



# The Solitude Practice

Practicing the Way





The Quiet Place



Encounter with  
Our Self



Encounter with  
Our Enemy



# Encounter with Our God

# How did the ancient believers commune with God?

## Physical and Ritual Cleansing

- **Water purification:** Bathing or washing hands and feet symbolized washing away moral and physical defilement before entering sacred zones.
- **Sacred garments:** Wearing specially laundered, white, or priestly clothing to reflect purity and respect before a holy deity.
- **Abstinence:** Fasting from food, drink, or worldly pleasures to subdue physical desires and sharpen spiritual focus.

## Sacrifices and Offerings

- **Animal and grain gifts:** Presenting unblemished animals, bread, or wine at an altar to establish peace, show gratitude, or atone for sins.
- **Mediated approach:** Relying on designated holy figures, such as priests or prophets, who knew the strict rituals required to approach the divine safely.

## Sacred Space and Time

- **Temple entry:** Traveling to designated holy sites, moving from outer courtyards inward toward the inner sanctum through a veil or gateway.
- **Observing sacred periods:** Aligning communion with holy days, festivals, or the Sabbath to rest from regular labor and meet with God.

“The desire to see God is what urges us to love solitude and silence. For silence is where God dwells. He drapes himself in silence. In every era, this experience of an interior life and an intimate loving relationship with God has remained indispensable for those who seek true happiness. ... Followers of Jesus have been running off into the desert for thousands of years, ultimately, to find happiness in God.”

—ROBERT CARDINAL SARAH, *THE POWER OF SILENCE*



October 18 & 19, 2025

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I'm feeling pretty disappointed since I was hopeful with prayer and the help of others I would find it. At the same time, I'm not sure I have a right to feel disappointed; is this me putting my treasure in worldly things? I also don't know if to go back tomorrow morning to see if I'll find it in daylight? Anyways, asking for prayer to be able to



*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to His purpose*  
- Romans 8:28



How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me.  
Psalms 131:1-2, 5-6

*Some things I have learned:*

- *Show up. God honors intention, not perfection.*
- *Share hard moments with community.*
- *Jesus' yoke is easy and His burden is light.*

Day after losing gold ring. 10/19/2025  
After 3, today or the last 24 hours was hard. Processing my emotions instead of defaulting to numbing technique was very hard. I feel drained but also feel really good to have come to this place acknowledging the nuance of the emotions I was feeling. The hopefulness of finding this jewelry but also the hopelessness of not having the certainty that I would find it. It made me realize that even though I believed



## Mark 1:32-34

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“

**That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.**

## Mark 1:35-39

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“

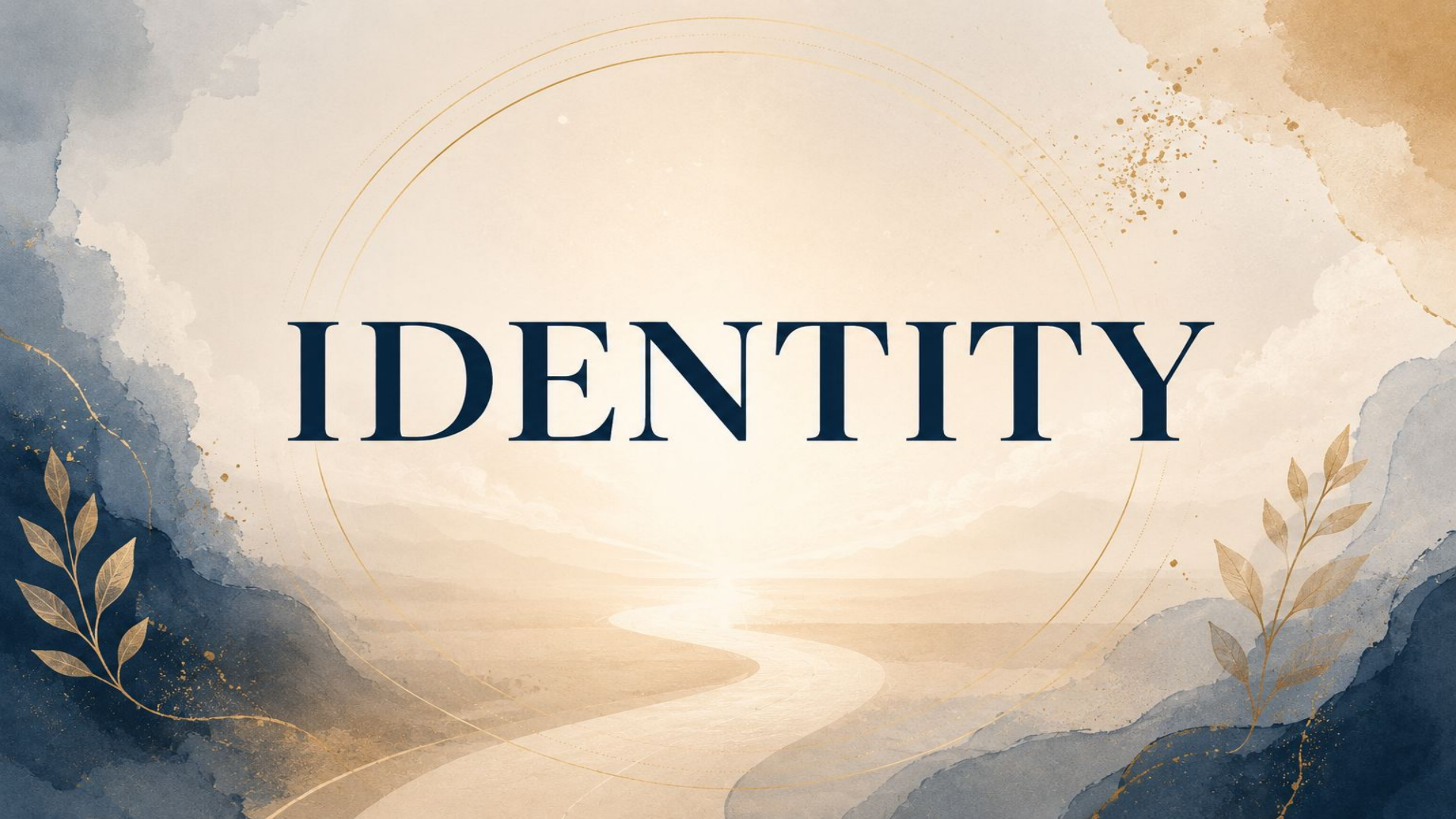
Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they explained: “Everyone is looking for you!” Jesus replied, “let us go somewhere else - to the nearby villages - **So I can preach there also. That is why I have come**”. So he traveled through Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

