

**MESSAGE BIG IDEA**

Jesus invites us to move away from hurry and into solitude.

**SCRIPTURE**

Luke 4:1-2, Luke 5:15-16, Mark 6:31

**POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND**

1. In Luke 5, we see Jesus draw away into a solitary place. Fred Craddock writes about this passage, saying, “This is not a reference to a single instance but to a pattern of repeated behavior. This is as customary for Jesus as going to the synagogue on the Sabbath.” See other passages: Luke 6:12-13, Luke 9:18, Luke 11:1, Luke 22:39, Luke 23:46.
2. There are many ways to practice silence and solitude. A person can set aside a regular time to read Scripture and pray about what they’ve read. Another form of quiet time is taking a shorter section of Scripture and, after reading it multiple times, ask God to speak to us through it. These practices are more meditative . Other forms of solitude are more about being in the presence of God. In these settings, we may want to chase away distractions and continue to choose to be with God, even if we have to make that choice 100 times in a few minutes.
3. There is a tremendous amount of wisdom in the spiritual practice of solitude. There are more quotes listed in this guide that might be helpful to you or your group members.
4. Encourage the group to practice “Set Times” silence and solitude in the coming week, but make sure they shoot for realistic goals. If people have never tried a quiet time, they might feel inspired to spend an hour a day doing so. We would suggest starting with 10 minutes and go from there. Similarly, when it comes to “Simple Times” of solitude, encourage the group to practice this one or two times a day. Overly ambitious goals in the area of the spiritual can turn life-giving practices into a chore, and we don’t want these practices to feel like a “law.”
5. Practicing silence in the group will give people a simple model for sitting in silence on their own. The debrief will be necessary because it gives you and the group a chance to normalize the feelings and struggles that people will experience during your two minutes of silence.
6. Quotes: “In solitude, I get rid of my scaffolding: no friends to talk with, no telephone calls to make... The task is to persevere in my solitude, to stay in my cell until all my seductive visitors get tired of pounding on my door and leave me alone.” – Henri Nouwen

“There is a pervasive form of contemporary violence to which the idealist most easily succumbs: activism and overwork. The rush and pressure of modern life are a form, perhaps the most common form, of its innate violence. To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything, is to succumb to violence. The frenzy of our activism neutralizes our work for peace. It destroys our own inner capacity for peace. It destroys the fruitfulness of our own work, because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes work fruitful.” – Thomas Merton