

**EXERCISES TO STRENGTHEN CONNECTION TO GOD**  
***Your Spiritual Temperament and Moving Toward God, Part 4***  
**Mark 1:35**

*“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”*  
Mark 1:35 (NIV)

**LEARNING FROM THE BIBLICAL “ASCETIC”:**

**1. NOTICE THE ASCETIC IN BIBLICAL WORSHIP**

**A. Solitude**

*“Immediately the Holy Spirit compelled Jesus to go into the wilderness. He was there for forty days ....”* Mark 1:12-13a (NLT)

*“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”*  
Mark 1:35 (NIV)

**B. Austerity**

*“But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.”* Luke 5:16 (NAS)

**C. Strictness**

*“Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.’”*  
Matthew 16:24 (NIV)

**2. SOME PRACTICES OF ASCETICS:**

**A. The Night Watch**

*“Behold, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who by night stand in the house of the Lord! Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.”* Psalm 134:1-2 (NKJ)

**B. Fasting**

*“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast ....”* Matthew 6:16-17 (NIV)

**C. Obeying**

*“Jesus replied, ‘If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching ....’”*  
John 14:23 (NIV)

*“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.”* Romans 13:1 (RSV)

**D. Living simply**

*“... O Lord ..., give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.”* Proverbs 30:7-9 (NIV)

**3. AVOID THE TEMPTATIONS OF THE ASCETIC**

*“The Pharisees ... heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. He said to them, ‘You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts.’”* Luke 16:14-15 (NIV)

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*“[Jesus] said to them, ‘Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place ....’”* Mark 6:31 (NIV)