



1. Solitude is the **pathway** to great **struggle** with **self** and great **encounter** with **God**.
2. The Holy Habit of solitude increases our **sensitivity** and **compassion** for others.
3. Silence is **unplugging** from the constant **stimulation** of life and our **addiction** to **noise** and **activity**.
4. The Holy Habit of silence teaches us to **listen**.

**Fill-ins:** pathway, struggle, self, encounter, God, sensitivity, compassion, unplugging stimulation  
addiction, noise, activity, listen

# » NEXTSTEP

- 1. Think About It:** How and when do you resist or avoid being alone? What tends to pop into your mind when you are alone? What do you resort to doing when you are alone? What would it look like to use time alone to intentionally place yourself in the presence of God?
- 2. Try This:** Pick a day this week to intentionally spend 15 minutes or more alone with God. You can do an activity if you wish: walk, run, drive, iron, etc. After the time is up, consider how it was for you to be alone with God. Was it hard? Good? Did God speak to you in any way? What did you learn about yourself in this time of solitude?
- 3. Think About It:** How do you avoid or resist silence? Do you find yourself tending to fill the silence in your life? Why might that be? What would it look like for you to be totally silent for a period of time in the presence of God?
- 4. Try This:** Set aside some time for silence. If this is new to you, begin with 10 minutes. Intentionally place yourself into the presence of God. Start your time in God's presence with Samuel's powerful, 7-word prayer: *Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening*. As you become quiet, what do you hear? If you get distracted, just reset and start again. Continue to let the quiet deepen. Be with God. After your time of silence is over, consider these questions: What did you learn about yourself? What did you hear from God? Remember: the benefits of silence are often seen in the fruit it bears.