

“Now more than ever the word about Jesus spread abroad; many crowds would gather to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray” (Luke 5:15-16).

The little-noticed passage of scripture above often evokes a feeling of surprise among those Christians who stumble upon it during Bible study or devotional reading. We are accustomed to reading about the compassionate Jesus who responds graciously in the face of human need. Here, however, we find Jesus declining an opportunity to teach and heal the crowds in order to pursue an equally important part of his ministry – discerning the will of his Heavenly Father through the disciplines of quiet solitude and prayer.

We live in a society today that is very action-oriented. The over-emphasis upon doing and accomplishing that we have come to expect of ourselves and others is so habitual in our experience that we consider it normal. And yet, contrast such an over-functioning, driven approach to the Lord’s simple command: ***“Be still and know that I am God”*** (Psalm 46:10).

Have you been still lately? Has regularly listening for the direction of God’s leading in your life simply been overwhelmed by the urgent demands of day-to-day living? If so, consider that the summer months are now upon us. The “lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer” seem to be the one time of the year that our society condones attending to any of our needs beyond work. I hope that this summer you will find a way to withdraw for a time from the demands of the crowd to a place of stillness where you can open your heart to God and be fed. Because Jesus said it best – ***“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”*** (Mark 8:36).

Much grace and peace to you,

Pastor David