

Meditation July 26th

I recently came across this quote

'The spirit of Joy and the spirit of Hurry cannot live in the same house.' (Evelyn Underhill)

All too often I find myself hurrying. Both physically, trying to fit everything in, or mentally, worrying about all the things I should be doing or people I should be seeing.

I have just finished reading a book that I have mentioned before, 'The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry' by John Mark Comer. He has also produced a workbook, in which he says the following:

'if you could measure the cumulative knowledge of human civilisation, from the year of Jesus birth, it took 1,500 years for it to double. But from there, it doubled again by 1750. From there, it doubled *every hundred years*, up until WW2. After the war, it doubled in 25 years. By the 80's, it was every 12 months.

Some current estimates put the number at *every twelve hours*.

So, if you were born the same year as Jesus, it would be a millennium and a half before the cumulative knowledge of the human race would double; if you're born today, it's doubled twice before dinner.'

Comer goes on to say the following:

"We have more information than any other generation in human history. In fact, we have so much information we often feel overwhelmed as vast terabytes of "news" constantly assail us via our phones and devices. This creates a paralysis in us. We then grow accustomed to this paralysis and live with it as our default.

We're used to hearing new information, even being *moved* by such information, and then *doing absolutely nothing* about it."

I recognise this feeling of being paralysed by too much information. There are so many podcasts to listen to, books to read, films to watch etc etc. In fact the choice can paralyse us and then rob us of enjoyment, because we think we should have chosen something different.

The bible says this in Ecclesiastes 1:8

'Everything is wearisome beyond description. No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied. No matter how much we hear, we are not content.'

We can never travel everywhere, see everything, learn everything, hear everything. And even if we could, we would still not be content. So if seeing

and hearing go do not bring contentment and leave us satisfied, we must look elsewhere.

Comer suggests four disciplines : Silence and Solitude, Simplicity , Sabbath, and Slowing. These are expanded upon in his book, mentioned above. You can also download his workbook on how to 'Unhurry' here : <https://johnmarkcomer.com/blog/unhurry>

Silence and solitude will resonate with those of us who meditate. It has been impressed on me yet again the need for times of stillness and quiet with God. Tim Keller has this to say

"Persons who meditate become people of substance who have thought things out and have deep convictions, who can explain difficult concepts in simple language, and who have good reasons behind everything they do. Many people do not meditate. They skim everything, picking and choosing on impulse, having no thought-out reasons for their behavior. Following whims, they live shallow lives."

Much of the above is summed up in a beautiful YouTube recording of the poem 'The Bright Field' by R S Thomas, set to Spem in alium by Thomas Tallis

I have seen the sun break through  
to illuminate a small field  
for a while, and gone my way  
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl  
of great price, the one field that had  
the treasure in it. I realise now  
that I must give all that I have  
to possess it. Life is not hurrying

on to a receding future, nor hankering after  
an imagined past. It is the turning  
aside like Moses to the miracle  
of the lit bush, to a brightness  
that seemed as transitory as your youth  
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

The link to the YouTube recording is here [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_TaedssNfE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_TaedssNfE)