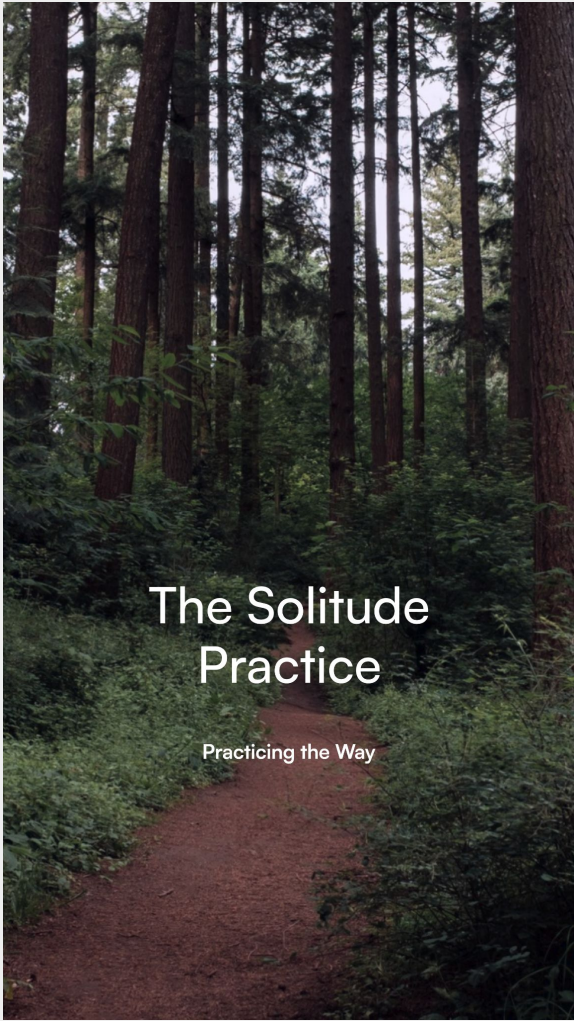


A photograph of a dirt path winding through a dense forest. Tall, slender trees line the path, and the ground is covered in green ferns and other undergrowth. The lighting is soft, suggesting a quiet time of day.

The Solitude Practice

Practicing the Way



The Solitude Practice

Week One:
The Quiet Place

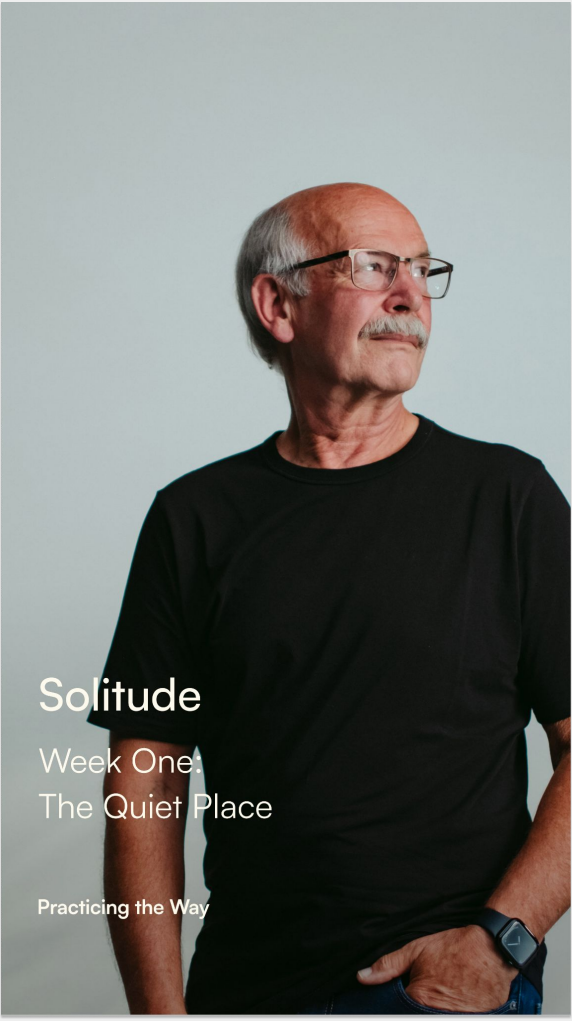
Week Two:
Encounter With Our Self

Week Three:
Encounter With Our Enemy

Week Four:
Encounter With Our God

Practicing the Way





Solitude

Week One:
The Quiet Place

Practicing the Way



Solitude —

Intentional time in the
quiet with ourselves
and God.

