

February 2020



Silence Is Golden

As I prepare to write this article I manage to find a nearly empty restaurant at the mall. I crawl into the booth in the corner where it is quiet and prepare to gather my thoughts into a logical narrative.

Around the corner comes a large lady, carrying coffee and a pastry . . . and a blaring cell phone. I groan as she sits down in the booth next to me. Her phone volume is cranked to the max . . . on speaker phone. That way she can eat and converse with the very loud lady on the other end.

I consider moving to the other end of the restaurant, but she tells the lady on the phone that she is getting ready to leave. I decide to wait it out . . . and I observe that they are talking about pretty much, nothing!

She finishes her pastry, gets up and glances apologetically in my direction as she walks by. Then the voice on the phone trails off into the distance as she leaves the restaurant . . . and I am finally left in my corner booth to relative silence, the reason I came here in the first place.

I can't help thinking of the utter disregard by our culture when it comes to respecting other people's personal space. It seems we have gravitated to the opposite, the intrusion and disruption of privacy, and the individual's peace of mind.

If someone, say a farmer from the eighteenth century, could hop on a time machine and land in a city in present day America, he might very shortly conclude that we have all gone mad. If he is used to peace and quiet, where in the city would he find it?

We have had automobile noise for over a century, but many other types of noise have invaded our lifestyle in just the past couple of decades.

When I was traveling a lot, I looked forward to staying in hotels for the solitude it gave me. I especially liked to get up early and eat in the cafeteria, enjoying the quiet. Then to my dismay, on one stay, the cafeteria was now decorated with television screens and newscasters were screeching about the world's latest developments.

Not long after that, I pulled up to a gas pump to fill my car's tank and there was a television screen on the pump. Ads were playing . . . of course.

Well, you know the progression. A few years ago, the average American watched five hours of television a day. Just recently, someone informed me that nine hours a day on the smart phone is now the average for Americans.



But I didn't write this article to tell you something you already know, that our way of life has been cluster bombed with noise. Rather I'm writing today about how very precious and rare silence is.

Silence is good for the soul.

*It is good for our minds,
for our health and well-being.*

Silence is necessary to hear the voice of God.

Perhaps that is why there is so little of it. Satan, the enemy of our soul, doesn't want us to hear the voice of God . . . ever. It seems he is doing a pretty good job of introducing yet another addiction to plague mankind . . . noise!

You really treasure something when you don't have it. You learn the value of something when you can't find it.

When I was in the Army at Fort Hood, Texas, my room was an eight man bay, that is, a large room with eight bunks. For whatever reason, one of the other fellows in the room decided to turn on his acid rock music before he went to bed, I guess to help him sleep. The problem was that I couldn't sleep with acid rock blaring all night.

For a few nights I slept in my office. At the time, I was a chaplain's assistant, so I had a small office. I rolled out my sleeping bag on the hard tile floor. It wasn't great, but it was quiet. However, after a couple days of that, red streaks appeared on my arms, legs and body, and they itched something fierce!

Chiggers! I had chiggers!

Chiggers are tiny bugs that live in the south. They don't bite you; rather they burrow under your skin and travel, leaving a red streak behind them on your skin where they have been. The way you kill them, and get the itch to stop, is to put nail polish over the spot where the chigger is. The bug, then can't breathe and dies. It dies down there under your skin . . . not the happiest thought. Would you agree?

When we went on field maneuvers, we pitched our tents under the trees, so that our company could not be seen from the air, and therefore by the enemy. That was the purpose of the field exercise, to practice camouflage. Chiggers live in the trees and drop down on you, infesting your clothes and sleeping bags. That's how I got chiggers from sleeping in the office. They were in my sleeping bag.

So I had to go back to the barracks and figure out a way to sleep. I had a reel to reel tape recorder and a long tape of soothing Christian music. At Radio Shack, I bought a long extension cord for my headset, so that I could put the reel to reel in my locker and run my headset to my bunk . . . and that's how I solved the noise problem. I shut out his rock and roll by wearing a headset when I slept, that delivered far more preferable music . . . music I could sleep to.

When Elijah was in the cave, exhausted and depressed after killing about 850 prophets of Baal and Ashterah at Mount Carmel, God sent a fire, an earthquake, and a wind so strong it literally broke rocks in pieces. Then came silence. Perhaps God sent all of this racket and commotion just to show Elijah the value of silence. God had something to say to Elijah and when it was silent, He spoke in a small voice, or whisper . . .and Elijah heard Him

perfectly . . . because of the silence.

The phrase "Silence is Golden," is not just a lyric from a sixties pop song, it is the powerful truth.

Silence is golden.
Silence is of great value.
When you seek silence,
you just may find God . . . there in
the silence.

What's Up? 

Many projects are in the mix. Several months ago, the Lord spoke to me about producing two-minute messages to post on the internet and on our website. To do so we needed equipment. The Lord prompted me to study current professional video cameras and choose one. I did, and He promptly responded, "You need two of them." The package we are looking at, two cameras with appropriate lights and microphones, I estimate to be about \$10,000.

In addition, we needed capabilities to edit video. We are excited to report that our friends, Steve and Jackie Henning, who run a multimedia company, have bought us a computer and accessories for video editing. Two weeks ago, we ran one-gig, high-speed internet into my office. We are close to being operational for video editing.

In His Service,

*George and Lorraine
Halama*

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scarlet circle

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