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Introduction to Spiritual Formation

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Guyon Response Paper

I believe that each one of us experiences the love and loyalty of God in various ways, but with the same purpose of bringing us closer to him. This season of stillness for me has been quite a long ride with many surprises in each corner. The year 2023 has made a whole 360 in my life from leaving my old church and entering a new church with so many different people that I've never interacted with before. In every step I took, the Lord provided me with his support, grace, love, and wisdom to make sure I was going forward with the right choice. While I was really struggling with praying about all the emotions I was going through. I found peace just as God's word is established in Psalms 46:5 "*God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day*". These words came alive in those very exact moments.

The Lord has opened my eyes to great things and has made me understand the purpose of each of them. For example, his silence during this season of stillness made me a stronger individual by trusting even when I don't notice he's working. I felt the Lord far away from me and I forgot he's a God who works in mysterious ways. I do truly believe I needed this season of God's silence in order to understand what it is to trust in him no matter the circumstance you may find yourself in. God's silence was not easy, but I managed to trust in him by praying,

reading stories in the bible that related to my situation, and having the time to evaluate and write down every emotion and thought rushing through my body. It is not easy to walk away from the brothers and sisters you grew up knowing, the ones you shared laughs with, the ones who helped you come closer to God, the ones that you consider almost your family. To enter somewhere new where there's no memories attached to that individual, a fresh new face with other expectations, and a new soul connecting with yours.

I will confess I was stressed, frustrated, and in need of filling a void. I felt the need to recruit my old unhealthy habits. However, I knew it wasn't the right thing to do and I knew that I didn't want to disappoint my God in any way. The stress was eating me inside and out. I was constantly in a very moody mood. I felt the need to talk to someone, but at the same time I didn't want anyone's help because I knew I could handle it. I never was one to seek help when things got tough and of course that made it harder for me because I wasn't expressing my feelings. Instead, I was suppressing them and forgot that this battle was not mine, but Jesus.

One thing that spoke to my soul profoundly was in Chapter 14 when it said "Simply turn away from evil and draw nearer to God". Yes, I know it is easier said than done, but what choice do we really have? As Christians we know right from wrong, what is evil and what is good. Especially, we know what comes with drawing away from God. Nothing good really comes out of pulling away and not letting God handle it first. At the end it's better to have wisdom, then none at all. It's better to know a God, then to not know one. It's better to have a caring father who loves us unconditionally, then to not have one. It's better to have a relationship with God,

then to not have one at all. Knowing good from evil is better, then going into things blindly without warning. It's better to know, then to crash into the unexpected.

All I can say is that I'm ready for the new change in my life. The blessings after the torment is God's way of glorifying himself in my life. So I thank him. I thank him because Jesus knows best. Jesus knows I am a strong soldier and he knows my heart overall. I thank him because he is loyal and never fails on the just. Also should I remind you this is not my battle, this is Jesus's battle and that is all.