

The Goodness of Solitude?



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Chapter Excerpted from the Book
"Christine's Short-Shorts"

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Areli MediaWorks 2012

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The Christmas season for me commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. My thoughts are found in a state of reverence and thanksgiving to God. He gave us the wonderful gift of the Redeemer who came to put all of us in right standing with Him. I am also thankful for my deliverance from depression, agoraphobia, infirmities, ungodly soul ties and so much more. Out of that gratitude is a heartfelt consciousness of those who can not emotionally connect with the myriad of holiday celebrations with food, fellowship, and euphoric shopping that the season means to many others.

All of us have something in our life that has the potential to draw us into a place of solitude if we allow it—regardless of the day, week, month, year or season. Yet there are some who are all around us: family members, friends, work mates and acquaintances who have smiles so broad that you would never know that in the recesses of their heart, there is a lamentation that manifests as sadness and/or loneliness, even in a crowded room. They live in a place of emotional solitude.

I believe God uses the solitary times and seasons in our life. It is quite possible that He wants us to separate ourselves from people and the hustle of this world. So He uses the very circumstances that put you in that emotional space to get you alone with Him. However satan tries to make you feel sad, frustrated or depressed when you are in emotional solitude. He makes it uncomfortable to be there or stay there. Jesus Christ was challenged by satan during his 40-days in the wilderness.

But the solitary places—desert, valleys, wilderness, caves, or pits—are your opportunity for spiritual rest and revelation when you use it to talk to God through prayer and meditation. In the solitary place He strengthens you for any challenges and elevation in ministry—your lifestyle that represents your dedication to Him. God gives you fresh ideas, plans and strategies for your future. You can use the time as an opportunity to re-evaluate who and what is in your life. What do you need to release and detach from, or what do you need to bring into your life to enrich or fulfill it?

When Jesus came out of the desert, he stepped into His ministry. Abraham came out of the solitary place to step into his destiny as a father of many nations. Jacob wrestled in the wilderness place, and he was renamed Israel. When Moses came down from the

mountain the first time, he was given a mandate to deliver the nation of Israel from slavery. In the wilderness, he came down from the mountain with the 10 commandments. Ezekiel was taken to the desert and was shown that he could speak to dry bones and they would live. At the mouth of a cave God spoke to Elijah in a still small voice to let him know that he was not alone. Job lost everything and asked God to let him die. But God restored him and gave him more of everything after he interceded for those who sat and scorned him when they were supposed to be his friends. Hannah got alone with God in the temple, and He gave her more children than she asked for. Samuel, her first born, was the first prophet to the nation of Israel.

So to those who may be in a solitary place, do not despise these days. Turn it into a healthy season of prayer with scriptural praise and worship. Don't ask God for anything right now. Don't ask for changes, just soak and saturate yourself with praise and worship to Him. Sing when you don't feel like singing. Listen to worship music that tells God who He is. Make it all about Him and nothing else, even if you don't like Him right about now. Give Him crazy, lunatic, radical praise and worship and watch for a shift in your atmosphere. Believe me, I do it all the time and I always see results.

Praise and worship will put you in a new realm and dimension with God, into the high place. In the Book of Revelations when John was in the spirit on the Lord's day, God told him to *Come up hither*. —Revelations 4:1. What you are experiencing right now is most likely God wanting you to come up hither so He can refresh you. He may want to take you into new realms of the length, depth and height of His knowledge. Consider His ways that are past finding out. He has something for you in that new place and He is using your circumstances to woo you into it.

There is a revival coming into the land and the Lord is choosing whom He may. They will be those men and women who carry the mantle to bring souls into His kingdom. They will move in signs, wonders and miracles. These are the ones God can trust to give Him all the glory and not exalt themselves. But know that our God lives, rules and reigns and He has not forsaken you.

The following is excerpted from my first book "Pray What God Says."

Prayer establishes hope. When you HOPE in God, you will begin to:

***H**—Hear Him through His word, prayer and your experiences. John 10:27—*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*

***O**—Obey His word and submit to the care and charge of the pastor He has designated to shepherd over you. Jeremiah 23:4—*And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.*

***P**—Pray the word of God without ceasing. 1 Thessalonians 5:17—*Pray without ceasing.*

***E**—Expect His response. Isaiah 65:24—*And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*

When you HOPE in God, in return are some of His benefits.

***H**—His Hearing ear. Psalm 4:3—*But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.*

***O**—Open heaven access to His presence. Malachi 3:10—*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

***P**—Peace while you wait for His response to your prayers. Psalm 29:11—*The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.*

***E**—Eternal results. Ephesians 2:11-13—*You have Christ in this world. You are not alien of the commonwealth of His kingdom. You are not a stranger to the covenant promises. You have His glory (the presence of His virtue) in your life. You have earnest, sincere expectations— Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

Prayer establishes TRUST in God

***T**—Turn to Him and tarry in His presence. Habakkuk 2:3—*For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*

***R**—Rest in and rely on His finished work. 1Kings 5:4—*But now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent.*

***U**—Understand His ways are not our ways. Isaiah 55:8—*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.*

***S**—Surrender to Him. James 4:7—*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

***T**—Take Him at His word. 2Chronicles 20:20—*And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.*