



Truth = allowing God's Kingdom narratives from His Word to reform and reshape the false narratives that we accumulate

Focal practices = sacred rhythms, spiritual disciplines, holy habits modeled by Jesus, if we want the life of Jesus then we have to live into the lifestyle of Jesus

Community = we take stock of who we are surrounding ourselves with and ask... Are the people we're spending time with living a flourishing life in Jesus?

"All of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone."

– Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

"As far as the search for solitude is concerned, we live in a negative atmosphere as invisible, as all-pervasive, and enervating (draining) as high humidity in an August afternoon. The world today does not understand...the need to be alone." – Anne Morrow Lindbergh

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

Mark 6:30-32

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. 31 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." 32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

Abiding in the solitary place provides sustaining strength for *abounding* in the public space.

"...you redeemed don't look like you're redeemed. You're as fearful, guilt-ridden, anxious, confused, and adrift in an alien environment as I am. I'm allowed. I don't believe. I have nothing to hope for. But you people claim you have a Savior. Why don't you look like you are saved?" – Friedrich Nietzsche (atheist philosopher confronting a group of Christians)

Mark 6:33-34

33 But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. 34 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

Mark 6:45

Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd.



➤ **Solitude helps me be present to what is *real* in my life.**

"...to celebrate the joys, grieve the losses, shed my tears, sit with the questions, feel my anger, attend to my loneliness. This 'being with what is' is not the same thing as problem solving or fixing, because not everything can be fixed or solved. Rather, it means allowing God to be with me in that place of waiting for him to do what is needed." – Ruth Haley Barton

➤ **Solitude reminds me to wait on God and let Him fight the battle.**

Exodus 14:14

The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.

➤ **Solitude removes the scaffolding from my life.**

"...no friends to talk with, no telephone calls to make, no meetings to attend, no music to entertain, no books to distract, just me—naked, vulnerable, weak, sinful deprived, broken—nothing. It is this nothingness that I have to face in my solitude...As soon as I decide to stay in my solitude, confusing ideas, disturbing images, wild fantasies, and weird associations jump about in my mind like monkeys in a banana tree. Anger and greed begin to show their ugly faces. I give long, hostile speeches to my enemies and dream lustful dreams in which I am wealthy, influential, and very attractive—or poor, ugly, and in need of immediate consolation. Thus I try again to run from the dark abyss of my nothingness...The task is to persevere in my solitude, to stay in my cell until all my seductive visitors get tired of pounding on my door and leave me alone." – Henri Nouwen

Resources:

The Way of the Heart by Henri Nouwen

Invitation to Silence and Solitude by Ruth Haley Barton

Souvenirs of Solitude by Brennan Manning

*Lord, I'm not free—
but who wants to be?*

*You're all that
matters
in my life.*

*I don't want to be free
of my hunger
for your bread.*

*I don't want to be free
of my thirst
for your word.*

*I don't want to be free
of my desire
for your will.*

*I don't want to be free
of my longing
for your presence.*

*I don't want to be free
of my need
to be taken up,
taken over,
joined to you.*

*Lord, may I never
be free
from wanting you.*

– Brennan Manning