

Spiritual Discipline of the Month:

Solitude

Many times we fear being alone. We do all sorts of things to avoid being alone; we **constantly** have the radio or TV on (even when we are not listening or watching), we obsessively surf the Web to fill the time, we check e-mail, text, and talk. We find all kinds of things to do just to fill the time; we eat when we are not hungry, we sleep when not tired, etc. The list goes on and on.

The practice of solitude brings us out from the things we do to avoid feeling the inner loneliness of our lives. It brings us into an experience that results in inner fulfillment and peace. When we practice the discipline of solitude we intentionally turn off the distractions of life and retreat to a place of inner solitude where we can hear the heartbeat of God in the world.

"Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him"
- Psalm 62:1 (TNIV)

Practical Suggestions / Challenge for the Month:

- ✓ Take advantage of "little solitudes" during the day: turn the radio off while driving, do chores without the TV on, go for a walk by yourself during a break, etc.
- ✓ Plan to spend anywhere from couple of hours (a morning, afternoon, evening, or a whole day) in silence and solitude during the month. During this time turn off all the distractions of life (TV, radio, computer, cell phone, etc.). Do simple activities and listen for God's voice. Hint: tell your family and friends you will not be available during this time.
- ✓ Enjoy time alone. Notice what is going on around you and where you see God working!

Other Things to Remember:

1. It's not always easy to incorporate new disciplines into your life.
2. Partner with someone and help keep each other accountable.
3. It's not about perfection, it's about practice.
4. Record your progress - start a spiritual journal.
5. Have fun!

Going Deeper: "It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my brothers. The more solitary I am the more affection I have for them...Solitude and silence teach me to love my brothers for what they are, not for what they say."
- Thomas Merton

If you have any questions or need additional help, contact us at (302)378-7692 or connect@connectioncc.org.

For additional information on Spiritual Disciplines, refer to *The Celebration of Discipline*, by Robert Forster.