



Prayer in Silence

"Be still, and know that I am (God)." Psalm 46:10

Prayer is an ongoing dialogue of intimate communion with God. Prayer is about falling in love with God. To put ourselves in the presence of God, we need to practice internal and external silence. Because in silence, God's word can reach the hidden corners of our hearts. It is not what we say but what God says to us and through us that is important.

We cannot hear his voice when our activities, worries, problems are distracting us from 'listening'. We need to put our worries before God and trust that he will take away our burdens so that we are free to open our heart and mind to his voice. Silence means leaving to God what is beyond our reach and capability.

The Gospels show Jesus withdrawing to lonely places, away from the crowds, away from the noise and away from his disciples in order to pray in silence and to seek his father.

Silent prayer comes in the form of solitude, meditation, or contemplation. What does this prayer look like?

- ✚ It is going to a place where we can be alone with no distractions and be private in our thoughts.

- ✚ It may be through the beauty of God's created world, where a sudden burst of light illuminates our path assuring us of God's guiding presence.
- ✚ It is sitting in a stillness of a chapel and letting the stillness enter your spirit.
- ✚ It is listening for the heartbeat of God and letting God lead you, giving up your own agenda.

“In silence, you feel the wonder and serenity of Jesus’ presence. God is good. He has given you this moment and He simply wants you to receive it with joy. It is a gift. It is from God and it’s for you! Your joy, your gratitude, your awe in God’s presence so manifestly real at this moment – your presence to this moment is enough.”

— Pope Benedict XVI (Teachings on Silence)

Silent prayer is standing in the presence of God with the mind in the heart, where there are no divisions or distinctions and where we are totally one. There God's Spirit dwells and there the great encounter takes place. As we weave prayer into our lives, it shows that God is in the ordinary as well as the extraordinary.

MEDITATION: is the act of focusing one's thoughts to reflect usually on one specific subject to discern its meaning or significance.

- I. We begin by reading Sacred Scriptures, holy icons, liturgical texts of the day or season, works of spirituality etc.
- II. We reflect on these works trying to understand the Word of God, replacing our own thoughts with God's thoughts.
- III. We respond to this meditation by personalizing the Word of God into our own life through our actions and attitudes.
- IV. We in turn are motivated and inspired with a conversion of heart to strengthen our will to follow Christ through service to the people of God.

In 1 Kings 19:11-13, Yahweh was not in the hurricane, or in the earthquake, or in the fire but in a light murmuring sound that spoke to Elijah.

CONTEMPLATION: A form of wordless prayer in which mind and heart focus on God's greatness and goodness in affective, loving adoration; to look on Jesus and the mysteries of his life with faith and love. Contemplation is divinely infused prayer.

Meditation transforms our personal life, our family life, at work, in our church and in our community.

- ✚ In silence, the Word of God is like a mirror, it reveals and exposes our actions. We stop hiding before God and the light of Christ can reach us and heal us when we acknowledge our sins and confess them. It can transform us even when we are ashamed of our actions.
- ✚ When we meditate on the Word, we build our faith. By visualizing stories of the Bible and how we might react if placed in their situation allows God to reveal himself to us. We are transformed by his power and grace.
- ✚ Immersing ourselves in the Word of God, we learn obedience to the Lord. By showing our love for Christ to our neighbours, and recognizing their suffering, we can offer those the light of Christ, his message of life and his saving gift of the fullness of love.

"In the attitude of silence the soul finds the path in a clearer light, and what is elusive and deceptive resolves itself into crystal clearness."

— Ghandi

In intimacy with God and listening to His Word slowly, we put aside our personal logic, our prejudices, and our ambitions and instead learn to listen. To ask the Lord, what is your wish? When we learn the prayer of listening, we will hear him call "Follow Me".

"The worship of the Father in and through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit is an act so holy that it demands times of silence – The silence of adoration, the silence of contentment, the silence of profound awe."

www.soulshpherd.org(Solitude and Silence)

A prayer of silence and listening and patience...

O Lord, I offer you this moment of silence.

This moment is for You.
I consent to Your action
In my mind and in my heart
In my will and in my soul.
I welcome Your action!

And to prepare myself, to make room for You,
I will sit here, quietly, with my eyes closed,
In an attitude of peaceful rest and loving devotion,
My intent is to welcome You.
I will slow down my thoughts and my imagination,
I will calm down my fears and my emotions,
I will try to exercise patience and humility
And I offer you these feeble efforts...

I lift up my soul to You,
Whispering in my heart and in my mind,
"Here I am! Quiet but attentive to You"

By Michele Szekely