



## **Monday Reflection:** Getaway with God: Finding Quiet in a Loud World

Have you ever taken a boat out on a river? Lake? Ocean? Whether by paddle or motor, it doesn't matter. Have you ever just gotten out on the water - so far that you can't see where you started? Just let the whole world fall away as you watch the waves ripple. Listen to the birds overhead. Smell the fresh air.

Perhaps, a walk in the woods is more your thing. In Alaska, there are so many ways to get away. In Eagle River alone, there are dozens of trailheads just waiting. We have so many opportunities to seek solace in silence.

There's a trailhead near my house that feels like you've stepped into a reality TV show - set in the middle of nowhere - where it seems like no one could hear you scream. In reality, if you walk another five minutes, you'd be at the highway. My point is - it's easy to find a quiet place, if you look.

We need quiet. We need to get away. And not like those old TV ads from the '80s where the mom walks into a room to find her kids making a huge mess and cries out, "Calgon, take me away." We need more than a bubble bath. We need a soul cleansing.

How do you get that? You step away from our loud, loud world for a moment. You get away with God.

*Jesus often went away to other places to be alone so He could pray. Luke 5:16 ERV*

Jesus knew just how important it was to get away. And, He was divine! He could have summoned a bubble bath in the middle of the desert! But, instead, He went away. To be alone. To pray.

God is calling for you to get away with Him. Can you hear Him?

Today's challenge:

Find a quiet place you can get away to. Maybe it's your pantry. Maybe it's a trail. Maybe it's your bath tub. Find your place.

Prayer:

Father, You call us to You. Thank You that You desire relationship with us. Thank You that you want me in all my ridiculousness. Lord, help me find a place where I can sit or stand or walk alone with You. Show me a place that will fit my need to get away with You. Jesus, I want more of You and less of me. Show me how to make that happen. Thank You for Your sacrifice. Its in Your Holy name we pray, Amen.

## **Tuesday Reflection: Eliminate the Distractions**

Dishes.  
Laundry.  
Tik Tok.  
Mowing the lawn.  
Netflix.  
Life in general.

You name it. It can be a distraction. We've got plenty of them! The average adult spends about two and a half hours a day just on social media. That's a lot of scrolling. And that's just the grown ups!

Do you remember when you were in school and you had to study for a test? What did you do? Okay, scratch that. What would suggest your kids do? Turn off the TV. Tell their friends they can't talk right now. Go to their room. Shut the door. Focus.

We have to be intentional to avoid distractions. When I walk my dogs, this is extremely evident! They want to sniff at every corner, chase every squirrel, and bark at anything or anyone who comes within 50 yards of us.

Distraction robs us from our purpose. For my dogs, chasing after that squirrel takes away from their walk time. For students studying for a test, that Tik Tok might mean a lower grade. For adults, endlessly scrolling through Instagram may deny us connection.

*Set your gaze on the path before you. With fixed purpose, looking straight ahead, ignore life's distractions. Proverbs 4:25 TPT*

Distractions don't just have to be external. They can be those lies we let ourselves believe. They can be those voices that tell us we aren't good enough. That we are too messed up for God's love. But, when we set aside those distractions - we can connect with God. We can see, His grace is there for us. Fix your eyes on His path.

Today's challenge:  
Figure out what's distracting you.

Prayer:  
Lord, I need Your help to focus. My whole life is filled with one distraction after another. One thing after the next that "needs" my attention and needs it right now. Father, help me focus on what is important. Help me focus on You. Reveal what is distracting me and help me to see how I can set aside those distractions. Help me set my gaze on the path You've laid out for me. Amen.

## Wednesday Reflection: Be Quiet

I once told a middle schooler to, "Shut it." Yeah, looking back, it wasn't my proudest moment. I'd been teaching a classroom of 5th and 6th graders - 90% of which were boys - and one boy in particular would not stop talking. In a fit of frustration, I told him to "shut it." In my house, those are two words we just don't say. "Shut it" and "shut up" (in my humble opinion) are effectively telling the other person that what they say/think doesn't matter. So, undoubtedly, this preteen was aggrieved that I'd said those words to him. No one likes to hear that.

Sometimes, there are occasions when we do need to, "shut it." When we just need to be quiet. When we are distracted - when we're walking around in our busy, busy worlds - we just can't focus. We can't hear.