Practicing the Way



Psalm 23:1-3

The *Lord* is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

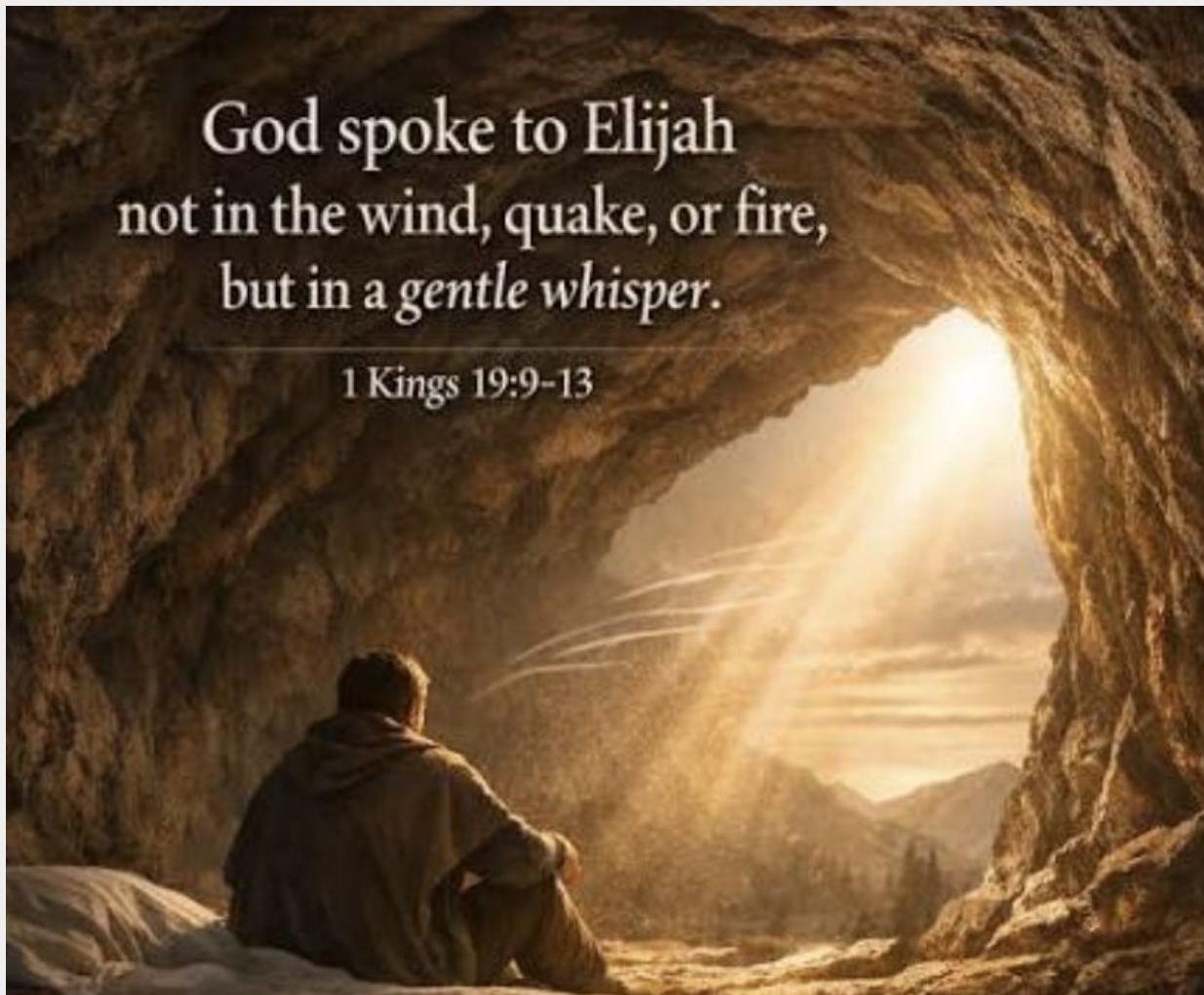
A scenic landscape photograph featuring a vibrant green field in the foreground with a small blue house. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a sky with soft, purple and blue clouds. The text is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

