

TOO BUSY FOR TIME ALONE -- WITH GOD? (Part 2)
By Gary Tenpenny

(Editor's Note: This is the second of two parts.)

Last week I wrote about how I discovered the value of a quiet getaway, not only for business planning but also – and more important – to address the spiritual dimension of life. My encouragement for you is that you resolve to get quiet as often as you can, drawing close to God and receiving the spiritual food and nourishment from Him that is so important for experiencing a rewarding, fulfilling life both in the marketplace and in our private lives.

Of all the tools, strategies and resources available to help us be effective and successful, I have learned the discipline of a deep, extended time alone with God consistently outperforms everything else. More people have breakthroughs in their personal, professional and spiritual lives as a result of this practice than any other single method. If our goal is to realize and carry out our God-given purpose, then it makes sense that we should spend time listening to the Purpose-Giver!

As we study the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, we find that from the beginning He found such times necessary to effectively carry out His mission: “And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, He departed and went out to a desolate place, and there He prayed” (Mark 1:35),

Many of us yearn to hear God's voice and plan for their lives, but the busyness of everyday life distracts us. It is critical, therefore, that we intentionally schedule extended time to find a quiet place away from all the distractions. Here is one recommended approach:

1. **Schedule it.** Set aside a full day, if possible. Overnight is even better. It often takes a half-day or more just to pull your mind out of work-mode. Be sure to let the key people in your life know that you are taking time away and will not be reachable.
2. **Withdraw.** Go to a retreat center, a lake house, beach house, camping, a mountain cabin, or other private setting. Any place that is quiet and where you can be alone will work. I recommend not doing this at your home or second home, as it is too easy to be distracted by visitors, projects, etc.
3. **Unplug.** Leave your cell phone OFF. No computer or TV either.
4. **Keep it simple.** Bring your journal, a Bible, music, perhaps one book by a Christian author. That is more than enough. Perhaps start with, “What I want to say to God.” Then devote extended time (most of the day) to reading, listening, and writing about, “What is God trying to say to me?” Lastly, spend time (perhaps an hour) writing your thoughts about, “What is the big thing I am hearing from God and what are the implications in my life?”
5. **Get outside.** Experience the natural wonder of God's creation.
6. **Write it out.** Journal your thoughts throughout your time alone. Not only will it help you maintain your focus, but later you also will be able to look back and see patterns, themes, and answered prayers along your journey with the Lord
7. **Relax.** Enjoy your time. Don't feel like you must be praying non-stop. Take a walk, fish, relax.

由香港工商基督徒協會 (CBMC Hong Kong Ltd) 逢週一發放

地址: 香港上環禧利街2號東寧大廈11樓1102室 Tel: (852) 2805-1923

Email: enquiry@cbmc.org.hk Web: www.cbmc.org.hk

支持本會使命, 服侍工商界及職場, 請下載奉獻表格

<https://www.cbmc.org.hk/file-download.html>

8. **Be prepared.** You will be distracted. That is just the way we are wired. Do not be discouraged at your wandering mind. Just keep refocusing on God and what He is saying to you.
9. **Expect opposition.** Our spiritual enemy will try to derail your time, most likely in the day or two before you leave. Time alone with God is not something he wants you to be doing.
10. **Be measured.** Give thought to what you will eat and drink – and how much. Too much caffeine, sugar, alcohol, or snacks can distract or cloud your thinking and focus.

© 2024. Gary Tenpenny is an Executive/Leadership Coach with a biblical perspective committed to walking with and building up other believers in all aspects of their lives. Gary is a Senior Area Director for CBMC Central Midwest.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. When you sense the need to think through things and plan without having any disruptions, what do you usually do? Have you found this to be effective?
2. Living in a very hectic, noisy world, we can become so accustomed to it that the idea of turning off the noise can create anxiety, even fear. Perhaps you find deliberately setting aside time to get away by yourself an alien, intimidating prospect. If so, why do you think that is?
3. Which of the suggestions for scheduling a getaway, a time for quiet thinking and planning, do you find most appealing? Explain your answer.
4. Has this two-week discussion of deliberately planning a personal getaway piqued your interest? Does it seem like something you would be interested in trying, if you have not already done something like this? Why or why not?

Challenge For This Week

Many people know about God, but to truly know Him we need to spend time with Him. To talk with Him. To listen to Him. To sit in His presence and give Him our full attention. When was the last time you did this?

Based on what we have discussed in this and last week's Monday Manna, what are your thoughts about setting aside a scheduled getaway, a quiet time not only for business planning but also to strengthen your spiritual life? Discuss your thoughts this week with a good friend or small group of friends, such as a CBMC group, and then take steps to put your thoughts into action.

NOTE:

For more about what the Bible says, consider the following passages:
Psalm 23:1-6, 33:11, 118:5-9; Proverbs 3:5-6, 19:21; Matthew 6:25-34; 1 Thessalonians 5:17

由香港工商基督徒協會 (CBMC Hong Kong Ltd) 逢週一發放

地址: 香港上環禧利街2號東寧大廈11樓1102室 Tel: (852) 2805-1923

Email: enquiry@cbmc.org.hk Web: www.cbmc.org.hk

支持本會使命, 服侍工商界及職場, 請下載奉獻表格

<https://www.cbmc.org.hk/file-download.html>
