



# FINDING SOLITUDE WITH THE LORD

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## **INTRODUCTION** by Pastor Josiah Nordgren

## **HOW TO INSTRUCTIONS**

Each day is broken up into 3 main parts.

Please read the following instructions before you jump into the booklet.

## **SEPTEMBER 18 - 24**

### **WEEK 1 / DAY 1-5**

- 1 **LONGING OF THE SOUL** by Pastor Josiah Nordgren
- 2 **GOD OVER ALL** by Pastor Alex Fong
- 3 **CONTENT IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD** by Pastor Todd Okamura
- 4 **STILL THE GOD OF MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS** by Pastor Art Larson
- 5 **LISTENING BELOW THE NOISE** by Pastor Art Larson

## **SEPTEMBER 25 - OCTOBER 1**

### **WEEK 2 / DAY 1-5**

- 1 **KNOWN** by Pastor Justin Masuda
- 2 **CONNECTING WITH OUR CREATOR** by Pastor Stephanie Trittipio
- 3 **YOU ARE LOVED** by Pastor Andrea Manuel
- 4 **ENDLESS STRENGTH** by Pastor Alex Fong
- 5 **TRUSTING GOD** by Pastor Alec Shimizu

## **OCTOBER 2 - 8**

### **WEEK 3 / DAY 1-5**

- 1 **BREATHE EASY AND KNOW GOD IS WITH YOU** by Pastor Jarrod Oda
- 2 **EVERYTHING, EVERYWHERE, ALL IN ITS OWN TIME** by Pastor Justin Masuda
- 3 **STAINS REMOVED** by Pastor Jarrod Oda
- 4 **THE LONG VIEW** by Pastor Josiah Nordgren
- 5 **FINDING TRUE IDENTITY IN OUR HEAVENLY FATHER** by Pastor Stephanie Trittipio

I am so excited you have decided to do this solitude journey with us during our "Pause" series. For the next 3 weeks, you will spend about 5 to 10 minutes being still before the Lord, engaging with His presence, reading, pondering, and praying. My hope is that this would not be a "church campaign" but something that would become a part of our daily rhythm long after this series is done.

This series and booklet were birthed out of my own life. Back in late May/early June, my family had just come back from a long, 2-week trip to the mainland, bringing back with us beautiful memories and also Covid. After each long day my kids would finally get to play video games and I would sit outside at sunset. I don't have a view but each evening God would show off, painting the sky in beautiful hues of blue, purple, pink, and orange. I would sit out there with the Lord, aware that His presence was with me. Sometimes 10 minutes, sometimes 30, with no agenda. At times I would read, write, pray, marvel at the sky or just breathe. I would make myself become aware of a God who is always and ever-present.

I realized how much I missed sitting in His presence, connecting with Him, abiding in Him. So often my life becomes about doing, doing for the church, doing for my family and even doing for the Lord. My relationship with Him devolves into a religion of activities and checked boxes. Too often I rely on adrenaline-fueled worship, snappy sermons, and spoon-fed devotionals rather than just simply resting in His presence. On top of all that, I am always trying to work my way into worth. My life with Him and how He sees me are often based on my performance. But each day I would go out there, and God would meet me, regardless of how my day went or how I felt. I had become a human doing, and I needed to relearn how to be a human being. I missed it, just being with God, and I imagine others do too.

This booklet is a guide, it is not meant to give you everything you need but rather to lead you to the One you need. I hope and pray what we do over the next 3 weeks will ignite a "passion for being" that will exist long beyond this series.

*In Christ,*

**PASTOR JOSIAH NORDGREN**



## WHAT EACH DAY LOOKS LIKE...

Each day is broken up into 3 main parts.

*Please read the following instructions before you jump into the booklet.*

### **SILENCE, STILLNESS & CENTERING YOURSELF BEFORE GOD.**

For 2-5 minutes you will just sit and breathe, look up at the sky (if you're outside), understand God is with you, and shut your brain off from the 45 things it is trying to think through in that moment. You are just going to be and realize that God is there with you as close and as intimate as someone sitting next to you. This will take practice, and if you're new to this I suggest setting a timer on your phone. For some of us, 2 minutes might feel like an eternity to do nothing, for others you might need 5 minutes or even 10 minutes. Do what works for you.

