



How To Guide: Retreats

Introduction:

The Gospels reveal that Jesus prioritized regular rhythms of retreat, Sabbath, and quiet time. These rhythms gave him focused time to rest, pray and have special communion with the Father and the Spirit. This lifestyle was a mark of the Spirit-filled life of Jesus and fueled the fruit that flowed from him.

This guide is meant to equip you to take a retreat.

What Is A Retreat?

When we say retreat, we mean an extended time anywhere from a day to even a year, where we take a break from everyday life in order to rest, pray and commune with God. Our hope and prayer, is that like Jesus, we would emerge from these retreats full of the power of the Spirit.

Retreats In The Life of Jesus:

Here are a few notable examples from the life of Jesus:

Jesus did an extended spiritual retreat before starting his public ministry:

In Mark 1, The Spirit led Jesus into a forty-day period of spiritual retreat in the wilderness. It was here in the silence and solitude that Jesus was both tempted by the Enemy and ministered to by angels. Luke adds that Jesus emerged from this retreat in the power of the Spirit.

Mark 1.12 At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

Luke 4.14 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.

Jesus went on an overnight spiritual retreat before making big decisions:

As he prepared to make a big decision about who to select as the 12 Apostles, Jesus retreated to a mountain. There in the midst of nature's beauty, he spent the night praying about who to select

Luke 6.12-16 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Jesus went on a retreat in a season of grief and loss.

In Matthew 14, after hearing the news of John the Baptists death, Jesus took time to retreat and process the grief and loss.

Matthew 14.13 When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place.

Jesus called his disciples to a retreat to rest after a season of heavy ministry.

Mark 6.30-32 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

Jesus led his disciples on a retreat in order to give them revelation.

Mark 9.2-4 After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

Putting It Into Practice:

We want to intentionally practice our faith. To get going, here are some steps to prayerfully consider:

Set Aside A Time: Prayerfully pick a time when you can take a retreat.

Pick a Place: Figure out where you can do the retreat. Jesus's retreats took place in nature. If possible, we recommend taking a retreat to some place to be immersed in nature's beauty. Also, we encourage you to make your retreat a time to slow down and rest

What To Do?

Here are some things we recommend to include on a retreat:

Gratitude: Spend an extended amount of time looking back over the previous season and writing out things you are thankful for. Where have you seen God's Presence in your life? Where has he answered prayer? Where has he provided?

Grieving: We have all experienced losses, disappointments, and unresolved hopes. As you continue in your retreat, talk with the Lord, and write out the things you are grieving as you come to the retreat. It is in His presence that we find the grace and healing we need.

Adoration: Spend extended time worshipping and adoring the Lord

Scripture: Ask the Lord for a passage of Scripture or a book of the Bible to soak in during that retreat.

Listening: Use the time to engage in listening prayer

Looking Ahead: Spend time in prayer looking to the next season ahead.