



*The*  
**Quiet  
Hour**

September, October, November 2009

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**Living in Community**

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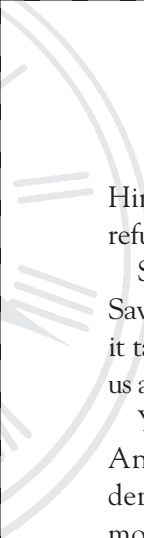
# Living in Community

Welcome! Your readings in this quarter of *Quiet Hour* focus on God's covenant as manifested in communities. You'll be considering the *persons* whom God chose as covenant leaders, the *invitations* He offered to enter into community, and people's *responses* to those invitations. But what, exactly, is the nature of the community we're invited to enjoy?

I like the way Bible commentator William Barclay put it in his *Daily Study Bible*: "It is the glory of the Christian that he lives in a fellowship of people who have had the same experience as he has had. It has been said that true friendship begins only when people share a common memory and can say to each other, 'Do you remember?' Each of us is one of a great fellowship of people who share a common experience and a common memory of their Lord."

In other words, living in Christian community is much more than just sharing friendship. It is sharing our Lord and our lives in Him. Which brings this quarter's focus down to the most practical question for us: How will I respond to God's invitation today?

And He does invite. For example, in several stories from Mark, Jesus invites all kinds of people into covenant with God. A Syrophenician woman, for example—a Gentile—convinced Jesus that He should heal her daughter. She did that by continuing an open-hearted conversation with



Him. In contrast, a rich man who was seeking eternal life refused Jesus' invitation, thereby rejecting the covenant.

So, again, how will you and I respond when we hear the Savior's invitation? If we decide to say yes, we'll also find that it takes courage and perseverance. For Jesus immediately gives us a cross to bear as we seek to follow among His people.

Yet it helps to remember that it is a step by step process. And it's not so much the big events in our lives that demonstrate our dedication; rather, it's the moment-by-moment willingness to say "Yes, Lord" at each mundane decision point coming our way. Each of our choices will in some way either strengthen or weaken our ability to follow.

That is why I believe *The Quiet Hour* is so appropriately named. We need a few minutes each day to reaffirm our commitment to the faith—and the community of faith—even as we are pulled in myriad directions at any given moment. So, when will you have your quiet hour today?

Gary Wilde

Editor, *The Quiet Hour*

*You are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household.*

—Ephesians 2:19, NIV



## Perfect Timing

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**Today's Scripture:** 1 Timothy 2:1-6.

**Today's Verses:** *There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.*

—1 Timothy 2:5-6 (NIV)

I believed that God wanted me to go to a certain Bible college in Missouri. However, I didn't have the money for registration, no financial aid, and no way to get there. So I asked the Lord to provide the way if He indeed wanted me to go. Here's what happened. . . .

Within a few days, money for the application arrived anonymously. The school accepted my application. Financial aid applications flew through the process. And a neighbor even lent me the money to rent a vehicle!

Why did God wait until a few days before I had to leave? It must have been "the proper time." So I learned to trust Him while I waited. My faith grew.

The great message we have to tell involves something important about God's timing: Our salvation came at just the right time. Jesus, the one and only mediator, came to earth approximately two thousand years ago, not before and not later. The timing was perfect.

—Daneen Padilla

*Age to age He stands;  
Time is in His hands.*

—"How Great Is Our God"

## Amazed in the Meeting

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**Today's Scripture:** Exodus 24:12-18.

**Today's Verse:** The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and commands I have written for their instruction."  
—Exodus 24:12 (NIV)

Imagine that meeting alone with God, in the way that Moses did, could be pretty exciting. He saw fiery glory, entered a cloud, and heard a heavenly voice. It would surely be intimidating. Meeting face-to-face with the Lord Almighty who created the heavens and the earth? Meeting with the one who knows everything about everything? Awesome and fearful! But Moses left that meeting with the Ten Commandments.

I can meet alone with God today, of course, in quiet times of prayer. I may leave with a new view of things. But the Ten Commandments changed my world—so could I leave with something that will change my world?

Our time alone with God is essential to spiritual growth. I grow to know Him better. I begin to see myself through His eyes, recalling how much He loves me. Like Moses, I too am amazed.

—Daneen Padilla

*I once was lost, but now I'm found;  
Was blind, but now I see.*

—"Amazing Grace"

## It's All About Him

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**Today's Scripture:** Numbers 11:24-29.

**Today's Verse:** [Moses said to Joshua], "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD'S people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!"

—Numbers 11:29 (NIV)

In the 1980s some prominent ministers succumbed to immorality. Recently, more ministers have done the same, causing some people to turn away from the church, and even, apparently, from faith in God.

These folks seemed to focus their eyes on people rather than on Jesus. But people will fail us—even the best of Christians. On the other hand, Jesus never changes, never fails. He is the solid rock upon which to build our faith.

Joshua knew that working with a mighty man of God, like Moses, was a great honor. However, he learned that God is the one doing the mighty work. God chooses whom He will use, so being someone He chooses is a great honor. However, no matter who He uses, He is still the one doing the work.

—Daneen Padilla

*We must be disappointed with the  
lesser things of life before we can  
comprehend the full value of the  
greater.*

— Edward G. Bulwer-Lytton