

RELATING TO YOURSELF

Ps 42:1-6 | Dave Geldart | 2019-05-26

1. Welcome
 - a. Family CG!
 - b. Summer Sprouts starts NEXT SUNDAY!!!
2. Announcements
 - a. This Sat! – 3 Neighboring Opportunities!
 - i. TGY Garage Sale
 - ii. MHK Day w/ CHBC
 - iii. Nothing Festival
 - b. Membership Class
 - c. Directory Updates
3. DEEVER VIDEO
4. Mingle: What's an ADVENTURE you've had recently (or like to have)?
5. INTRO:
 - a. Americans are good at lots of things. Kids, can you name some?
 - i. (sports, innovation)
 - b. For 60 yrs theres something were really bad at --- being happy
 - c. Leading researchers and expert on happiness in US
 - i. *Martin Seligman*
 - ii. *Tony Campos*
 - d. We're on average 2x as rich as 50 yrs ago, far healthier, and safer. American dream that you'll be better off than your parents, and your kids will be better off than you continues to be true!
 - e. 1 Problem. All this prosperity doesn't seem to have made Americans any happier. In fact just the opposite. Beginning with the boomer Gen and holding true since, we're 10-12x more likely to be depressed than prev gens.
 - f. Americans have become TERRIBLE at being happy
 - g. If we saw a 10-12 fold increase in some disease or condition somewhere in the world, we'd call it an epidemic.
 - h. WHAT'S GOING ON?
 - i. (though I believe there are a number of factors working together).
 - ii. I'm going to propose to you today what I think is a significant part of the answer. That the problem lies with significant disconnection in our foundational relationships: **We're losing a value for deeply knowing ourselves and knowing God.**
 1. And have instead filled our lives with distraction and superficiality
 2. I struggle with this.
1. Last week started our new summer teaching series on RELATING
 - a. We are made from relationship (trinity) and FOR relationship (God, self, others, etc)
 - i. List of many we'll hope to address in this series!
 - b. When we sinned, everything went sideways
 - c. All our relationships were broken and damaged

- i. God
 - ii. Self
 - iii. Others
 - iv. Etc
- d. And as we've seen in the last 60 yrs in our country some of the effect of that disconnectedness has accelerated because of the choices we've made to let go of relating deeply with God and ourselves
 - i. And we're not doing well.
 - ii. We must reclaim a value for connecting with God, self, and others on a deep and meaningful level
 - iii. That's what this teaching series will speak to.
 - 1. Got it? :)
- 2. John Calvin famously has said that to know ourselves we have to know God, and to know God we have to know ourselves
 - a. Indeed they are so intertwined!
- 3. Tonight we're going to talk about relating to ourselves, our souls.
 - a. Next Sunday, relating to God
 - b. You'll see that all the rest of the topics lie within these bookends.
 - i. We MUST let God restore our relationships to ourselves and God (through the power of the Gospel!)
 - ii. Before we can learn to truly relate well to these other key people and relationships.
- 4. We're going to start with knowing YOURSELF (slide) since that's probably the area we're weakest in.
 - a. Irony of individualistic, Selfie Stick culture
 - i. May seem counterintuitive to say.
 - ii. But for all the focus on ourselves, we barely KNOW ourselves
 - iii. It's all plastic. The SELF we want others to see. The surfacyself we try to be even to ourselves.
 - 1. But not typically our REAL selves.
 - iv. We RARELY even know ourselves below the waterline
 - 1. Iceberg
 - v. And THERE, below the waterline of our hearts, our souls reside –our SELF!
- 5. Now, the journey outward in our lives can be so exciting
 - a. KIDS: whats an adventure you'd like to take? Where would you like to explore?
 - i. climb a mountain, an ICEBERG! Travel the world.
- 6. But as many have found, the journey INWARD can be at least as exciting.
 - a. And far less traveled
 - i. The undiscovered country
 - b. A QUEST!
 - i. Adventures!
 - ii. Danger lurks
 - iii. Uncertainty
 - iv. Treasures untold
 - v. Life-changing discoveries
 - vi. You'll come back changed

- 7. So lets start out that journey tonight
 - a. First steps perhaps for many of us.
 - b. So lets go together!

