

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

“TO USE GOOD THINGS TO OUR OWN ENDS IS ALWAYS THE SIGN OF FALSE RELIGION.”
– RICHARD FOSTER

Bible Intake (Study, Hearing, Reading, Memorizing) - If we would know God and be Godly, we must know the Word of God intimately.

“Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.” –Jerome, an early church scholar

Celebration - Carefree festivity with a sense of Thanksgiving, because of the joy brought through obedience.

"The Christian should be an alleluia from head to foot!" - Augustine of Hippo

Chastity - Personal integrity, restraint and simplicity in design or expression.

"Much of the modern resistance to chastity comes from men's belief that they 'own' their bodies - those vast and perilous estates, pulsating with the energy that made the worlds, in which they find themselves without their consent and from which they are ejected at the pleasure of Another!" –C.S. Lewis

Confession - Revealing and acknowledging shortcomings and failures to God and others. A means of healing and transforming, part of the redemptive process.

"The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works." - Augustine of Hippo

Evangelism - The winning of personal commitments to Christ, with a crusading zeal.

"If I never won souls, I would sigh till I did. I would break my heart over them if I could not break their hearts." - C.H. Spurgeon

“It does not take a perfect church to introduce a man to the perfect Christ.” -Richard Woodsome

Fasting - Voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes. Fasting reveals the things that control us, and helps us keep our balance in life.

"Self-indulgence is the enemy of gratitude, and self-discipline usually its friend and generator."
-Cornelius Plantinga, Jr.

Fellowship - Belonging to each other in a relationship because we share together the common life and enabling grace of Jesus Christ.

“Though I know intellectually how vulnerable I am to pride and power, I am the last one to know when I succumb to their seduction. That's why spiritual Lone Rangers are so dangerous - and why we must depend on trusted brothers and sisters who love us enough to tell us the truth.” -Charles (Chuck) Colson

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Journaling - A record of experiences, ideas, or reflections kept regularly for private use.

"We teach ourselves the significance of learning by demonstrating to ourselves that cogent, biblical thinking is worth writing down."

–Jim Elliff, founder of Christian Communicators Worldwide

Meditation - Not emptying your mind, but filling it with God and His Word, so Scripture saturates your thinking and conversation.

"The reason we come away so cold from reading the Word is because we do not warm ourselves at the fire of meditation." - Thomas Watson

Prayer - Communion with God. Involves adoration, thanksgiving, petition, an awareness of need, a sense of God's nearness.

"Pray as you think...thank God for and pray about everything that strikes you powerfully." - John Owen

Sacrifice - An act of offering something precious; destruction or surrender of something for the sake of something else.

"If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him."

– C.T. Studd

Secrecy - Not allowing anyone to know of the deeds you do or money you give in order to avoid acting for the wrong motivations.

A few questions to consider:

"Do I ever feel disappointed when nobody notices my efforts?

Do I ever get upset when someone else gets the credit for my idea?

Do I ever find myself doing something so someone will think more highly of me?

Do I ever sulk when my past achievements are forgotten or ignored?

Do I ever get upset when no one says, "Thank you?"

Do I ever share sensitive information about someone else to make myself look better?"

Service - Hard work and using spiritual gifts, which every Christian is expected to do, through the motivations of obedience, gratitude, gladness, forgiveness, humility, and love.

"You are expected to serve and gifted to serve, but are you WILLING to serve?" - Donald Whitney

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Silence - The absence of speech in order to learn; it involves the act of listening closely.

"It is easier to be silent altogether than to speak with moderation." - Thomas a Kempis.

Solitude - Being settled in inner and outer aloneness with the Lord without distraction. This can set us free from loneliness and fear.

"Loneliness is inner emptiness. Solitude is inner fulfillment." -Richard J. Foster

“In the regular practice of solitude, God's...love and presence becomes the bedrock of my being, the unshakeable foundation of my true identity and calling.” –Ruth Haley Barton

Simplicity - Rejecting materialism. Simplicity is an inward reality that results in an outward life-style, and sets us free to receive the provision of God as a gift.

"I am learning that a man can live profoundly without masses of things." - Richard Byrd

Stewardship - The disciplined use of time, money and other resources – because God owns everything you own.

"The question is not, 'How much of my money should I give to God?' but rather, 'How much of God's money should I keep for myself?'"
- Donald Whitney

Submission – Willfully yielding to the Lord, authorities and other believers. Laying down the terrible burden of needing to get our own way.

"A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all." - Martin Luther

Worship - Extravagant respect or admiration for or devotion to an object of esteem.

"The Church is the Church in her worship. Worship is not an optional extra, but is of the very life and essence of the Church. ...Man is never more truly man than when he worships God. He rises to all the heights of human dignity when he worships God, and all God's purpose in Creation and in Redemption are fulfilled in us as together in worship we are renewed in and through Christ, and in the name of Christ we glorify God." -James B. Torrance