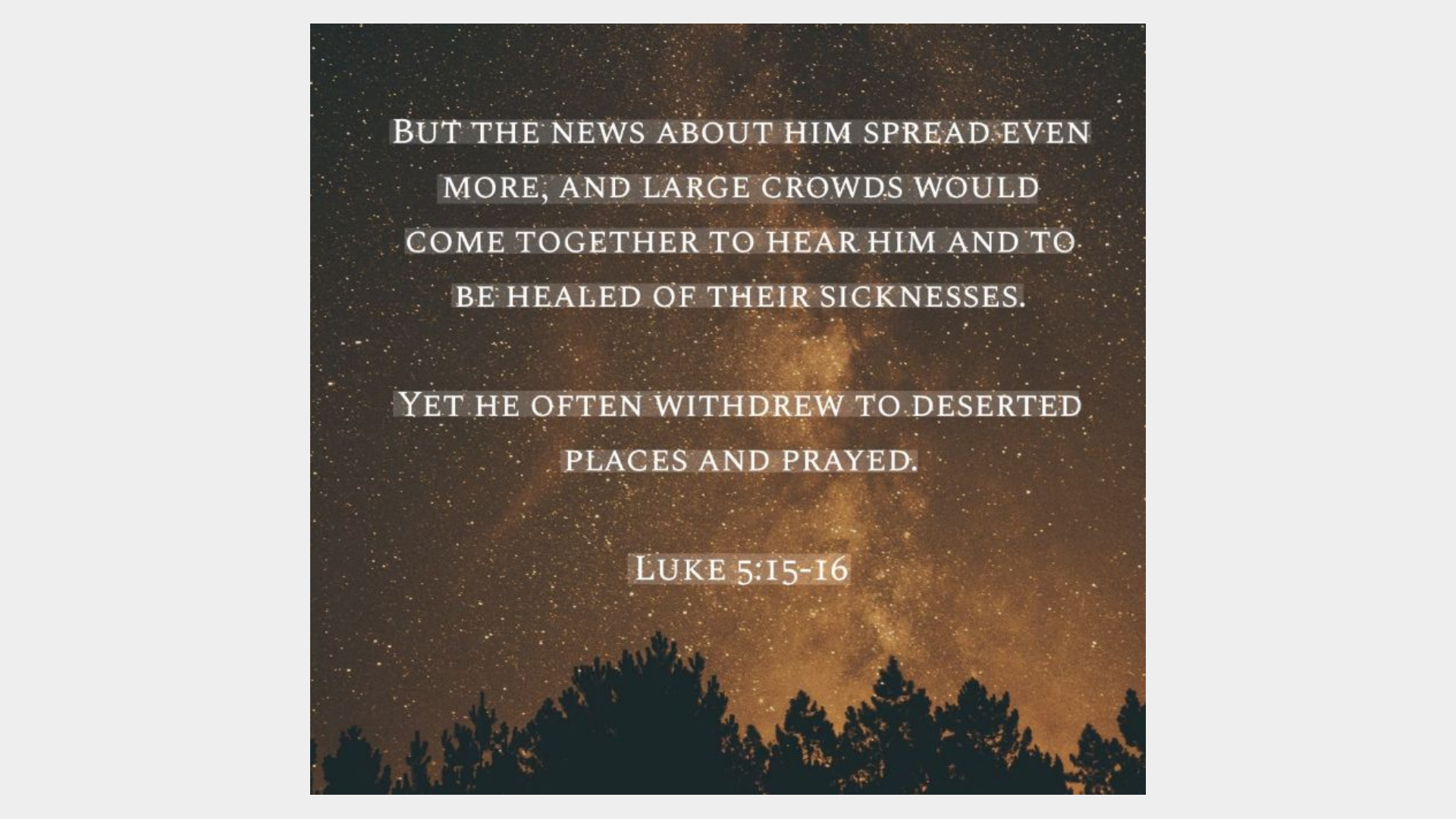
“Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth.”

— Psalm 46:10

God spoke to Elijah
not in the wind, quake, or fire,
but in a *gentle whisper*.

1 Kings 19:9-13





BUT THE NEWS ABOUT HIM SPREAD EVEN
MORE, AND LARGE CROWDS WOULD
COME TOGETHER TO HEAR HIM AND TO
BE HEALED OF THEIR SICKNESSES.

YET HE OFTEN WITHDREW TO DESERTED
PLACES AND PRAYED.