8. PRAY!!!

9. Foundation

- a. YOU have a soul
- b. KIDS– where is your soul?
 - i. I'd enjoy geeking out on this, mind/brain correlation, dualism, soul/spirit distinctions. WHAT is the soul, etc perhaps another time
 - ii. But for now:
- a. Immaterial part of our SELF that contains our personality, animates the Body and can commune with God
- b. We are created beings with both a physical nature (our body) and a “spiritual” immaterial nature (our soul)
 - a. Our souls survive the death of the body
 - b. Can exist w/o the body
 - c. But (contrary to many historical beliefs), don't WANT to be disembodied
 - i. Long to be embodied,
 - ii. And indeed that's what we were made for, and what is promised to those who trust in Jesus
 - iii. PHYSICAL resurrection
- c. The reality of YOUR SOUL is Explicitly and implicitly taught all throughout scripture
 - a. Here's a sampling:
 - i. Copy them down now. Online later.
 - iii. *Gen 2:7 → 'then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground (PHYSICAL NATURE) and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (SPIRITUAL NATURE → nephesh...soul), and the man became a living creature.*
 - iv. *Mat 16:26 → what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?*
 - 1.
 - v. *Ps 62:1 (my soul finds rest in God)*
 - 1. *Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.(niv)*
 - vi. **Prov 16:24** *(gracious words like a honeycomb... sweet to the soul)*
 - 1. **Gracious words are like a honeycomb, [HEXAGONS!] sweetness to the soul and health to the body..**
 - a. Again the indication we have bodies AND souls
 - 2. **COLORING SHEET**
 - vii. *Psalm 19:7 (law of Lord perfect, refreshing soul)*
 - 1. *The law of the LORD is perfect,^[a] reviving the soul;*
 - viii. *Mat 10:28 (don't fear those kill body, but not soul)*

1. *And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.*
- d. For more about evidence for the existence of the soul
 - ix. McCallum – Sensing Your Soul
 - e. Finally, I'm not going to differentiate between soul and spirit.
 - a. I'm going to use the term soul, spirit, and self interchangeably, in their common, general senses.

10. What's happened?

- a. We're not typically very connected to myself
- b. We avoid silence and solitude, thinking, reflecting
 - i. Some because of broken effect of Sin – my own and others → brokenness within myself!
 - ii. In part because I have painful and shameful things in my past that keep me from wanting to look deep inside
- c. RH Barton Sacred Rhythms ch 2
 - i. We are not very safe for ourselves, because our internal experience involves continual critique and judgment, and the tender soul does not want to risk it.
 - ii. There are very few places where the soul is truly safe, where the knowing, the questions, the longings of the soul are welcomed, received and listened to rather than evaluated, judged or beaten out of us.
- d. I resonate with that.
 - i. It's either quite foolish or quite strategic that I'M the one preaching on this
 - ii. I've lived much of my adult life significantly disconnected from myself
 1. And struggling greatly to connect with God and hear his voice
 - iii. I experience the ongoing effects of sin in my life, that stress those fractured relationships
 - iv. I have pain and shame in my past... don't want to have to sit with that
- e. Jesus wants to guide you not just to eternal life later, but full life NOW
 - i. He wants to help us reconnect all our broken relationships.... Including with ourselves. Heal from past wounds. Live fully free and whole and peaceful and productive lives now.

Signs You might be disconnected from myself

- You're addicted to noise and distraction in my life
- You compulsively turn to my cell phone, Social Media, Netflix, Music, Podcasts to avoid moments of boredom
- You're habitually busy – why cant you slow down? (get to that 70%!)
 - Struggle with too little emotions
 - o Emotionally disconnected

