



Stillness, solitude, and silence are three contemplative prayer practices that are needed now more than ever, as we live lives of increased noise, interruption, and busyness. Which of these three causes your heart to race a little faster as you ponder its practice? Chances are, that is the practice you need most. This week, try to slip in a ten-minute practice each day and see how your outlook changes.

Adult to Small Child

Read: [Luke 8:24](#).

Reflect: The story of Jesus calming the waves and creating calm is a story parents and young children need to remember on an almost daily basis. There is always motion and sometimes a little bit of chaos, too! It's a gift to find moments of stillness, and to call on Jesus to provide them. Where are the moments of calm in your life? How can you find more of them?

Respond: Pray with the waves! This prayer simulates Jesus calming the waves of the boat and can be done with even the smallest baby. Sit on the floor with your child protected safely in your lap. Rock or sway from side to side saying, "Swish, swish swish, swish." After a few seconds say, "And now we are still!" When you say the word "still," immediately stop rocking and feel the stillness in your body. Babies and little ones love to anticipate what will happen with the word "still." If your child is old enough, take the time to explain the story of Jesus calming the waves.

Adult to Elementary Child

Read: [Luke 9:10-17](#).

Reflect: This story, the feeding of the multitude, is so important to Christians that it is the only story besides the resurrection that appears in all four gospels, and in two of the gospels it appears twice. Jesus had been teaching a crowd about God's kingdom, and healing the sick among them, all day, and toward evening, the disciples told Jesus to send the crowd away, since there was no place for them to find food or drink, or spend the night. Jesus was tired, I'm guessing, and tired of the disciples, too: "You give them something to eat." They only have five loaves of bread and two fish among them, but Jesus takes them and gives thanks to God for them and when all is said and done, "everyone ate until they were full, and the disciples filled twelve baskets with the leftovers." We complain about not having enough, and then God shows us that there is enough, and more than enough. In this upside-down kingdom of God, we can fill more baskets with the leftovers than we started with in the first place!

Respond: How will you give thanks today for what you have, and what you can share? Learn a new table grace for dinner, write a thank-you note to God, draw a picture of what you are grateful for, and as a family, make a plan to give to others from what has been so generously and abundantly given to you.

Adult to Youth or Young Adult

Read: [Luke 10](#).

Reflect: In Luke 10, Jesus visits two women, Martha and Mary. Jesus tells Martha to stop running around like a crazy person trying to prepare things for him, but to instead just spend time with him like Mary is doing. The current generation of teens and young adults has been said to be the most stressed-out generation in history. Yes, it's true that certain work must get done--school, college applications, extracurricular responsibilities--but have we booked ourselves so tightly that we haven't left room for Jesus at all?

Respond: Together, go to the kitchen and each choose your favorite beverage container. This could be a coffee mug, a travel tumbler or just a glass you enjoy drinking water from. Set those specific cups visibly on the counter for the rest of Lent. At least once a week, be sure those cups get used to drink a favorite beverage *together*. Practice simply spending time together. Talk about your day, your week, and where you saw Jesus in your experiences or in another person.

Adult to Adult

Read: [Luke 10:21-42](#).

Reflect: Are you easily distracted? Like Martha, I'm too busy preparing the house to welcome Jesus instead of positioning my heart at the feet of Christ like Mary. God invites us to rest, listen, and put away our distractions. We are more attuned with God when we simply stop trying to make perfect the world around us. When my grandmother comes over, I feel like the entire house must be in order, everything in its place, not one vestige of disorder obvious. Because she is a hard worker who maintains a clean home, it makes it difficult for me to let her come into an untidy place. Yet when she visits, my attention to her is what she values most. What would happen if we put away the distraction of perfection and instead focused on being present?

Respond: Grab a paper to write on. Let the dew of the day settle on your brow. For one moment sit in the presence of God. Let God unfold promises and stories of grace. By writing down your gratitude, offer thanksgiving with a full and undistracted heart. What do you see or feel? Write that down as you rest in God. Take as long as you'd like.

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