The prophet Elijah had just called on God to do some amazing miracles. God had thrown down fire from heaven. He'd made it rain after a drought. But, Elijah found himself feeling downcast and afraid of a local leader. He ran off and hid in a cave. He went away with God. He eliminated distraction. And he got quiet.

*Then he was told, "Go, stand on the mountain at attention before God. God will pass by." A hurricane wind ripped through the mountains and shattered the rocks before God, but God wasn't to be found in the wind; after the wind an earthquake, but God wasn't in the earthquake; and after the earthquake fire, but God wasn't in the fire; and after the fire a gentle and quiet whisper. 1 Kings 19:11-12 The Message*

He is the God of the quiet. He is the God in the gentle and quiet whisper. In fact, He does far more in the quiet than He does in the loud. Sometimes, He works in the loud. He's always in the quiet. But, we have to be quiet enough to hear it.

That reminds me of the song, "Quiet," by Elevation Worship.

I'll just be quiet  
And let You speak through the silence  
Here I am, no more hiding  
You are in this moment, I won't fight it  
I'll be quiet

Today's challenge:

Sit in the quiet. Give yourself one minute of quiet.

Prayer:

Father, forgive me for telling that tween to "shut it" all those years ago. Lord, help us to sit in the silence and listen for Your voice calling to us. Help me be quiet. Amen.

**Thursday Reflection:** Pray

So far this week, we've gotten away. We've eliminated the distractions. We've gotten quiet. Now what? Now, we get to work. We're getting right to today's challenge and prayer.

Where did you find your getaway? Go there. Take this with you. Turn off the distractions. Get quiet.

Focus.

*Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. Colossians 3:2 (NLT)*

Father God, I thank You for this day. Thank You that You know when it's the right time for rain and when it's the right time for sunshine. Thank You that we live in this beautiful place. Thank You that we can have relationship with You. God, help me turn off distractions right now and spend this time in Your presence. Help me worship You in this time.

God - today I thank You specifically for:

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Father - forgive me for when I've put other things before You. Help me release the guilt that I am carrying.

Jesus - I ask today that You would help my friend/family:

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Lord - help me to get closer to You. Help me with these struggles I am facing in my life right now:

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Holy Spirit - come. I want to hear You. Use my life to honor You. Help others see You through me. Speak to me now.

I'll just be quiet.

Amen.

## **Friday Reflection:** Make a Plan

Getting healthy doesn't mean eating a salad for lunch, going to the gym once, and expecting that your cholesterol will magically drop. You have to make a plan. You have to eat some oatmeal and get on the elliptical. You have to get in the habit of healthy choices.

To getaway with God, you need to do the same thing (minus the oatmeal.) Thankfully, He knew we'd need time to do that and He planned for it!

*"Look, the LORD has made the Sabbath day a day of rest for you. So, on Friday he will give you enough food for two days. Then, on the Sabbath, each of you should sit down and relax. Stay where you are." Exodus 16:29 ERV*

God gave the Israelites a day of rest. It was built in for them to have a day to just commune with God. No heavy lifting. Just be-ing.

We need to set aside time to connect with God. Not just at church. But, time to spend in His presence. For worship (think KLOVE.) For His word (the Bible.) For connection (prayer.)

For those of us who are married, imagine the following scenario: your spouse walks up to you in the kitchen to chat and you say, "Hey, we talked on date night. We can talk again next time." Uh... who else would be sleeping on the couch? Thankfully, God doesn't send us to the doghouse when we blow Him off.

Relationships require investment. You have to keep up an ongoing conversation. And little acts of love sprinkled throughout help, too. We won't get to know our partners if we don't talk to them. Same thing with our relationship with God. Talk to Him. He's listening. Make a plan. And not just a once a month date night.

Today's challenge:

Put a reminder in your phone or on your calendar to get away with God on a regular basis.

Prayer:

Jesus, we need You. Life is so hard. It's so busy and we're so distracted by whatever is the loudest thing at the moment. We need Your guidance on how to set aside time to spend with You. We need a fire in our hearts to long for relationship with You. Jesus - stoke that desire in our hearts that only You can fill. Help our time away with You be something we long for and not a chore to mark off our to do lists. God - we are so amazed by You. It's in Your name we pray, Amen.