away and you will sense his presence and loving care surrounding you.

READY TO PRACTISE SOLITUDE?

1. Find time and a location where you can be alone
2. Plan in your calendar when you will practise solitude
3. Go with no agenda other than to be in the presence of God

Want to learn more on solitude? Download a one-page study guide at www.SASpiritualLife.ca



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