

The Gift of Solitude

May 10, 2026

Main Passage: Mark 1:35-38; Luke 5:15-16

Theological Theme

Jesus often withdrew from the crowds and from His disciples to seek alone time in prayer with the Father (and we should, too).

Introduction

- ① Have you ever sought to learn or grow in the spiritual discipline of solitude?
- ② What makes this practice challenging to you personally?

1. Deserted Places (Luke 5:15-16)

Luke gives a brief but powerful insight into Jesus's priorities. At this point, Jesus's ministry was active. He had begun to call His disciples and was healing and teaching people. What He was doing was important. It was full. It was busy. And yet . . . He withdrew.

- ① What is surprising about the juxtaposition of the events described in these verses?
- ② How might you have been tempted to respond differently if you were Jesus?
- ③ Where might you be in danger of being overly busy—even with “good” things?

2. There He Was Praying (Mark 1:35)

In our first passage, we saw a time in Luke when Jesus went off alone to be in solitude and prayer with the Father. This passage in Mark gives us more gospel evidence of this practice of Jesus.

- ① What does this passage teach us about Jesus's practice of solitude?

- ❓ What further evidence do we have that Jesus was intentional about this practice?
- ❓ Where might God be calling you to sacrifice in one area (sleep, leisure time, etc.) to spend time with Him? Why is it worth it?

3. Everyone is Looking for You (Matthew 1:36-38)

It's clear that Jesus was in high demand. If He had stuck around to pray, He would have no doubt been interrupted. Not that we are "in demand" in the same way Jesus was, but those of us with children have probably experienced this—if we don't figure out how to truly go out and find a deserted place, we're going to be interrupted. So this opens up the question for us: What is the "deserted place" in our lives?

- ❓ What might these verses tell us about the difference between Jesus's priorities and that of the disciples?
- ❓ Who are you more likely to resemble in daily life? Why?
- ❓ Consider what might be the "deserted place" in your life where you can regularly seek time with the Father. How will you plan to take steps toward this practice this week?

Conclusion

- ❓ Is busyness something you struggle with? Where might God be telling you to let go or reexamine your priorities to give Him first place?
- ❓ What is a realistic "deserted place" in your life? Where (and when!) could you retreat to for time in solitude with the Lord?
- ❓ How do we get started from here? What are some ways we could begin to start incorporating solitude into our everyday lives?