

# Sermon Notes

“Big Questions and Gentle Whispers”  
September 8, 2019



*Seeking God*  
in Solitude



*Finding God*  
in Friendship



*Celebrating God*  
in Community



*Reflecting God*  
in Relationships

## Reflection Questions *(please use these individually or in groups)*

### Sermon Reflections:

1. What sort of season of life are you in right now? Are you harassed by enemies or threats? Enjoying the aftermath or victory or accomplishment? Somewhere in between?
2. Ask God to give you the strength and provision you need for this day, and for this week.
3. What big questions do you have for God? What big questions might God have for you?
4. Consider a good "when" and "where" for you to spend time alone with God this week, ideally each day, or at least 2-3 times.

## Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Mark 6:7-13, 30-32 | Why did Jesus invite his disciples into a quiet place? What is he teaching them by doing so?**
- **1 Sam. 3:1-11 | What time of day are you most open to hearing the voice of God speak to your heart?**
- **2 Tim. 3:14-17 | In what ways has Scripture been teaching, re-buking, correcting or training you recently?**
- **Psalm 119:9-16 | What are the benefits of placing high value and priority on the understanding and application of Scripture?**

## Self-Care Disciplines *(Excerpts from Celebration of Discipline)*

### September Discipline: Meditation | Re-collection or Centering Down

This contemplative practice from the Middle Ages is called "re-collection," and what the Quakers have often called "centering down." It is a time to become still, to enter into the recreating silence, to allow the fragmentation of our minds to become centered. The following is a brief exercise to aid you in "re-collection" that is simply called "palms up, palms down." Begin by placing your palms down as a symbolic indication of your desire to turn over any concerns you may have to God. Inwardly you may pray, "Lord, I give to you my anger towards John. I release my fear of my dentist appointment this morning. I surrender my anxiety over not having enough money to pay the bills this month." Whatever it is that weighs on your mind or is a concern to you, just say, "palms down." Release it. You may even feel a certain sense of release in your hands. After several moments of surrender, turn your palms up as a symbol your desire to receive from the Lord. Perhaps you will pray silently: "Lord, I would like to receive your divine love for John, your peace about the dentist appointment, your patience, your joy." Whatever you need, you say "palms up." Having centered down, spend the remaining moments in complete silence. Do not ask for anything. Allow the Lord to commune with you, to love you. If impressions or directions come, fine; if not, fine.

*Note: Don't let these burden you each week. Please engage only if you feel it would be beneficial in caring for yourself. Sometimes self-care involves giving yourself a break, even from self care disciplines.*