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Spiritual Disciplines

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What is Spiritual Discipline?

1. Discipline is defined as "training expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behavior."
 - Discipline is not part of the sin nature, but it is a natural component of the Christian life.
 - Nothing of any significance in our lives is ever accomplished without it.
2. Spiritual disciplines can be described as those behaviors that augment our spiritual growth and enable us to grow to spiritual maturity.
3. When does the process begin?
 - This process of spiritual growth and development begins to take place the moment a person encounters the risen Christ and comes to Him for salvation.
4. What the purpose of spiritual discipline?
 - The purpose of spiritual discipline is the development of our inner being, that which has been transformed by Christ at salvation.

(2 Corinthians 5:17) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

- Redeemed believers have experienced the total renewal of the whole person from within, involving differences in thought, feeling and character that may be slower to be evident in our outward behavior.
- This is what Paul had in mind when he spoke of taking off the "old self" and putting on the new, "which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator".

(Colossians 3:9–10) ⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

5. How do we avoid the error of understanding spiritual disciplines?
 - The best way to avoid error in the understanding of spiritual disciplines is to stick with clear scriptural mandates given to all Christians to immerse ourselves in the Word of God wherein God speaks to us, and in prayer, whereby we speak to Him.
6. How do we begin to create Spiritual Disciplines?
 - Spiritual Disciplines being by involving the Word of God and the reading, study, memorization, and meditation of Scripture.
7. What if we do follow the previous instructions?

- If this discipline is neglected, no other effort to discipline ourselves will be successful because we simply do not have the power to overcome the resistance of the sin nature in which our new natures reside.
- Nor do we have the power to overcome the resistance of demonic influences whose aim is always to separate us from the only means of spiritual growth, the Word of God.
- We must begin any effort at spiritual discipline with the only source of power, the Word of God.

8. How important is Scripture memorization?

- Scripture memorization is also essential.
- We always have the freedom to choose what we place in our minds. With that in mind, memorization is vital.
- If we truly believe that the Bible is the Word of God, how can we not memorize it?
- Memorization enables us to keep it constantly in the forefront of our minds, and that makes it possible to react to all life circumstances.

9. What Scripture can we use to teach the necessity of Memorization?

One of the most powerful passages of Scripture regarding the necessity of memorization is found in [Joshua 1:8](#):

[\(Joshua 1:8\)](#) ⁸ Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

- It is through the discipline of memorization that we are enabled to pray more effectively and to meditate.
- This in turn enables us to “be prosperous and successful” as God defines “**success**” for us.
- When we are walking in His ways and in His will, we are imbued with a new Spirit-filled inner being, one with a heart like God’s.

10. How important is it to have the spiritual discipline of prayer.

- The second discipline is that of prayer. Our prayers are a spiritual communion with God through means of thanksgiving, adoration, supplication, petition, and confession.
- The wonderful thing about prayer is that God meets us where we are.

- He comes alongside us to lead us into a deeper, more real relationship with Him, not motivated by guilt, but driven by His love. Prayer changes us.
- Prayer changes lives. Prayer changes history.

11. What makes us want to be like God?

- Our knowing God really makes us want to conform to Jesus and His will for our lives.
- God slowly and graciously reveals Himself to us while we pray, and it is during those moments that we can more deeply understand and experience His love.

12. What's the outcome of discipline in prayer?

- One of the major outcomes of disciplined prayer is answered prayer. But, in all truth, that is secondary to the real purpose of prayer, which is an ever-growing, unending communion with God.

Conclusion:

Taken together, the spiritual disciplines of prayer and the Word will provide us with a rewarding program which will lead to godly living, praise, submission, service and celebration of our salvation and the God who provided it. Through these disciplines, we are enabled to obey God's command to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

(Philippians 2:12–13)

Do Everything Without Grumbling

¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.