- One of the ways I semi-unconsciously decided to minimize pain in my life since childhood was to disconnect from my feelings. My emotions. The DOWN THERE stuff of my soul
- And I've been semi-successful!
 - Though it has not delivered on its promise to protect me from pain
 - Instead it has led to me to greater alienation from myself
 - And toward increased anxiety and depression
 - AND significant difficulty connecting with God and others
- By God's grace, that's been changing over recent years as I've followed God into these places and pursued healing....
- More on that later
- You have significant pain, shame, and/or sorrow in your past that you've never really worked through
- You have frequent outbursts of anger --- or depression, or anxiety
- You have strong emotional or physical reactions to events or people, but don't really know why
- You're stuck- just cant seem to make progress with personal issues or in your life in general.
- You can't remember the last time you just sat with yourself and thought thoughts, reflected
- You're tired. So tired. Deep down, at the soul level.
- Your self-talk is generally negative
- You hate yourself
 - Another one I can resonate with. Sadly.
 - And another area I'm experiencing God's powerful healing in ☺

So what do I do?

Relating to yourself well involves Listening to Yourself AND Talking to Yourself

Listening to what your soul is actually saying

AND talking BACK to yourself Speaking GOSPEL truth to your soul.

Going to use Psalm 42: Read v 1-6a to illustrate this:

¹ As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.

² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?

³ My tears have been my food day and night,
while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

⁴ These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:
how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God
with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival.

⁵ Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation ⁶ and my God.

1) LISTEN

- a. How does he KNOW what his soul thirsts and pants for?
- b. How does he KNOW what is going on deep in his soul?
- c. He assumes what you and I do not, that we live lives conducive to knowing ourselves at basic foundational levels.
 - i. Practices that help us listen to ourselves
 - ii. Habits that include natural time and space for contemplation and reflection
- d. He is ABLE to pour out his soul
 - i. BECAUSE HE KNOWS exactly what his soul is longing for
 - ii. What it is feeling, where it's coming from, and why.
 - iii. DO YOU?

PRACTICES:

There are many, but I'm going to highlight two related practices that can help you listen to yourself at a deep, meaningful level.

- f. Silence and Solitude
 - a. The soul is like a wild animal—tough, resilient, resourceful, savvy, self-sufficient. It knows how to survive in hard places. But it is also shy. Just like a wild animal, it seeks safety in the dense underbrush. If we want to see a wild animal, we know that the last thing we should do is go crashing through the woods yelling for it to come out. But if we will walk quietly into the woods, sit patiently by the base of the tree, and fade into our surroundings, the wild animal we seek might put in an appearance.
 - 1. Parker Palmer, *A Hidden Wholeness*
 - 2. Barton, Ruth Haley. *Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation (Transforming Resources)* (p. 29). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.
 - ii. Time and space set apart specifically and intentionally for you to be quiet and alone with just you and your soul and God.
 - 1. No noise
 - 2. No distractions
 - 3. No tasks
- g. We're like a container of river water, all shaken up.
 - o Be still long enough for the dirt to settle, and waters become clear
 - o Both regular shorter times, and med times, and periodic extended times

- **Shot, Medium, and long flavors**

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- o 5-20 min each morning or evening to sit
 - with yourself, your thoughts, feelings, listening to self, listening for God
 - Get to a quiet place (pref not work)
 - into comfortable position (but wont sleep)
 - Set an alarm on your phone (so you're not constantly checking the time)
 - Perhaps face a window

- Start by asking God for a simple word or phrase you can use to help you stay focused on your goal today to sit with yourself and God
 - Here I am
 - Lord, what's going on?
 - Please help.
- Then sit quietly, as distractions come, notice them
 - Let them float by like clouds
 - Then calmly use your prayer phrase to enter back into waiting availability
- Notice what's going on inside you, thoughts and feelings.
- Listen for what your soul may be trying to say (and God's voice too)
- Sit until the alarm
- Then pray thanksgiving for the time
- Resist the urge to evaluate HOW IT WENT or WHAT YOU GOT OUT OF IT
- It's enough that you showed up and sat quiet and available.
- The more you do these, you'll be surprised at what you hear your soul say
- 2 hrs a wk (can be intermixed with time in Word, prayer, journaling.... tawG)
 - MY TAWG – Bakehouse, recently in spare office at a TGian's work Fri Mornings
 - Had to build up those muscles!
- A night or 2 away somewhere quiet, unplugged, pref. alone
 - Could be at home in basement or something (esp if kids quiet or gone)
 - Could be out of town somewhere – hotel, spare room at relative's house
 - Stone Barn
 - Extrovert! – but I was surprised at how much I LOVED IT --- didn't want it to end
- **THESE TAKE SCHEDULING!**
 - Get to that 70% (TCB #11) -- not only for flexibility to respond to needed times for silence, solitude, reflection, BUT ALSO INCLUDE IN THAT 70% SCHEDULED times of silence and solitude, other restorative activities
- We must meaningfully be in community so we can be in solitude safely (and must be meaningful in solitude so we can be in community fruitfully)
- 2 Book Recommendations for this. Both by Ruth Haley Barton
 - Sacred Rhythms (A few years ago Taylor Hillegeist joined me reading through this in his tawG at the same time I was.)
 - Invitation to Silence and Solitude (I'm currently reading and practicing through!, Join me)

