

# SPENT & SUSTAINED

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Recovering a  
Devotion First  
Ministry

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## **Module 3 Sample:**

### **Imaginative Exercise**

#### **Sitting with Paul**

Imagine yourself in a quiet, simple space.  
It might feel like a small room, or a shaded outdoor place.  
The light is soft. The air is still.  
You are not alone.  
Paul is there with you.  
He is older now.  
His body shows the marks of travel, suffering, and endurance.  
But his presence is calm — grounded, attentive.  
Notice where you are sitting in relation to him.  
Perhaps on the floor.  
Perhaps on a bench.  
Perhaps across from one another.  
There is no rush.  
No task to complete.  
Just shared presence.

#### **Being with Shared Life**

Paul looks at you with warmth.  
Not as a teacher addressing a student, but as someone who has shared life — joy and disappointment, hope and fatigue.  
You sense that he knows what it is to give himself to others.  
He has loved people deeply.  
He has stayed longer than was comfortable.  
He has been spent for the sake of others.  
Notice how it feels to be seen by someone who understands this life.

#### **Hearing His Heart**

After a while, Paul speaks quietly.

He does not offer advice.  
He does not explain his theology.  
He simply says something like:  
“We were delighted to share not only the gospel of God,  
but our lives as well.”  
Let those words rest in the space between you.  
You may notice a memory arise.  
A face.  
A moment of shared life from your own ministry.  
Allow it to be there.

#### **Receiving the Invitation**

Paul looks at you again.  
There is kindness in his eyes — not expectation.  
You sense an invitation, not a demand.  
An invitation to keep sharing your life.  
An invitation to love deeply without measuring the cost.  
An invitation to trust that this kind of life matters.  
Sit with him for a few moments longer.  
No words are required.

#### **Closing the Prayer**

When you are ready, allow the scene to gently fade.  
Bring your attention back to your breathing...  
back to the room...  
back to your body.  
Take one slow breath in...  
and release it.  
When you are ready, gently open your eyes.

## **Colloquy**

### **Speaking with Jesus About Being Spent for Souls**

A colloquy is a simple, honest conversation.  
Not formal.  
Not polished.  
Not theological.  
You are not explaining your ministry to Jesus.  
You are speaking to Him from within it.  
Take a moment to settle.  
You may imagine Jesus seated near you —  
not evaluating your effectiveness, but attentive  
to your heart.  
He knows the faces you carry.  
He knows the conversations that linger.  
He knows the cost of loving people who  
cannot repay it.  
Let yourself become aware of His steady  
presence.

#### **Speaking Honestly**

You may begin wherever you feel most true.  
You might say:  
“Jesus, this is where I feel poured out...”  
“This is where loving people feels costly...”  
“This is where I feel unseen or  
unappreciated...”  
“This is where I am afraid of loving less...”  
There is no need to soften your words.  
If there is resentment, name it.  
If there is grief, name it.  
If there is deep affection for your people,  
name that too.

#### **Naming the Fear Beneath the Giving**

Sometimes being “spent for souls” hides a  
quieter fear.  
You might ask yourself gently:  
Am I afraid of becoming irrelevant?  
Am I afraid of not being needed?  
Am I afraid that if I give less, I will matter  
less?

If any of this feels true, speak it plainly.  
“Jesus, I am afraid that if I stop giving...”  
Stay with whatever surfaces.

#### **Receiving His Way of Being Spent**

Now notice Jesus.  
He, too, gave His life for souls.  
But He did not rush.  
He did not cling to outcomes.  
He did not measure love by visible success.  
He trusted the Father.  
You may wish to ask Him:  
“Jesus, how do You want me to share my  
life?”  
Or,  
“What does it mean to be spent in love — but  
not consumed by pressure?”  
Remain quiet after you ask.  
You may receive a word, an image, a memory,  
or simply a sense of steadiness.  
All are enough.

#### **What I Want to Remember**

Write a word, phrase, or impression that feels  
important to carry forward:  
This is not a resolution.  
It is a remembrance.

#### **Closing Prayer**

Lord Jesus,  
Teach me how to give my life  
without trying to control what it produces.  
Let my love be rooted in trust,  
not in fear.  
Keep me near You  
when I am poured out.  
Amen.

## Module 6 Sample:

### Theological Lens

#### Dominion as Shared Stewardship

Before we begin naming metrics or practices, we pause to receive a way of seeing.

Scripture speaks of dominion not as control, but as shared participation in God's ongoing care for the world. In Genesis, human beings are entrusted with tending, cultivating, and guarding what God has made. This work is delegated, relational, and bounded. It is never absolute.

Dominion assumes limits.

We are given real responsibility — but not ultimate authority. We are called to faithfulness, not control. To stewardship, not outcomes.

The theologian Dallas Willard taught that spiritual formation and ministry go wrong when we confuse our role with God's. When dominion is distorted, we try to manage results we cannot produce. We measure what we can control rather than attend to what we are entrusted to tend.

Scripture offers a corrective vision.

Paul reminds the church that ministry is collaborative work within God's field: "We are God's co-workers." Some plant, some water — but growth belongs to God. This means that while our work matters deeply, it is not determinative. We participate in

conditions for life; we do not manufacture transformation.

This distinction matters when we talk about metrics.

Measures rooted in control tend to create urgency, comparison, and exhaustion. Measures rooted in stewardship invite attentiveness, patience, and shared responsibility. Dominion helps us discern which is which.

As you enter the practices that follow, hold this lens gently:

- We are responsible for presence, not results.
- We steward faithfulness, not outcomes.
- We measure in ways that serve life, not pressure.

This lens does not remove accountability. It restores proportion.

#### Holding the Lens

As we move into conversation and practice, return to this question:

What kind of work have we been assuming is ours — and what kind belongs to God?

Let that question guide what you notice next

## **Module 2 Sample:**

### **Carrying This Forward**

You have taken time to notice your limits, your hunger, and the places where you feel thin or tired.

You have allowed yourself to be honest before God — not as a leader holding everything together, but as a person in need of grace.

Nothing needs to be resolved before you leave this space.

God does not hurry what He is forming in you.

#### **As You Go**

You may find that something from today stays with you — a word, an image, a quiet sense of being seen, or simply an awareness of how tired you have been.

You do not need to turn this into a strategy. Let it remain a conversation that continues slowly in the background of your days.

You may notice yourself becoming more aware of when you are pushing past your limits.

You may notice moments when you remember you do not have to carry everything alone.

Let these small moments be enough.

#### **A Prayer to Carry**

Lord,  
meet me in my weakness,  
not after I overcome it.  
Teach me to receive Your grace  
where I feel most unable.  
When I reach for control,  
remind me that You are already at work.  
Walk with me in the ordinary weight of  
ministry,  
and help me carry only what is mine to carry.  
Amen.

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