**Study Series: Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life**

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**Lesson Title: “Silence and Solitude…for the Purpose of Godliness” (pp. 154 - 166)**

February 28, 2021 Session 13

**The main point of this lesson is:** Godliness will not happen apart from times alone with God.

Focus on this goal: To help adults yearn for quiet times alone with God.

Key Bible Passages: Matthew 14:23; Mark 1:32-37

To the Leader: Keep the spiritual disciplines poster you created for Session 6, Step 1 (p. 78) displayed throughout this entire study.

Before the Session

1. **Obtain** a timer. (Step 1)

2. **Print out** Psalm 46:10 in the CSB, NASB, and KJV translations. **Distribute** to three volunteers as they arrive. (Step 2)

3. **Read and be prepared** to summarize 1 Kings 19. (Step 4)

During the Session

**Step 1. Introduction / Discussion Starter**

**Request** adults sit in absolute silence.

**After one minute,** **ask** how adults felt during sixty seconds of silence.

**Consider** reasons silence makes many people uncomfortable, and what they do to avoid that discomfort.

**Determine** why believers must not avoid silence or solitude.

**Read** the main point of this lesson (p. 167).

**State:** The goal of this session is to cause us to yearn so much for quiet times alone with God that we discipline ourselves to practice silence and solitude for the purpose of godliness.

**Step 2. Day One – Explanation of Silence and Solitude**

**Read** the first Day One sentence (p. 154).

**Invite pre-enlisted volunteers to read** the three versions of Psalm 46:10.

**Use that verse to explore** what determines whether silence and solitude is appealing and transforming in a believer’s life.

**Request** adults define the spiritual discipline of silence.

**Examine** the meaning of “outward silence” (p. 155).

**Ask:** Which is more difficult—maintaining outer or inner silence?

**Explain** your reasoning.

**Request** adults define the spiritual discipline of solitude.

**Determine** the difference between being alone and practicing the discipline of solitude.

**Determine** why silence and solitude must be balanced with fellowship.

**Declare:** Whether we are extroverts or introverts, the spiritual disciplines call us to get out of our comfort zones for the purpose of godliness.

**Urge adults** to answer the call to go deeper and practice silence and solitude by **reflecting** again on Day One, activity 2 (p. 155) sometime this week.

**Step 3. Day Two – Valuable Reasons for Silence and Solitude, Part 1**

**Organize** the group into four teams.

**Assign** one of the following passages to each team: Matthew 14:6-13; Mark 1:32-39; Luke 6:12-19; John 6:4-15.

**Instruct teams** **to read** their passages **and identify** how Jesus practiced silence and solitude, and reasons He did so.

**After** giving teams **a few minutes** to discuss, **invite them to share** their findings.

**Read** the Day Two paragraph (p. 156) beginning, “The point should be obvious ….”

**Read** 1 Kings 19:11-13.

**Ask:** Why are there times we need complete silence to hear God speak to us?

**Guide the group** to list indications people are addicted to noise (point out not all “noise” has sound, social media for example).

**Ask:** What are specific ways we can silence noise in our lives so we can hear the voice of God better?

**Request volunteers read** Habakkuk 2:20 and Zephaniah 1:7.

**Analyze** the difference in being silent before God and silent toward God.

**Invite volunteers to share** times they have experienced meaningful, silent worship.

**Request a volunteer read** Psalm 62:1-2 (Day Two, p. 158).

**Explore** how silence before God demonstrates faith in Him.

**Discuss** Day Two, activity 2 (p. 158).

**Step 4. Day Three – Valuable Reasons for Silence and Solitude, Part 2**

**Request a volunteer read** Isaiah 30:21.

**Ask adults to identify** another reason for being silent before God.

**Note** from Day Three that the disciplines of silence and solitude are often exercised to seek and discern God’s will.

**Note** we also exercise silence to seek God’s salvation.

**Discuss** Day Three, activity 1 (p. 159).

**Read** 1 Kings 19:3-8, then **summarize** 19:9-16.

**Determine** how God used silence and solitude to restore Elijah physically and spiritually to help him regain spiritual perspective.

**Declare:** Sometimes the most spiritual thing God calls us to do is take a nap and eat something!

**Draw attention** to Day Three margin/pull quote (p. 159).

**Request a volunteer read** James 1:19.

**Explore** how the discipline of silence can help believers obey that command.

**Ask:** Why is it important we learn to control our tongues?

**Read** the last Day Three paragraph (p. 161).

**Step 5. Day Four – Suggestions for Silence and Solitude**

**Invite volunteers to share** which reasons for silence and solitude have compelled them to yearn for quiet times alone with God.

**State** Day Four (pp. 161-164) gives practical suggestions on how to practice the spiritual disciplines of silence and solitude.

**Guide the group** to examine those suggestions.

**Ask:** How can we as a community help one another practice silence and solitude?

**Step 6. Day Five – Perseverance in the Disciplines**

**Draw attention** to the spiritual disciplines poster to review the disciplines examined in this study.

**Ask:** Hebrews 10:36 says, “You have need of endurance.” Why is that definitely true when it comes to developing and practicing these spiritual disciplines?

**Explore** from Day Five (pp. 164-166) three things that can help believers persevere.

**Read** the last Day Five paragraph (p. 166).

**Step 7. Live Out the Lesson**

**Urge adults** to prayerfully consider Day Five, activity 2 (p. 166).

**Close in prayer.**