

Main Idea:

What really is contemplative prayer? How do we do it? What are the challenges?

2 Corinthians 3: 12-18

12 Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, 13 not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. 14 But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. 15 Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. 16 But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Questions That Need Answers:

1. How do we breakdown the practice of contemplative prayer?
 2. How do we actually participate in it?
 3. What are the 3 great challenges of contemplative prayer
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- Contemplative prayer, really is the center piece of the prayer life of the believer, because without words, we are unable to steer prayer where we want it to go.
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3 Dimensions of Contemplative Prayer

1. Looking
 2. Yielding
 3. Resting
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1. Looking

When we say looking what really are we saying... **"Looking at God, Looking at you, in love."**

- There is a story of a elderly farmer back from the early 1900s who everyday would go sit in this old catholic church for hours, doing nothing but sitting there for hours on end. Finally one day the local priest asked him, "What are you doing in here day after day" the old man with a smile on his face responds "I look at him, he looks at me, and we are happy"

- Nothing could describe contemplative prayer more, then that story.

- "The soul that beholds God forgets all things else, for it is lost in the beauty of His face." — Teresa of Ávila
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2. Yielding

"The most difficult thing for us to believe is not that God exists, but that He loves us as we are." — **Brennan Manning**

"Our greatest spiritual battle is not discipline, service, or prayer; it is to let God love us." — **Henri Nouwen**

- Yielding to God in silence, is also being ok with being able to experience his loving gaze for yourself. Its being able to without mediating on how unworthy you are, or all the stuff you have done, or how you think about you yourself, simply accept and soak in his unwavering and unchanging love for you.

- Now yielding, also means waiting.... If you look at contemplative prayer throughout Church history, you will see that contemplative prayer is not something you really do, rather something you wait on.

- **Yielding in prayer, is often the first step in a life of yielding to his direction.**

3. Resting

- Finally we move into resting.... resting is the ability to finally quiet our minds, to yield to presence to look at God, and enjoy his presence fully.

- Contemplative prayer should get to the place that prayer doesn't feel like work or a discipline, rather that prayer would feel and be our ultimate rest.

- You see when prayer becomes rest... the transformation of me into the person of Jesus, really begins to take place.

"You are what your mind looks at. You are what you contemplate" - Hwee Hwee Tan

3 Major hurdles of Contemplative Prayer

1. Distraction
 2. Hurry
 3. Self Reflection
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FINAL THOUGHT

Contemplative prayer is one of the greatest practices we can dedicate ourselves too. It forces us to die to ourselves, to surrender our timing and direction, and it allows God to show us what it means to be aware of his presence.

- In the words of John Mark Comer, "We must remember that the goal of prayer is not answered prayer, its the presence of God himself"
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Individual Practice:

- Spend time this week each morning in 10 minutes of silence and solitude. Allowing a time for contemplation and quiet. Allow your body to comes to rest, and your mind to find The Holy Spirit.
 - Explore what it would look like to add a 2nd time of prayer into your day, and chose possibly to make it contemplative prayer. See if 5 minutes in quiet alone with God changes the rest of your day.
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