

# Sharpen Your Faith

## Week 5, Practicing God's Presence

*Paul T. Quelet, October 8, 2006*

"Hurry is not *of* the Devil; it *is* the Devil."—Carl Jung<sup>1</sup>

→ The issue is that many of us do not understand the \_\_\_\_\_ spiritual life.

### 1. Cultivate Our Intimate \_\_\_\_\_ with God

#### Busyness

- Read Luke 10:38-42.
- Doing things \_\_\_\_\_ God should never replace our relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Him.
- Acknowledge that you \_\_\_\_\_.
- God is our \_\_\_\_\_. This is why we try to take things into our own hands.
- Read Hosea 6:1-3.

"The key is not whether leaders spend some time with God but whether the time they spend is unhurried and adequate for all God wants to say to them. It might be that God would say more to leaders if they would give him more time to say it!"—Henry Blackaby<sup>2</sup>

#### Cooling Off our Passion

- Read Revelation 2:1-7.
- There is only one reason we cool off: we begin to follow \_\_\_\_\_.
- When our lampstand goes out, that means we lose \_\_\_\_\_ and our testimony.
- Read Psalm 89:14-18. Those who are in God's presence are \_\_\_\_\_ all day long!!

#### Knowing God Intimately

- Read John 17:3. Eternal life is knowing God.

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<sup>1</sup> Carl Jung, *The Other Side of Silence: A Guide to Christian Meditation* (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, p. 212-213.

- Read Philippians 3:7-11.

“Once you become aware that the main business that you are here for is to know God, most of life’s problems fall into place on their own accord.”

—J.I. Packer<sup>3</sup>

“‘I have called you friends.’ (John 15:15) Friendship is rare on earth. It means identity in thought and heart and spirit. The whole discipline of life is to enable us to enter into this closest relationship with Jesus Christ. We receive His blessings and know His word, but do we know Him?”

—Oswald Chambers

## 2. \_\_\_\_\_ on God

### Dispelling misconceptions of Meditation

1. It is the same as Eastern meditation.
2. It is just as well for someone else to talk to God as we do.
3. Meditation is not too difficult or complicated.

“True contemplation is not a psychological trick but a theological grace.”—

Thomas Merton

### Imagination in Meditation

- Many of us need something rooted in the \_\_\_\_\_ when we meditate upon God, so we must use our \_\_\_\_\_.
- We are seeking to think God’s thoughts after Him—and thoughts are often rooted in \_\_\_\_\_.

### Meditating on Scripture

- Read Psalm 119:97-99. Meditating on God gives us supernatural \_\_\_\_\_.
- Let the Scripture continually be an autobiography of you. Not “God what were you saying to the disciples?” but “God what are you saying \_\_\_\_\_??”

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<sup>3</sup> J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, p. 34

"The words of Scripture are not merely to be read but to be heard. They are meant to go into the heart!"—R. Kent Hughes<sup>4</sup>

"...just as you do not analyze the words of someone you love, but accept them as they are said to you, accept the Word of Scripture and ponder it in your heart, as Mary did. That is all. That is meditation."—Dietrich Bonhoeffer<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Seek \_\_\_\_\_ to be with God

#### Why we don't seek solitude

- Our fear of being \_\_\_\_\_ drives us to noise and crowds.
- Read Psalm 4:1-4.

"Where shall the world be found, where will the word resound? Not here, there is not enough silence."—T.S. Elliot<sup>6</sup>

#### Solitude vs. Loneliness

- Loneliness is \_\_\_\_\_. It comes from feelings of isolation and separated.
- Solitude is the time we can be alone with God. It is not shut out everyone, but to be very \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to God.

#### What does Solitude do for us?

- Read Psalm 46:10.
  1. Makes our busy days far more \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. Solitude \_\_\_\_\_ the damage of the noise and cares of the world.
  3. Solitude allows us to face \_\_\_\_\_ days.
  4. Solitude gives us \_\_\_\_\_ insight when we don't expect it.
  5. Solitude has a positive effect on the \_\_\_\_\_ body.

"Has God trusted you with a silence—a silence that is big with meaning? God's silences are His answers...Can God trust you like that, or are you still asking for a visible answer? God will give you the blessings you ask if you will not go any further without them; but His silence is the sign that He is

<sup>4</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *The Disciplines of a Godly Man*, p. 85

<sup>5</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Way to Freedom* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth O'Conner, *Search for Silence* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1971), p. 132.

bringing you into a marvelous understanding of Himself...You will find that God has trusted you in the most intimate way possible, with an absolute silence, not of despair, but of pleasure, because He saw that you could stand a bigger revelation." —Oswald Chambers

### Steps into Solitude

Keep a \_\_\_\_\_ rest!!

**Bottom Line:** No activity is more important than practicing God's presence. We must seek the deeper life of intimacy with God.

**Memory Verse:** "Be still, and know that I am God..."—Psalm 46:10 (NIV)

### Suggested Resources:

Psalm 27, Psalm 73, Psalm 139, Jeremiah 9:23-24

*My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers

*The Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster

*Knowing God*, J.I. Packer

*The Pursuit of God*, A.W. Tozer