

Resilience, part 6 - Silence & Solitude

Matthew 11:28-30 The Message version

“The Secret of the Yoke”

Be before you do

Sabbath

The new normal of “hurried digital distraction” is robbing us of the ability to be “present.”

- Present to God
- Present to others
- Present to this beautiful world
- Even present to our own souls

“There are books to be read; landscapes to be walked; friends to be with; life to be fully lived.... This new epidemic of distraction is our civilizations specific weakness. And its threat is not so much to our minds, even as they shape-shift under the pressure. The threat is to our souls. At this rate, if the noise does not relent, we might even forget we have any.”

Andrew Sullivan, I Used to be a Human Being

Is there a practice from the “yoke” of Jesus that could help with this?

Is there a Spiritual Discipline that could set us up to thrive and build “Resilience” right in the middle of the chaos of modern society?

The Quiet Place: “Silence and Solitude”

Jesus’ example

Matthew 4: 1-2

“Eremos”

What if, the desert is not the place of weakness; what if it’s really a place of strength and resilience!

“Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness because it was there, and only there, that Jesus was at the height of his spiritual powers. It was only after a month and a half of prayer and

fasting in the “quiet place” that he had the capacity to take on the devil himself and walk away unscathed.” --- John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*

Mark 1:35

When you go through the Gospels you quickly realize that the “quiet place” was a top priority for Jesus.

Mark 6:30-32

He took them to “quiet place” guess the word?!

Eremos

In Luke’s Gospel in particular, you can chart Jesus’ life and activity. The busier and more in demand that Jesus became, the more he withdrew to his “quiet place” of silence and solitude.

Luke 5:15-16

In seasons of busy-ness we need more time in the eremos (quiet-place)

Jesus needed time, why do you think you don’t?

It’s in this place of quiet, silence and solitude build an inner resilience because it’s in the “eremos” where we ground ourselves to God, and our souls find healing.

The two dimensions of silence:

- External silence
- Internal silence

Silence leads to emotional healing for the soul.

Solitude

Solitude is when you set aside time to feed, water and nourish our souls

“Loneliness is inner emptiness, solitude is inner fulfillment” -Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*

Could the antidote for this spiritual dryness be as “easy” as silence and solitude, the quiet place?

Maybe the problem is more of our absence than His...more about our distraction than His disconnection...

“Without solitude it is virtually impossible to live a spiritual life, we do not take seriously the spiritual life if we do not set some time aside to be with God and listen to Him.” Henri Nouwen

Reaping the Consequences

- 1) Find your Quiet places
- 2) Take our time
- 3) Slow down
- 4) Start to feel
- 5) Face the good, the bad and the ugly in our own hearts
- 6) Hear the quiet voice of God

In the quiet place, in the silence and solitude our souls finally come home

John 15:4-5 ESV