

Practicing Solitude

Solitude

The creation of an open, empty space in our lives by purposefully abstaining from interaction with other human beings, so that, freed from competing loyalties, we can be found by God.

Practicing Solitude

Jesus practiced Solitude ...

- Began his public ministry with Forty days alone in the desert (Mat 4:1-11)
- Before he chose the 12, spent the night alone in prayer (Lu 6:12)
- When he received news of John the Baptists death, he withdrew to a lonely place (Mat 14:13)
- After the miracle of Feeding the Five Thousand, he went to the hills by himself (Matt 14:23)
- After a long run of ministry, “in the morning, a great while before day, he rose and went out to a lonely place.” (Mk 6:31)
- When the 12 returned from their healing mission, Jesus instructed, “Come away by yourselves to a lonely place.” (Mk 1:35)

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Jesus practiced solitude ...

- After healing a leper Jesus “withdrew to the wilderness and prayer.” (Lu 5:16)
- Taking 3 disciples, he sought a place of silence for the Transfiguration encounter. (Mat 17:1-9)
- He sought solitude in the Garden of Gethsemane in preparation for his suffering and salvation work. (Mat 26:36-46)

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Fruit of our Practice

What value do we add to our Lives by the Practice of Solitude, or spending time with God?

Dependency:

Even when weary, needs remain; our strength for ministry comes from God

Direction:

Seeking God's will, not ours; a time of focused listening & Hearing God give guidance to you

Rest & Retreat:

Being 'mindful of our pace', we are limited beings and need rhythms of rest and reflection between giving of ourselves

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Fruit of our Practice

DeBriefing:

Taking the time to make sense of the events and circumstance of our lives; interpreting life thru God's perspective

Love Check:

Time with God reminds us that our motivation for serving and giving to others is our Love for Him; abstinence of nourishing the ego

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Making It Happen:

‘Little Solitudes’ in our day

moments before we get out of bed
cup of coffee in the morning
bumper to bumper traffic
walking, running

A Quiet Place

designate a room in your home
special chair
spot in the park
church sanctuary

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Making It Happen:

Retreat Center / Houses

retreat day

weekend

7 day retreat

30-40 day retreat

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Doesn't every breath crave a deeper, fuller exposure to his Presence? It is the Discipline of solitude that will open the door. You are welcome to come in and "listen to God's speech in his wondrous, terrible, gentle, loving, all-embracing silence."

Richard Foster quotes Catherine de Haeck Doherty