

The Place of Silence - Meditation for 1st December 2020

Looking through photographs we had taken when on times away last year, I came across two images which were about "Silence".

The first was seen in a busy little town in the north of Mallorca as we walked into the hills during a lovely Spring...



To quote

Firstly,

"SILENCE"

"...a species in danger of extinction".

How true that is for me who seems to need sound in my life all the time - the radio, television or music, a voice at the end of the phone.....

Secondly,

"SILENCE"

Do not fear him, he is harmless, do not scare him away, enjoy him..."

I started (and am still) thinking about why I need "noise" all the time.

The second image was taken in November, at the end of Autumn, at one of our favourite magical tree places – Dawyck, one of the group of Scottish Botanical Gardens, near Peebles.



"SILENCE SPACE"

Reading the text on this board – I asked myself the question then, as I do now, "Why do I not turn off my phone, rest and enjoy peace and tranquility ...

Why do I not take time out, once in a while?"

Why do I find it so difficult to take time out, to be silent and not be busy?

Even at night, when I try and free my mind, pray and empty myself of all thoughts, and when I practise going in to the core of my being and try listening to God, I still find it difficult to stay in that reviving silence which time with our Lord brings. I often end up turning on the radio to be lulled to sleep by the *World Service!*

Do you remember the words from the Simon and Garfunkel song, *The Sound of Silence*?

*Hello darkness, my old friend
I've come to talk with you again
Because a vision softly creeping
Left its seeds while I was sleeping
And the vision that was planted in my brain
Still remains
Within the sound of silence*

As I ponder these things I look into Scripture to explore the “silence” talked about there and the place(s) where God is in the silence.

In 1 Kings, 19, 11-13 we read about the Lord speaking to Elijah. The Lord said, *“Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but God was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.*

Psalm 62 , verse 1 – *For God alone my soul waits in silence;* and in verse 5 we read,

Find rest, O my soul, in God alone: my hope comes from him.

From Ecclesiastes 3, verse 7 - *A time to keep silence, and a time to speak.*

So often, in his busy ministry, Jesus took time out to be alone, be silent, pray and be with His Father.

In Luke 5, 16, *But he withdrew to the wilderness and prayed.*

In Matthew 26, 36-46, Jesus is in the garden of Gethsemane and three times he goes away from the disciples to pray... *Sit here, while I go yonder and pray....And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed...Again, for a second time he went away and prayed...So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time...*

I have returned to David Cole's book, *The Mystic Path of Meditation*, to once again think more deeply about *The Place of Silence* in my life, what it is and where it is. In Cole's book he quotes Meister Eckhart - *“If God is to speak into your soul, she must be completely still and quiet, only then can he speak into her”.*

To accompany this meditation, I offer you two resources.

Firstly, lovely words from the hymn, *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind* and a link to a sung version of it.

Drop your still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of your peace,
the beauty of your peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
your coolness and your balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire,
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm,
O still small voice of calm!

<https://youtu.be/WqOnjmr9Ah0>

Secondly, I am attaching for you, a beautiful photograph of the sea (at Brighton) sent to me on Sunday by my sister – I found it very calming and uplifting. Peace be with you all!