LUKE 5:15-16

ἔρημος

erēmos / desert; desolate; wilderness



*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan
and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ...*

- Luke 4:1 NIV -



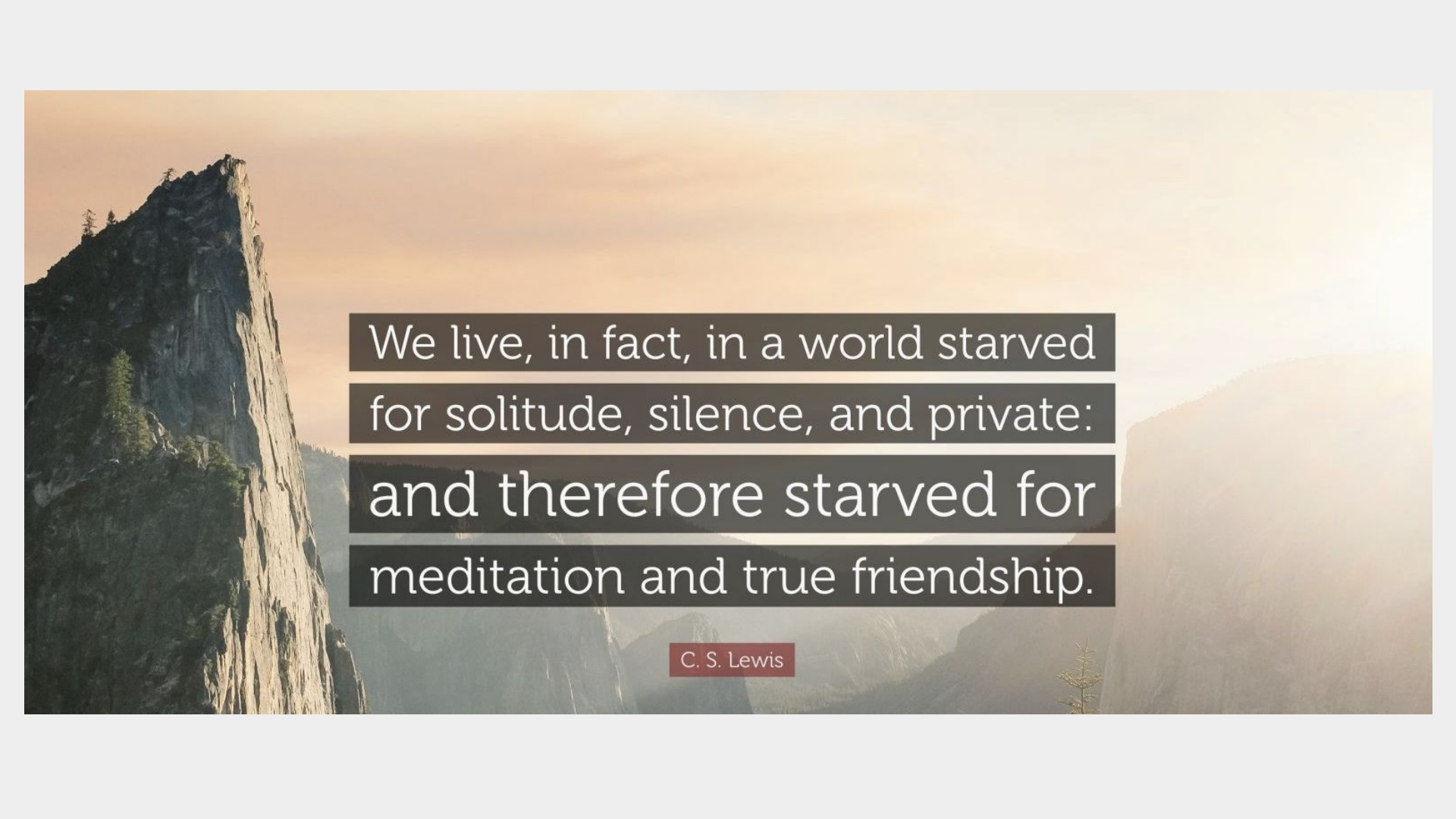
**We need to find God, and he cannot
be found in noise and restlessness.
God is the friend of silence.**

Mother Teresa



"Only **solitude and silence**... can take the world off my back and forever release me from both hurry and loneliness. They open the door to productive engagement with other [spiritual] disciplines."

Dallas Willard

A dramatic landscape photograph of a mountain peak, likely El Capitan in Yosemite National Park, under a warm, hazy sky at sunset or sunrise. The image is used as a background for a quote. The quote is presented in four lines, each within a dark rectangular box. The text is white and serif. The author's name is in a small red box at the bottom center.

We live, in fact, in a world starved
for solitude, silence, and private:
and therefore starved for
meditation and true friendship.

