

Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”
Isaiah 40:31*



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The Rewards of Solitude

We usually emphasize the role of staying busy in achieving a productive life, but success also requires that we know when to disengage from everything and spend time just thinking.

“And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening” (Gen. 24:63).

“When I remember You on my bed,
I meditate on You in the night watches”
(Psa. 63:6).

“So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed” (Lk. 5:16).

These three verses give us insight into a habit that made Isaac, David, and Jesus great men of God: they all recognized the value of escaping the hustle and bustle of daily life in order to spend time alone just thinking.

As our culture becomes ever more interconnected, with all its plugged in, turned on, blazing fast, full volume technology keeping us in touch with the rest of the world 24/7, it's more critical than ever that we find time to completely disengage from everything and everybody. And that doesn't mean that we stick in ear-buds and listen to our iPods. It means that we completely remove ourselves from every vestige of civilization and spend a good chunk of time by ourselves just *thinking*; not worrying about that tough project we're working on, or the trip coming up next week, or what's

for supper tomorrow night, but *thinking* about the big things in our life: God, character development, goals and dreams — the kinds of things that really determine the direction our life takes.

Training ourselves to spend time alone can have enormous benefits. First, from a strictly health perspective, these periods of inactivity allow us to physically and mentally relax and recharge our batteries. By giving our bodies and minds time to rest from the stress of the daily grind, we give them a chance to refresh and renew.

Second, spending time thinking about the big things in our life enables us to re-assess our priorities. By getting away from the daily clutter, we are better equipped to sort out all the demands that press upon us, and make strategic decisions that will benefit us and others.

Third, occasionally getting away from people helps us appreciate them more when we come back to civilization. Spouses, for example, can do their marriage a favor if they will schedule periodic sabbaticals away from the kids and even from each other. The people in

our lives must not be neglected, of course, but neither should we burn ourselves out in their service.

Finally, solitude can be a significant tool in helping us draw closer to God. Living in a world that has effectively relegated God to the wilderness, the wilderness may be the only place we can find Him. The time spent communing with Him in those quiet hours will give us the strength to stand firm against the temptations that assail us back in the world of men.

Where can we find these opportunities for personal reflection? Isaac found his in a nearby field; Jesus had to walk some distance to get away from population centers. But it need not be such a dramatic change of scenery: David's thoughtfulness occurred when he laid down on his bed at night.

So shut down the internet, unplug the TV, turn off the cell phone, put down the books and magazines, and just disappear for a few hours. But do so with deliberate purpose, careful to direct your thoughts to those things that will change your life for the better.

— David King