

Be Still - A simple guide to Quiet Times

Gen. 3:8-9, Mark 1:35-38, 6:31-34, 14:32-36

Introduction

Be still booklet over August

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24-6 Prayer Movement

Pete Greig

Life story

Belfast, Parents dedicated to serving God

They led small church in Essex

Teenage years swings between Faith and Doubt

At 17 expelled from college

At 18 homeless, jobless and out of options

"After a few visits in prison, life caught up with me, and so did God. I made a conscious choice that I would give the rest of my life to him."

30 years later: husband for 29 years, raised two children, enjoyed full life with God

Perhaps an unlikely person to teach us about prayer

Read quotes from page 2 - 3

Finish with quote from page 5

Encounter

Encounter changes us

Encounter - meaning

Encounter a problem

Encounter the enemy at dawn

Encounter an interesting person

Encounter a soul friend, spouse, loved one

Many people we have encountered have changed us

spouses, children, parents, teachers, friends, leaders, etc

Our encounter with God changes us

How did we change each time we encounter God

Acknowledges that he exists?

Gave your life to Jesus

Being saved by Christ?

God's encounter with people

began in a garden

A beautiful place where God relaxed

And met with the people he created

And then one day, these people are hiding

Gen 3:8-9

Where are you?

due to fear and shame as they had done something wrong

is that also our reaction

Are we avoiding the presence of God as we are confronted with our own

Even though we are forgiven and will be forgiven?

But God pursues us

Not to harm us, (we have done that ourselves), but to restore and recover us

In God's encounters we are made whole

Romans 8:1-2

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ

Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

Where's your (my) garden

Hebrew Gannah

covered or hidden place

small, walled enclosures

tranquil spaces

Morocco, Tunisia, Seville in Spain

An inviting and refreshing space

Where is your "chair"?

I have a chair in my study

Probably do not use it enough!

But in a way it is my garden - where I meet with God, read my bible, etc

But what is it for you?

Car, gym, nature, garden, bed

Find the least distracting time

In the morning before your day begins?

walk at lunch break?

In the evening when the day quiets down

Find a place and a time that works for you

Encounter when life is good

Jesus went up the mountain at the height of his success

Mark 1:35-38

And then: let's go somewhere else

But people tend to stop making time for God when life is good

many distractions

less 'need'

Encounter when life is busy

Jesus took his disciples to a quiet place when they were overrun with people who needed him

Mark 6:31-34

Sometimes we do not make the time

Sometimes our quiet time becomes crowded

Had family over for the weekend - change in routine!

Sometimes we have to work hard to be quiet - as our minds are busy

May take more effort than usual

Jesus engages with the crowds who follow him and then sends them away

Mark 6:45-46

One of the hardest things for Brian is to when he is at his busiest to take longer than usual over his quiet time

temptation to rush in and out again

But he found it is more important to have that encounter with God, when he is busy

The Lord comes and resources him with a fresh perspective and renewed energy

Encounter when in crisis

Jesus spend time in a garden when he was in a crisis - the biggest crisis of his life

and ours!

Mark 14:32-36

How do we respond to a crisis

turn to other people

try to fix things (me!)

But do we turn to God?

Not only answer prayers, but stilling ourselves before him?

"As someone who has experienced loss and grief, I know that these few lines inadequately cover the suffering that accompanies crisis, that it is a deep need that raises many questions"

Bill recommends book God on Mute by Pete Greig

Summary questions

Where are you? Where are you at?

Where is your chair? Where is your garden?

When is the best time to go there?

Do you need to change the time or place of your encounter with God?

Summary suggestions

Find a place: your car, your gym, your bedroom, a prayer room, a local church sanctuary, your armchair

Find a time: morning, evening, afternoon, whatever works best for you

Flexibility will set you free:

Different circumstances and different seasons require different ways for you to encounter

Challenge yourself to start where you are

Whether in a season of success, busyness or despair - God will meet you there

Distraction

Once you have found a place and a time

Distraction sets in

Jesus tells us:

Mat 6:6

"When you pray, go"

intentional location

"close the door"

intentional action

"pray to your Father"

intentional interaction

Create silence

Not find silence

Intentional

but also silence in our hearts

???not read quote page 21???

Dealing with distractions

Name your distraction

become aware of your distraction

identify the distraction

name your distraction

Tame your distraction

respond - praying for a person or a worrisome issue

feed it - hunger, thirst?

delay it - write it down

buying a lightbulb

switch of the phone

Dismiss it - if nonsense

laugh at it, bin it, or burn it!

Then free to engage with your quiet time - until the next one

but can be quite quick and not distracting

Helps to concentrate

Holding something when you pray

Praying with hands

holding cross

Example: Chotki

not object of power

but aids to concentrate

knitting, or other repetitive craft

Breathing

breathing prayer

In: Lord Jesus Christ Son of God

Out: have mercy on me

you can use other scriptures!

Posture

walking around, standing

kneeling

hands together - stop fidgeting

sometimes a change of angle or scenery helps us to focus

Prayer Exercise

at the Gym, like lifting weights, etc

and a prayer with every action

walking, and on every rhythm pray

did that during sabbatical

to concentrate on what

that we hear from God

Keep our bodies or minds active with repetition so that we can also open our souls to hear from God

Not for everyone

Some practice meditation

But some are doers and like to do something while they pray

These are aids not prescriptions

Whatever works for you!

Summary

When we pray we can get distracted

We need to be intentional

location, action and interaction with the King

Dealing with distractions

name and tame them

Practice holding something when you pray