

Silence As Intimacy with God



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by [Kim Butts](#)

"But oh! God is in his holy Temple! Quiet everyone – a holy silence. Listen!" Habakkuk 2:20 MSG

"But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." Luke 5:16

"Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him..." Psalm 37:7a

Jesus frequently separated Himself from the busy, noisy life of His ministry to be alone in the Presence of His Father. Scripture teaches clearly how He repeatedly went to quiet, lonely places to pray. Jesus drew apart in order to hear from

God and to be refreshed and renewed in the Presence of His Father. Because of this disciplined intimacy, Jesus was able to commune with God and discern His voice in the midst of the noise and activity around Him. If this was the regular rhythm of the life of Jesus, it should be so for us as well.

Dallas Willard states, "God's provision for us and for His work through us is adequate. We do not have to 'make it happen.' We must stop shouldering the burdens of 'outcomes.' These are safely in His hands. Someone insightfully said, 'The greatest threat to devotion to Christ is service for Christ.' Allowing service for Christ to steal our devotion to Him is a radical failure in personal soul care. But it is one from which the practice of communing with Christ in times of solitude and silence can deliver us."

If we can't hear God in the silence, how can we ever hope to hear Him in the constant hammering din of everyday life? It is difficult to separate ourselves at times from all of the spiritual "do-ing" in order to take the time necessary to listen for His voice, no matter what form it takes (that's entirely up to Him). Often, we make a perfunctory attempt to be still and know that He alone is God, when we are really consumed with wondering "how long is this going to take before I hear something?" Perhaps a key lesson within silence is to learn how to be content in the Presence of God whether He chooses to speak or not. A sweet memory came back to me while writing this. I remember one late night when my husband and I discovered it had started to snow. We turned out the lights and sat snuggled together on the couch just watching in perfect silence...no words were spoken. Simply being together in that moment was enough.

Our purpose for silence must never be attached to an agenda in order to "get" something from God. Our intent is to simply be in His presence...and if we learn how to be content there...we will become in time, a prepared, consecrated vessel, ready to hear from Him when He chooses to speak. Silence teaches us

