

ZIMZUM DISCIPLESHIP VIDEO LESSON #4: SILENCE SMALL GROUP SESSION 1 — GENERAL OVERVIEW

Gathering

Opening Prayer:

O God of peace, who has taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be our strength: By the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray, to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Begin with brief check-ins and the opening questions below:

Opening Questions:

How has it been practicing zimzum discipleship and creation justice? Which of the spiritual practices associated with creation justice have you engaged in?

Content Study

- Watch the video on Silence found at ecww.org/zimzum-discipleship/

Reading: Luke 5:12-16

“Once when he was in one of the cities, a man covered with a skin disease was there. When he saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground and begged him, ‘Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.’ Then Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, ‘I am willing. Be made clean.’ Immediately the skin disease left him. And he ordered him to tell no one. ‘But go, show yourself to the priest, and, as Moses commanded, make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them.’ But now more than ever the word about Jesus spread abroad; many crowds were gathering to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. Meanwhile, he would slip away to deserted places and pray.”

- Use *lectio divina* (“divine reading”) for this passage.
- Read the text slowly aloud. Sit for a time and notice where your heart takes you
- Meditate on a word or phrase that has caught your attention. Or imagine taking on a role in this narrative and playing it over again in your mind
- Pray the passage aloud slowly again, or simply pray the word or phrase that has taken your attention
- Quietly consider how this passage might lead you to live more faithfully as a disciple of Jesus, and let the Spirit guide you as to next steps for contemplative living.

Reflection Questions

- Cal Newport writes, “At the slightest hint of boredom, you can now surreptitiously glance at any number of apps or mobile-adapted websites that have been optimized to provide you an immediate and satisfying dose of input from other minds. It’s now possible to completely banish solitude from your life.” How much solitude and silence do you get now in your life? Do you think that’s enough? Why or why not?
- The concept of Zimzum discipleship centers on our making space in our lives for the three core relationships with God, one another, and the created world. Thomas Merton wrote, “You will never find interior solitude unless you make some conscious effort to deliver yourself from the desires and the cares and the attachments of an existence in time and in the world.” What cares, desires, or attachments do you have with the things of this world? How do you need to make intentional space to deliver yourself from these?
- According to the movie promo, “Silence is Golden.” Besides movie theaters, where else do you wish you could show this message? What do you hope would happen?
- +Phil described the “Be still” breath prayer. Have you ever tried a prayer like this before? What was that like for you? Take a moment now and try it. (A reminder: it’s five instances of the phrase, getting shorter each time, with at least a full breath between uttering it. “Be still and know that I am God.” “Be still and know that I am.” “Be still and know.” “Be still.” “Be.”)

Final Reflections

- What has captured your heart or your imagination in today’s discussion?
- Where have you seen God—or Love—recently?
- What might you intentionally do over the next 2-4 weeks to bring you closer to God?

Closing Prayer

Almighty and Eternal God, you sacrificially withdrew from a place within yourself in order to create the entirety of the cosmos so that you might be in relationship with us and all of creation. Help us to embrace zimzum discipleship and make space in our own lives, that we might more faithfully follow in the way of Jesus who gave of himself for the salvation and healing of the whole world. All this we ask in the name of the Risen Christ, who dwells endlessly with you and the Holy Spirit. Amen.