

Solitude and Silence Handout

Spiritual Formation

- Spiritual formation is the process of developing the person, the character of that person. Everyone's character is formed, for good or for the worse, intentionally or not.
- The spiritual disciplines are those God ordained practices that are in our power to do, as we work with God to transform our character to become more like Jesus.
- Self denial is an important part of our spiritual formation. Matt 16:24. Luke 9:23.

Introduction

- There is something both appealing and transforming about silence and solitude.
- Have you ever had the dream or fantasy of just running away, or going away to a deserted tropical island for a while?

Explanation of silence and solitude

- The discipline of silence is the voluntary and temporary abstention from speaking so that certain spiritual goals might be sought.
- Solitude is the spiritual discipline of voluntarily and temporarily withdrawing to privacy for spiritual purposes.
- Culture conditions us to be comfortable with noise and crowds and busyness. The advent of cell phones, computers, television, social media, etc. have conditioned us to feeling like we need some background noise or activity.
- Pascal. All man's miseries derive from not being able to sit in a quiet room alone.

Valuable reasons for silence and solitude

- To follow Jesus example. Matt4:1. Matt 14:23. Mark 1:35. Luke 4:42.
- To minimize distractions in prayer
- To express worship
- To express faith in God
- To seek the salvation of the Lord
- To be physically, mentally and spiritually restored
- To regain a spiritual perspective
- To seek the will of God
- To learn to control the tongue

Some suggestions

- Minute retreats

- Daily time of solitude and silence
- Getting away
- Special places, thin spots