

WEEK 5

SEEK SOLITUDE

Take some time to discuss the previous week's readings and/or challenges. Here are some things to discuss:

- Celebrate a "win" that you had in the Red Letter Being Challenge over the past week.
- Share a struggle.
- What did God reveal to you during the readings and/or challenges this past week?

Okay, time to draw battle lines! Apple or Android. Pick one and explain.

No matter which one you picked, now that we've battled, let's get vulnerable. Both Apple and Android allow their users to check the amount of screen time they have used. Share with the Group how many hours/minutes per day you have used on your device for the past day/week and then defend yourself on why that's okay. If you are able, also share how many times you picked up the phone in the past day/week and notifications in the past day/week.

Watch Red Letter Being Challenge Video 5 -- Seek Solitude

Note some of the times and places in Mark's Gospel in which Jesus sought solitude in His life:

- **Mark 1:12-13: In the wilderness**
- **Mark 1:16, 2:13: Walks by the lake**
- **Mark 1:35: Early in the morning in a solitary place**
- **Mark 4:35-41: On the water in the midst of a storm**
- **Mark 6:46-47: On the mountainside**
- **Mark 14:32: In the garden of Gethsemane**

Not only did Jesus seek solitude in many different times and places. He also sought solitude before, during, and after many major life events.

- **Before He began His 3-year ministry He spent 40 days in the wilderness. (Matthew 4:1-11)**
- **Before He decided who the 12 disciples would be, He spent time alone overnight with God on a mountainside praying. (Luke 6:12-16)**
- **He grieved His friend and cousin, John the Baptist, after he was martyred for His faith. (Matthew 14:13)**
- **In the Garden before enduring His crucifixion, He prayed alone 3 times. (Matthew 26:36-46)**

Describe, if any, what your current habits, or rhythms look like when it comes to seeking solitude. What is going well? What could be going better?

What is keeping you from spending time in solitude with God?

Read Luke 8:40-56

Many people today will describe their lives as busy. Was Jesus busy? If yes, how do you see that busyness played out in this story?

Is there a difference between being busy and hurried? Was Jesus hurried?

Are you busy or hurried?

Jesus had an extremely busy life. He was a very wanted man, crowds continually followed Him, pressed in on Him, and made requests of Him, etc. And yet, in the midst of all the busyness, Jesus was never too hurried that He missed out on the one person that needed Him in that moment. Solitude with God allowed Jesus to stay focused on the mission God called Him to. God has also called you to live on mission for Him.

Read Hebrews 12:1-3: Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Zach said last week that prayer allows us to connect to God in a confusing world, while solitude allows us to disconnect from a loud and distracting world. Agree or Disagree.

What could the practice of solitude look like in your life in the upcoming week?

Rank yourself on a scale of 1-10 (where 1 is “very poor” and 10 is “excellent”) on how you feel you are doing at implementing this practice of seeking solitude in your life. If comfortable, share that number with the Group.

CLOSING THOUGHT AND PRAYER

Challenge for the Week: Go unplugged for an entire day in the upcoming week. In that day, spend some alone time with God.

Close by spending five minutes together in silence. In that silent time, each person can pray that God would reveal more clearly the race He’s called you to run, that He would give you focus to run the race, and that He would also reveal any distractions that may hinder you from running well.

