

## Come And Find The Quiet Center Shirley Erena Murray

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Come and find the quiet center, in the crowded life we lead,  
find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed.  
Clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes that we can see,  
all the things that really matter, be at peace and simply be.

Silence is the friend who claims us, cools the heart and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us, knows our being, touches base.  
Making space within our thinking, lifting shades to show the sun.  
Raising courage when we're shrinking, finding scope for faith begun.

In the Spirit let us travel, open to each other's pain,  
let our loves and fears unravel celebrate the space we gain,  
there's a place for deepest dreaming, there's a time for heart to care.  
In the Spirit's lively scheming there is always room to spare.

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Psalm 37:7 *“Quiet down before God, be prayerful before Him. Don't bother with those who climb the ladder, who elbow their way to the top.”* The Message

Psalm 23:2 *“He lets me rest in the meadow grass and leads me beside the quiet streams.”*

The Living Bible<sup>1</sup>

Lamentations 3:28-30 *“When life is heavy and hard to take, go off by yourself. Enter the silence. Bow in prayer. Don't ask questions: wait for hope to appear. Don't run from trouble. Take it full-face. The worst is never the 'worst'.”*

The Message<sup>2</sup>

Do you think it's important to step back from the busyness of life? Why? What do you do to help yourself find your “quiet center”? What clutter and chaos make it difficult for you to find that space?

Take some time to determine for your self “all the things that really matter”, and ask God to help you deal with the rest.

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Psalm 119:113b *“You’re my place of quiet retreat; I wait for Your Word to renew me.”* The Message<sup>2</sup>

1 Corinthians 13:12 *“We don’t yet see things clearly. We’re squinting in a fog, seeing through a mist. But it won’t be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We’ll see it all then, see it clearly as God sees us, knowing Him directly just as He knows us.”* The Message<sup>2</sup>

Isaiah 35:3-4 *“Energize the limp hands, strengthen the rubbery knees. Tell fearful souls, ‘Courage! Take heart! God is here, right here on His way to put things right and redress all wrongs. He’s on His way, He’ll save you!’”* The Message<sup>2</sup>

Do you consider silence “a friend”? Does it “cool the heat and slow the pace for you”? Or do intruding thoughts and sounds interfere? Do you feel God can speak to you even if you don’t find silence calming? Why do you feel that way?

The psalmist says God is our “*place of quiet retreat*”. Is that concept easier for you than silence? Can you quiet yourself to listen for God?

Quieting ourselves, and eventually entering silence, is a spiritual discipline, and it takes practice. Can you commit to practicing quieting yourself? Even if it’s only for one minute at a time, God can work with that and help us see more clearly and get to know God better, as Paul said in his letter to the Corinthians. And, that is the “*faith begun*” that allows us to see that “*God is here, right here.*” As you are able, try to expand your quiet time with God. Notice how it makes you feel, and how it affects the rest of your day.

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James 2:14-17 *“My brothers and sisters, what good is it if people say they have faith but do nothing to show it? Claiming to have faith can’t save anyone, can it? Imagine a brother or sister who is naked and never has enough food to eat. What if one of you said, ‘Go in peace! Stay warm! Have a nice meal!’ What good is it if you don’t actually give them what their body needs? In the same way, faith is dead when it doesn’t result in faithful activity.”* Common English Bible<sup>3</sup>

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 *“What a wonderful God we have – He is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy, and the One who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does He do this? So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us.”*

The Living Bible<sup>1</sup>

Psalm 47:10 “Help me to do Your will, for You are my God. Lead me in good paths for Your Spirit is good.”  
The Living Bible<sup>1</sup>

Being open to the pain that others experience is not easy. What difference can being “in the Spirit” make when we’re trying to be available to other’s pain? Why do you feel that way?

Think of times you have been comforted and strengthened during “*hardships and trials*”. Who was it that did that for you? Whose “*faithful activity*” helped them be God’s hands and feet and voice for you?

Is it easy for you, “*when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement*” to be able to “*pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given*” you? Why do feel this way? If you feel you need help to accomplish this, use the Psalm as your prayer, asking for help that you will be able to carry out your own “*faithful activity*”.

*“To sum it up, you should all be of one mind living like brothers with true love and sympathy for each other, generous and courteous at all times. Never pay back a bad turn or an insult with another insult, but on the contrary pay back with good. For this is your calling – to do good and one day to inherit the goodness of God.”*

1 Peter 3:8-9 JB Phillips New Testament<sup>4</sup>

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