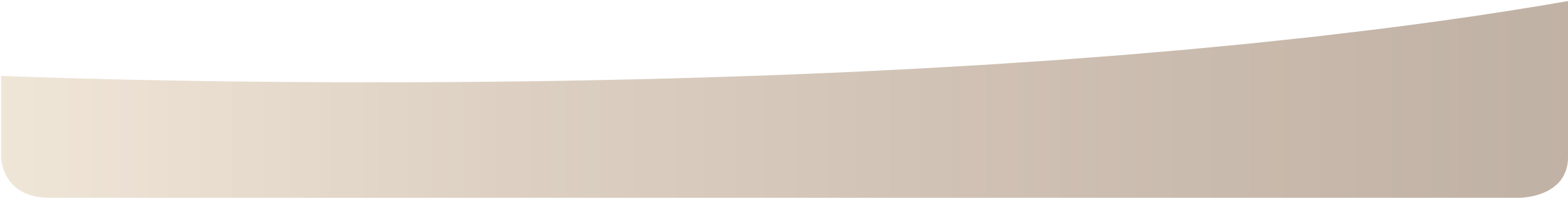
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Jim Baker



**25 Practices To Nurture The Inner Spiritual Life**



**Spiritual Practices…….Seeking Greater Connection With God**

It was while reading Richard Foster’s, *Celebration of Discipline* that it first struck me that the Christian faith is more of a quest than a destination and that in this centuries old journey people of the Christian tradition have developed spiritual practices to seek greater communion and connection with God. As a result, there is a rich diversity of Christian spiritual practices, heavily influenced by times, circumstances, and the people who have met God in the midst of these practices.

Incorporating these new ways (to me) of praying, meditating, reflecting, experiencing, and reading scripture fueled a closer relationship with God and a new passion for the inner spiritual life than I had ever imagined possible. Marjorie Thompson, author of *Soul Feast*, describes the inner spiritual life as “simply the increasing vitality and sway of God’s Spirit in us. It is a magnificent choreography of the Holy Spirit and the human spirit, moving us toward communion with both Creator and creation. The inner spiritual life is thus grounded in relationship. It has to do with God’s way of relating to us and our way of responding to God.”

Words like discipline, exercise, and practice are common metaphors for God communing and connecting activities. I prefer the term “practice” because of its relationship to the athletic imagery used by the Apostle Paul. As with any sport, the more you practice, the better you get. You get in better spiritual shape the more you practice. You can listen to countless sermons and read innumerable books, but true transformation and real communion with the Creator happens only as we practice spiritual activities that connect us to God and His ways.

Most of us have experienced the benefit of practicing an instrument, sport, skill, or game and becoming better and better as a result. I suggest you think of the spiritual life in the same way, committing to practice regularly a few of the 25 Spiritual Practices below. Some, like Lectio Divina and the Jesus Prayer, have been practiced for centuries. Others are more contemporary and individualized expressions and variations of classic spiritual practices. What is the payoff? Henri Nouwen describes it best:

*In the spiritual life, the word “discipline” means “the effort to create some space in which God can act.” Discipline means to prevent everything in your life from being filled up. Discipline means that somewhere you are not occupied, and certainly not preoccupied. In the spiritual life, discipline means to create space in which something can happen that you hadn’t planned or counted on.*

There you have it. Incorporating new spiritual practices into your spiritual regimen can create the space for a mystical connection, communion, and union with God that allows for something to happen that you hadn’t planned or counted on!

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**Spiritual Practice - A Personal Virtue Vision**

A “Personal Virtue Vision” develops an individualized picture of transformation in specific areas of life, and requires careful training plans to accomplish. For example, I must first envision what virtue would look like in particular areas of my life:

*Money:* If I were out of control in spending and full of greed, what would it be like to be content with my possessions and free to be generous with what I have?

*Anger or Control:* If I were angry and controlling, what would it look like to be able to put away anger quickly and trust God for outcomes rather than manipulate circumstances or people to accomplish my perception of what is best?

*Fear or Worry:* If I were living in fear or worried about matters, what would it be like to be able to trust God’s providence and provision and be peaceful, no matter the circumstances?

**Step One:** Read and prayerfully reflect on this passage from the Message Bible: II Peter 1:3-11. Begin to think and pray about an area of life where God is leading you to establish a virtue vision.

*Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally and intimately, the One who invited us to God. The best invitation we have ever received! We were also given absolutely terrific promises to pass on to you – your tickets to participation in the life of God after you turned your back on a world corrupted by lust.*

*So don’t lose a minute in building on what you’ve been given, complementing your basic faith with \*****good character, \*spiritual understanding, \*alert discipline, \*passionate patience, \*reverent wonder, \*warm friendliness and \*generous love****, each dimension fitting into and developing the others.*

*With these qualities active and growing in your lives, no grass will grow under your feet, no day will pass without its reward as you mature in your experience of our Master Jesus. Without these qualities you can’t see what’s right before you, oblivious that your old sinful life has been wiped off the books.*

*So, friends, confirm God’s invitation to you, his choice of you. Don’t put if off; do it now. Do this, and you’ll have your life on a firm footing, the streets paved and the way wide open into the eternal kingdom of our Master and Savior, Jesus Christ.*

**\**Good character*** – the areas of life you envision God’s goodness to touch, the areas you decide to establish a virtue vision in to be more like Christ in your life.

**\**Spiritual understanding*** – scriptures & other knowledge you can learn about that area.

**\**Alert discipline*** – the practices & habits you train with to bring life change.

**\**Passionate patience*** – the continued attempts at obedience that in this area of life, that will be hard at first, but eventually as you endure, will supernaturally become a natural part of a new you in your behaviors and attitudes.

**\**Reverent wonder*** – this will require all your effort to abandon yourself to God’s power and grace to change you in that area.

**\**Warm friendliness*** – evidence of real change is that you are a more loving person to others due to change in that area.

**\**Generous love*** – you are more loving to others in this area where you have changed even when some are indifferent to, offended by or even hostile to you due to the change in you.

**Step Two:** Prayerfully read the passages listed below. Use these scriptures to help you identify any recurring thought, feeling, attitude, behavior, habit or sin to be transformed. As you read make a note of anything that seems like it could be an area you might consider on the attached worksheet.

Read a chapter in Proverbs {one or two chapters from chapters 10-28} and notice if an attitude, behavior or character trait, negative or positive, grabs your attention, complaining, listening, talking less, jealousy/envy, etc.

Read the Love chapter, I Corinthians 13, kindness, thinking only the best of another, not reviling back, etc.

Read Romans chapters 12-14, Ephesians chapters 4-6 or Colossians chapters 3-4 thinking the best of everyone, ingratitude, judgmental, etc.

Read the Sermon on the Mount chapters 5-7 and ponder if contempt, anger, half-truths/dishonesty, etc. characterize your life.

**Step Three:** Talk to a couple of your most trusted friends or family members and have them pray for you as you do this exercise. If you feel comfortable, ask them what they have any wisdom or nudging from God on your behalf to help you choose your virtue vision areas.

**Step Four:** What virtues do you feel drawn to by God in healthy conviction so that you are both sufficiently challenged and also looking forward to seeing transformed?

**Step Five:** Develop an actual plan of spiritual practices, disciplines and training exercises to pursue in each specific area you have identified to be transformed.



**Spiritual Practice: Lectio Divina**

Traditionally, the spiritual practice of *lectio divina* is broken down into the following steps named in Latin:

**1. *Lectio* (reading)**

**2. *Meditatio* (meditation)**

**3. *Oratio* (prayer)**

**4. *Contemplatio* (contemplation)**

**5. *Actio* (action)**

Each of these steps together form a process by which we encounter God in his sacred word and respond to his grace. They form parts of a larger whole, but each one comes with a certain set of skills for us to master. Let’s look briefly at each step.

***Lectio* (Reading):** Listen with your heart as well as your ears. Which words seem to rest on your heart? Jump out at you? What did the Scripture mean then?

In the first phase of *lectio divina* we understand what the passage we are reading says in itself. This is the literal meaning of the Scripture passage and the lessons everyone should recognize in reading it. At this stage we do not yet consider our own lives in connection with the Scriptures. We do not let our opinions influence our reading, but seek to understand the message of the passage as interpreted by the Church independently of anyone’s opinions. This phase is summarized with the question: *What does the text say that everyone should understand?*

***Meditatio* (Meditation):** Transfer to my place in life today.....the same scripture passage may mean different things on different days to different people.....be open.

