



Review study... any thoughts on what you tried out this week?



#### Mice experiment

One dose each... kills group of mice

20 doses to kill one mouse

Why...

In fact, put a mouse in with amphetamines, and he dies...

Explanation: *"go off like popcorn or firecrackers"*

We are warned not to be like the mice...

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

—Romans 12:1-2

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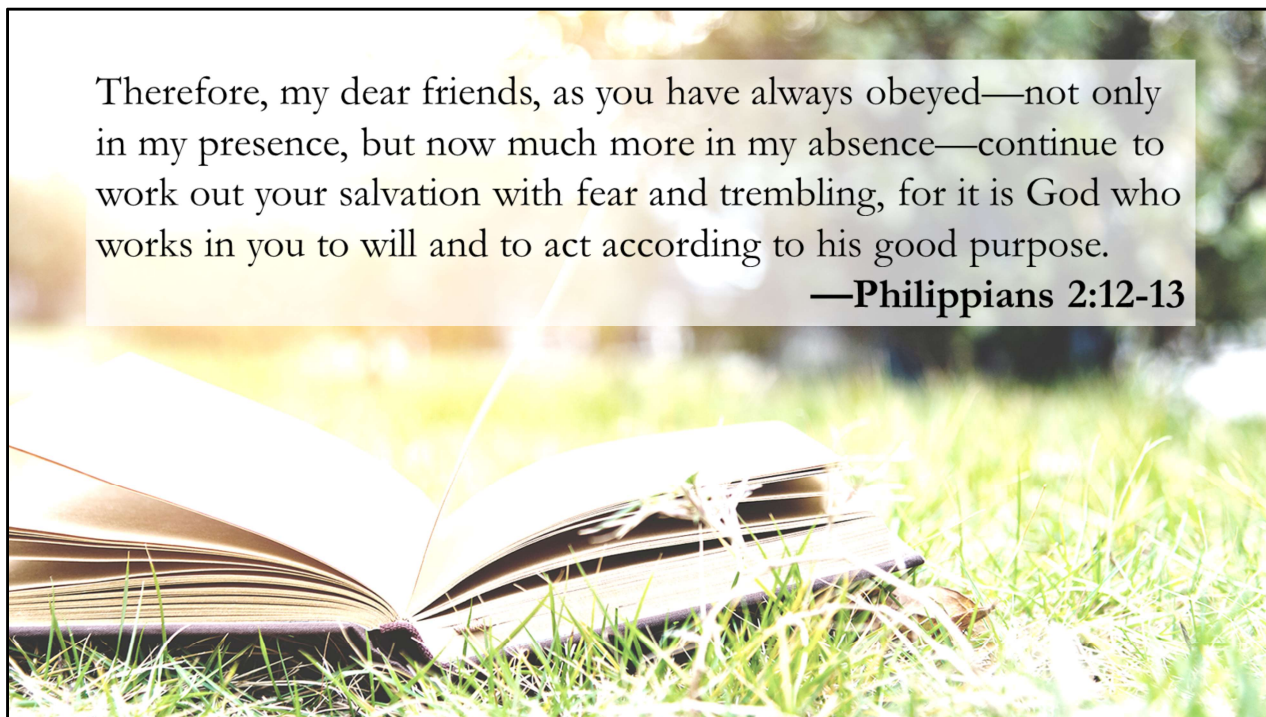
*“Do not be conformed...”*

Don't be like the mice...

Deadly environment... deadly patterns

*“be transformed”*

Passive tense: God's work...



Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

—Philippians 2:12-13

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We “work” to make ourselves *available* for God’s work...

Today we’re going to look at disciplines that help us disconnect from “patterns of this world” in order to connect to God





### Discipline of "Slowing"

John Ortberg tells the story of calling a spiritual mentor...

"Relentlessly eliminate hurry from your life."

Ortberg teaches the discipline of "slowing" he developed in response... (one month at a time)

- Driving in the slow lane

- Chew food, eat slowly (force at least 15 chews)

- Grocery store; deliberately get in "wrong" line or let people go in front of you.

The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want.

—**Proverbs 21:5 (KJV)**



You: *"Why would I want to do that?"*

Proverbs 21:5 (KJV)—“The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want.”

Eugene Peterson interprets it this way in *The Message*:

Careful planning puts  
you ahead in the long  
run; hurry and scurry  
puts you further behind.

—Proverbs 21:5  
(Eugene Peterson's *The Message*)



Eugene Peterson interprets it this way in *The Message*: “Careful planning puts you ahead in the long run; hurry and scurry puts you further behind.”