2) Strategic Boredom

- a. Intentionally creating space in our day to day lives to nourish reflective and contemplative thought
- b. Most of us RARELY allow ourselves to recognize this invitation
 - i. BECAUSE we have addicted ourselves to noise and distraction
 - 1. Our focus muscles are generally quite atrophied
 - 2. BUT THEY CAN BE STRENGTHENED!

ii. Entertainment / amusement

1. A muse – without thought
2. Netflix
3. SocMed
4. CellPhone

a. **HOW LONG does it take when you have even the briefest moment** without something to do, for you to compulsively grab your cell phone.

b. After you get the kids in bed, how many evenings do you default to watching Netflix until you go to bed yourself.

c. Eat sleep, veg, repeat

iii. All work splendidly to keep us from sitting with ourselves

c. Boredom gets a bad rap

i. We see it as so negative

ii. Kids, have you ever said I'M SO BORED???

1. Do you like that?

- Consider reclaiming boredom as a strategic value: STRATEGIC BOREDOM! Strategic opportunities to let your soul speak, pay attention to your thoughts and feelings. REFLECT AND CONSIDER yourself and what's going on inside.
- Take a walk – NO HEADPHONES OR CELL PHONE
- No music or teaching in the car
- NO Cell phones at home when you're bored after kids go to bed.
- We'll talk more about this later when we talk about relating to technology. But for now, how quickly do you reach (impulsively?) for your cell phone in even brief moments of down time?
- Dial it back on the Netflix. Don't just default to watching TV after kids go to bed until you go to bed.
- Regularly choose NOT to distract or amuse yourself, and see what happens.
- Kids – learn that it's ok to be a little bored sometimes. It's good to just think or sit outside and read or color or do something like that. Learn to pay attention when you're feeling something. Learn to pay attention to things you think ABOUT YOURSELF – are they true? What God says?

SPEAKING

h. Back to Ps 42

i. Notice what the writer is doing, he doesn't ONLY listen to himself, he talks back!

i. Chooses to REMEMBER the whole picture of reality, including the GOOD times

ii. And tells himself to HOPE IN GOD and choose praise

j. Oh what an oft missed step this is

k. It's not enough to listen to yourself

i. WE MUST LEARN TO SPEAK BACK TO OURSELVES

ii. Engage our wills

iii. And preach truth to our souls

iv. We need to hear well our souls so we can speak well to our souls.

l. QUOTE:

- i. **“Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself?”**

Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them but they are talking to you, they bring back the problems of yesterday, etc. Somebody is talking. Who is talking to you? Your self is talking to you. Now this man’s treatment [in Psalm 42] was this: instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?” he asks. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says, “Self, listen for moment, I will speak to you.” – **Martyn Lloyd-Jones** (*Spiritual Depression*, 20–21)

SPEAK TRUTH TO OURSELVES

Preaching the Gospel to Yourself

- **Gospel Primer**
- Take every thought captive to obey Christ (2 Cor 10:5)
- **Rom 12 – be transformed by the renewing of WHAT YOU THINK**
- **Memorize Romans 8**

