



Silent Solitary Retreat

*Be still and know that I am God.
He was in the still small voice.*

Purpose: Slowing down enough to refocus on God in your life. This provides refreshment for your body and spirit. Reflect before the retreat on the activities which you do not have time for regularly that usually restore your soul. If you know what those are then plan your retreat accordingly. You can custom create your own retreat. Or you can follow the included format.

What to Do:

It is suggested that you dedicate 6 hours to this retreat. You can start by taking a walk around your block praising God for the nature you see and praying for the neighborhood around you. Pack a lunch and head to the park or library. Wherever you go, pick a refreshing spot to read an excerpt from Christian history or a devotional or a Bible passage. Read it silently once and then aloud. Journal your thoughts or questions on the topic. Listen to the Bible on MP3 and reflect on it by listening to a song that inspires you toward God. Reflect. You will be inspired to express what you are learning and what you feel by writing, drawing, clay sculpting, painting, singing, or composing, etc.

Prayer Walk

Read

Reflect

Listen

Respond: Write, Draw, Compose, Pray

Where to GO:

Local: Your neighborhood may work, Edinburg Municipal Park, Edinburg Birding Center www.worldbirdingcenter.org, Edinburg Museum of South Texas History, International Museum of Art, McAllen; Parks in McAllen, UTPA campus, STC Pecan campus, a quiet restaurant, a library, the Zoo, (not the beach at Spring Break). There may be places you've always wanted to explore and haven't had time to nearby where you live or nearby your church.

Travel: If you are traveling long hours, plan your listening material so that it is meaningful and refreshing to you. Plan listening that will center you on God. Take a Christian book on tape, music; listen to scripture or a recorded sermon.

Supplies: Selected reading material, your bible, journal, art supplies or instrument, mp3 or ipod or CD player, sustaining snacks and water, sunglasses, chair, bug spray, bike, etc.

Alone or with someone: It's a solitary, silent retreat. As long as the person with you is doing the same thing and you won't be tempted to visit with each other it can work. Your cell phone handy but OFF! Texting, obviously not!

Reflections:

How am I doing? Am I tired? Rest or sleep in God's presence. Am I hungry? Eat, breaking bread with Christ. Am I stressed? Get some exercise, go on a run, walk, swim, or hike with Christ. How have I been doing physically, emotionally, and spiritually this semester? How is our relationship, God? Think back over the semester. How have I spent my time? Share with God what comes to mind about how I have spent my time. What are the areas of my life where I need God to help me? God is listening so talk to God now.

What segments of my life are out of balance? Talk to God about seeking his help to live your life and do your ministry and school work for him so that you can escape some of the unnatural pressure you put yourself under to perform. Remember that Jesus took solitary retreats to get away from daily life to talk with God over his life and ministry. Sometimes they talked all night so you can be certain that God wants to hear you just as God listened eagerly to Jesus.

Tell God the desires of your heart. You are taking this retreat near Easter so read passages from the Gospels about this time in Jesus life on earth. Reflect about them in your journal. www.biblegateway.com

If the circumstances allow it, end with a simple meal with God. Roast hot dogs or make a sandwich, but take a simple meal with Jesus remembering that God often makes himself known in the breaking of the bread of his creation.¹

Resources:

Jesus' prayer filled life: Mark 14:32-36

Jesus taking with God: Mark 1:35; 6:46; Matt. 14:22-23a; Luke 6:12

Heart Preparation: Psalm 27:4-9; Psalm 131; Judges 6: 15-17; 36-40; 1Kings 19:11-13; James 5:13-16.

www.biblegateway.com or www.utpabsm.org or www.christianitytoday.com

"You've Got the Time" NIV, MP3 format (at the BSM)

Anything by C.S. Lewis. CDs: The Magician's Nephew (borrow from BSM)

Finding Our Way Again, Brian McLaren

Running in Circles, Kim V. Engelmann

The Cross and the Switchblade, David Wilkerson

What the Bible is all about for Women, Lisa Harper

¹ Excerpts taken from Dr. Betty Talbert's Covenant Group material: Silent Retreat, George W. Truett Seminary.