



Practicing Solitude. Practicing Silence. Experiencing God.

“To enter into solitude and silence is to take the spiritual life seriously. It is to take seriously our need to quiet the noise of our lives, our need to cease the constant striving of human effort, our need to pull away from our absorption in human relationships for a time in order to give God our undivided attention. In solitude God begins to free us from our bondage to human expectations for there we experience God as our ultimate reality—the one in whom we live and move and have our being.”

—Ruth Haley Barton,
Author of *Invitation to Solitude and Silence*

Solitude and silence are foreign concepts to us in today’s fast-paced society. Most of us crave them, but most of us also have a difficult time feeling comfortable in the midst of solitude and silence.

In her new book *Invitation to Solitude and Silence* Ruth Haley Barton explains: “The practices of solitude and silence are radical because they challenge us on every level of our human existence. They challenge us on the level of culture because there is little in Western culture that supports us entering into what feels like unproductive time for being (beyond human effort) and listening (beyond human thought) ... They challenge us on the level of human psychology because in the silence we become aware of inner dynamics we have been able to successfully avoid by keeping ourselves so noisy and busy.”

In *Invitation to Solitude and Silence* Barton walks you through the process of beginning these disciplines and soaking up all that come from solitude and silence. She describes her own struggles to stick to these disciplines and the joy she has found in persevering past the distractions that keep her from times alone with God. She shows you through “Practice” sections at the end of each chapter what it means to accept an invitation to solitude and silence. Most important, Barton journeys with you into God’s transforming presence.

She writes: “In solitude our thoughts and our minds, our wills and our desires are reoriented God-ward so we become less and less attracted by external forces and can be more deeply responsive to God’s desire and prayer in us.”