



## MLU Spiritual Disciplines – Week 3

### Homework/Practice for the Week

#### **Daily Rhythm**

- Continue two minutes of silence with God.
- Continue one intercessory prayer each day.
- Practice one act of hidden service each day.
- Notice how solitude and service shape “quiet strength.”

#### **Reflection Questions**

- Where did solitude bring clarity or discomfort?
- How did serving quietly change your awareness of God?
- What does “strength through stillness” mean to you?



## MLU: Spiritual Disciplines

### Week 3 Summary Sheet

#### *Quiet Strength – Solitude & Service*

#### The Discipline of Solitude

##### Loneliness vs. Solitude

- *“Jesus calls us from loneliness to solitude.”* — Richard Foster
- Loneliness is inner emptiness; solitude is inner fulfillment.
- Solitude is a posture of the heart, not isolation.

Portable Sanctuary: We carry “a portable sanctuary of the heart” wherever we go.

##### Solitude and Silence

- Silence is not just the absence of words — it’s the presence of listening.
- *“It is easier to be silent altogether than to speak with moderation.”* — Thomas à Kempis
- Silence trains us to stop managing outcomes and trust God.

##### The Dark Night of the Soul

- A season of dryness or emptiness that God uses to free us from self-activity.
- *“O guiding night! O night more lovely than the dawn!”* — St. John of the Cross
- Not punishment — grace.

##### Steps into Solitude

- Notice “little solitudes” throughout the day.
- Experiment with short periods of silence.
- Create a quiet place for reflection.
- Withdraw periodically to reorient your heart.



## The Fruit of Solitude

- *“It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my brothers.”* — Thomas Merton
- Solitude increases compassion, gentleness, and presence.

## The Discipline of Service

### The Towel, Not the Title

- *“If you are to do the work of a prophet, what you need is not a scepter but a hoe.”* — Bernard of Clairvaux
- Jesus redefined greatness with a towel, not a throne.
- Service begins in the ordinary and the unnoticed.

### Self-Righteous vs. True Service

- Self-righteous service: seeks recognition, depends on human effort, driven by moods.
- True service: flows from relationship with God, acts quietly, finds joy in hidden obedience.

### Service and Humility

- *“Condescend to all the weaknesses and infirmities of your fellow-creatures.”* — William Law
- Hidden service crucifies pride and awakens joy.

### Service in the Marketplace

- *“Love to be concealed, and little esteemed.”* — Jeremy Taylor
- Everyday service — patience, kindness, helpfulness — is the training ground for humility.

### The Service of Small Things

- *“Large tasks require great sacrifice for a moment; small things require constant sacrifice.”* — Francis de Sales
- Faithfulness in small things forms Christlike character.