In the meditation phase of *lectio divina*, we ask, *what does this text say to me, today, and to my life?* We allow God to pull up certain memories of people, places, and events in our lives that relate to the passage we are reading. Meditation is also an opportunity to see ourselves in the text. We can consider our own feelings as if we were a participant in the text or try to understand what it would be like to be one of the people represented in the text. In this way we come to a deeper appreciation of how God is working in our lives through the sacred word. Having entered into the story ourselves, we can return to the present and consider the areas in our own lives that God is calling us to contemplate.

***Oratio* (Prayer):** Make up a simple prayer using the phrase that “spoke to you from the Scripture.” You can share this with the group or keep it private.

Through a meditation on Scripture, we experience an intimate encounter with God that leads us to respond in prayer. Having met our Lord in his holy word, we courageously speak to him in our own words. In this way we consider prayer to be a simple conversation with God. It is a conversation that comes in various forms: we ask petitions (or requests) of him, we give him thanks, and we give him praise. We might also ask for the intercession of Mary or the saints represented in the passage we read. At this phase we can ask ourselves: *What can I say to the Lord in response to his word?*

***Contemplatio* (Contemplation):** Time to be quiet again and listen to the Lord. In what direction is this Scripture passage taking me? Discernment is a very important part of this step.....keep tuned into the Lord. Ask the Holy Spirit’s help.

A true encounter with the Lord always leads to transformation. Indeed, the Lord God proclaimed, “Behold, I make all things new” (Revelation 21:5). Through contemplation we come to an understanding of the parts of our lives that need to be transformed by God’s grace. We humble ourselves and open our lives up to his transformative power. This step comes with the willingness to change, an openness and trust in God, and the decision to follow God’s will rather than our own. With this decision comes a fear of losing what we find comfortable and safe. At the same time we feel the excitement of a call to heroic adventure and a hopeful future of living the life we are meant to live. At this step in the *lectio divina* process, we ask ourselves: *What conversion of the mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of me?*

**Actio (Action):** An action step that may come to you now or sometime during the next week...don’t need to rush this. How is the Lord asking me to act on this Scripture? In what direction is the Holy Spirit guiding me?

Finally, although this phase is often not considered to be a part of *lectio divina* proper, it is an essential result of the encounter with God in Sacred Scripture. Having received God’s love and grace, we go forth to serve others out of the love we have been given. Our transformation calls us to witness to others; it calls us to selflessly serve our brothers and sisters in Christ. These acts are done not so much out of a sense of duty, but out of the inspiration we receive from the acceptance in faith of God’s love.



**Spiritual Practice: Forgiveness**

Forgiveness is an act of letting go. When we forgive we do not forget the harm someone caused or say that it does not matter. But we release bitterness and hatred, freeing ourselves to move on and make choices grounded in our strength rather than victimization. Forgiveness opens our closed hearts to give and receive love fully. Jack Kornfield offers a wonderful meditative practice of forgiveness:

Sit comfortably. Allow your eyes to close and your breath to be natural and easy. Let your body and mind relax. Breathing gently into the area of your heart, let yourself feel all the barriers you have erected and the emotions that you have carried because you have not forgiven—not forgiven yourself, not forgiven others. . . . Let yourself feel the pain of keeping your heart closed. Then, breathing softly, begin asking and extending forgiveness, reciting the following words, letting the images and feelings that come up grow deeper as you repeat them.

**Asking Forgiveness of Others**Recite: "There are many ways that I have hurt and harmed others, have betrayed or abandoned them, caused them suffering, knowingly or unknowingly, out of my pain, fear, anger, and confusion." Let yourself remember and visualize the ways you have hurt others. See and feel the pain you have caused out of your own fear and confusion. Feel your own sorrow and regret. Sense that finally you can release this burden and ask for forgiveness. Picture each memory that still burdens your heart. And then to each person in your mind repeat: "I ask for your forgiveness, I ask for your forgiveness."

**Offering Forgiveness to Yourself**Recite: "There are many ways that I have hurt and harmed myself. I have betrayed or abandoned myself many times through thought, word, or deed, knowingly and unknowingly." Feel your own precious body and life. Let yourself see the ways you have hurt or harmed yourself. Picture them, remember them. Feel the sorrow you have carried from this and sense that you can release these burdens. Extend forgiveness for each of them, one by one. Repeat to yourself: "For the ways I have hurt myself through action or inaction, out of fear, pain, and confusion, I now extend a full and heartfelt forgiveness. I forgive myself, I forgive myself."

