

Yesterday morning, I preached on the Contemplative aspect of our Christian faith, what Richard Foster calls “The Prayer-Filled Life”. As I stated, of the six aspects of Faith* this is the one to which I am most drawn. All of us are drawn to one or two aspects over the others, but we also mentioned that we all need all of these streams working in our lives to one extent or another.

It has been said that only recently in human history have we begun paying people simply to listen to us. That used to be a natural part of friendships, family relationships, and the church body. But with the drastic increase in workloads, time spent, and expectations on everyone, we have less and less time to listen to one another. And so now nearly 20% of Americans are seeing counselors, spiritual directors, or both. Now as a Spiritual Director myself, I know the work, training, and skill needed for these roles – they are paid for far more than just listening. But I believe these are related. Add to that the number of people who would say they have many acquaintances and a few friends, but almost none with whom they can share the deepest parts of life. What we are seeing is a People desperate for someone to listen to the reality of their lives.

This is the aspect of the Contemplative life that I find the most fulfilling. When we move to a Prayer-Centered life, we find that we are heard by the One we most want to hear us. And while this may seem contradictory to the reality that Contemplative Prayer is far more about listening than about speaking, it is in the listening to God that we find ourselves truly heard by Him. So if you are looking to be heard, for someOne who will listen to the deepest cries of your heart, for a confidant, guide, and friend, let me suggest the Contemplative life.

If you want to know more, I would love nothing more than to talk with you about it. I’m looking to listen. Just let me know.

* The other 5 aspects are the Holiness, the Social Justice, the Charismatic, the Incarnational, and the Evangelical aspects.