

Silence and Solitude

Wednesday Night
September 30, 2009

"Where shall the world be found, where will the word resound? Not here, there is not enough silence." T.S. Eliot

- Loneliness is inner emptiness. Solitude is inner fulfillment.
- Solitude is more a state of mind and heart than it is a place.
- There is a solitude of the heart that can be maintained at all times.

Jesus lived in inward heart solitude

Matthew 4.1-11 –

Luke 6.12 –

Matthew 14.13 –

Matthew 14.23 –

Mark 1.35 –

Luke 5.16 –

Matthew 17.1-9 –

Matthew 26.36-49 –

"Let him who cannot be alone beware of community Let him who is not in community beware of being alone ... Each by it self has profound pitfalls and perils" Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Silence and Solitude

- Without silence there is no solitude
- Though silence sometimes involves the absence of speech, it always involves the act of listening.

There is an old proverb that says basically -- All those who open their mouths, close their eyes

James 3.1-12 –

"It is easier to be silent altogether than to speak with moderation." Thomas a Kempis

Eccles. 3.7 –

Control is the key.

The disciplined person is the person who can do what needs to be done when it needs to be done.

Proverbs 25.11 –

The Sacrifice of Fools

Eccles. 5.1-2 –

- The sacrifice of fools is humanity initiated religious talk.
- One reason we can hardly bear to remain silent is that it makes us feel so helpless.
- Silence is one of the deepest Disciplines of the spirit simply because it puts the stop on all self-justification.

The tongue is a thermometer and thermostat

Thermometer: it gives us our spiritual temperature.

Thermostat: it regulates our spiritual temperature.

"Real Silence, real stillness, really holding one's tongue comes only as the sober consequence of spiritual stillness."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The Steps of Solitude and Silence

1. Take advantage of the little solitudes
2. Develop a quiet place designed for silence or solitude
3. Discipline ourselves so that our words are few and full
4. Occasionally go one entire day without words.
5. Every 3 months retreat from everything for 3-24 hours for the purpose of reorienting your goals.

"It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my brothers. The more solitary that I am the more affection I have for them ... Solitude and silence teach me to love my brothers for what they are, not for what they say."

Thomas Merton