Point is: hurry closes us up more than it speeds us up

Driving: *watch people who frantically must pass you...*

So it doesn't really speed you up, but it does close you up... “tunnel vision”... anything else is an annoying obstacle...

*How can we ever expect to hear God this way?*



Hurry is single-mindedness

Which is why Bible commands haste when you are obeying God's command  
Most of the time it shuts God out





What are some ideas you have for "slowing"?

(intentional actions that force you to stop your hurried mindset)

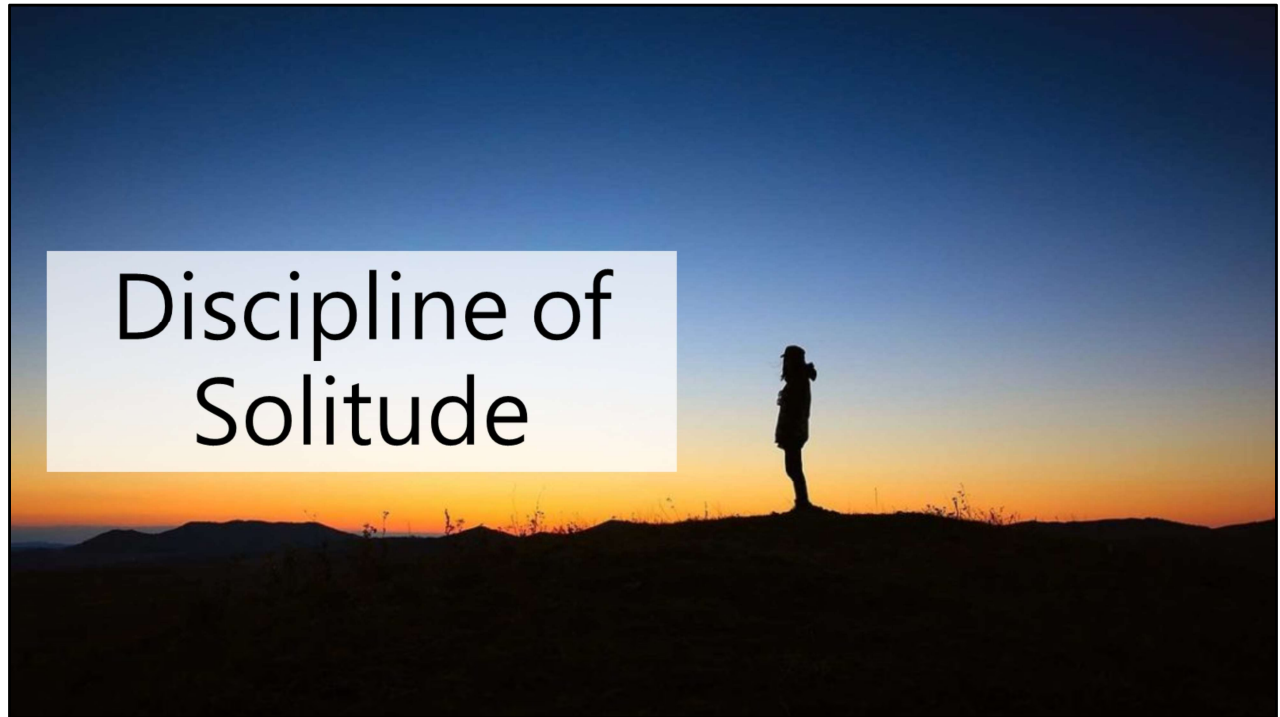
Might relate to discipline of simplicity (covered another week)...

Slowing gets us off the "hamster wheel"...

*(refer back to mice)*

No longer caught up in world's deadly pace

Ready for solitude



## Discipline of Solitude

Solitude is getting alone; disconnecting from the world for a purpose

Why solitude? I ask this b/c solitude *frightens* us

What are some of the ways  
that we compulsively avoid  
solitude?

Most of the time, we don't like to be alone...  
Set up artificial "companionship"...

What are some of the ways that we compulsively avoid solitude?



If you are really alone, things come up that you can usually avoid/distracted from...

<video>

Louis CK is by no means a believer... but he is more in touch with the human condition than most...

But his experience and our experience is different for one key reason... we find God where a faithless person finds nothing...

But we push it away...

Not just a product of technology...



“Just so hollow and ineffectual... is our ordinary conversation. Surface meets surface. When our life ceases to be inward and private, conversation degenerates into mere gossip. We rarely meet a man who can tell us any news which he has not read in a newspaper, or been told by his neighbor; and, for the most part, the only difference between us and our fellow is that he has seen the newspaper... and we have not. In proportion as our inward life fails, we go more constantly and desperately to the post-office. You may depend on it, that the poor fellow who walks away with the greatest number of letters...has not heard from himself this long while.”