**Offering Forgiveness to Those Who Have Hurt or Harmed You**Recite: "There are many ways that I have been harmed by others, abused or abandoned, knowingly or unknowingly, in thought, word, or deed." Let yourself picture and remember these many ways. Feel the sorrow you have carried from this past and sense that you can release this burden of pain by extending forgiveness whenever your heart is ready. Now say to yourself: "I now remember the many ways others have hurt or harmed me, wounded me, out of fear, pain, confusion, and anger. I have carried this pain in my heart too long. To the extent that I am ready, I offer them forgiveness. To those who have caused me harm, I offer my forgiveness, I forgive you."

Let yourself gently repeat these three directions for forgiveness until you feel a release in your heart. For some great pains you may not feel a release but only the burden and the anguish or anger you have held. Touch this softly. Be forgiving of yourself for not being ready to let go and move on. Forgiveness cannot be forced; it cannot be artificial. Simply continue the practice and let the words and images work gradually in their own way.  

**Spiritual Practice: Whole Brain Scripture Meditation**

Most of us are inclined to mostly use only one side of our brain. Our thought processes are either predominately creative, intuitive and abstract (right brain), or logical, rational and concrete (left brain).

This is true in our work as well as our spiritual life. To engage both the right and left sides of our brains requires concentration, focus and intentionality. When we do, we are capable of break through thinking and feeling.

When applied to reading and reflecting upon God’s word, we frequently experience fresh insights and perspectives. For example, meditating on a conceptual text (left brain) and an imagery text (right brain) together can have a greater impact on the mind and heart than a single text in isolation.

Include the following exercise as a regular spiritual practice and judge for yourself.

**Whole Brain Scripture Meditation Exercise**

Step 1: Invocation

Intentionally place yourself before God; ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate the text, and to bring you into the presence of Christ.

Step 2: Reading and Reflection

Select a biblical text that states a truth or concept. Select a companion text that has more imagery such as a narrative, parable or story that helps you feel and experience the truth or concept. Example: read a text on the concept of the Kingdom of God and then read a parable of Jesus that has a concrete image (yeast, a lamp, treasure in a buried field, a pearl of great price, etc.).

In a leisurely, prayerful and meditative spirit, spend 15-30 minutes in reading both texts, slowly pondering the words, images and associations.

Step 3: Prayer

Thank God for this time in his presence and for any insights or leading that he may have given you.

Step 4: Recollection

Sometime later in the day, remember your time in the presence of the Lord through the text, and remind yourself again of the insight, word, phrase, sense of leading or sense of his presence that you may have experienced during your time of meditation.

Example Exercise:

**Left Brain: Read and meditate on a propositional text that states on a cognitive level the wonderful truth of sonship, adoption, God as Abba Father and that we are children of God.**

*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you have received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Romans 8:15-16*

*You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus………..Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out Abba, Father. Galatians 3:26; 4:6*

**Right Brain: Read and meditate on a pictorial narrative that helps you imagine, understand and experience what sonship, God as Abba Father and being children of God looks like and feels like on a personal level.**

*As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Matthew 3:16-17*

*He got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. Luke 15:20*



**Spiritual Practice: Experiencing God In Silence, Solitude, and Stillness**

The importance of silence, solitude, and stillness in the life of Jesus and his disciples is undeniable. Jesus made a habit of withdrawing, sometimes abruptly, from the crowds and his ministry of doing his Father’s will to “the hills” or a “lonely place” or “the wilderness” or a “high mountain” or to the “seashore” or to the Garden of Gethsemene. To be more like Jesus we must likewise find times of silence, solitude and stillness.

The spiritual disciplines of silence, solitude, stillness are disciplines of abstinence. In the disciplines of abstinence, we abstain in some form and for some time from what we generally regard as normal desires.

And, as with all spiritual disciplines, the disciplines of silence, solitude, and stillness are for the ultimate goal of godliness, Christ-likeness, and oneness with God.

For the purpose of spiritual disciplines we define silence, solitude, and stillness as follows:

**Silence:** To abstain from speaking. To listen. To be quiet.

**Solitude:** To be alone. To turn away from human interaction and external stimuli.

**Stillness:** To stop, cease, desist. To not move. To rest. To stay fixated. To wait. To be at peace.

**Experiencing God in Silence**

“In silence and quietness the devout soul makes progress and learns the hidden mysteries of the Scriptures” – Thomas a Kempis.