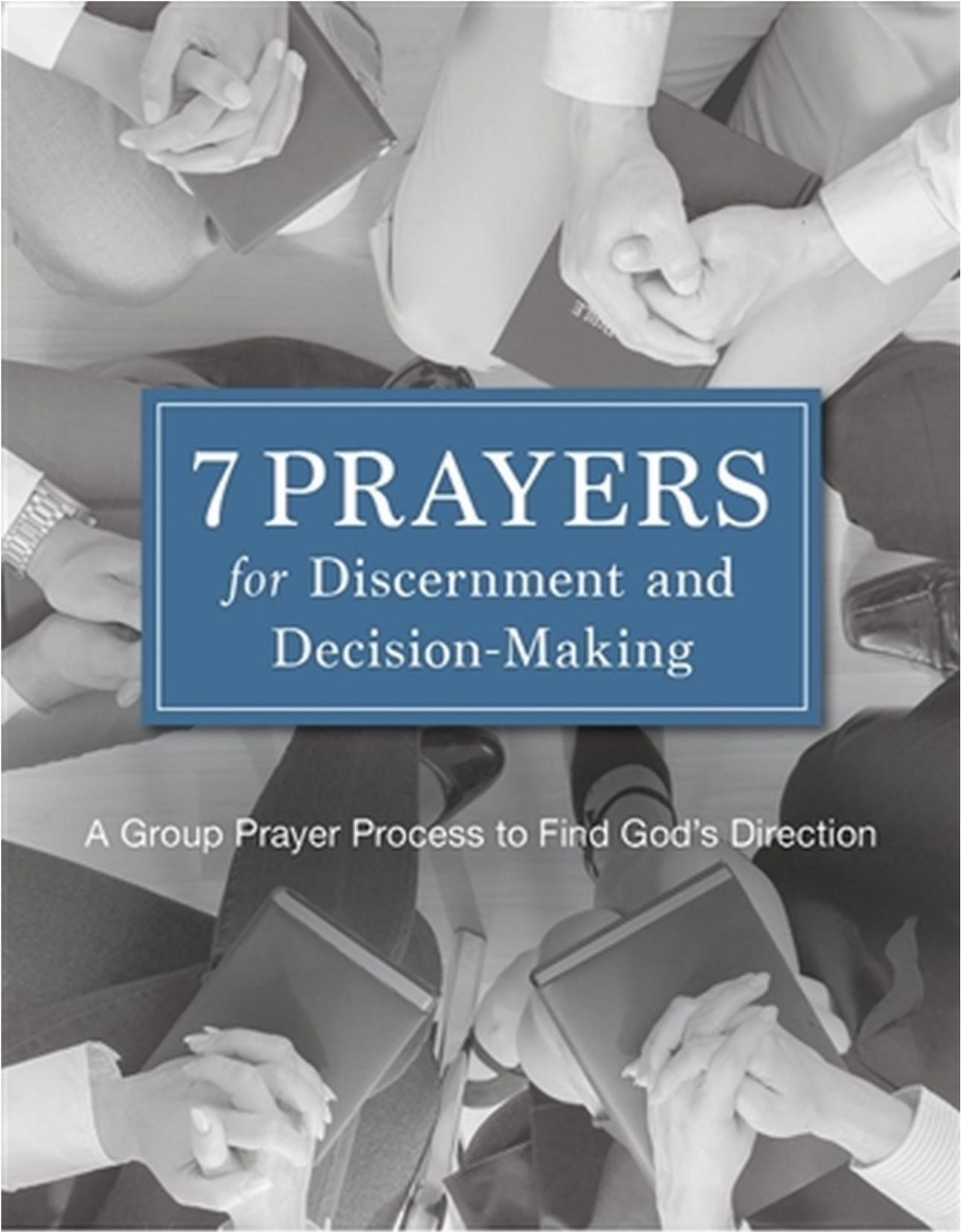
contentment in waiting. Can the knowledge of His presence be sufficient in your every day life?

How do we make the transition from silence to carrying His Presence into whatever each day brings to us as Jesus did so seamlessly? Carving small moments of stillness into my day often helps...little mini Sabbaths of rest such as taking a walk, gazing out a window, putting on headphones to block out the noise around me, etc. There are creative ways to be still, but it is definitely a discipline that needs to be nurtured.

“In a noise-polluted world, it is even difficult to hear ourselves think let alone try to be still and know God. Yet it seems essential for our spiritual life to seek some silence, no matter how busy we may be. Silence is not to be shunned as empty space, but to be befriended as fertile ground for intimacy with God.” Susan Muto

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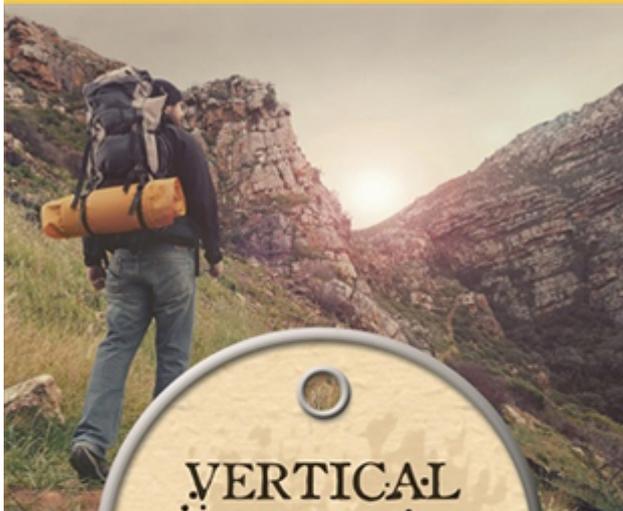
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