Journaling

- Can be good intersection between listening and speaking
- And the “I’m just not a journaler” response is not a good answer.
 - You’ll benefit far more greatly than you expect.
- How I journal
 - Tends to intermix with spending time with God, and praying
 - But I’ve committed to writing out my thought
 - Completely and utterly uncensored
 - You are NOT allowed to read my journal
 - I journal like no one ever will
 - Get it out
 - It’s already in there. God already knows
 - You might as well know too.
 - Gotta get it out
- Or some other activity that really helps you connect with yourself – emotions, thoughts, what your soul’s wanting to say
- Writing music
- Writing stories, poems

Get some soul care

- Intentionally open yourself up to some trusted (trained) others who can help you walk down into your soul and your past, help you understand why you do what you do, ways you’ve

unconsciously chosen to make life work apart from God, ways you've chosen to protect yourself from pain that are keeping you from yourself, God, and others. Ways you're disconnected from yourself. And help you walk with Christ into healing.

- This is something we're excited to increasingly get trained in and offer in TG.
- Briefly—my soul care experience
 - o Been very significant in my life to help me get healing and health
 - o Before Soul Care, always felt like soul was so sad.
 - o Since Soul Care, don't really feel like that!
- More on Soul Care in a few weeks

Be Kind to Yourself

- m. Our souls don't really come out for another reason.....
- n. So many of us actually hate ourselves—for our weakness, sin, shame
 - i. We've believed the identity labels given us by others – and then by ourselves
 - 1. Spiritual Warfare is here! – trying to get you to believe LIES about WHO YOU ARE (and Who God is)
 - 2. So we become our own enemy
 - ii. We speak to ourselves, but not KINDLY, not truthfully, not how JESUS does
 - 1. We can get so HARD on ourselves
 - a. Beat ourself down with words and BAD NEWS
 - 2. Profoundly mean and unkind to ourselves
 - a. WAY harder on ourselves than GOD is.
 - 3. Evil one doesn't even have to do ANYTHING
 - a. He's gotten YOU to keep kicking yourself down
 - 4. **Much of this starts early – when we're kids (Evil One NO RESPECTOR OF AGE!)**
 - iii. **Parents, we need to help train our kids HERE!!!!**
 - 1. They are being attacked NOW.
 - 2. And being taught to attack themselves.
 - iv. **PLAY SONG – BE KIND TO YOURSELF**
 - 1. **Andrew Peterson wrote that song for his 12-yr old daughter**
 - 2. **Then his wife reminded him how desperately HE needed to hear God sing that song over him!**
 - v. **It's me.**
 - vi. Kids AND ADULTS,
 - 1. Do you notice yourself being mean to yourself?
 - 2. Do you say mean things about yourself to yourself?
 - vii. Everyone, What NAMING words do you believe about yourself?
 - 1. What negative words do you believe about yourself?
 - a. Failure
 - b. Disappointment
 - c. Not enough
 - d. Stupid
 - e. Ugly

- f. Unpopular unwanted uncool
- g. Dork
- h. Awkward
- i. Pervert
- j. Weak
- k. Gross
- l. Nobody
- m. Mean
- n. Unkind
- o. Ignorant
- p. Clueless
- q. BAD
- r. Missed Unseen
- s. Not valued
- t. Nobody
- u. Pathetic
- v. Not Special
- w. An embarrassment
- x. Mistake

- viii. Getting to know yourself will go hand in hand with getting to know GOD better
 - 1. And hearing what HE thinks about you
 - 2. Learning to choose to believe GOD's perspective about you more than your own
 - 3. Seen, Known, Enjoyed. Loved. Cherished. Wanted.
 - 4. Learn to love yourself.
 - 5. **Because God Loves you so much he sent his son JC to die for you**, so that whoever believes in him might have everlasting life –STARTING NOW in the broken places of our relationships
 - a. **If you've never started THAT Quest, why not choose even now to follow JESUS into adventure healing, and fully life??**

11. So to summarize:

- a. Relating to yourself well involves LISTENING to yourself and TALKING to yourself.

12. Q&A (if time)

- a. What's your experience with relating to yourself?
- b. Do you struggle more with listening or talking to yourself?
- c. What's a next step?

