

Intimacy With God Requires This Deliberate Action

At our core, we were made to do one thing: talk to God. It's a lifestyle, something that defines us night and day, twenty-four seven. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Paul tells us to "pray without ceasing."

But our culture presents other things as more important. Stores, restaurants and fitness centers stay open around the clock. Cable news goes constantly. The internet offers endless choices of music, movies, TV shows and shopping sites.

We live in a distracted world, yet all these options leave us unfulfilled—saturation doesn't bring satisfaction. There is a deeper hunger inside, an ache we're trying to soothe, a cry longing to be heard. Something is struggling against this busyness.

But if we don't take time to listen, we might not hear. If we don't ask the right questions, we won't get the answers. Take a moment and ask yourself: What would we do if the music stopped? How would we cope if we couldn't watch our shows, drink our lattes or buy things anytime we wanted? Who would we be, apart from all these distractions?

There is a spiritual void that the things of the world—and the chaos and busyness of our culture—cannot satisfy. It's into this spiritual emptiness that the Word of God speaks:

"The voice of him who cries out, 'Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low, and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rough places a plain; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.'" (Is.

40:3–5).

What is this preparation for? How can we invite the Lord's presence?

It starts by creating space to be with Him. We must clear the path, eliminate mental traffic and set aside time for God. We need to establish boundaries. In our distracted culture, that could mean turning off our phones and devices for a few hours. The Holy One doesn't want to compete for our attention—He wants to be first place!

We're all tempted to base our identities on our jobs, hobbies or interests, but Jesus invites us to find our significance in Him. God is the one who made us, knows us, and will determine where we spend eternity. Placing boundaries in our lives so that we have time for Him will pay off in the long—and short-term.

Our Father is calling out, "Come away from distraction and prepare the way for Me. I will fill your heart with glory beyond what you can imagine." Jesus wants to remove all the things that hinder love—and this includes everything that keeps us from Him.

Take time and ask the Lord what He's calling you to lay down, where He wants you to go, or not go, and which issues He wants to address. Let Him highlight whatever is getting in the way, and how He wants you to respond.

*Reprinted with permission from the © International House of Prayer in Kansas City. A Detroit native who was raised in Vermont and Connecticut, **Adam Wittenberg** worked as newspaper journalist until 2012, when he moved to Kansas City to complete the Intro to IHOPKC internship. Afterwards, he earned a 4-year certificate in House of Prayer Leadership from IHOPU and is now on full-time staff in the Marketing department. Adam is also active in evangelism and has a vision to reach*

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