



Week 4 - 2024

The Inner Life - *na'aseh v'neshema*

The Christian life flows from the inner work that God does in our soul, and spiritual formation is drawn from this well. Exodus 24:7 says, *“Moses took the Book of the Covenant and read it aloud to the people, and they said, “We are willing to do and hear all that the Lord has spoken.”* This week we will meditate on that odd response!

Starting thoughts for your group -

- Parent *sometimes* find themselves giving instruction to a child that questions the purpose of those instructions! How did your parents respond to these questions? How do you respond (or hope to!) as a parent?
- Have you ever sensed God asking you to do something that didn't really make sense in the moment, but you later could see His purposes?

Watch Video #4, then discuss...

Developing Our Inner Life - Contemplative Practices

In a loud and busy world, we are called to cultivate Simplicity, Stillness, and Depth

1 - Times of abstinence or fasting - *intentionally denying our outward physical self and our natural desires to focus on spiritual development:*

- Read these passages on fasting and abstinence:
 - **Jesus expected His disciples to fast** -
 - Read Matthew 6:16-18
 - **Abstinence and Fasting trains us in Self-control** -
 - Read Titus 2:11-14, Galatians 5:22-25, 2 Peter 1:3-8
- Discuss with your group how you could incorporate this practice.

2 - Sabbath Rest - *an intentional time of rest for renewal and connection with God and family*

- Read these passages on Sabbath rest:
 - **God creates Sabbath as a time of ceasing from the work of Creation to hand it over to humanity. In Sabbath, we give space for His work** -
 - Read Genesis 2:1-3
 - **Jesus taught that God created Sabbath for our benefit, not as legalism** -
 - Read Mark 2:18-22
- Discuss with your group how you could incorporate this practice.

3 - Solitude and Silence - *seeking out times of quiet and stillness to hear God's voice*

- Read these passages on stillness and solitude:
 - **When we are still, we can see God's work over our own** -
 - Read Psalm 46:10-11
 - **Jesus taught that God created Sabbath for our benefit, not as legalism** -
 - Read Luke 5:15-16
- Discuss with your group how you could incorporate this practice.

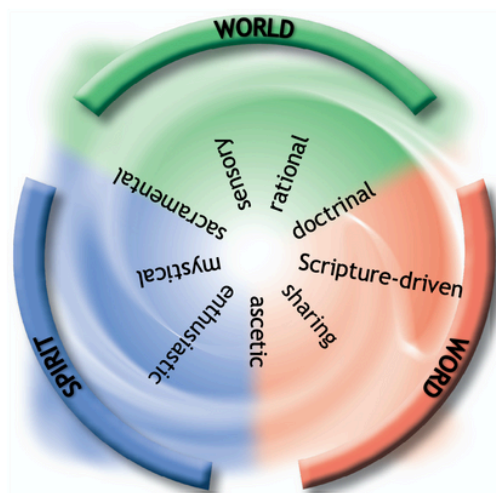
“Many Christians who were “on fire” for Jesus are now burnt-out because we taught them to pursue fire instead of oil. We prioritized the fire of ministry service instead of “secret place oil” and our flame went out because we had no devotional fuel”
- Chris Burns

EN-CORE JOURNEY

SCRIPTURE • BELIEFS • PRACTICES

Have you checked your oil?

Pastor Scott showed the illustration of the oil lamp - the flame can't continue to burn unless the oil is refilled. Our spiritual oil is refilled in the secret places of communion with God, when we learn to be still and listen, when we lay down our agenda to receive His, where we quiet the noise of human desires to pursue something deeper. On the graph below, is there an are of spirituality you may be feeling dried out and needing oil?



Accountability!

This week's practices are hard in our world, and may even seem a little weird! What is the Spirit of the Lord calling you to this week?