CHOPPING BLOCK! (this stuff got cut)

1. What does it even mean to have a relationship with yourself?
 2. We are unique beings, able to think higher order – think about thinking
 - a. Part of image of God
 3. Not crazy (necessarily) to think about yourself – or talk TO yourself
 4. We were MADE to do this, to be able to think about ourselves and others
 - a. We have our thoughts
 - b. And we can think ABOUT those thoughts!
 - c. There is A SELF to us
 - i. EPH 3:16
 1. ESV [I Pray] that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,
 2. NASB – “inner man”
 - ii. [Romans 7:22-23](#) says, “For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body.”
5. IDENTITY
 - a. WHO am I categorically -- positionally
 - i. Created being
 - ii. Human
 - iii. Little lower than angels
 - iv. Sinner redeemed by Jesus’ blood
 - v. Now I’m an adopted ROYAL Child of God
 - vi. CO-HEIR with Christ of Gods Kingdom!
6. BODY/SOUL/SPIRIT
 - a. What does it mean to have a soul?
 - b. What is a spirit? Same as soul?
 - c. Am I my body?
 - d. Mind/Brain?
 - i. Neuroscience shows CORRELATION between these, but not identicalness
 - e. Materialism says I AM
 - i. Only physical
 1. My sense of self is merely the exchange of energy in the web of neurons in my brain
 2. I AM my Body
 - ii. Bible says I’m a soul:
 1. We are EMBODIED SPIRITS
 2. I am not merely my body
 3. An immaterial spirit which holds personality animates the body
 4. My spirit WANTS to be embodied, but can exist w/o body
 - a. Longing for resurrection
7. TG wants to highly value rich inner life
 - a. Sp disciplines

- i. Means of GRACE
- 8. Introverts may have a slight natural leg up here
 - a. Word to extroverts?
 - b. Introverts
 - c. We need to be in community so we can be alone safely
 - i. And we need to be alone so we can be in community fruitfully
- 9. What does GOD want us to KNOW about relating to ourselves?**
 - a. We're not a mistake
 - b. We're beloved beyond our wildest dreams by God Almighty Himself
 - i. The maker and lover of our souls
 - ii. He sees you. Knows you. Loves you.
 - c. If you've not entrusted yourself to him through the cross of Jesus
 - i. God wants you to know that you're wanted
 - ii. And that you're soul is mortally sick
 - iii. But you're also offered the elixir of life free of cost to you, bought at GREAT COST to him
 - iv. And not only healing and forgiveness, but also adoption as beloved children of God
 - d. If you're his child,
 - i. He wants you to know you are his child forever
 - ii. He will never leave or forsake you
 - iii. Forever accepted and beloved
 - iv. And he is even now on the great mission of making you more and more who you REALLY ARE
 - v. You'll survive death of your body
 - 1. And one day he'll embody you in a new body, never to sin or die again
 - 2. A perfect match to your renewed eternal soul
 - vi. On a renewed earth merged with Heaven itself
 - e. So we don't have to hide anymore
 - i. Don't have to hang back in shame
 - ii. Don't have to live disconnected from your true self. Your heart
 - 1. God himself wants to meet with you there.

10. What does GOD want us to EXPERIENCE about relating to ourselves?

- a. Rest for our souls (Mat 11:28-30)
 - i. How much soul-rest do you want???
- b. Integrated living
 - i. A centeredness
 - ii. Unity of self
 - iii. So many of us live unexamined lives
- c. Actual, practical, experiential REALTIONSHIP with God on a deep level
 - i. Hearing God's voice is intimately tied to our ability to hear our own souls
- d. A deep understanding of what's going on below the service of our lives

