7.7- Silence

Take some time to read and reflect on the following

You may recall from 9.12, where we talked about contemplative prayer, that I mentioned an entire week would be devoted to exploring that practice further. Well, this is that week. “Contemplation” in a Christian sense is a technical term- it has a unique meaning apart from the dictionary definition. Specifically, contemplation as used here is a certain manner of prayer that is rooted in the presence of God and seeks to shape the practitioner into a certain mode of being. A contemplative Christian will be non-anxious, non-reactionary, peaceful, contented, and rooted deeply in the reality that God is around us in all circumstances. The way to become that sort of person is to practice contemplation until it bleeds over into your life as a whole. So, this week, we will be focusing more specifically on what it looks like to practice contemplation. To do so, we will break it down into its three most basic components: silence, solitude, and meditation.

Silence, solitude, and meditation are the elements that become blended together in the Christian practice of contemplation.

Now, before this all sounds too hyper-spiritual or mystical and you think that it’s not for you, let me stress that nothing could be further from the truth. Contemplation is for everyone. The main idea is that we actually can, and should, connect with the presence of God, but that some of our most natural rhythms make this challenging for us. That is why we put silence, solitude, and meditation into practice. And today, we begin with silence. We practice silence so that God will have the floor to speak.

We practice silence first and foremost because we believe the living God can and does speak to us.

Silence is often our first step into a different sort of life. Silence makes us give up some of our illusion of control over our lives, and it removes layers of distraction and distance we put between us and deep things. You will likely find that spending time in silence allows the hard things that you have buried deep or avoided thinking about to finally rise to the surface. These are usually the things that only God can truly help us with, and therefore the first things God hopes to talk to us about.

Take some time to listen to and reflect on the following

Silence

Take some time to put the following into practice

Spend at least five minutes in silence. Try your best to get to a place with as little ambient noise as possible, with the understanding that many of us might not have a place to go for complete silence. At the very least, in the quietest place you can be in, do not contribute to the noise at all. This might even just be driving in the car without any music or podcasts playing. Don't put too many stipulations on what this looks like beyond simply trying to be silent. We will be spending time in silence for multiple other days this week, so this is a good test case for a good time/place to find, as well as helpful to gauge how challenging being silent will be for you.