

WHEN THE PRESSURES OF LIFE MAKE YOU IRRITABLE Remember Isaiah 30,
WHEN THE PRESSURES OF LIFE MAKE YOU IRRITABLE,
REMEMBER ISAIAH 30:15 AND MARK 6:31

"For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel... in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while."

When the children of Israel entered Canaan, they were given explicit instructions regarding their agriculture. "When ye come unto the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the Lord. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather the fruit thereof. But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard" (Lev. 25:2-4).

During the passing of time, regulations changed the attitude of farmers. Aware of the increasing needs of mankind, governments ordered that fertilizers and other commodities be used to restore the elements removed by successive crops. Fields are not "rested" as they once were.

When a man or woman works under pressure, irritability is inevitable. When people are emotionally upset, they say and do things which beget tension and destructiveness. Relationships are ruined, and contacts with neighbors become a nightmare. God knew this and prepared a remedy for His people.

Stillness... The Mother of Confidence

During my stay in Rotorua, New Zealand, I went with a famous guide to see the wonders of the national park. All around were pools of boiling mud and geysers of varying size. Yet the main attraction was the huge central waterspout which sent a column of water high into the air. When it seemed reluctant to entertain visitors, I saw a slight frown appear on the face of the lady lecturer. Suddenly, she approached and threw something into the base of the geyser. Within moments the earth seemed to erupt, and the famous phenomenon came to life. I was fascinated when she explained, "Sometimes, it is necessary to throw some detergent into the gaping hole. I do not know what happens exactly, but the trick always works."

I smiled, for I had often seen the same phenomenon among men and women. Volcanic eruptions are not reserved exclusively for national parks. Sometimes eruptive energy fills the souls of human

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beings, and it only needs a little encouragement. One unwise word or thoughtless action may lead to problems in a home, a community, and even among nations. Such energy needs to be quelled, not encouraged! Jesus said to His exultant followers, "Come apart, and rest awhile," and to make this possible, He led the disciples into the desert. They needed to be still and know that He was God.

Solitude... The Means of Communion

Many teachers believe that Moses did not deserve the punishment which terminated his ministry. He had brought Israel out from the bondage of Egypt to the borders of Canaan. That he should be excluded from Canaan because of the failure of the people and his own moment of anger when he smote the rock seemed to be a travesty of justice. God had special reasons for His treatment of Israel's leader, but it is thought-provoking that during his times of testing Moses climbed into the mountain where his ruffled spirit was calmed.

"To bear up under loss; to fight the bitterness of defeat, and the
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weakness of grief; to be victor over anger; to smile when tears are
close; to resist evil men and base instincts; to hate hate, and love

love;

to go on when it would seem good to die; to seek after the glory and
the dream; to look up with unquenchable that is what any man
can do, and so be great" -Zane Grey

Self-Restraint... The Method of Conquest

Moses and Paul belonged to the same family. In some ways they
might have been twins! Paul gave his life for people who criticized
him, and he sacrificed everything that undeserving people might be
helped. Surely there were occasions when his natural instincts desired
to retaliate, but on the solitary occasion when he yielded to impulse, he
apologized for his outburst (see Acts 23:1-5). His phenomenal success
was due, at least in part, to the steady hold he maintained upon his
personal feelings. He had learned to say, 'Not I, but Christ liveth in
me' (Gal. 2:20).

Too much work can promote oppression, worry, discontent, and,
finally, criticism of other people. Since the tongue can be a dangerous
member of the body, it is often wise to keep one's mouth closed!

God said, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength," and
this is an excellent text for a depressed or irritable soul.

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