- i. The good, bad, and ugly
 - ii. SO THAT we can grow → Rom 12 → sanctification, renewing
 - iii. Soul Care
- e. We'll be more kind to ourselves as we really get to know ourselves
 - i. So many of us hate ourselves.... Deep down
 - ii. That's partly why we avoid really sitting with ourselves. Getting to know ourselves, deep down.
 - 1. It's painful, difficult
 - iii. Analogy of a long hallway with rooms off
 - 1. Many shut
 - a. Many locked
 - 2. We're terrified to go in some of those rooms, lock ourselves out!
 - a. Lock others out
 - b. Lock GOD out
 - 3. In those rooms are our fears, shame, sin, failures, scenes of great pain
 - a. Try to ignore it, contain/compartmentalize
 - 4. But to live full, free, integrated lives, we have to open those doors
 - a. Deal with what's there
 - 5. And as we get up the courage – usually through DESPERATION
 - a. Desperation drives this – when the pain of staying the same finally seems greater than the pain of change
 - b. We open the door and find Jesus has been there all along
 - c. Waiting patiently and compassionately
 - d. Waiting to help you heal and break free.
 - iv. We need to know ourselves to really get to know GOD – what he's REALLY like and

11. QUOTES FROM SACRED RHYTHMS, RUTH BARTON

a. CHAPTER ONE - DESIRE

- i. When was the last time you felt it—your own longing, that is? Your longing for love, your longing for God, your longing to live your life as it is meant to be lived in God? When was the last time you felt a longing for healing and fundamental change groaning within you? Do not rush past this question; it may be the most important question you ever ask.
 - 1. Barton, Ruth Haley. Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation (Transforming Resources) (p. 22). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.
- ii. ...desires lurk within all of us, and that is why giving any attention at all to desire feels like opening up Pandora's box. But it is even riskier to refuse to acknowledge what's real within us, because whether we acknowledge them or not, these dynamics are at work wielding a subterranean power over us. Their power only gets stronger the longer we repress them. How much safer it is for ourselves and everyone around us if we open up our desires in Jesus' presence and allow him to help us sift through them.

1. Barton, Ruth Haley. Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation (Transforming Resources) (p. 25). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.
- iii. The more authentic our desires, the more they touch upon our identities and also upon the reality of God at the heart of our being. Our most authentic desires spring ultimately from the deep inner wells where the longing for God runs freely.
1. PHILLIP SHELDRAKE, BEFRIENDING OUR DESIRES
 2. Barton, Ruth Haley. Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation (Transforming Resources) (p. 27). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.
- iv. PRACTICE sitting with yourself, your desires:
1. Settle into a comfortable position that allows you to remain alert.
 2. Breathe deeply in this moment as a way of releasing any tension you might be holding and becoming aware of God's presence, which is closer than your breath.
 3. Allow yourself to enjoy God's presence in quietness for a few moments.
 4. When you feel ready, imagine yourself in the historical setting of the story of Bartimaeus as it unfolds in Mark 10:46-52, or imagine yourself in your own place of need.
 - a. Read the story slowly, seeing yourself as the person needing something from Christ and calling out to him from the noisy crowd. How do you approach him or try to get his attention? What words do you use? What emotions do you feel? Imagine that in response to your cry, Jesus turns to you. Now you are face to face with one another. Allow yourself the full realization that you have Jesus' complete attention (because you do!) and hear his question addressed to you: "What do you want me to do for you?"
 5. Do not be afraid of emotion; it is important that you let yourself feel how deep your desire goes.
 - a. You may need to sit with the question and your response for quite some time before you have fully gotten in touch with your heart's desire or have fully expressed it. Give this question and its answer all the time it needs.
 - b. You may want to go for a walk with the question, lie in the grass and feel the warmth of the sun, curl up under a blanket, journal your response, engage in writing or artistic expression.
 - c. If you choose to journal, it might help to begin with the statement "God, what I most need/want from you right now is . . ." and then let your thoughts flow.
 6. Listen for Christ's response. Don't feel as if you have to do anything; simply relish the intimacy and richness that come when we are able to "be with what is" in God's presence.

