Silence to Sustenance – Ralph & Carrie Peters

Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster… 1st published in 1978

The Inward Disciplines

1. Meditation
2. Prayer
3. Fasting
4. Study

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The Outward Disciplines

1. Simplicity
2. Solitude
3. Submission
4. Service

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The Corporate Disciplines

1. Confession
2. Worship
3. Guidance
4. Celebration

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FOUNDATIONS OF LEADERSHIP: A CHRISTIAN APPROACH
by William A. Kirsch
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Disciplines of Abstinence
- Solitude
- Silence
- Fasting

Disciplines of Engagement
- Prayer
- Bible Study
- Worship
- Service

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The Disciplines of Abstinence

1. Solitude

Removing ourselves from social interaction in order to gain solitude allows us to focus solely on God. (Kirsch, 7)

The main purpose of solitude is to remove distractions so that you can remain still and alone before God. (7)

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*After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone. Matthew 14:23

*But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer. Luke 5:16

*Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray. Mark 1:35

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Solitude ≠ Loneliness

"Let him who cannot be alone beware of community… let him who is not in community beware of being alone."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

* If we want to be alone, SAFELY, we've got to have fellowship and accountability.

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2. Silence

- There can be noises and even people talking, and you can be listening for the still small voice in the midst of it all.
- 1 Kings 19:11-14
- Shema (Heb) "hear" or "listen
  the Biblical - to obey – take action

8

* If we are silent when we should speak, we are not living in the discipline of silence. If we speak when we should be silent, we again miss the mark" (Foster, 99)

9

A time to be quiet
And a time to speak;
Ecclesiastes 3:7

Silence is a way of taming the tongue. James warns us that the tongue can be painfully destructive (James 3:1–12)

SELF CONTROL is the key

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3. Fasting

Christian fasting ≠ hunger strike

Christian fasting ≠ dieting

In the secular world FASTING is mostly motivated either by vanity or the desire for power

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Fasting in the Bible

1. From all food, but not water

Jesus…

Luke 4:1-2

1 Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, 2 where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry.

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2. Daniel Fast

A restriction of diet

Daniel 10:2-3

2 When this vision came to me, I, Daniel, had been in mourning for three whole weeks. 3 All that time I had eaten no rich food. No meat or wine crossed my lips, and I used no fragrant lotions until those three weeks had passed.

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3. Absolute Fast - 3 Day

Absolute fast. – Abstaining from food and water.

Esther 4:16

16 “Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die.”

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Paul

9 He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink.

Acts 9:9

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4. Absolute Fast - Supernatural

Moses - Deuteronomy 9:8-9

8 Even at Mount Sinai you made the Lord so angry he was ready to destroy you. 9 This happened when I was on the mountain receiving the tablets of stone inscribed with the words of the covenant that the Lord had made with you. I was there for forty days and forty nights, and all that time I ate no food and drank no water.

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Elijah - 1Kings 19:8

1 Kings 19:8-9

8 So he got up and ate and drank, and the food gave him enough strength to travel forty days and forty nights to Mount Sinai, the mountain of God. 9 There he came to a cave, where he spent the night.

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Did Jesus command us to fast?

Jesus taught about fasting on the sermon on the Mount

When you give… When you pray… When you fast.

Matthew 6:16-18

It was not Christ's intention to reject or despise fasting… it was His intention to restore proper fasting.

Martin Luther

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Is fasting a command?

Matthew 9:14-15

And… is fasting just about food?

You can fast from anything that is beginning to take too much time or attention in your life and keeping you from focusing on spiritual matters. (Kirsch, 10)

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