

Working Out Our Faith: Home Edition

A Week of Silence

The title above sounds a bit scary and intimidating, doesn't it? A week of silence – can you imagine!? Most of us have trouble imagining a day of silence, an hour of silence, perhaps even a full minute of total silence is an uncomfortable proposition.

This week we invite you to engage in a series of daily “Silence Muscle Building” challenges. Embrace the challenges to whatever degree ~~you are comfortable~~ --- **actually, no.** We invite you to embrace the challenges to whatever degree you are able to stretch outside of your comfort zone, believing God has good things waiting for you on the other side.

Mix and match them as you like; try a new one each day or combine them as the week progresses. Whatever you do engage it with your whole heart, listening for all that God wants to say in the space you've left open to hear his voice.

Monday

Be completely silent as you eat your meals today, even as a family. Engage attentively to what you are doing as you eat. Try to keep your mind from wandering. Allow God to nourish your soul, as you nourish your body. Debrief as a family after.

Tuesday

Silence is as much about eliminating outside voices as it is learning to quiet our own. Today eliminate all the outside 'voices' you tend to listen to for a half or full day. Keep all radio/music/TV etc. off while you drive, work, clean or cook.

Wednesday

Practice 10 minutes of centering, silent prayer today. Follow the instructions offered below.

Thursday

Refrain from talking from Breakfast through to Dinner today. If you must communicate do it via writing, but try to make this an experiment of true silence as much as possible.

Friday

Practice 30 minutes of attentive silence at some point today. You may find it helpful to go for a walk as you do this, or to work in the garden or on a simple hands-on project. Whatever you do, try to practice this silence very attentively, listening carefully for God's voice to you in those moments.

Saturday

In another attempt to quiet the outside voices, refrain from any engagement with news and/or social media today. Close the cultural conversation out of your mind, heart and spirit for one day, refrain from adding your voice to it at the same time.

Sunday

We're not prescribing a specific exercise for you today. We encourage you to do an intentional practice of silence... but we will be silent as to what the specific experiment should be. Simply listen for God to guide you, as to how silence should appear in your life today. 😊

How To Practice Centering Prayer

The goal of Centering Prayer is simply to quiet the heart and rest in God alone

Sit in an upright, attentive posture in a way that allows for an erect spine and open heart. Place your hands in your lap.

Choose a sacred word or image as a symbol that you will use during this time of prayer.

Gently close your eyes and bring to mind the sacred word or image as your anchor and a symbol of your desire to be open to the presence and action of God within you.

Your sacred symbol is intended to be the same every time you pray. It helps to ground you in the present moment, allowing you to give your undivided loving, yielded attention to God. (Choose a name for God or a characteristic for God like, Love, Peace, Grace etc.)

Silently, with eyes closed, recall your sacred symbol to begin your prayer time. As you notice your thoughts, gently return to your sacred word. Do this however many times you notice your thoughts.

Stay in the loving quieting presence of God for as long as you need or want to. When your prayer period is over, transition slowly from your prayer practice to your surroundings.

Note: 20 minutes is recommended with centering prayer, but you can begin with 2-5 minutes and gradually work your way up over time

***"Watch your step when you enter the house of God.
Be ready to listen quietly rather than rushing in
to offer up a sacrifice to foolish people,
for they have no idea that what they do is evil.
Do not be too hasty to speak your mind before God
or too quick to make promises you won't keep,
for God is in heaven and you are on earth.
Therefore, watch your tongue;
let your words be few."***

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 (VOICE)

Bonus Experiences from our Spiritual Practices Page

Holy Spirit Prayer Experience

(available in PDF, Audio or Video)

<https://southridgechurch.ca/spiritualpractices/meditations/>

→ Choose "Holy Spirit Prayer" from the menu

Listening Prayer Experience

<https://southridgechurch.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Listening-Prayer.pdf>