- a. Barton, Ruth Haley. Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation (Transforming Resources) (p. 28). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

b. CHAPTER 2 – SOLITUDE

- i. The soul is like a wild animal—tough, resilient, resourceful, savvy, self-sufficient. It knows how to survive in hard places. But it is also shy. Just like a wild animal, it seeks safety in the dense underbrush. If we want to see a wild animal, we know that the last thing we should do is go crashing through the woods yelling for it to come out. But if we will walk quietly into the woods, sit patiently by the base of the tree, and fade into our surroundings, the wild animal we seek might put in an appearance.
 1. Parker Palmer, A Hidden Wholeness
 2. Barton, Ruth Haley. Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation (Transforming Resources) (p. 29). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.
- ii. Most of us are not very good at sitting with longing and desire—... The longing for solitude is the longing for God. It is the longing to experience union with God unmediated by the ways we typically try to relate to God.
- iii. It is the practice that spiritual seekers down through the ages have used to experience intimacy with God rather than just talking about it.
- iv. Silence deepens our experience of solitude, because in silence we choose to unplug not only from the constant stimulation of life in the company of others but also from our own addiction to noise, words and activity. It creates a space for listening to the knowings that go beyond words, and feeling no pressure at all to put the depths of the human soul into words. We enter into solitude and silence on the basis of our desire for God, and it becomes a place for being with our desire in God's presence.
- v. The longing for solitude is also the longing to find ourselves, to be in touch with what is most real within us, that which is more solid and enduring than what defines us externally. This is our soul,
- vi. We are not very safe for ourselves, because our internal experience involves continual critique and judgment, and the tender soul does not want to risk it.
- vii. There are very few places where the soul is truly safe, where the knowing, the questions, the longings of the soul are welcomed, received and listened to rather than evaluated, judged or beaten out of us.
- viii. Technology was supposed to help us lead saner lives, but instead it has led us to expect more of ourselves and try to cram more in. One of the new challenges for our generation is the impact of technology on our spirituality. This warrants serious consideration. If we are not careful, technology has a way of compromising our ability to be present to ourselves, to God and to each other—all of which are fundamental elements of the spiritual life.
- ix. Exhaustion sets in when we are too accessible too much of the time.
- x. What feels like being available and accessible is really a boundaryless existence that offers no protection for those things that are most precious to us.

- xi. No wonder we feel disconnected from God: we are rarely able to give him our full attention in solitude and silence. Thoughtful reflection is constantly sabotaged by the intrusion of cell phones, pagers and e-mail messages. No wonder our human relationships are so unsatisfying as they get reduced to snippets of interrupted, disembodied phone conversation. What feels like convenience is actually robbing us of those things we value most. We are left with bits and pieces of everything rather than experiencing the full substance of anything.
- xii. Most of us are more tired than we know at the soul level. We are teetering on the brink of dangerous exhaustion, and we really cannot do anything else until we have gotten some rest. The other disciplines described in this book and elsewhere are a wonderful smorgasbord of spiritual sustenance, but we really can't engage any of them until solitude becomes a place of rest for us rather than another place for human striving and hard work.
- xiii. Since we're not always sure how to live with our humanness, we feel guilty when we are tired, ill or grieving and try to shove it down rather than attend to it. But it takes energy to repress these aspects of our humanness, and eventually the effort itself wears us out.
- xiv. "The fact is there is nothing that we are doing that God could not raise up a stone in the field to do for him. The realization of this puts us in our true place. Though, lest we get too knocked down by such a realization of our insignificance, let me hasten to add that there is one thing that we alone can give God . . . and that is our personal love. No one else can give God our personal love. This is our great significance."

1. M. BASIL PENNINGTON, FINDING GRACE AT THE CENTER

2. Barton, Ruth Haley. Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation (Transforming Resources) (p. 43). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

xv. PRACTICE of Solitude and Silence

1. Choose a place
2. Setting into a comfortable position
3. Sit quietly at the base of the tree that is your life and begin to notice what is true about you these days.
 - a. Don't rush or try to make anything happen. Let your soul venture out and say something to you that perhaps you have had a hard time acknowledging: Is there a particular joy you are celebrating? A loss you are grieving? Are there tears that have been waiting to be shed? A question that is stirring? An emotion that needs expression?
4. Sit with what comes to your awareness
5. Practice this way of entering into solitude regularly until it becomes routine for you to begin your times in solitude by being quiet and letting your soul come out and then rest in God's presence. You will likely be surprised at what your soul wants to say to God.