

"Everyday Holiness: Practicing Solitude"

Greg Wendschlag October 28, 2018

"He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Ps. 46:10

The Discipline of Solitude

"Without solitude it is virtually impossible to lead a spiritual life." Henri Nouwen

"Where shall the world be found, where will the word resound? Not here, there is not enough silence." T.S. Eliot

"In contemporary society our Adversary majors in three things: noise, hurry and crowds. If he can engage us in "muchness" and "manyness" He will rest satisfied." Richard Foster

The nature of solitude

"Solitude is not loneliness. Solitude is cultivating an inner silence that frees us from loneliness. Loneliness is inner emptiness, solitude is inner fulfillment." Richard Foster

Why is solitude important?

"Solitude does not recharge your batteries to give you the power to overcome the rat race; on the contrary, it teaches you to ignore the struggle altogether...We must seek out the recreating stillness of solitude if we want to be with others meaningfully." Richard Foster

"In the stillness, our false, busy selves are unmasked and seen for the imposters they truly are." Richard Foster

How Jesus practiced solitude

"After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone." Mt. 14:23

- Jesus started ministry with 40 days of solitude – Matt 4/Luke 4
- Before Jesus chose the 12 – Lk. 6:12
- When he mourned John the Baptist – Mt. 14:13
- After feeding the 5000 – Mt. 14:23
- Following a long night of work he arose in the morning – Mk. 1:35
- When the 12 returned from teaching and preaching – Mk. 6:31

- After a miraculous healing – Lk. 5:16
- With three disciples – Mt. 17:1-9
- In the Garden of Gethsemane – Mt. 26:36-46

How do I find time for solitude?

“At first, time thus spent will seem so useless, so wasted. We will soon be severely tempted to make “good use of our time” by reading books or writing many pages.” Richard Foster

“Our problem is not too little time, but making better use of the time we have.” Oswald Sanders

“Procrastination, the thief of time, is one of the Devil’s most potent weapons for defrauding us of eternal heritage.” Oswald Sanders

Practicing solitude

- Take advantage of the “little solitudes.”
- Daily retreats
 - Plan
 - Place
 - Pray
 - Praise
 - Print
- Longer retreats

Lifer challenge:

1. Take a time inventory. How much time is spent on what is important?
2. Commit to “unplugging” for a period of time each day.
3. Make time every day to be alone with God.

Discussion Starters for Your Groups InCommon

1. What is the difference between loneliness and solitude? Which do you experience more?
2. What are the things in your life that compete with quietness of the soul?
3. How must you change your daily schedule to create space for time with God?
4. What goals for solitude have you made for yourself?

