

Nothing Happens Overnight
Peace in the Silence
Mark 1: 32-35
February 9, 2020

Peace in the Silence - Devotional

Mark 1: 32-35 "When evening came, after the sun had set, they brought to him all those who were sick and demon-possessed. The whole town was assembled at the door, and he healed many who were sick with various diseases and drove out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he got up, went out and made his way to the deserted place; and there he was praying.

Luke 5:15-16" Yes the news about hm spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. Verse 16, But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed."

Last week Pastor Dave spoke about the importance of prayer. Prayer is where we get the opportunity to be refilled with the living water to face any obstacles we may face. I'm reminded of Romans 8:26-27. In the same way, the spirit helps us in our weaknesses, we do not know what we ought to pray for, but the spirit himself intercedes for us through the wordless groans. What does that mean? Even when we feel like we don't know what to say or have the right words, but we are postured in a position of surrender in prayer, the Holy Spirit in us is also praying for us.

Now that's some good news. So today we will be talking about personal devotions. As _____ just read about Jesus taking a moment to spend with the father; he is a great and prime example of someone who has taken the time to foster his relationship with God the Father to pray for his people. **A moment of stillness in the in the busyness of life. This is a moment where God speaks as well!**

We all know that we are supposed to do some sort of devotional not limiting it to just in the morning, but throughout the day and there isn't a specific way to do it. But spending time with God allows you, to be in constant commune with God on a spiritual level. Some of the examples of spending time with God can be like the following:

Painting,
some people like to run,
go on long walks,
exercise,
music,
prayer room,
10 mins in the shower.

I've often found myself with a little bit of time on my hands to spend in my quiet time however, how many knows that life can get the best of us? We tend to use TV, kids, work, social media as an outlet or an excuse from spending time with the Father. Let's be honest! I like to stay in the know aka, what's the next big thing technology wise. Who's put out new music? Who's been traveling where? With all of this overload of information, I'd noticed that I'd become anxious about things, I wasn't involved in or it wasn't

happening in my life yet. One of my best friends back home told me that she was going to start journaling...I'm like, I can do that! What I really wanted was one of those cute journals!

Low and behold, this is how I started my journaling journey which is how I spend my devotional time with God. Instead of distracting myself from spending quiet time with God. I'd intentionally start journaling, carrying my journal with me and journal throughout my day as if I would be talking to God.

Journaling isn't for everyone, but I tend to look at my journal as free therapy because I can write for free and not get charged for a session. Now I'm not discouraging folks from going to see a therapist because they are great people and when I was seeing one back home, I'd take my journal with me. This allowed me to re-read the progress I've made or see the broken cycle I'd put myself into. **"It's ok to have Jesus and a therapist."** Journaling for me allows me to write out all of my thoughts, spill the beans, it's like I've just thrown up at the feet of Christ. Anything good and or bad comes out, and after that, prayer requests that I know people are asking for comes out and I notice that once everything is out, I sit and listen in the quiet. In the quiet, I tend to grab my Bible and read a passage. I've positioned myself to be receptive and listen to the Holy Spirit.

Which brings me to my first point: Devotions allow for your spiritual eyes to be opened to what God is calling you to be a part of.

Take a look at Mark 1:32-35 Jesus was dealing with what became his normal day to day task:

1. Healing the sick,
2. Casting out demons,
3. Turning water into wine -can I get an Amen?

But he would always pull away to spend time with the Father. It was in that place that he would be refreshed and reminded of the cause and vision of the Father. John 6:38 shows that, "For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me."

Another example of this is found in the story of Paul and Silas. This story is found in Acts 16:16-40. To sum up the story, Paul and Silas were in the middle of a mission trip to spread the gospel. In the town that they were in, there was a female **slave girl** that was possessed by a demon. Her slave owners used her as a fortune teller in order for them to make a profit from her. When she saw Paul and Silas, she kept shouting, **"These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved."**

How annoying is that to have someone constantly announce your every move. Hannah, my daughter, is totally notorious for doing that to me. I'll be in the restroom and my mom in CT will know that I'm in the restroom. No Privacy.

Paul got annoyed, because she was being obnoxious, so he commanded that, "In the name of Jesus that the spirit come out of her." And it did. Now look at what Paul did next. He has messed up someone's way of living. So now in vs. 25, you'll read about how both Paul and Silas were thrown into prison after a public beat down. In pain and in chains Paul and Silas began singing songs of worship to God. (Praise you in this storm -Casting Crowns) and suddenly there was what felt like an earthquake. Prison doors flew opened and chains began to fall.

