

Time to be silent

January 4, 2009

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How many of you made New Year's resolutions this week?
How many of you believe in making New Year's resolutions?

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During the week while I was preparing for this message, my first thoughts were that it should be full of vision for 2009, this being the first Sunday of the year. But as I got thinking about it, I felt the Lord gently encourage me to pick up on the prophetic word two Sunday's ago that Sue brought.

The gist of the word was about being still and sitting at the feet of Jesus particularly during this busy holiday period of the year.

So, rather than bring a word of action, I want to bring a word of perceived inaction as often we are so busy filling up our daily lives with noise, clutter and general activities and being silent or meditative is seen as being inactive or lazy.

One of the busiest pastors in America wrote this on his blog a couple of weeks ago.

It was a very normal day until I realized that I was actively destroying my own soul. The day began with my alarm jolting me awake. I immediately turned on my BlackBerry to hear it chime for each voicemail and email that had been left while I slept. I stepped into the shower where I listened to my waterproof radio. I then turned on the television to catch some news while I dressed. Driving to work I tuned in to some talk-radio banter.

Throughout the day the chime on my laptop kept ringing as email arrived, and my cell phone continued to vibrate and ring on my hip. Before long, I needed a break, and I put on my iPod to go for a walk.

On the drive home, I again listened to the radio in an effort to drown out the blaring horns of frustrated fellow commuters. After eating dinner and tucking my five children into bed, I turned on the television to watch shows I had recorded on my Tivo.

As I drifted off to sleep, it dawned on me that I had not had one minute of silence during my entire day. It was possible I realized that I could live the rest of my life without ever again experiencing silence.

In that moment God deeply convicted me that I was addicted to the false trinity of our day, the gods known as Noise, Hurry and Crowds. I remembered the words of missionary martyr Jim Elliot, who said, "I think the devil has made it his business to monopolize on three elements: noise, hurry and crowds... Satan is quite aware of the power of silence."

I began to ponder what Jesus' life might be like if He lived today. Would He be available to all of His followers twenty-four hours a day on His BlackBerry? Would He have left His phone on at the Last Supper and been continually interrupted by needless calls? Would He have failed to stop and speak to needy people because their weeping was not loud enough for Him to hear over His iPod as He hurried past them on His way to a meeting He was already late for?

Mark Driscoll - full post here: <http://theresurgence.com/silence>
December 12, 2008

Ecclesiastes 3:7b (from the there is a time for everything passage)
... a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

Psalms 46:10a
"Be still, and know that I am God"

We are living in a day with so many voices, so many sources of information and so many distractions that we are in great danger of missing the single most important voice speaking into our lives - that wonderful voice of Jesus.

How on earth are we in our crazy worlds going to find time to be silent, to be still and to know that He is God?

While there possibly many ways and methods, I want to encourage each of us this year to follow Jesus' own example as found in the following scriptures.

Matthew 14:23
And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,

Mark 6:46
And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.

Luke 5:16
But he would (*often*) withdraw to desolate places and pray.

Luke 6:12
In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God.

Mark 1:35
And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.

There are a few things here that should be noted from these verses.

- 1) He was by himself
- 2) He went to pray
- 3) He went to an isolated place

In all of this I'm sure Jesus found time to be silent and to listen to His father as well as talk with Him. It would have been a time of simply relaxing in God's presence, enjoying communion with His father. A time in which He would have been refreshed and given further vision for the work that still lay ahead.

It also appears that He attempted to be un-interrupted, to be by himself, although this was occasionally interrupted by the crowds who somehow still managed to find him.

What about each of us this year? Is this one of our New Year's resolutions that we will look for ways in which we can just be with Jesus?

Husbands are you prepared to give your wives' space & time to do this?

Wives are you prepared to give your husband's space & time to do this?

Parents are you prepared to encourage your children to find space & time to do this?

2009 will be a busy one, there is work to do, families to feed, bills to pay, places to go, people to meet, calls to be made, emails to write, Facebook pages to be updated.

Let's not get so busy this year that we do not regularly make time to be by ourselves and in silence to be with our Lord.