**Be Quiet – By Thailer Jimerson**

Another quote from Toyohiko Kagawa’s reflections:

“If this can be called a living social order, then the fire-wheels of hell in perpetual motion are a symbol of a perfect society. The window through which God would invade life so superficial and so completely absorbed in the present has been closed.

“God would simply be a nuisance in a capitalistic society and in an age where materialism has become the accepted norm of life. Thus in this whirl-about life it is necessary to put Him out of the way. If God comes in, the motion of this whirligig world would come to a stop. Life with God means an end of this merry-go-round existence and to live instead for things of the highest value….For him who is too busy, even the opportunity to listen to the voice of conscience is lost. The reason the cities teem with delinquent youth is because the child is no longer given an opportunity to reflect.

“The prevalence of homicidal insanity in America, where the machine civilization has made its greatest strides, is the same phenomenon as the growth of juvenile delinquency. The fact that modern man, cut off from nature and with no opportunity to reflect, abandons religions has its root in the same cause.

“If one speaks of reflection there are people, not a few, who smile. When I remarked to an American young lady that the women of her nation ought to learn the art of quietness, she replied with a cynical laugh. To quiet one’s soul relieves the strain of the nerves, enables one to steer clear of mistaken judgments, and makes one’s path plain.

“Reflection is practicing the art of listening to the voice of God. When this becomes a lost art, religion loses its reality and is doomed." (pp.177-81, Axling)

As one brother put it to me, we are too busy to sit around and do nothing. Our personal and public lives have been so invaded with busyness in all its various facets that quietness and solitude, so necessary for Christian growth and joy, has all but been aborted. Are we slaves to the machine?

I think we know, or can assume, that the biblical world was vastly different from ours. Quietness, reflection, and prayer were part and parcel of the day. This can’t be taken for granted today. In our technological age, our world is fast, efficient, and drowning in ads. Our itineraries are busting at the seams and we’re constantly throwing greater and larger sacrifices on the altar of professionalism just to make a buck. On top of all that, our pupils are sewn to some sort of screenslaver.

On top of the implicit context of the biblical world, we have explicit commands to meditate and think (Philippians 4.8; 2 Timothy 2.7; Psalm 1.2). We also have examples of Jesus departing from the multitudes to a desolate place to pray (Luke 5.16). If they needed this, I know we do.

We need to relearn the art of quietness and just stop. Just stop.

Listen to me: do yourselves a favor and make time today to drive somewhere nice, leave your phone in your car, go outside, sit in the grass, and just look at a tree. Just look at it. Breathe deeply. Be mindful of your environment. Read a chapter of the Bible. Then put the book down and just meditate on it. Reflect. Think about your life and where you want to improve. Then pray. Talk to God. I think you’ll find this very refreshing. And you need to do it every day.

Stop being too busy to just sit around and do nothing.