How many know that the enemy can't take away our joy?

Now, this type of miracle can really happen when you truly have an intimate relationship with Christ.

Paul:

1. who was once named Saul,
2. was a person that persecuted the Christian believers,
3. was a distinguished citizen of Rome,
4. would drag believers out of their homes into prison for their faith in Christ.

Now here he was, sitting in prison singing to the same God he used to kill people over. During that time, yes, he had an encounter on the road to Damascus, developed a devotional time with God and in Acts 16, you see God working on Paul's behalf. This is a great example of seeing our devotional time come into action in public.

Point number 2 is: Devotional time allows you to practice your spiritual rhythm in private.

Just like, I love to sing at home....all the time. It would get to the point where my mom would ask if I was an animal just singing for no reason LOL.

Picture this: Patrick Swayze singing to Whoopi Goldberg in Ghost, that was me.

But this was me doing a rep, in preparation to who I am today, a Worship Pastor. Back in February 2017, I made a journal entry to God, stating, I felt a calling on my life to go into the ministry as a worship leader. The thought of a lower paying position as a single parent is going to be quite difficult but here I am today. I'm a prime example of a prayer request coming true. **Practicing my personal devotional time in private then allowed for me to be qualified by God in public.**

The God who was and is to come said, I have you. It became something I kept repeating over to myself, folks were prophesying that something would happen. The more time I spent journaling I found out that God had a song that He wanted to pull out of me. I couldn't believe that I could song-write. Because I'm my own worst critic. I was like nah I have to do it with my friends, they know what they're doing, and God was like nope. This is our time, look at Psalms 23, David states, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures." Did you see that, God didn't say have a seat, he said.....SIT DOWN, CHITA (If you hear me say that to my daughter, that's not her name, I'm telling her to sit down in Creole because obviously, she didn't understand when I said it in English). Just set your eyes on me, and beautiful music coming out. I'd spend hours after my full-time job and being a parent, to just write and enjoy being in his presence. Can I get an Amen?

**Point 3: Last point, Devotional time allows you to practice discernment.
The ability to hear from God as to what's good and what's not good.**

John 10:10 says the enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy.

The more time spent in devotional time as well as meditating on the word, the less time you'll spend worrying. During my devotional time, I started to see that my inner critic was just the enemy making me think that I couldn't do this on my own.

So when your devotional time isn't consistent, you allow the enemy to plug in negative thoughts....for example the comparison game.

If I wasn't talking myself out of something, it was social media or someone else I'm friends with etc. Could be anything!

I started to think that my music wouldn't be as great as Kari Jobe, Kim Walker Smith, Darlene Z, Tasha Cobbs, Steffany G all of the great female worship artists that are now main stream...but through the quiet time, I started to hear, *did I tell you that you needed to do this on your own?*

When I didn't journal, I'd feel like I'd be carrying a heavy burden. Crazy thing folks, God wouldn't plant an idea in you for you to sow on your own, bring it to him during your devotional time, he'll show you how to do it. Let me give you one name....David. Now I'm not calling out all of the David's in this church but David in the Bible.

How many know that God never performs a miracle the same way. Jesus gave sight to 3 different people in 3 different ways. So, I hit the reset button and started writing again, I come to realized, I'm not supposed to do this alone. Draw close to God because of him our dreams are made true. *Recognizing when the enemy tries to lead you astray is so important. You aren't having to spend time on something you weren't meant to do, and you aren't fighting a battle that wasn't meant for you.*

Spending time with God never changes, our understanding of Him, it only unfolds during the time spent journaling, meditating on the word. *Remember, you're a problem, when the enemy sees you about to scratch the surface of what part you are to play in God's big plan, he will do anything and everything to distract you, but what's amazing about journaling is you get to go back and read through your entries and see how God was and is moving. He's the same God that's here today, yesterday and forevermore.*

Romans 12, intentionally transforming and renewing of your mind. The more you spend in the presence of God, the more your discernment grows, the more you start to see the traps the enemy has placed before you to cause you to stumble.

So, to sum it up, devotional time isn't about just reading through something but more of spending quality time with God. Allowing him to speak back to us vs. you listing off all of your wants and desires. I'd like to sing a song that I've written in the summer of 2019. During that time, in my spiritual walk I felt like I was in a position of waiting. Waiting to hear if a church wanted to interview me, waiting for someone to like me on the online dating app, waiting for Kindergarten to begin for my daughter, waiting for a change, waiting to set down some roots somewhere.