#### STEP 1 & 2

### **SCRIPTURE & SHORT DEVOTIONAL**

Each of these help you reflect on one aspect of God or yourself. Read it carefully and slowly. Constantly be watching your pace to see if you're rushing through it just to get it done.

#### STEP 3

### **REFLECT: THINK DEEPLY, PROCESS & TALK TO THE LORD.**

In conclusion, you will take another 2-5 minutes looking inward, processing, and expressing yourself to God. We have written some bullets to guide you, but this time is best left unstructured. Also, if God is doing a work in you and your timer runs out, continue to sit because He isn't done.

## II TIMING MATTERS

There is no “right time” during the day to do this; simply do it when you are at your best. Are you a morning person? Great! Wake up before everyone else. Are you a night owl? Awesome! Do it when everyone is going to bed or winding down for the evening. Do you have an extended lunch break or time alone while your kids are in school? Maybe midday is the time for you. Do whatever works best for you.

## II PLACE MATTERS

I get distracted easily. I need to find a time and space in which things are quiet, which is my yard from 6:30pm-7:00pm. I am a visual person; I love looking up at the evening or night sky and thinking about the vastness and power of our God. So maybe for you outside is best or maybe you read then go for a walk and reflect. Others of you will be happier in your living room or at your kitchen table. Again there is no “right way” to do it, only the way that works for you.

## II GOD IS NOT ONLY TO BE UNDERSTOOD BUT FELT

In John 15:4 Jesus tells us, “remain in me as I remain in you.” There is a tangible, physical, real, and practical relationship that He wants to have with us. This relationship is not only expressed in reading, praying, and doing for the Lord but also simply being in His presence. He is not a God to just know but a God to be felt. Pause and feel His presence, understanding that He is there with you. Pause and feel His love; imagine Him wrapping His arms around you and allow yourself to feel the same warmth you feel when a loved one embraces you. Talk to Him out loud if no one is around, and understand that He hears every single word. There is never a moment in which He is inattentive to you. Please don’t go through the motions of this book; by itself it is lifeless. It’s words on a page that will one day be forgotten. On the other side of it is an eternal God who has been waiting to spend time with you. He is here, He is with you. You are not alone.

## II UNDERSTAND SOLITUDE IS DIFFICULT

This isn’t easy. We as a people have forgotten the lost art of the pause. We are restless, often mindless, always going, always moving, always “connected” and yet somehow disconnected in the places it matters most. If you’re new to this you’re going to be bad at it at first. Two minutes will feel like an eternity and you’ll find yourself checking the clock a couple of times before it finishes. Your brain will try to remember and recount the 140 things you have to do right after you sit and be silent and you will be tempted to rush through it. Some days you will find that you are just going through the motions and you need to pause to make yourself present. Other days you will sit with the Lord and not really feel anything.... IT IS OKAY. You are working out muscles that have atrophied. It will take time and it is worth it!

## II IF YOU MISS A DAY

This journey was built with that in mind. Instead of doing it 7 days a week, we are doing it 5 days a week. If you miss a day, just pick up where you left off. If you miss multiple days, don’t feel bad or quit, just jump in wherever we are.

## II DON'T GO IT ALONE

During this series we are encouraging every single person to jump into an ‘Ohana Group. Each week, in-person or on zoom, groups will get together and talk about what they are learning from the weekend sermons but more importantly they will be talking about what they are learning from their quiet time with the Lord. Just like physical workouts, this spiritual workout is most effective with other people. You will be more apt to do each day carefully and seriously if you know you are getting together to discuss it later in the week. If you want to jump into a group it’s not too late. We have groups for men, women, youth, young adults, couples, kupuna, and much much more. Email [groups@newhopeleeward.org](mailto:groups@newhopeleeward.org) to get connected. At the end of each week there are ‘Ohana Group questions. If you are not ready for a group, answer them as a family or with your spouse or grab a couple coworkers or friends in church. Growth does happen alone with the Lord but it is meant to also happen together.