— Henry David Thoreau, *Life Without Principle*

We carry this forward in the way that we compulsively check email, Facebook, watch the news...



# Solitude frees us

“Solitude frees us, actually. This above all explains its primacy and priority among the disciplines. The normal course of day-to-day human interactions locks us into patterns of feeling, thought, and action that are geared to a world set against God. Nothing but solitude can allow the development of a freedom from the ingrained behaviors that hinder our integration into God’s order.”

— Dallas Willard, *Spirit of the Disciplines*



Solitude **frees** us from all this...

<Willard quote>

Frees us from the world’s demands that it squeeze you into its pattern of thought...

example of Jesus

crowds pressed in with their ideas of “Messiah”

Jesus “often withdrew” – Luke 5:16

“lonely places” – some things you can only do alone

Christian life: balance between community and solitude...

Bonhoeffer: “Let him who cannot be alone beware of community. ...

Let him who is not in community beware of being alone.”

Today’s church has poverty of both true community and meaningful time alone...

Need the strength that comes from both:

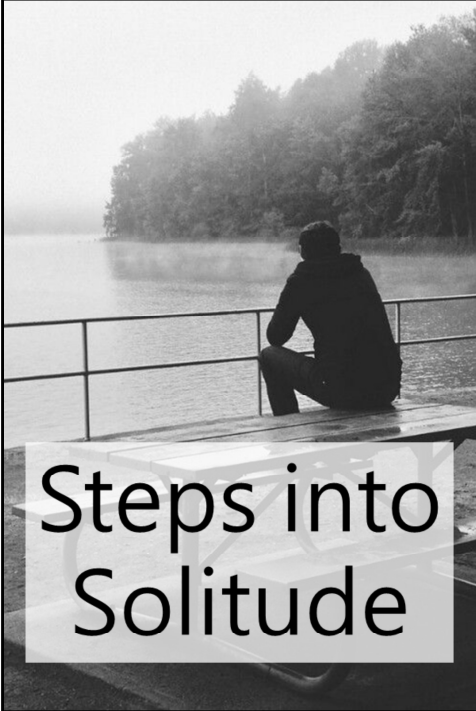
# Solitude strengthens us



Solitude strengthens us

Jesus "led by the Spirit" into wilderness  
Solitude/fasting was not the test  
Going there for *strength* for the test

*"Man does not live by bread alone..."*  
Don't need to be strengthened by food  
Hearing God is what strengthens me



**Steps into Solitude**

**Claim quiet moments**  
*(turn heart and mind to God)*

**Quiet place**  
*(a consistent place is helpful)*

**Four-hour blocks**  
*(once a month or even once a week)*

**Retreat a day or more**  
*(be alone... do nothing)*

Practice of solitude – “Steps into Solitude”

Claim quiet **moments**

Moments after waking

Short walks from here to there...

Quiet **place**

Room, place in woods, park...

Consistent place is helpful

4-hour **blocks** of time

Use this time to ask God to refocus, redirect

**Retreat** a day or more

Guideline for solitude: be alone, do nothing

Solitude is not really solitude without...



Discipline of Silence

Two forms of the discipline of silence...

# Disciplines of Silence



## Removing noise

*Avoid godless chatter, because  
those who indulge in it will  
become more and more ungodly.*

**—2 Timothy 2:16**

Silence: removing **noise**

*What are some ways we surround ourselves with noise on purpose?*

2 Tim 2:16 – “Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.”

Hearing God, “still, small voice”

seldom thunders above noise in our lives...

need to be quiet to hear him

suggestions: car... home... discipline yourself not to need

“background noise”



# Disciplines of Silence



## Quieting oneself

*When words are many, sin is not  
absent, but he who holds his  
tongue is wise.*

**—Proverbs 10:19**

Silence: quieting oneself

Proverbs 10:19—*“When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.”*

Practicing silence:

Try days when only speak in response...

Remove times when you talk “just to talk” – meaningless chatter about weather, etc.

Experiment, not law

Observe yourself, why you speak...

Defend yourself, manage your appearance...

# Disciplines of Silence



“One reason we can hardly bear to remain silent is that it makes us feel so helpless. We are so accustomed to relying upon words to manage and control others. If we are silent, who will take control? God will take control, but we will never let him take control until we trust him. Silence is intimately related to trust..”

— **Richard J. Foster,**  
*Celebration of Discipline*

Desire to be “heard”

Allows us to give gift of “being heard” to others

Allows us to listen to God

# Challenge for This Week

- Recognize moments of hurry
- Take one of the “steps into solitude”
- Have a day without background noise
- Be ready to talk about it next week

