

Discussion Guide



Summer 2010 Sermon Series
<http://www.rbcpc.org/spiritual-apps/>

“Transformed by Solitude”

Week # 1, June 26/27, 2010

- 1. Scripture:** Luke 2:25-32, *free* mobile Bible apps available:
 - iphone: visit App Store, download ibible or Bible: Life Church YouVersion
 - blackberry/droid: visit App World, download Bible: Life Church YouVersion
- 2. Sermon:** “Transformed by Solitude” Pastor Bruce Humphrey,
<http://www.rbcpc.org/about-us/sermons/>
- 3. Study resources**
 - Primary: John Ortberg, *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, Ch. 1-3
 - Secondary: Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, pg. 96-109
- 4. Study Guide** <http://www.rbcpc.org/spiritual-apps/>
- 5. Blog** <http://spiritualapps.blogspot.com/>

Next week: Break in the series July 4th Celebration

July 10/11: **Sermon:** “Transformed by Study”
Study: *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, Ch.11
Celebration of Discipline, p. 62-76

“Transformed by Solitude”

Scripture References

Read and reflect on the following scriptures. What do they say to you about the practice of *solitude*?

Luke 2:25-32

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you now dismiss^[a] your servant in peace.
³⁰For my eyes have seen your salvation,
³¹which you have prepared in the sight of all people,
³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

Notes:

Mark 1:32-39

³²That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. ³³The whole town gathered at the door, ³⁴and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

³⁵Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. ³⁶Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!"

³⁸Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." ³⁹So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

Notes:

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Sermon

Key Words: **Center - Quiet - Peace - Hurry**

1. Merriam-Webster defines the verb **center** as: 1 : to place or fix at or around a center or central area; 2 : to give a central focus or basis. What does it mean to you to be *centered*? What do you think God means when He calls for our focus?
2. Pastor Bruce states, “*Solitude brings peace.*” When Jesus returned from forty days in the wilderness he had found *peace*. Why does Jesus want *peace* for us?
3. Why is **quiet** important? Share a time you felt the need for quiet. What were you looking for in the *quiet* moments?
4. “Life shouts, ‘**Hurry.**’ Solitude asks, ‘Why?’” Reflect on the last time you were in a big hurry. Would it have made a difference if you approached the situation more slowly?
5. When is it appropriate to **hurry**? When is it not? What do you think Jesus would say about that?

Scripture

6. Read the Luke 2:25-32 scripture. How important did God think *quiet* was for Simeon? What might have happened if Simeon was not *quiet*?
7. Read the Mark 1:32-39 scripture. What happened when Jesus prayed in a solitary place? How did this change his course of action?

Study Resource

8. To be *transformed* means to change, and change is taking place around us all the time. Describe what *spiritual transformation* means to you.
9. If someone were to say to you, “I think you would benefit from a day of *solitude*,” how would you respond? What do you think such a day would be like?
10. John Ortberg spoke of God as being deeply joyful. Why do you think God commands, rather than just suggests, that we be joyful?
11. Why does *hurry sickness* cause harm to our spiritual growth? How does it affect our *joy*?

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Life Applications SPIRITUAL APP: SOLITUDE

Think about what you are trying to achieve through the discipline of *solitude* - keep that in mind as you go through this section.

Remember that not all spiritual apps/disciplines will work for everyone. Celebrate that fact! Spiritual disciplines are a lot like spiritual gifts in that the Holy Spirit uses each one of us in a unique way. If this one does not work for you, don't give up, try the next one!

Personal:

Four steps to solitude:

P – PREPARE Find a quiet place and a quiet time, get comfortable, settle in.

R - REST Invite God to join you and to work within you.
Quietly repeat a Psalm prayer: *Be still, and know that I am God.*
Let all thoughts (mental activity) die away.

A - ATTEND Wait and watch for the Spirit to emerge into your awareness.

Y - YIELD Allow God to work within you.
Offer thanks for the time together.
Return to solitude soon.
Regular practice yields the best results.

Small Group:

Make a commitment to practice solitude. Share this with at least one person in your group. Discuss how you would like to be kept accountable – here are some suggestions:

1. Make an appointment with Jesus in your calendar app.
2. Keep a journal of your attempts at solitude.
3. Ask your accountability partner to text you at the beginning/end of each day.

Be prepared to report back at your next meeting.

Pray:

Personal: That you might find time to spend with God in solitude.

Group: Break into groups of two, share prayer requests. Take a minute or two to pray these requests in silence.

Kingdom: The strength of the whole is measured by the strength of its parts. Pray that through the practice of solitude, each one will become closer to Jesus individually, strengthening the Kingdom, one follower at a time.