“All writers on the spiritual life uniformly recommend, nay, command under penalty of total failure, the practice of silence” – The Catholic Encyclopedia

“In quietness and trust is your strength” (Isaiah30:15)

We are in a culture that conditions us to be comfortable with noise and crowds and uneasy with silence. We have an addiction to noise. Silence is rare in our society as our lives are always filled with background noise, without which we tend to fear nothing is happening. What does it say about our souls if we have to have noise to feel as if something is happening around us?

All in all no spiritual discipline is more universally accepted as necessary than the practice of silence. In silence we close our soul off from the sounds of words, music, and noise. Silence allows us to experience life-transforming concentration on God.

The reason we seek silence is the same reason Jesus did – to be able to listen and hear what God is saying to us. Nothing like silence strips us naked and allows us to see reality through God’s eyes.

Silence is possible without solitude but very few of us can be silent in the presence of others, which speaks to the necessity of pairing silence with solitude. Richard Foster notes that “Without silence there is no solitude”

**Experiencing God in Solitude**

“But when you pray, go into your closet and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.” (Matthew 6:6)

In the spiritual discipline of solitude we purposefully abstain from interaction with other human beings and all that comes with interaction with others. We intentionally isolate ourselves away from the experience of being with others by going to our prayer closet, the ocean, the wilderness, the desert, or the mountain to experience aloneness with God.

Solitude also is freeing. The normal course of daily human interactions locks us into patterns of thought and action that work against experiencing God, and only solitude can free us from the ingrained patterns that hinder our connection with God. In solitude we can better see the things that trap, worry, and oppress us and we are free to return to society as free persons.

It has been said that no great work in literature or in science was ever wrought by a man who did not love solitude. Anyone who has to create music, art, lessons, sermons, presentations, or reports knows it can’t be done with excellence without some form of extended and uninterrupted solitude.

Spiritual people from every generation are agreed it is a fundamental principal of religion that no large measure of spiritual growth was ever attained by one who did not take sufficient time to be alone with God.

**Experiencing God in Stillness**

“Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.” (Psalm 37:7). Scripture implies that stillness involves waiting and that blessings follow those who wait on God. As we don’t initiate action in our own strength and timing, we experience the blessings of God’s good and perfect and pleasing will and timing.

“Peace! Be still! And the wind ceased.” (Mark 4:39). Jesus connects stillness with peace. When we experience extended periods of stillness with God, our RPM’s slow down, our inner turmoil is quietened, and a deep peace that passes understanding permeates our body, mind and soul.

“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations and in all the earth.” (Psalm 46:10). The Psalmist declares that we come to know God and His ways in stillness and that He is glorified and worship is experienced through God-focused stillness.

“He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.” (Psalm 23: 2-3) Scripture associates stillness with rest and healing. When we are sick the doctor usually prescribes that we be still through bed rest. When we suffer broken bones they are placed in a cast or sling to immobilize the bones. Why? Because stillness promotes healing. When we are still before God we experience life-giving healing and wholeness that only He can provide.

“Now therefore stand still and see this great thing that the Lord will do before your eyes.” (1 Samuel 12:16). In stillness we slow down enough to notice where God is obviously at work in our lives, the lives of others, and in the world.

It was while Samuel was lying still in the Temple (1 Samuel 3:3-4) that God spoke to him. Likewise it is in the midst of stillness that we hear God’s voice speaking to us and respond to His call upon our lives.

**Silence, Stillness, and Solitude Summarized**

Spiritual writers and leaders, ancient and modern, are unanimous in agreeing that the disciplines of silence, solitude, and stillness lead to a love of God, a love of self, and a love of others. More than any previous generation in history, we must discipline ourselves to experience silence, solitude, and stillness.

Think of silence, solitude, and stillness as complimentary as well as catalytic. They are frequently found together because silence, solitude, and stillness go hand in hand, each making the other complete. Think of them as a three stranded rope, when structured together are stronger than the sum of its parts.

