

Diving Deeper into Discipleship for February 6, 2022

Pastor Pete Fowler | *Open Invitation: The Needs of Seeds*

Sermon Reflection Questions:

- Ask God to help us recognize diversity and strive for unity in the Church. Are you making space for "each other and the 'other'" in response to Jesus' desire for that kind of unity?
- Thank God for his endless and abundant grace, that it knows no scarcity or boundaries!
- Which threat to the growth of the gospel in your life is most prevalent: spiritual battles and a hardened heart, a lack of perseverance in testing, worries, wealth, or pleasure?

Devotional Reading and Reflection

- **John 17:20-23** | What are the outcomes of the Church living with the kind of unity Jesus prays for in this passage?
- **Matthew 11:25-26** | Why do you think God takes pleasure in revealing things to those who are like "little children" instead of the "wise and learned?"
- **1 Timothy 6:6-10** | How have you experienced, or seen in others, the truth that an eagerness for money has led someone away from the faith?

Weekly Spiritual Practice

February Practice: Solitude & Silence | Starting Small (from *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster, pg. 106)

- The discipline of silence and solitude are interwoven into the DNA of a Christian person. We rely on them like one relies on food or water. Perhaps this is why so many folks feel spiritually malnourished or dehydrated because they are not opening themselves up to silence and solitude. Solitude is not simply the absence of noise but the absence of distraction. Whenever we are able to sit and rest in the presence of God, our eyes are opened in ways that we wouldn't have imagined before.
- Open yourself up to starting small. Engaging in silence can be an intimidating thing. We often have to come face to face with ourselves and our struggles in the silence. Distraction is much easier. This week, don't feel like you need to go on some grand silent retreat or hideout in a cave for the weekend. Find little pockets throughout your day to spend just a few moments focused in the quiet. This could be as you sip your morning coffee, or while you drive to and from work with the radio off. There are numerous ways to engage in solitude. These tiny little moments can help reorient your life like a compass needle. They are little moments that help all of us to be genuinely present wherever we are.