

CREATING SPACE FOR GOD



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by [Kim Butts](#)

I have a sign on my office bulletin board that states, "Sit in silence for ten minutes every day." It is not as easy as it sounds; however, silence is an important discipline to cultivate in one's journey towards Christ-likeness. I wish I could say I was good at practicing this discipline, but it is my goal to eventually get to the place where the exercise of silence strengthens my ability to be attentive to God as I go about my normal everyday activities.

Ten minutes isn't a very long time, but it seems eternity when there is much to do and many things on my mind. Yet, the discipline of silence, if nurtured well, will result in a deeper knowing of the heart of God. How can God speak to me if

I am always talking...or otherwise engaged? If I make room for Him to speak, perhaps my doing and thinking will be more kingdom-focused, and my prayers more intent upon and aligned with God's heart. And, hopefully my activity following silence will be filled with obedient, Christ-like pursuits. Silence is not easy in our noisy culture; however, as Henri Nouwen states, "I have never met anyone seriously interested in the spiritual life who did not have a growing desire for silence."

In the spiritual discipline of silence, we create space for God to speak. How we engage God in this time can be in a variety of ways; however, I will touch on two. First, we can wait silently for God to speak directly to us...with an expectation that He will give us a word or a revelation regarding some clarity that is needed or if there is something we have been struggling with, such as a choice that needs to be made. It is a time of intentional listening for the purpose of discerning the voice of the Father. I often use the words of young Samuel, who said, "Speak Lord, Your servant is listening." Patient waiting is involved in this form of silence. It can be hard work, but as Nouwen wrote, "Silence is the furnace of transformation."

Secondly, there is a discipline of silence that is simply "keeping company with God." It isn't the time to ask questions or express what is on our hearts. If we fill the silence with our thoughts and questions –there is no true silence. In this kind of silent prayer, we can allow ourselves simply to be with God – and that is enough. There is no void because God is present. We are aware of His presence because we are paying attention. Susan Muto stated, "Silence is not to be shunned as empty space, but to be befriended as fertile ground for intimacy with God."

Jesus, of course, is our prime example of one who waited patiently on God. He stated that He never did or said anything that the Father did not instruct Him to do or say. We know from Scripture that Jesus spent a lot of time in silent prayer

– waiting and listening. But we also see our Living Christ moving throughout His day with continual wisdom and grace – He didn't always need to stop before every healing or word spoken to draw apart for a private exchange with God, for that conversation was always part of Him. He had times of extended solitude with God, but was always attentive to the voice He knew so well no matter what circumstance He found Himself involved in. This is prayer in everyday life. "Silence is praise to you, Zion-dwelling God, and also obedience. You hear the prayer in it all" (Psalm 65:1-2 MSG).

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Biography

Kim serves as the Executive Director of Harvest Prayer Ministries which she co-founded in 1993 with her late husband, Dave (1953-2022). Her ministry involves teaching/training and consulting as well as writing and developing resources. She is content coordinator for HPM's teaching platform, PrayerU.com

and also compiles and edits HPM's free daily devotional, [Connection!](#) as well as [Prayer Tip Tuesday](#).

Kim has written multiple books and has published articles in a variety of magazines and publications. She is a member of America's National Prayer Committee and serves as President of Gospel Revivals, Inc. (Herald of His Coming).

Kim has a BA in Psychology and a Masters degree in Spiritual Formation and Leadership.

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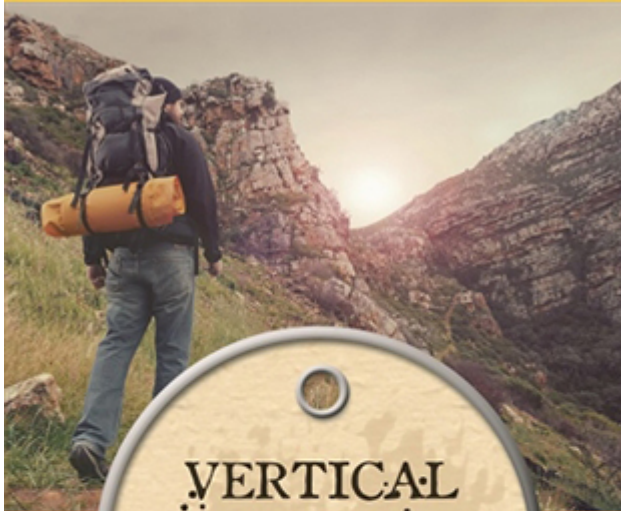
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