

LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE: SILENCE & SOLITUDE!

Scripture used: [Matthew 11:28-30 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

This week Pastor Hurmon continued our sermon series *My Best Life*. We are learning what it takes to apprentice ourselves to Jesus, and to live a life full of joy that resides deep in our souls. Living our best lives is not about surface emotions like happiness. It is about experiencing the peace that can only happen when our daily lives are aligned with our eternal purpose. This is the model that Jesus presents us, in particular a life that includes periods of silence and solitude. This is critical to recover our souls, and to prepare ourselves for the crises of tomorrow that will come whether we like it or not. The Bible is full of stories that include breaks, starting with the seventh day in the story of creation. We need to adopt more periods of silence away from others to focus on God, creating the space to hear what He's saying to us.

KEY POINTS

- 1. Silence and solitude is critical to rest and recovery.** Our busy lives do not really allow us to be fully restored. This is even more true today with the widespread use of social media and polarizing news. We suffer all kinds of "secondary traumas" that keep us from ever feeling rested and restored. We need to unplug completely, even for brief moments. This is possible no matter how hectic our schedules are. Pastor Hurmon went to a hill near his home for a single afternoon and sat under a tree on a blanket! Being alone for just a few hours was incredibly healing, and prepared him in advance for unexpected chaos that occurred the next day.
- 2. Jesus modeled the use of silence and solitude for us.** He consistently sought out *eremos*. That means a lonely place, or a quiet place, or the wilderness. This was where Jesus went before He started His ministry. [Luke 5:15-16 \(NIV\)](#) tells us that He often "withdrew to lonely places and prayed." He also knew it was important for His followers to do the same thing. In [Mark 6:31-34 \(NIV\)](#) Jesus took His disciples away to "a quiet place to get some rest." He understands the weariness that can overwhelm us. Just as Jesus needed restorative breaks, so do we!
- 3. We can hear God's voice during periods of silence and solitude.** Solitude is not the same thing as isolation. We are not cut off from God. In fact, the opposite is true. Solitude means we are alone with God, and completely attuned to Him. Sometimes we can only hear God speak to us when we slow down. Why? Because God does not need to show His power. In [1 Kings 19:11-12 \(NIV\)](#), God was not in the storm, the earthquake, or the fire. God was "a gentle whisper." To hear a whisper, we must be silent and ready to hear Him speak to us. Listen for the voice that builds us up, not tears us down. God's voice will always be gentle and kind, even when He is bringing conviction or repentance. There are always false voices with deceptive messages. God's voice is full of the deepest love for us.

DISCUSSION

- 1) HEAR** - Living our best life is all about saying yes to Jesus and organizing our life around His message. To do that, we must create space in our lives. This silence allows us to deepen our relationship with Him. If we give God a chance, He will speak to us softly and lovingly. Receiving God's love will restore and renew us, and make every day our best day. When you assess your daily rhythm, is there space for pauses, prayer, and soul reflection? What are the moments in your day that fill your soul in positive ways?
- 2) UNDERSTAND** - Consider [1 Kings 19:11-12 \(NIV\)](#). Slowing down is hard for all of us. There are so many demands on our time. And yet the benefits of silence far outweigh the costs. What did it take for Isaiah to be able to hear the voice of God? How was he able to distinguish between God's voice and other voices and noises? As you take the time to listen for God's voice, also make sure to note what you're hearing. Specifically, what voice or thought do you most often hear in your moments of silence?
- 3) DO** - At the beginning of this sermon series, Pastor Hurmon asked us all to set aside 15 minutes every day. Instead of checking social media or watching TV, we should read the Gospel of Mark. God will find ways to deepen our understanding of Jesus through this dedicated time. For this week, we should expand that practice to include two one-minute pauses each day. Schedule them so you make sure to follow through. See you next Sunday!