

**noise**

**Why is silence so hard to deal with?**

**138 million people are regularly  
exposed to noise levels labeled  
as excessive by the  
Environmental Protection  
Agency**

**Do you have a cell phone?**

**Voice mail?**

**Do you have a cell phone with  
voice mail, email, and texting?**

**Do you have a TV?**

**More than one TV?**

**Do you have a radio on all day?**

**On at work, in the car, at home?**

**Is there such thing as visual  
noise?**

**Do you wish there were more  
billboards along the roads you  
drive?**

**Is this silence difficult for you?**

**Do you feel like God is distant?**

**Do you wish God's voice would  
be louder in your life?**

**Is there a connection between  
the amount of noise in our lives  
and our inability to hear God?**

**Vehicles now come with separate stereos and DVD systems for the back seats.**

**You can buy wired clothing now.  
Coats, jackets and hats  
equipped with cell phones and  
MP3 players.**

**Most of the backpacks that are sold to school children have a pouch for an MP3 player and a hole to run the earphones out of.**

**Try this.**

**Make yourself comfortable in  
your chair and begin breathing  
slowly as you read.**

**Be silent, O Israel, and listen!**  
**-Deuteronomy 27.9**

**search your hearts and be silent**  
**-Psalm 4.4**

**Let all the earth be silent before  
Him.  
-Habakkuk 2.20**

**Come to me and I will give you  
rest**

**-Jesus in Matthew 11**

**If I am not still, and if I don't  
listen, how is Jesus going to give  
me rest?**

**Why is it so hard to be still?**

**Why do we feel like we have to  
be so busy?**

**Have you spent the same amount of time worrying and talking about your difficult, confusing situations as you have spent in silence, listening to what God might have to say?**

**Why is talking so much easier  
than listening?**

**But Jesus often withdrew to  
lonely places and prayed.  
-Luke 5.16**

**These were regular disciplines  
that Jesus had.**

**Silence.**

**Solitude.**

**When was the last time you were  
in a solitary place?**

**What is it about silence that is so difficult?**

**Why is it easier to surround myself with noise and keep moving than to stop, be silent and listen?**

**How much noise do I voluntarily  
subject myself to?**

**Does my schedule, my time, my  
life look like that of a person who  
wants to hear God's voice?**

**Maybe the healing and  
guidance we desperately need  
is not going to come from one  
more meeting or therapy session**

**or sermon or self-help book**

**but from simply listening for the  
voice of God.**

**Do you really believe that God's  
voice is more interesting than the  
voices around you?**

**Is it possible that you have been  
searching for God in the winds,**

**the earthquakes and fires**

**and He is waiting to speak to  
you in the silence?**

**silence**

**God usually addresses individually those who walk with him in a mature, personal relationship using this inner voice, proclaiming and showing forth the reality of the kingdom of God as they go.**

-Dallas Willard (Hearing God)

**Neither the wind, earthquake, or fire happened apart from God's knowledge or permission. In fact, God used these repeated demonstrations to prepare Elijah for an encounter with himself. And like an echo, God often uses the repetitive events and themes in daily life to get my attention and draw me closer to himself.**

**I call them sacred echoes because I've noticed that throughout my relationships, daily life, and study, the same scripturally sound idea or phrase or word will keep reappearing until I can no longer avoid its presence. Is this mere coincidence or is there something more?**

**The sacred echo reminds me to pay close attention; something important may be going on here. The sacred echo challenges me to prayerfully consider how God is at work in my own life as well as the lives of those around me.**

**The sacred echo is an invitation to spiritual awakening.**

**-Margaret Feinberg (Sacred Echoes)**