

Sharpening the Soul

From spiritual dullness to clarity

Time:

10-15 minutes

Focus:

Awareness, Growth, God's Word

Scriptures

Hebrews 5:11-14

2 Peter 1:9

Psalm 36:2-3

Jeremiah 8:12

Revelation 3:17

Matthew 13:15

Psalm 139:23-24

Proverbs 28:13

1 John 1:6-7

Ephesians 4:15

Proverbs 27:17

Psalm 119:37

Proverbs 25:26

1 Corinthians 5:6

1 Corinthians 14:1

Parking lot

Write down distracting thoughts here:

Settle in

Take a deep breath. Turn off notifications on your phone if you can. Ask God to open your eyes to where you need sharpening so that you can be closer to him.

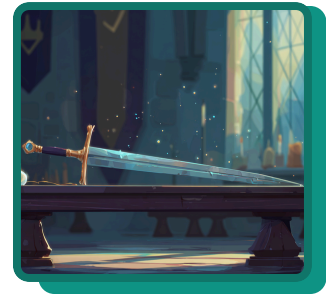
Thought starter

Spiritual dullness is a quiet danger. It creeps over our hearts and makes us unresponsive to God's Word. It blinds us to our need for him, keeping us stuck.

But we don't have to let dullness conquer us. We can keep our hearts tender and sensitive to God through emotional honesty and spiritually sharpening relationships. The result is a growing faith that will make a positive impact on people around us.

Here's what we'll learn in this Quick Quiet Time:

- We grow by listening to God.
- We stay sharp when we are honest about our hearts.
- We sharpen each other when we're honest with one another out of love.



The warning: Beware of spiritual dullness.

Hebrews 5:11-14 NLT

There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull and don't seem to listen. [12] You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. [13] For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn't know how to do what is right. [14] Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.

 **Truth bomb:** We stop growing because we stop listening.

- Spiritual dullness happens when we stop responding to God's Word and settle for "milk" (immaturity and superficiality) instead of "solid food" (maturity and depth).



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Notes:

 **Definition time: What is spiritual dullness?**

“Dullness” means lacking in force, intensity, or sharpness. When we are spiritually dull, we don’t clearly understand spiritual truths about God, ourselves, or others. Our faith feels sluggish and slow.

 **Metaphor moment:**

A blade that isn’t sharpened slowly loses its edge. When we do not allow God’s Word to sharpen our spiritual senses and tell us the truth about ourselves, we lose our edge spiritually. We don’t feel effective at helping ourselves be close to God or helping others.

 **The danger zone: A dull heart is a blind heart.****2 Peter 1:9 NLT**

But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins.

Psalm 36:2-3 NCV

They think too much of themselves so they don't see their sin and hate it. [3] Their words are wicked lies; they are no longer wise or good.

Jeremiah 8:12 NCV

“They should be ashamed of the terrible way they act, but they are not ashamed at all. They don't even know how to blush about their sins ...”

Revelation 3:17 NLT

“You say, ‘I am rich. I have everything I want. I don't need a thing!’ And you don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.”

Matthew 13:15 Voice

The people's hearts have turned to flab; their ears are clogged; their eyes are shut. They will try to see, but they will not see; they will try to hear, but they will not hear; they will try to understand, but they will not comprehend. If they, with their blindness and deafness, so choose, then I will heal them.

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Notes:

 **Truth bomb:** An unchecked heart numbs its "spiritual nerves."

- We become spiritually blind when we no longer want to see the truth about our needs, our sins, and the condition of our hearts.
- When we are spiritually blind, we become unable to detect sin, hate evil, or feel the healthy sting of conviction.

 **Metaphor moment:**

A blind heart is like a house with all the lights turned off. Everything that is dangerous is still there, but we can't see any of it, so we walk straight into things without seeing them coming.

 **Reflect**

- In what area of my life have I become "spiritually flabby"—choosing the path of least resistance rather than the discipline of righteousness?
- Is there a specific sin or habit in my life that used to bother my conscience, but now feels "normal" or easily justifiable?

 **The remedy: Emotional honesty keeps us spiritually sharp.**

Psalm 139:23-24 NLT


Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. [24] Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

Proverbs 28:13 NLT

People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.

1 John 1:6-7 NCV

So if we say we have fellowship with God, but we continue living in darkness, we are liars and do not follow the truth. [7] But if we live in the light, as God is in the light, we can share fellowship with each other. Then the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses us from every sin.

 **Truth bomb:** Hiding sin doesn't just distance us from God; it hardens us.

- Concealment hardens the soul, making the heart dull, rigid, and unresponsive.
- Honest, humble confession keeps the heart soft.
- It keeps us receptive to God's voice and sensitive to his leading. Our spiritual senses become clear and sharp.
- This openness restores fellowship—both with God and one another.
- And in that place of light, God brings cleansing and renews us from the inside out.

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Notes:

 **Metaphor moment:**

Emotional honesty is like opening the windows of a long-shut room. Fresh air rushes in, the dust is exposed, and the space becomes livable again.

Confession is not a burden. Emotional honesty is a necessary breath of relief. When we “open the windows” of the soul, fresh light and air make life livable again.

 **Reflect**


- When was the last time I asked God (or a trusted friend) to point out a "blind spot" in my character, and how did I react to the answer?

 **The growth culture: Truth in love keeps our friendships sharp.****Ephesians 4:15 NLT**

Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

Proverbs 27:17 ERV

As one piece of iron sharpens another, so friends keep each other sharp.

 **Truth bomb:** Truth + love sharpens the soul toward maturity.

- Truth without love becomes a weapon that wounds. Love without truth misleads. We need both love and truth in our relationships to experience growth.
- God is love ([1 John 4:8](#)). Being emotionally honest with God is the prerequisite to speaking the truth in love to other people.

 **Metaphor moment:**

Truth in love is a lantern on a dark path. Its light shows the way forward without blinding those who walk beside us.

 **Respond**

Who has the standing permission to “speak truth” into my life even when it hurts, and when was the last time I invited them to do it?

 **Staying spiritually sharp: A checklist**

Invite the search: Ask God daily to reveal anything you are hiding from yourself and others (Psalm 139).

Confess fast: Don't let sin sit in your heart; the longer it stays, the more it numbs your conscience and heart.

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Notes:

Kill rationalization: Don't make excuses for "small" sins; they are the ones that dull the blade.

Welcome correction: Stay close to people who love you enough to tell you hard truths (Hebrews 3:13).

Protect your sensitivity: If you stop feeling grieved by things that break God's heart, you are in the danger zone.

Additional scriptures:**Psalm 119:37 AMP**

Turn my eyes away from vanity [all those worldly, meaningless things that distract-let Your priorities be mine], And restore me [with renewed energy] in Your ways.

Proverbs 25:26 AMP

Like a muddied fountain and a polluted spring Is a righteous man who yields and compromises his integrity before the wicked.

1 Corinthians 5:6 TPT

Boasting over your tolerance of sin is inappropriate. Don't you understand that even a small compromise with sin permeates the entire fellowship, just as a little leaven permeates a batch of dough?

1 Corinthians 14:1 NLT

Let love be your highest goal!

**Humor break!**

Why did the writer sharpen his pencil?
He wanted to get his point across.

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