

How to Reclaim Your Spiritual Zeal for Jesus

Jesus told the crowd to sit down. A very simple command and act. Can you sit down to sit and pray? The Lord revealed to us His purpose for answering prayer: He wants the Father to be glorified in the Son. Jesus wants our prayers to be answered as we pray in His name. The mystifying truth is that the possibilities in prayer are as great as the purpose for prayer. But we must avail ourselves of the Lord in the secret place. We must learn to be still.

Finding stillness may be one of the greatest challenges in our relationship with Christ and our prayer lives. There are two great hindrances we face every day in our search for stillness: our busy lifestyles and the constant noise of our culture. From the incessant barrage of information to the insidious advertising, our toxic culture leaves us no rest. Are you busy? Where are you on the Facebook addiction scale? Enough said.

I was raised in front of a television. I did my homework there and spent much of my free time late in the evenings sitting with my family watching television. My learning style is to have background noise. Silence is very difficult for me, even today. As with me, most of us have become accustomed to the never-ending noise, and even if we are not used to it, we find it difficult to escape. So how do we find stillness?

As simple as it may seem, we find stillness by making a choice, deciding to sit down away from all the clamor of our life and technology. God bestowed on us free will; it is not an illusion. We are not victims of our culture. We have control over the way we respond to everything that comes our way. The science of neuroplasticity (the ability of the brain to reorganize itself by developing new neural connections)

makes it very clear that when we make a decision, we change the matter in our brain. It is the scientific confirmation of God's Word: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7a).

Every time we steal away with the Lord in quiet retreat, we transform and renew our minds and conform to the communication pathways of the kingdom (Rom. 12:1-2). And it is in the stillness that our zeal for the Lord and His ways is given the chance to grow.

What would you do? Stories of this Jesus were spreading like wildfire. Thousands were following Him. Mark comments, "[People] were astonished beyond measure, saying, 'He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak'" (Mark 7:37). What did the crowd do? They followed Him for three days without food! Jesus said, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have now been with Me three days and nothing to eat" (Mark 8:2).

It is not surprising that people dropped everything and followed Jesus. The majority of them had been raised hearing and reading of God's miracles accomplished for their ancestors, but that was in the past—this was now. They had heard rabbis speak in the temple, but they had never heard anyone speak with this kind of authority. They had never seen miracles performed with their own eyes.

What would you do? Would you take off work? Would you travel hundreds of miles to hear Him? Would you tell everyone who would listen about Him? Would you go without food for days to follow Him? What is your hunger level for the Lord?

Paul instructed the believers in Romans to be fervent for the Lord (Rom. 12:11). The word "fervent" in the literal etymological sense means "very hot or boiling." Paul is comparing the Christian's temperature to boiling water. Paul's instruction and expectation are that Christians would be like

him, boiling hot for the Lord: “Cleave to what is good. Be devoted to one another with brotherly love; prefer one another in honor, do not be lazy in diligence, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord, rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer” (Rom. 12:9-12).

The Lord delights in passion for prayer and passion for Him and His kingdom. The truth is He can't stand lukewarm or dispassionate people. Being lukewarm is a fatal spiritual state for a person. A lukewarm Christian is deceived and lives a life of duplicity.

Jesus is the bread of life, and His promises are true. There is a spiritual need, a hunger, in our lives that can only be satisfied by communing with our Lord and Savior in the secret place. So where can we find this kind of passion for prayer, zeal that will not be satisfied with any counterfeit or substitute? It all originates in the secret place, in our stillness before the Lord. Jesus gives the invitation and instruction to come and sit down with Him, but be still: “Be still and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10a).

 *Adapted from 40 Days Through the Prayers of Jesus by Tim Cameron, copyright 2017, published by Charisma House. Discover secrets, mysteries and provoking lessons from Jesus' prayer life through this book. To order your copy click on this link.*

Prayer Power for the Week of Apr. 8, 2018

This week, heed the Lord's admonition to “be still” before Him and know He is God. Take that time to get quiet in the secret place and listen to His voice as you pray. Continue to pray for worldwide revival and more laborers to reap the harvest. Pray for our leaders, those serving in the military, our allies, the next generation and the peace of Jerusalem. Read: Romans 12:9-12, Revelation 3:15-16.