



**Second Sunday in Lent**

True silence—the absence of words, the absence of unnatural sound—is nearly impossible to find these days. Contemporary culture seems bent on filling our every waking moment with sound: round-the-clock newscasts, synthesized music, **We are so used to mundane noise by now that when a sudden silence falls across a room, we are unnerved and look around to see what just broke.**

Yet ancient spiritual wisdom says that **silence** is a prerequisite for spiritual growth. **Silence bestows many gifts. A practice of silence, for example, can diminish anxiety.** Our neurological system is designed to respond to danger; noise—especially loud, startling, or repetitious noise—drives up the adrenalin level in preparation for either doing battle or taking flight. **In a world that bombards us with sound, we often feel jumpy, overwhelmed, and edgy, the effect of endocrinal responses to perceived danger.**

**When we're all wound up we cannot focus on what's important only on what's urgent. Prayer often takes a distant place in our lives.** In silence, our outer senses can rest and our inner, spiritual senses—the ears and eyes of our soul, so sensitive and discerning—can shyly come forward and perceive what happening to us and to others. We begin to see and hear what is usually invisible and inaudible to us.

**The Sounds of Silence**

1. What percentage of your day are you intentionally silent? \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Is silence a something you need more of in your life? \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Do you feel stressed and anxious when things get quiet? \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Are you willing to risk being silent for spiritual health? \_\_\_\_\_.



**Au·thor·i ty**

Power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior

➤ **Authority makes things happen**

*“If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.”* Matthew 12:28

*“There are people who make things happen, there are people who watch things happen, and there are people who wonder what happened.”*

➤ **Authority is the point of conflict for growth**

*“What is truth?”* John 18:38

➤ **Who is the Authority in your life?**

- (1) **Controls your behavior** – past, beliefs, values, goals, hurts
- (2) **Governs your activities** – expectation, fear, acceptance, pride
- (3) **Determines your future** – success, failure, security, youth

**BY WHO'S AUTHORITY?**

**Real Hurts** - *“he saw the crowds and had compassion on them”* Matt. 9:36

Essential Quality – **TIME**

**Real Hope** - *“God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.”* 1 John 1:5

Essential Quality – **GRATITUDE**

**Real Help** *“They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat”* Mt.14:16

Essential Quality – **HUMILITY**

**This is God's Word for my life in this place and at this time. Today, I am a new creation in Christ, I am God's very own, and I believe He has a purpose for my life.**

### ***Matthew 9:1-8 (NIV)***

<sup>1</sup>Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. <sup>2</sup>Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

<sup>3</sup>At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

<sup>4</sup>Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? <sup>5</sup>Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? <sup>6</sup>But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home." <sup>7</sup>And the man got up and went home. <sup>8</sup>When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

Jesus spoke in parables to describe something that is in many respects beyond our comprehension.

### **Give God...**

- The First **Day of Every Week**
- The First **Part of Every Day**
- The First **Portion of My Income**
- The First **Consideration in Every Decision**

The Afternoon knows what the morning never dreamed of. Swedish Proverb

If you attempt to talk with a dying man about sports or business he is longer interested. He now sees other things as more important. People who are dying recognize what we often forget that we are standing on the brink of another world. – William Law, 18<sup>th</sup> British Theologian