

40 Days of Prayer and Fasting

October 23th

Daily Devotional #23

We Are in the Season of Listening

As We Ask, "What Is GOD Preparing Us/for Us to Do?"

An introduction to "Listening" (part 2 of 3)...

*Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed,
for His compassions never fail.*

*They are new every morning;
great is Your faithfulness.*

*I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion;
therefore I will wait for Him."*

*The LORD is good to those whose hope is in Him,
to the one who seeks Him;*

*it is good to wait quietly
for the salvation of the LORD.*

Lamentations 3:22–26 (NIV84)

Listening is much harder than it sounds (like that word play?). But that is what we are committing to do, and struggling to learn as we make ourselves available to GOD in this Season of Listening. We know GOD is faithful. We believe GOD is working in us and preparing us for (and preparing for us) good, even incredible, things so that His Kingdom is glorified and grows stronger and larger. But we are a people that want to "hit the ground running" and get busy doing the things that need doing. Waiting, being still, being silent before GOD and Listening for Him and to Him are difficult for us to do. We are, quite simply, so busy that to stop the inertial forces of our complexly busy lives in order to wait... to be still... to hush the world around us and listen for GOD's whisper, well, in all honesty, it feels impossible.

Congratulations to satan and his minions.

He (that foul angel of lies and darkness) has quietly and sneakily convinced us that we can squeeze one or two more things into our daily routine so many times over the years that we are overbooked, overdrawn, overstretched and, spiritually speaking, completely outwitted. What a demonically great plan to squeeze out GOD by

squeezing in one little extra thing (sometimes even good things) at a time until we are so full of ourselves, our schedules, and all the things we must attend to, that we have no time to wait, to be still, to be silent before our GOD.

It is a crushingly sad state of being... to be too busy for GOD. For ultimately it crushes us: our souls, our understanding of who we are and Whose we are, our understanding of what is truly Good and truly GOD, our understanding pure Love and real Life, our understanding of how deeply we are loved and treasured by that pure Love, real Life, and true GOD.

Henri Nouwen puts it like this:

Why is it so important that you (purposefully spend time) with God and God alone...? It's important because **it's the place in which you can listen to the voice of the One who calls you the beloved.** To pray is to listen to the One who calls you "my beloved daughter," "my beloved son," "my beloved child." **To pray is to let that voice speak to the center of your being, to your guts, and let that voice resound in your whole being. *Who am I? I am the beloved...***

(Henri Nouwen, "Moving from Solitude" 81-82.)

When we learn to sit in silence and truly wait on GOD, we will come to know who we are by knowing Whose we are and how deeply He loves and treasures us. When we allow that to genuinely manifest itself in the deepest parts of our soul, we will begin to rise with strength and courage in ourselves, our Family, our Father, and His call. When we are secure and strong in Him, we are prepared to represent Him well, honor Him fully, and rightly live "hallowed be Your name."

So, in this Season of Listening, fight to make time to wait on the Lord and be silent and still before Him. Put satan and his garbage-inducing tricks where they belong, and put GOD and His Kingship where it belongs. Rest in Him by waiting on Him. Invite Him to move in your life and in the life of Western Hills by being still before Him. Let Him speak to you, to us, by being silent in His presence. It is here we will discover Him. It is here He will guide us. It is here we will glorify Him...

*The LORD is good to those whose hope is in Him,
to the one who seeks Him;
it is good to wait quietly
for the salvation of the LORD.*

Lamentations 3: 26 (NIV84)