

LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Lesson 6 w/Answers

The Discipline of Solitude

We continue our Christian Living study of Foster's twelve spiritual disciplines by looking at the discipline of Solitude. We live in a day where solitude is something we think little of, and rarely find. The non-stop noise of the day, the job, the children or grandchildren; our health and our family's health; and concerns for friends and neighbors all combine to crowd our hearts and minds with anxiety and distraction.

Foster says that solitude is what we need in order to bring clarity into our lives and our relationships. Essentially, we need some solitude in order to clear our minds and hearts and to listen to God.

Read the following and consider what they tell us about the Discipline of Solitude:

1. What is Solomon referring to in Ecclesiastes 1:1-4, and how does it relate to our need for solitude?
 - a. ANSWER: Solomon is addressing a common condition that existed then—and it exists today: I'd call it "busy-ness" in our lives. And in point of fact, we get so busy. Our calendars are so full of appointments, errands, and "to do" lists that we can hardly catch our breath. In the end, all this "busy-ness" leads to nothing but exhaustion and lack of time for focusing on the really important aspects of our lives, including especially our walk with Christ.
2. What do each of the following tell us about solitude and its benefits?
 - a. Psalm 50:7
 - i. ANSWER: If we listen, we'll hear God.
 - b. Psalm 78:1-2
 - i. ANSWER: If we listen, God will teach us hidden things.
 - c. Psalm 81:8
 - i. ANSWER: If we listen, God will warn us, and He will keep us from harm.
 - d. Proverbs 1:5-7 and Proverbs 8:33
 - i. ANSWER: If we want wisdom, and if we want to know God, then we need to push away the noise of the day and make time to listen for God's wisdom.
 - e. Proverbs 19:27
 - i. ANSWER: If we stop listening to God, we will stray from His words of knowledge.
 - f. Proverbs 23:19
 - i. ANSWER: Listening to God will set our hearts on the right path, or course.
 - g. James 1:19
 - i. ANSWER: We are instructed to be "quick to listen". Therefore, we should be seeking out time to listen, time to quiet our soul in order to talk with God and to hear Him.
3. To complete our Biblical study on solitude, read Psalm 40 and list the things that this passage tells us about spending time with God.
 - a. ANSWER 1: When we take time to listen, God will "open our ears". He will help us to hear Him and understand what He is saying to us.
 - b. ANSWER 2: When we listen to God, we will more readily desire to do His will.
 - c. ANSWER 3: Furthermore, we never have to doubt that God will come to our rescue. He will save us from our enemies, He will hear our prayers, and He will deliver us—if we seek Him out and listen for His voice.

Finding quiet time to create a moment of solitude in our busy lives and seek out God will fill our lives with blessings that we cannot imagine—but we must take that first step. We cannot hear God’s voice in a crowded room, or in an environment full of noise, demands on our time, and a heart full of anxiety over the worries of this world. It is only when we allow ourselves to draw away in solitude and quiet our heart that God will come and talk with us and minister to us. If we listen with all our heart, God will answer, and He will answer in ways you’ve never imagined.

Think about it: If we only choose to do so, we can take the time to draw away and have a very personal conversation with God, our Creator. Can you imagine anything more blessed?

Thanks for studying with us,

In Christ

Wes