

Take 20

A Soul Care Resource

Compiled by

Katherine M. Johnson, D.Min.

Take 20 is designed to be used for about 20 minutes of prayer and reflection. It is a collection of quotes, Scriptures, and hymns related to a specific topic. At the end an opportunity is given to practice Scripture-based Reflective Prayer.

It is in silence that we habitually release our own agendas and our need to control and become more willing and able to give ourselves to God's loving initiative. In silence we create space for God's activity rather than filling every minute with our own.
—Ruth Barton in *Invitation to Solitude and Silence*

Wordless prayer...is humble, simple, lowly prayer in which we experience our total dependence on God and our awareness that we are in God. Wordless prayer is not an effort to 'get anywhere,' for we are already there (in God's presence). It is just that we are not sufficiently conscious of our being there.

—William Shannon in *Silence on Fire*

SILENCE

The Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silent before Him.

Habakkuk 2:20

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.

Psalms 42:1-2



This waiting is not to be confused with passivity. Waiting on God in the silent places of the soul is an active waiting that contains a seed of expectancy and hope. We wait with the kind of anticipation a night watchman feels as he waits for the morning sun.... This is how we wait for God—with longing, with expectancy, with alert awareness, our whole self straining to catch the earliest possible glimpse of this God who comes.

—Ruth Barton in *Invitation to Solitude and Silence*

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God is infinitely patient. He will not push himself into our lives. He knows the greatest thing he has given us is our freedom. If we want habitually, even exclusively, to operate from the level of our own reason, he will respectfully keep silent. We can fill ourselves with our own thoughts, ideas, images and feelings. He will not interfere. But if we invite him with attention, opening the inner spaces with silence, he will speak to our souls, not in words or concepts, but in the mysterious way that Love expresses itself—by presence.

—M. Basil Pennington in *Centered Living*

- ◆ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

—Matthew 17:5

- ◆ I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning.

—Psalm 130:5-6

- ◆ Solitude and silence are not self-indulgent exercises for times when an overcrowded soul needs a little time to itself. Rather, they are concrete ways of opening to the presence of God....

—Ruth Barton in

Invitation to Solitude and Silence

There is no life of prayer without silence.

—Mother Teresa

We must silence every creature, we must silence ourselves to hear in the deep hush of the whole soul, the ineffable voice of the Spouse. We must bend the ear, because it is a gentle and delicate voice, only heard by those who no longer hear anything else.

—Francois Fenelon in *Christian Perfection*

After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.
—1 Kings 19:12

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He says, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

—Psalm 46:10

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The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

—Matthew 6:30-31



Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

by Gerard Moultrie

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly minded,
For with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth
Our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
In the body and the blood;
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of light descendeth
From the realms of endless day,
That the powers of hell may vanish
As the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six winged seraph,
Cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence,
As with ceaseless voice they cry:
Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Lord Most High!

Please take Psalm 46:10 (sidebar) and pray, using the following steps to guide your time with the Lord:

Four Stages of Reflective Prayer ©

1. **Read** – Read the verse slowly and prayerfully several times (out loud if possible), savoring the words and letting them sink in. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out.
2. **Reflect** – Now begin to think about the words or phrases that stood out to you. Come in faith with the expectation that the Lord will speak to you. Ask him a question such as “What does this mean?” to help you reflect more deeply. You may also think about the passage through the eyes of the author or someone mentioned in the verses. Write down any insights that God gives you.
3. **Respond** – Prayer is a two-way conversation with the Lord. Respond from your heart to what he has been revealing to you in his Word, especially taking time to listen to what he may be saying to you personally. You may want to write out your prayer to God and anything he says to you.
4. **Rest** – At any time, when you begin to sense the presence of the Lord, stop any mental effort you are making and just rest in and enjoy his presence. This is the time to savor the special moment of connection between you and God. Treasure God's Word in your heart.