In summary, we practice the disciplines of silence, solitude, and stillness so that we may:

* Seek the will of God as Jesus did before choosing his disciples in Luke 6:12-13.
* Open our minds to see God’s ways as when Gabriel responded to Zechariah’s unbelief with an enforced silence in Luke 1:20.
* Quieten the noise so we can clearly hear God’s voice as Samuel did.
* Regain strength and receive power. After expending themselves physically and spiritually Jesus told His disciples, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest awhile.” (Mark 6:31)
* Produce the fruits of the spirit in our daily lives.
* Increase our sensitivity and compassion for others, and experience a new responsiveness to their hurts and needs.
* Learn to rely more on God’s control in matters where we typically feel compelled to speak, act, or exert control.
* Participate without interruption in other spiritual disciplines, such as, to read scripture and sacred writings, meditate, pray, journal, worship, and fast.
* Experience union, communion, and oneness with God.

If you have experienced genuine silence, solitude, and stillness then you resonate with the words of Jonathan Edwards who found such spiritual disciplines “a delight and a foundation of refreshment, joy, and transformation.”

**How To Find Solitude And Make It Productive**

Prior to our cacophonous age, leaders naturally found solitude anytime they were physically alone. In today’s world it can be difficult to find times and places to be alone with our thoughts as we are surrounded with a swarming variety of inputs and intrusions through most of our days and nights. In years past, solitude was so accessible that leaders used solitude without even being aware of it. Today it takes a conscious, concerted, and disciplined effort.

**Finding the White Space**

If solitude really is essential to effective personal leadership, then when and how do you summon the strength, find the white space in your calendar, and establish zones of solitude? First, remember that a key element of solitude is mental isolation, which is the antithesis of accessibility, input, distractions, and interruptions. Secondly, be aware that solitude can be sustained, or intermittent, and can found as readily in a fast food restaurant as on top of a serene mountain. Finally, systematically build pockets of solitude into your life, times when nothing is scheduled.

What follows are examples of some ways to create pockets of solitude during the workday.

* Turn off the radio in the car
* Take an offsite “spiritual retreat” day or morning
* Take a moment during the day to sit silently in the church sanctuary or chapel
* Go to the church or local library
* Close yourself off in the church conference room
* Shut your office door
* Ask your Administrative Assistant to restrict your accessibility for a period of time
* Designate one day a week as no-meeting days
* Block off a morning for time to think
* Don’t check email or texts for a designated period of time
* Eat lunch in your car
* Take a mid-afternoon walk
* Schedule time to journal your thoughts of the day before you leave work

**How To Make Solitude Productive**

There are several simple ways to prepare for times of solitude to make those moments more productive.

* **Prayer:** Ask God for the Spirit of knowledge, understanding, counsel, and wisdom (Isaiah 11:2-3).
* **Percolate:** Prioritize in advance the issues, problems, opportunities, and decisions you will want to reflect upon.
* **Principles:** Identify the scriptures, beliefs, and values that will undergird and serve as filters for your time of solitude.
* **Plan:** Collect the materials, books, and resources that you think especially helpful to getting your mind processing.

Embrace the discipline of solitude as the foundation of your personal leadership development and you will come to rely on and treasure solitude as you experience its benefits.



**Spiritual Practice: “Peace, Be Still”**

Read Mark 4:35-41. Place yourself in the boat with the disciples, becoming one of them as you read.

Look at the picture icon of *Storm on the Sea.* This icon illustrates the peaceful space in Jesus. Icons are “prayer helps” that have been used in the church for centuries. They are not meant to be realistic portraits but to point to the spiritual realities they portray.

In this one the two disciples in the boat with Jesus represent our two basic responses to the storms of life: flight (John) and fight (Peter). Jesus offers a third response: rest in God.

Ponder the icon carefully and ask:

* What emotions or attitudes do you sense the posture and gesture of each figure is conveying? Peter (standing up), John (sitting down), Jesus (sleeping)?
* What are the “winds and waves” that are pressing you?

1. Life
2. Family
3. Ministry/Work

* What are your “fight” responses?

1. Worry
2. Fear
3. Anger
4. Contempt
5. Control

* What are your “flight” responses?

1. Depression
2. Giving Up
3. Shutting Down
4. Medicating
5. Withdrawing
6. Addictions

Note that the wind is whipping Peter’s coat to form what looks like wings. And that both Peter and John have halos. In his flight into despair, John isn’t directly looking at Jesus, but he is still glancing at his master out of the corner of his eye.

The icon suggests that the world of peace is possible – that we can live in the Jesus end of the boat, in the peace, trust and confidence of God’s care, even as we face death.

Where would you have Jesus speak, “Peace be still” into your life?

