



Psalm 23:3

Gathering

SOLITUDE

Emily Esfahai Smith writes: “As our lives become ever more connected, there are so few places we can go to truly be alone anymore.” We are always plugged into a screen...checking Facebook, reading emails, catching up with Netflix or playing a video game. We may be alone, but...are we really alone? Times of solitude are important and it’s a habit we may wish to consider adding to our lives.

There’s been a lot of attention devoted to how technology is scattering our attention and corroding our relationships, but we need to consider how it may be impairing our capacity for solitude. We’re so overstimulated!

If we desire to know who we are in Christ and want to grow in our relationship with Him, we need to be content with being alone with Him – with nothing vying for our attention. When we meditate, pray or journal, our thoughts become inspired by the Holy Spirit and direct our thinking. Time with the Lord – time in solitude – is critical to strengthen our walk with the Lord.

Where do you begin to unplug so that you can make space for solitude and reap the benefits of being still before the Lord. Psalm 23:3 from The Message says: “*True to Your Word, You let me catch my breath.*” Try putting your phone down for some intentional solitude moments. It’s a great time to charge your phone and yourself!

Scripture: Psalm 23:3 (VOICE) “*He makes me whole again.*”

After sharing the Scripture, use at least three of the questions below with your group:

- Do you find yourself ‘addicted’ to technology? What consumes most of your time – Facebook, games, Netflix?
- What concerns you about spending quiet time alone in solitude?
- Have you ever felt the rewards of spending quiet time with the Lord?
- How do you spend time catching your breath spiritually?

Complete your monthly report and turn it in to the Corps Officer.



Do you find yourself **'addicted'** to **technology**? What consumes most of your **time** – Facebook, games, Netflix?



What **concerns** you about spending quiet time alone in **Solitude**?



Have you ever felt the **rewards** of spending quiet time with the **Lord**?



How do you spend **time** catching your breath **Spiritually**?



Psalm 23:3 (VOICE)



Psalm 23:3 (VOICE)

If you desire to take steps to begin or enrich your personal time with the Lord try the discipline of **Centering Prayer**. Centering Prayer is a popular method of meditation used by some Christians, placing a strong emphasis on interior silence. ... The name was taken from Thomas Merton's description of contemplative prayer (*a much older and more traditional practice*) as prayer that is "centered entirely on the presence of God." Here are some suggested steps:

Set aside 10 minutes for this exercise. This may seem like an eternity at first, but as you continue to practice, your soul will desire more time. Set a timer if that helps you to be less concerned about when to stop.

Settle into a comfortable position.

Intentionally place yourself in the presence of God, in the center of His love (*This is about awareness and acknowledgment, not geography or theology*).

Choose a simple word, phrase or verse from Scripture that expresses your desire for God (*e.g. love, peace, grace, Jesus, presence*). Let this word guard your attention.

Take time to become quiet. It is not unusual for the first minutes to be filled with many noisy thoughts. It might even happen the first few times you try. Don't be discouraged. Don't worry about those noisy thoughts.

Let them go. Gently return your attention to the center of God's presence and love by repeating your word, phrase or Scripture that you selected. Let this draw your attention back to Jesus.

Be with Jesus. Listen. Be still.

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