

A Publication of the Winnetka Ave. Church of Christ

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ISOLATION: SOLITUDE

“A celebrity is a person who works hard all his life to be come well-known, then wears dark glasses to avoid being recognized.” The quote is from a comedian from the 1940’s and 1950’s by the name of Fred Allen. Allen was noted as being topically pointed and bordered on being an absurdist in his comedy. But in the noted quote, he seems to hit the nail squarely on the head. Fame does have a tendency to bring about a loss of privacy, coupled with a rabid feverishness of attention. Hence the need for going incognito; the longing for solitude, isolation.

After Jesus had fed the 5,000 as found recorded in John, chapter six, notice what is seen in verse fifteen. “*Jesus therefore perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force, to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.*” Throughout the synoptic gospels Matthew, Mark and Luke are quick to point out that Jesus was known to seek out solitude. “*But the news about Him was spreading even further and great multitudes were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But He Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.*” (Luke 5:15-16)

Jesus knew the importance of what we today refer to as “decompressing” and alone time with the Father. Inasmuch as Jesus is to be our example, we would do well to emulate Him in all aspects, including the need to turn down the volume so to speak in our life. We may not be a celebrity with an entourage, nevertheless the day by day rigors of dealing with people can weigh anyone down.

“*But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut the door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay*

you.” (Matthew 6:6) Jesus after learning of the horrific death of John, the baptizer, went off to “a lonely place” (see Matthew 14:1-13) He needed the solitude. We as well need to turn off the distractions in life and really center on our relationship with God.

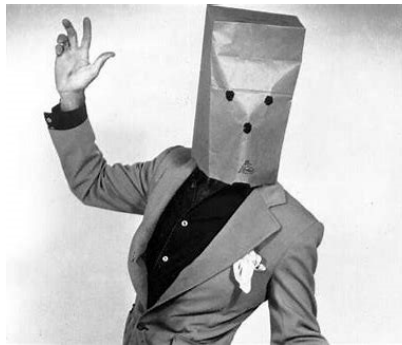
When was the last time you fully focused on not only going to God in prayer, but also taking the time to fully ponder what He has said in His word? In the quietness of being alone.

“*When I remember Thee on my bed, I meditate on Thee in the night watches, for Thou hast been my help, and in shadow of Thy wings I sing for joy.*” (Psalms 63:6-7) “*I will remember my song in the night; I will meditate with my heart; and my spirit ponders.*” (Psalms

77:6) “*Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer.*” (Psalms 19:14)

It would seem, but looking at the life of Jesus as He walked among mankind, recognized the need for balance in life; the public part and the private solitude for prayer and introspection. “*And in the early morning, while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and was praying there.*” (Mark 1:35) What is striking is that Matthew, Mark, Luke as well as John made careful note of Jesus seeking time to isolate Himself. More than suggesting such was important to Him. Accept the challenge to turn down the noise in life and make a daily appointment for yourself for solitude wherein you will spend time in reflection of God’s word and in prayer.

“*Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.*” (Isaiah 40:31) Find time to contemplate and pray and watch your spiritual well-being grow. (wbe)



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