

FAITH

IN REAL LIFE



REAL LIFE. REAL GOD.

BIG WORD: stillness

Stopping whatever I'm doing so I can fully place myself in the presence of my loving Heavenly Father.

FAITH SKILL: quieting

Taking time to settle myself into silence and stillness so I can focus on God and listen to Him.

BIG IDEA: To hear God's voice, I need to turn down the world's volume.

LET'S TALK

All day long your child is bombarded by sound. Use these conversation starters to introduce him to the sacred practice of silence and stillness.

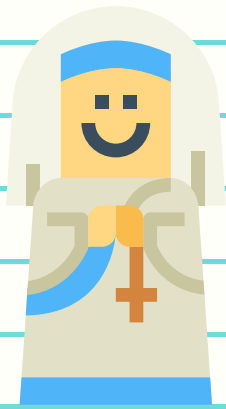
RIDDLE

What is so fragile that when you mention its name, you break it?

SILENCE

QUOTE

"We need to find God, and He cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature — trees, flowers, grass — grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence. We need silence to be able to touch souls." – Mother Teresa



QUESTIONS

- What are your favorite sounds?
- What sounds do you wish would disappear?
- Is our home quiet or noisy?
- Do you wish there was more calm and quiet in our home?
- Is there anything about silence that's making you uncomfortable?

NOTE TO PARENTS

Researchers have noticed that children have become so used to constant noise that they are actually uncomfortable without it. Noise, essentially, has become a crutch for our children. This has led to habits like coming home and immediately turning on the television.

LET'S PLAY

QUIET CONTEST

The last person to make noise wins the game. You don't have to be still, but you have to be quiet! Any sound (even the one you cannot control, such as sneezing) takes you out of the game. After the game have everyone share about their experience and what they've learned.



GUESS BY THE SOUND

In a small cardboard box place a household item. Have everyone take turns rattling the box and guessing what's inside. After everyone made a guess, reveal the item. Then place a new object inside and play the second round.

IDEAS: crayon, spatula, TP roll, potato, sock, LEGO mini-figure, etc.



RED LIGHT, GREEN LIGHT

One person is 'It' and he/she stands a good distance away from the other players with his back to them. When It calls 'Green Light,' the other players move towards him until he spins around, calling 'Red Light.' When they hear the red light command, the other players must freeze on the spot. Anyone seen moving must return to the starting line. Players must remain frozen until the next 'Green Light' command is given. Play continues in this manner until someone reaches and tags It. The tagger becomes the new It and the game begins again.

LET'S READ

Take time to explore these passages where God invites us to slow down and be still long enough to see Him and hear His voice clearly.

PSALM 23:2

He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters

PSALM 131:2

But I have calmed and quieted myself, I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content.

ISAIAH 30:15

This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength."

PSALM 46:10

He says, "Be still, and know that I am God."

REVELATION 3:20

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with Me.

LET'S READ

Take time to explore these passages where God invites us to slow down and be still long enough to see Him and hear His voice clearly.

1 KINGS 19:11-13

The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.

After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.

When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

EXODUS 14:14

The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.

1 SAMUEL 12:16

Now then, stand still and see this great thing the Lord is about to do before your eyes!

PRAY

Heavenly Father, we bring our noisy lives and our cluttered minds to you so that we can learn to be still and know that You are God.

LET'S DO THIS!

Here are some hands-on ideas for integrating silence and stillness practices into your home.

SILENT SANCTUARY

Designate a space in your house as a sacred, silent place for meeting with God in quiet. This sacred space can be permanent—a spare bedroom transformed into a dedicated inner peace place—or it can be temporary—the living room corner transformed for a time.

Keep in mind, a large space is not needed to create a place of inner peace. A bench by a low window functions as well as a quiet corner in the room. A low room divider or shelf partitions can define a stillness area.

This space can even be as simple as blanket with some soft cushions or a hammock in the backyard. Keep it clutter-free since it's difficult to focus on spiritual matters when we are surrounded by visual distractions.

However, a few peace objects might enrich this space. Here are some examples: a peaceful poster (see one at the very end), a plant, fresh flowers, rock garden, a battery-operated candle that changes colors, a sand-timer, a water fountain, fishbowl, ant farm, pair of binoculars, a notebook, a pen or pencil, a Bible, a wooden cross. **All these objects invite children to still their bodies, quiet their minds, and listen to God's whisper.**

STILLING THE BODY

Have everyone sit comfortably on age-appropriate chairs.

Sit your back resting against your chair.

Put your feet on the floor and let them feel the floor.

Rest your hands gently in your lap or on your knees.

Let's think about being in charge of our body and teach different parts of our body how to be still.

- We begin with our toes. Wiggle your toes five times.

THEN TELL YOUR TOES TO BE STILL!

- Now think of your heels. Lift them off the ground two times, keeping your toes on the ground.

THEN TELL YOUR HEELS TO BE STILL!

- Move up to your knees. Wiggle them sideways five times, keeping your feet still.

THEN TELL YOUR KNEES TO BE STILL!

- Think of your stomach. Suck it in and let it out two times.

THEN TELL YOUR STOMACH TO BE STILL!

- Move to your shoulders. Roll your shoulders a few times, keeping the rest of your body still.

THEN TELL YOUR SHOULDERS TO BE STILL!

- Think of your hands and fingers. Wiggle your fingers and hands five times.

THEN TELL YOUR FINGERS AND HANDS TO BE STILL!

- Keeping the rest of your body still, slowly move your neck and head from side to side.

THEN TELL YOUR HEAD AND NECK TO BE STILL!

- Think of your nose. Wriggle it from side to side.

THEN TELL YOUR NOSE TO BE STILL!

- Move to your eyes. Flutter them up and down quickly.

THEN TELL YOUR EYES TO BE STILL!

- Now, all the parts of your body are still.

For how long can you keep them all still?

Let us see if you can keep your body still while I count to 10-20-30, etc.

Let us say thank you to God for our bodies.

CALMING CANDLE

Right before bedtime gather your family. Have everyone form a circle on the floor. Light up a candle and place it in the middle.

Take some time to watch the light dance on the walls.

Ask everyone to share the best and the worst part of the day, and if they have seen/experienced God in any part of their day.

After everyone has shared whisper that we are going to be quiet for three minutes and listen. Set the timer on your phone and let your youngest child push the start button.

Look at the flame of the candle as it flickers.


Watch the flame grow and move.

close your eyes gently and think about how much God loves you.

When the timer chimes, ask everyone what it felt like to be quiet.

Invite everyone to watch as the candle is put out.

Watch the smoke rise until you can't see it anymore. it's like our prayers going up and out to God.



**I WILL LISTEN TO
WHAT GOD THE
LORD WILL SAY.**

PSALM 85:8





**BE STILL BEFORE
THE LORD AND WAIT
PATIENTLY FOR HIM.**

(PSALM 37:7)

