



The God Who loved us first gives us every good gift. In fact, we truly “cannot give what we do not have.”

This truth came home to me in a particular way recently as I struggled to express to two of my friends the value of making an upcoming, three-day silent retreat for women. Most of all, I wanted to express to them the value of being in silence for most of the retreat.

I am a big talker, so for me to talk about loving silence is funny. And, now, here I am trying to write about silence. What I most want to express is that the more we desire silence, the more we seek it.

So speaking about and writing about silence should be “a thing,” as folks like to say these days.

If the benefits of silence capture our attention, engage our thoughts and become the object of our desire, then many good things follow. What are some benefits of being in quiet for a prolonged time?

One benefit: our “radio station” is changed

Our hectic lives have us bouncing around like the old-time radio dial. We moms speed around in our vans and SUV’s laughing and crying and praying and talking. Yes, this morning, my high school son and I were unusually quiet on the car ride to school, but I must admit that on my end, I was zooming around loud in thought. We Americans are particularly good at being loud: at best, this loud is bold; and, at its worst, it is utterly distracting. So, keeping all this in mind, we embrace prolonged quiet to “tune in” to that oddball radio station where there is beauty and a certain movement, but there is no noise.

Second benefit: from noiselessness to hopefulness

As noise decreases, hope increases. I know. I have experienced this grace over and over. It is addicting and wonderful.

Third benefit: then we hear God

Here is a little prayer, “Lord Jesus, give us ears that hear and eyes that see.”

A third benefit– and, there are so many more we could speak of– is that, **in the quiet, we begin to perceive reality with the eyes and ears of God.** This is no small thing. Mysteriously, though, it happens with small acts of obedience here and there. A three-day retreat may seem big and difficult to get to do. In the ocean of God’s Love, it is a puddle, but a puddle worth the jump.