C. S. Lewis



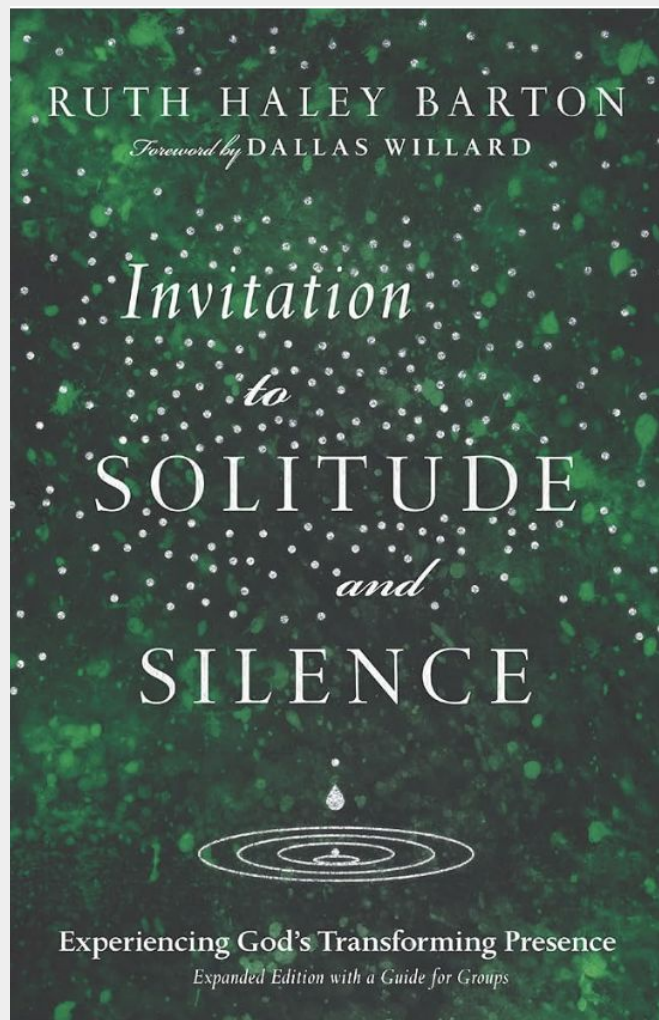
Without solitude it is virtually impossible to live a spiritual life....We do not take the spiritual life seriously if we do not set aside some time to be with God and listen to him.

— *Henri Nouwen* —

You will find
only what you
bring in.

YODA





**When we sit quietly in God's presence,
the sediment that is swirling in our souls
begins to settle.**

Ruth Haley Barton

**The most important thing about
solitude and silence is... showing up and
letting God do the rest.**

Ruth Haley Barton



The practice of solitude and silence is radical in our society where productivity is expected.

Ruth Haley Barton

Discussion questions: In triads (groups of 3)

- How are you currently practicing solitude, silence, and stillness in your spiritual life?
- What are some examples of external noises in your life? What are some examples of internal noises in your life?
- What do you hope the practice of solitude will add to your life?

1. Begin each day with a few minutes of solitude, silence, and stillness. For some, at night before bedtime, or during a lunch break works better.

2. Find a quiet place at home or outside in nature that is distraction free. Make sure your phone is in another room and settle in a comfortable position.

3. Begin to take long, slow breaths from your belly all the way up through your lungs. Inhale through your nose, exhale through your mouth.

4. With each inhale, prayerfully welcome the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit into the deepest place within you. You may want to repeat a simple prayer like "Come Holy Spirit" or "Lord, I am here."

5. Visualize the love of the Father being poured out in Christ and into the depth of your being by the Holy Spirit. Or you may want to listen for God's voice and see what comes to mind. Don't force anything, just be with God.

6. You may want to continue your time in solitude by praying a psalm or reading a story from the Gospels or a passage from Scripture. Or by praying over your life. Or by journaling to God. Follow your heart.

Start where you are now, not where you want to be. Aim for several minutes of solitude, silence, and stillness. Then gradually build on that time. Just show up every day.

Solitude is not meant to be only learned but it is a practice. An ancient practice by Jesus and other Biblical people.

Let solitude with God be the first thing you do in the morning or last thing before you go to sleep. Do not look at your phone, listen to music/podcast, or even read a book. Let God be your only input.

Remember, this is an invitation. God is inviting us to be with Him.

Be patient with yourself.
Just show up every day.

Our Creator, Our Father,
Our Lord is delighted to be with you.

You are doing well in solitude when you show up again and again.