

Lesson 4

“Spiritually Disciplined”

Now that you are saved and set free, you are going to find it very important to establish a lifestyle change. There are certain things you must avoid and particular disciplines you must establish in order to make good progress on your journey in the faith.

In the bible, Jesus called his followers “disciples”. The word “disciple” is connected to the same root word for discipline. You could say, “A disciple of Christ is a disciplined follower of Jesus”. As serious high level followers of Jesus we must establish some very key spiritual disciplines in our lives. Daily prayer, bible study, church attendance, giving and worship are all foundational disciplines that every new Christian must learn how to develop.

Below are three Key Spiritual Disciplines that mark the life of a disciple:

1) The Discipline of Daily time with God (Prayer).

Communication is essential to the help of any valuable relationship. So it is in your relationship with God. If you want to grow spiritually, you must devote time to talking to the Lord and learning how to listen as He speaks to you.

a) Why do you need a daily time with God?

- i) It will help you grow in your relationship with God.
- ii) It will help you express your love and commitment to God.
- iii) It will help you receive direction and guidance.
- iv) It will help you get equipped for the day.

(1) In the secret place of prayer, you can receive from God that which you need in order to do His will for each day.

(2) In His presence, you draw strength, courage, and insight. Without His presence, you are left to your own feeble devices to manage your life

v) It will encourage your heart and help you renew your mind (Ro. 12:1-3).

vi) It will cause you to grow in spiritual maturity.

(1) An effective, fruitful quiet time will help you to grow because you will be receiving spiritual food, or nourishment, from God.

(2) To neglect your quiet time is like neglecting to feed your physical body. In both instances, a lack of nourishment will weaken you and can leave you vulnerable to the Satan, the enemy of your faith.

b) There are two main parts of a quiet time with God.

i) Prayer is the first part. Prayer is you speaking to God.

ii) The Word of God is the second part. The word is one of the ways God speaks to you.

(1) His Word is "a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (*Psalms 119:105 KJV*).

(2) The Word speaks to your heart concerning actions, motives, and attitudes and will challenge you continually to grow in your relationship with God.

c) Here are some more helpful prayer tips.

i) Choose a place that is quiet and free from distractions (Matt. 6:6; 14:23).

ii) Choose a definite time.

iii) Start your time of prayer with thanksgiving and praise.

iv) Confess any sin or unforgiving attitude that the Holy Spirit brings to your attention.

v) Ask God for the things you need personally (Phil. 4:19; 2 Pet. 1:3; Matt. 6:33; 1 John 5:14-15)

vi) Pray for others and not just yourself.

vii) Always remember to pray in faith (Mark 11:22-24).

viii) Be sure to offer thanks to God for hearing your prayer.

ix) Leave time for God to speak to you personally.

2) The Discipline of Reading the Bible

Jesus answered and said, "it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4 NKJV)

A person cannot live without food and water, as both are required for healthy physical life. Spiritual life is no different; if you don't regularly feed from God's living bread of life, His Word, you will starve to death spiritually. Jesus said that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from God's mouth. When Jesus made this statement, He was being tempted by the devil. He successfully overcame the temptation, however, not by exerting pure willpower, but by exercising faith and trust in God's Word. As you feast daily from God's Word, you will find the nourishment you need on your journey of faith.

Helpful Tips for reading your Bible:

- a) Ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher or counselor, so that you can learn the will and ways of God (John 16:13–14; Psalms 119:18).
- b) Receive and believe what God is saying to you through the Bible (Hebrews 3:7–8; 4:1–2), for faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17).
- c) Speak Scriptures out loud to God, to yourself, and to Satan!
- d) Meditate on the Word continually (Proverbs 4:20–23; Joshua 1:8).
- e) Respond to what you read in the word by putting it into practice (James 1:23–25).
- f) Write down what God has impressed on your heart in a personal journal.
- g) Memorize verses of Scripture.

3) The Discipline of Church Attendance

Acts 2:46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts

When you were saved, you were born into the family of God. Christianity is a religion of fellowship and connectedness. We all serve Jesus better together. Going to church is a valued discipline because when we assemble together, the Holy Spirit connects us in life-giving relationships.

Hebrews 10:24,25 "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another..."

a) Christians possess a fellowship of the Spirit.

i) Fellowship brings fruitfulness. We serve better together!

ii) Fellowship provides spiritual equipping (1Peter 4:10-11).

(1) There are many areas in your Christian life where you cannot function properly without the fellowship of other believers.

(2) The Holy Spirit moves to bring unity in the body of Christ, and He gives gifts as they are needed to build up and keep the body whole.

iii) Fellowship provides safety.

(1) Within the local church congregation, you receive pastoral oversight from the senior pastor, staff pastors, and spiritual mentors. "Their work is to watch over your souls, and they know they are accountable to God" (Heb. 13:17 NLT).

(2) In addition to receiving pastoral oversight, here you will be placed in a life giving relationship with a Discipleship Coach. It is their job to help you learn how to enjoy your journey into the abundant life of Christ (John 10:10).

b) Twelve healthy attitudes toward others in the body of Christ.

i) Love one another (John 13:34–35; 15:12, 17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:18; 4:7, 11–12).

ii) Encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18; Hebrews 3:13; 10:25).

iii) Edify one another (Romans 14:19).

iv) Admonish one another (Colossians 3:16).

- v) Serve one another (Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 4:10)
- vi) Bear with one another (Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13).
- vii) Forgive one another (Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13).
- viii) Be kind to one another (Ephesians 4:32).
- ix) Be compassionate to one another (Ephesians 4:32; 1 Peter 3:8).
- x) Accept one another (Romans 15:7).
- xi) Pray for one another (James 5:16).
- xii) Carry one another's burdens (Galatians. 6:2).