# Encountering God

**Identity** : Reminds us of who **we** are.

**Calling** : Strengths us in **our** role.

# IDENTITY

The image is a full-page artistic illustration. The background is a soft watercolor wash of light blue, pale yellow, and muted orange, suggesting a misty or dawn landscape. A winding, light-colored path or river flows from the bottom center towards the horizon. In the distance, there are faint, layered mountain ranges. The sun is positioned on the horizon, creating a bright glow and casting long, soft shadows. Two thin, concentric gold circles are centered behind the text. In the bottom left and right corners, there are delicate, gold-colored leafy branches. The overall aesthetic is ethereal and serene.

# WHERE DO WE GET OUR IDENTITY

*from?*

Our identity shapes how we think, live,  
and respond to the world.  
The question is—where are  
you getting yours?



## FROM THE WORLD

Temporary, shifting,  
and never enough.



## OTHER PEOPLE'S OPINIONS

Living to please others and  
seeking their approval.



## ACHIEVEMENTS AND SUCCESS

Tying your worth to what you do,  
earn, or accomplish.



## APPEARANCE AND IMAGE

Basing your value on how you  
look or what others see.



## COMPARISON

Measuring your worth by  
comparing yourself to others.



## POSSESSIONS AND STATUS

Finding identity in what you own  
or the status you have.



## BELOVED CHILD OF GOD

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us,  
that we should be called children of God."

1 JOHN 3:1



## MADE WITH PURPOSE

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus  
to do good works, which God prepared in advance  
for us."

EPHESIANS 2:10



## DEEPLY LOVED

"I have loved you with an everlasting love;  
I have drawn you with unfailing kindness."

JEREMIAH 31:3



## CHOSEN AND VALUED

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and  
appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit."

JOHN 15:16



## SEALED AND SECURE

"In him you were also included, when you heard  
the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.  
When you believed, you were marked in him  
with a seal."

EPHESIANS 1:13



## IDENTITY IN THE WORLD SAYS:

"I AM WHAT I DO OR WHAT  
OTHERS THINK OF ME."



## IDENTITY IN CHRIST SAYS:

"I AM WHO GOD SAYS  
I AM."



## YOUR TRUE IDENTITY IS FOUND IN CHRIST ALONE.

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"* 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17





# Discussion Questions

Take a few minutes to reflect, then share.

1

**Is your Christian identity buried under worldly waste bags? If so, what steps are you willing to take to revive it?**

2

**How can you encourage your brother/sister about their Christian identity today?**

A detailed landscape painting featuring a sunset over a calm lake. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with dramatic, textured clouds. In the background, there are dark, forested mountains. On the right, a small white cross is visible on a distant hill. The foreground shows a rocky shoreline with some sparse vegetation. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual. The word "Calling" is written in a large, elegant, white cursive script across the center of the image.

# Calling

## SCRIPTURE

# Luke 9:23

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**Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”**

## Faith

*"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,  
the evidence of things not seen."  
Hebrews 11:1*

*Encourage One Another*  
1 Thessalonians 5:11

## Love

*"Let all that you do be done in love."  
1 Corinthians 16:14*



## Serve

*"The greatest among you will be your servant."  
Matthew 23:11*

*Pray Without Ceasing*  
1 Thessalonians 5:17

## Share the Word

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."  
Matthew 28:19*



## Hope

*"For I know the plans I have for you..."  
Jeremiah 29:11*



## Mark 1:35-39

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## SCRIPTURE

# Luke 6:27-28

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“

**“But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.**

## SCRIPTURE

# Matthew 5:39

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“

**But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.**

**“My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart.” Psalm 7:10**

## Matthew 5:40

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“

**And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt,  
hand over your coat as well.**

**“Give to everyone who asks you... Do to others as  
you would have them do to you.” Luke 6:30-31**

SCRIPTURE

## Matthew 5:41

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“If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.

**“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart,  
as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”  
Col 3:23**

# Discussion Questions

1

**What might choosing not to retaliate look like in everyday life—at work, at home, while driving or in relationships?**

2

**Why might Jesus ask us to give more than what is demanded of us?**

3

**What would “going the second mile” look like in your life this week? How can Encountering God help with this?**