

Spring Training – Desire & Solitude
Romans 12.2, Galatians 4.19, & Philippians 2.13-14 // March 26, 2019

[Get to know Ruth Haley Barton and her book, Sacred Rhythms—Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation.]

Two Bible passages & two key words for Spring Training:

- Galatians 4.19 – *form* – *taking a form that embodies a particular inner essence*

- Romans 12.2 – *transform* – *to be formed after being with*

Phil 2.12b-13 – Ground rules for Spring Training formation & transformation:

1. I can't. God can. And God usually won't without my desire and effort.
2. Want to beats ought to.
3. Discipline starts with desire.
4. It's more about rhythm than about rigor and rigid routines.
5. Forming and transforming our spiritual lives is a team sport.

Desires – The starting place for Spring Training.

- > When Jesus asks, *What do you want me to do for you?* [Mark 10.46]...ANSWER HIM!
- > Develop the habit of asking Jesus, *What desire do you see in me that you'd love to fulfill?*
- > Be open and honest about your shadowy desires so they don't operate underground!
- > Your desire for God is the truest thing about you, because it is the re-imaging of God in you.
 - >> So...What do you desire...for yourself? With God? From God?

Solitude. Coaching points on the discipline of solitude:

- 1/ Stop talking, stop doing – and just be in God's presence.
- 2/ Solitude is a place inside myself where God's Spirit and my spirit just hang out.
- 3/ Solitude interrupts our cycle of frenetic doing, noise, & stimulation so we can hear our longings calling us deeper into the relationship that can satisfy our longings. Mark 6.30 & 45
- 4/ Solitude faces emptiness/exhaustion & focuses on the resource of God's presence. Ps 62.1,5
- 5/ Solitude waits for God to make stuff happen instead of stressing & striving. Ex 14.13-14

>> An exercise in practicing solitude by Ruth Haley Barton. *You'll likely be surprised at what your soul wants to say to God.*

Get comfortable in an undistracted place. Sit quietly, breathe deeply, and remember God's presence with you and your desire to be present with God. Notice what is true. Don't rush or try to make anything happen. Simply let God's Spirit and your spirit hang out together. Let your soul say something to you that perhaps you have 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? Is there a question stirring? An emotion that needs expression? Whatever comes to your awareness, just sit with it, becoming conscious of God's presence with you in that awareness. Don't try to fix it or fight it or even pray about it. *Just be with it—with God.* Rest with it, letting God fight for you. Pay attention to what it means for you to *be still and let God fight for you* in this area?