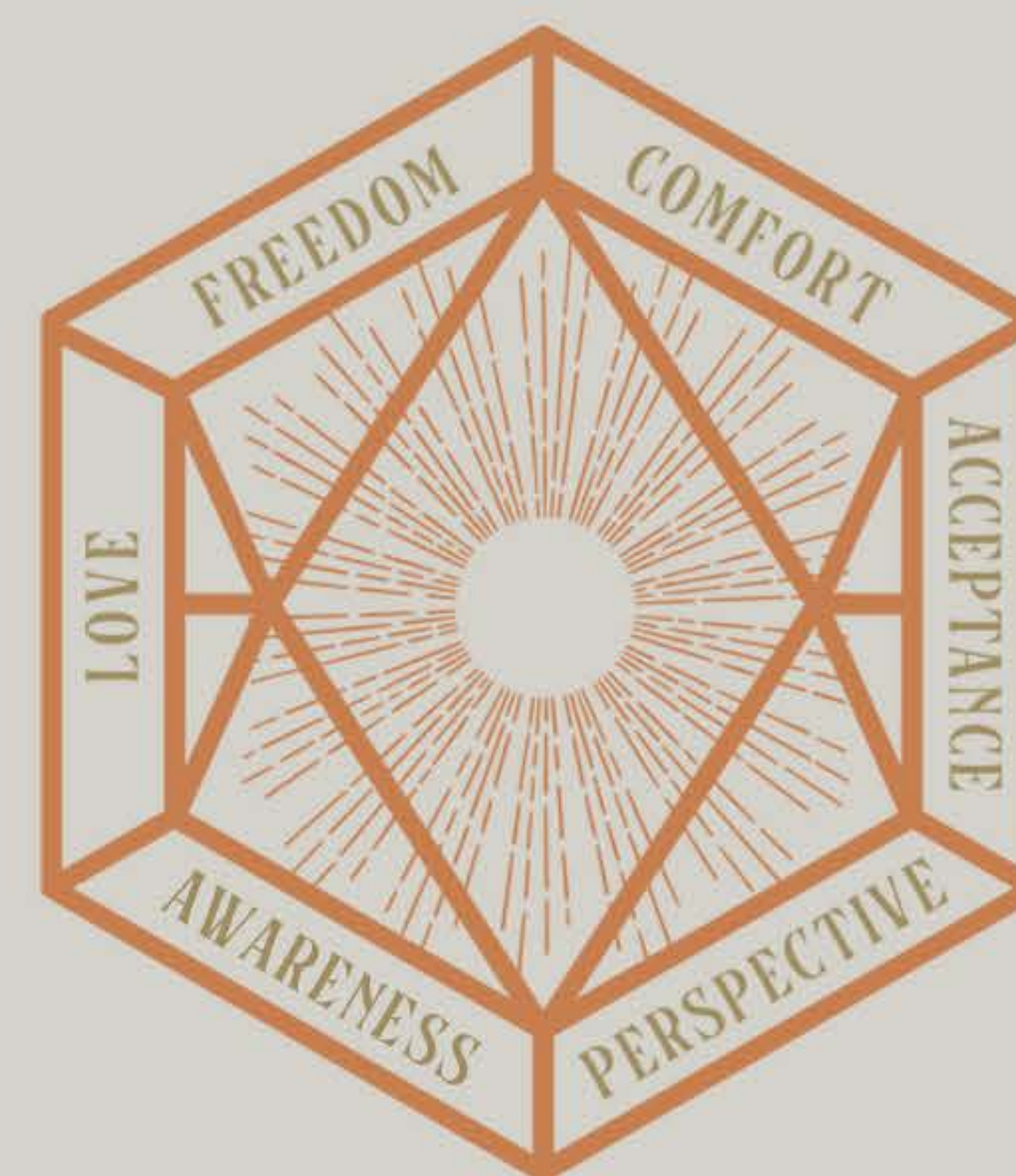


the GIFT of LENT

WEEK 5 | APRIL 3

THE GIFT OF AWARENESS



INTRODUCTION

So far during our Lent series, we've focused on four gifts - freedom, comfort, acceptance, perspective – and practiced fasting from food, impulse spending, social media, and sweets and caffeine to enhance each of these freedoms. This week, Pastor John focuses on the Gift of Awareness, which is enhanced by spending time in solitude, so we can hear from God.

DISCUSSION

1. "Silence is a necessary path to becoming a No Matter follower of Jesus." What's your experience with the spiritual rhythm of silence?
2. **Read Luke 4:1-13, 42-44; Luke 5:13-16; Luke 6:12-13.** Describe each place of solitude and what happened before, during, or after Jesus' time there.
3. What influence did Jesus' time alone have on the events in the above passages? Can you recall when a time of solitude affected a specific event in your life?
4. What are some practical steps you can take to shut off the noise and spend time in solitude?

TAKE ACTION

1. Spend a few minutes recording your current thoughts and worries.
2. Take the list from #1, find a place you enjoy, and sit in silence with God. If you are new to this discipline, try five minutes. At the end of your time, record any experiences or lessons you learned.
3. Try adding some of the other types of fasting to your time of silence, such as fasting from food, social media, etc.

RESOURCES

1. [Invitation to Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God's Transforming Presence](#) by Ruth Haley Barton, available on Amazon
2. [Protégé](#) by Steve Saccone (particularly chapter 5), available on Amazon
3. The "Silence and Solitude" session in [The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry](#) series by John Mark Comer on [RightNow Media](#)