



SILENCING THE NOISE

by Whitney Davis

It's 2021. The world is noisy. We've endured a pandemic, an election year, racial injustice and tension, and many drastic changes over the last several months. People are bold and vocal about their opinions. Opinions are causing victimization and hurt to run rampant. The growing technological world we live in has way more information at our fingertips than our brain and heart can handle. We turn on the television, Netflix, a podcast, music, or some form of noise to drown out any existing silence. And we are drowning in the noise of it all. It can be overwhelming. The noise keeps us from being able to hear the Lord and dramatically disrupts the peace He brings.

Let's explore some concepts that will help us combat the noise in our life to hear from the Father clearly.

For God alone, my soul waits in silence; from Him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken... For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from Him. Psalm 62:1-2,

1.) AWARENESS

Noise can be numbing. We can be so accustomed to its presence that we do not even realize how much space it takes up in our lives. Our world values productivity and pressures us to fill our days with information, tasks, entertainment, people, planning, and worry. Anything that keeps us from just being and waiting is a type of noise that clouds our perspective. When we operate like this for days, weeks, and months on end, how can we expect to hear from the Lord? We must realize and be aware of the ways that we allow

unnecessary noise to clutter our lives. We can't just silence this noise by putting in a pair of earplugs. The kind of noise we are referring to is the kind that fills our being and disrupts our communion with God. Jobs, bills, chores, relationships, family, emails, social media, meetings, church, phone calls, text messages, shopping, books, movies, games, books, and YouTube are just some ways noise fills our life. These things aren't necessarily bad, but when they consume our head and heart in unhealthy ways, they crowd out the space we have for God to fill us. Take inventory as you go throughout your day. What is capturing your time and attention, and how much of the time and attention is being captured by what isn't eternal? Do these things benefit your spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being? This awareness is the needed first step to taking charge of the noise that influences you.

2.) DISCIPLINE

We rarely make needed changes in our life without making intentional choices. Realizing noise exists in our world isn't enough to rid its impact.

Psalm 37:7 tells us to "Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.

Psalm 130:6 states, "My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning.

Being still before the Lord and waiting for Him is an active process that requires discipline. Examine what makes the most unwanted noise and begin to set boundaries on its volume. This might mean deleting a social media app or limiting your time on social media. This might mean fasting from Netflix or Youtube. This might mean setting boundaries to leave your work at work and embrace your family when at home. That email response can wait until the morning. This might mean you devote more time to reading the Bible, prayer, and time in worship than you do online shopping. We must be gatekeepers who

are conscious of what noise we allow to infiltrate our lives. As we make wise decisions to set boundaries on the noise, we have to fill the space with time in the presence of the Lord. We can't hear from Him if we aren't listening, always talking, or allow external noise to drown out His voice. He is our salvation! It's worth it to intentionally choose to drown out any noise that takes away from hearing from Jesus

3.) HOPE.

Why does this matter? Because Jesus Christ is our HOPE. Is He important enough to us that we will do whatever it takes to hear His voice? I like to think of the example of losing your phone and your ringer being on silent. You pull out all the stops, quiet the whole house, and get all hands on deck to listen for the vibrating sound that goes off when you try to call the number. You do whatever it takes to find the phone. Jesus is the source of all truth, wisdom, peace, and direction in our life. We must do whatever it takes to hear from Him. When the noise of this world overwhelms our heart and mind, our hope is Christ.

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CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- 1) Do you struggle with silencing unwanted noise? Explain.
- 2) What makes the most noise in your life?
- 3) Share any practical ways you have been able to silence unwanted noise to hear from the Lord?
- 4) What does the hope we have in Jesus mean to you in this noisy world?

CALL TO ACTION:

- 1) Take inventory this week and reflect on what consumes your heart and mind throughout the day. Journal the different “noises” that fill your days. This helps you be aware of what is consuming your attention.
- 2) Prepare to find time each day this week to sit in silence before the Lord. Allow Him to speak peace and give wisdom to you.

Commit this week to silence the noise that keeps you from communion with Jesus.

MEMORIZE: “For God alone, my soul waits in silence; from Him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken...For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from Him.” Psalm 62:1-2, 5

