

Day 16 - Spiritual Disciplines

John Mark Comer, in his book, Practicing the Way, writes, “Formation into the image of Jesus isn’t something we do as much as it’s something that is done to us, by God Himself, as we yield to His work of transforming grace. Our job is mostly to make ourselves available.” Making ourselves available to God and His forming work, we must have margin and space in our lives. Sunday mornings are a great place to start, but we must also carve out time in our daily lives for God to work in our hearts and minds.

Where is there space in your daily life that you can make available for God to continue His work of transforming you into someone who looks more and more like Jesus?

Our focus scripture for today is 1 Timothy 4:7–10

”⁷ ... Rather, train yourself in godliness. ⁸ For the training of the body has limited benefit, but godliness is beneficial in every way, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. ⁹ This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance. ¹⁰ For this reason we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.”

For thousands of years, the church has utilized spiritual disciplines or practices as one way to make ourselves available to God. These include practices such as Sabbath, prayer, fasting, solitude, generosity, scripture reading, community, and serving. For example, setting aside a day for you individually or for your family to Sabbath together can be a powerful way to delight in God and make space for Him to speak to you. Spending time fasting allows you to incorporate your body into your spiritual practice by experiencing physical hunger that highlights your spiritual hunger and dependence on God.

These are examples of the many ways we can utilize spiritual disciplines to create margin in our lives for God to do His work of transformation in us. Again, it is not the disciplines themselves that do the work; it is being with Jesus as we do the practices that will transform us.

Pause to ask God to reveal a way you can incorporate a spiritual discipline you don’t already practice into your everyday life. It could be Sabbath, prayer, fasting, solitude, generosity, scripture reading, spending time in community, serving, or something else that God reveals to you.

As an invitation to a spiritual practice—a way to say “yes, Lord,” take the practice God revealed to you during the pause and intentionally schedule it into your life. Put it on your or your family’s calendar for the next week. If you feel stuck, reach out for help to the church staff, a trusted leader, or an encouraging friend.

Prepare to walk with God into the day before us, listen to the words of Paul’s prayer in Colossians 1 verses 9-12 that we pray over you now:

We ask God that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

Father, help us discern where you are leading us as a church - making Your invitation clear.

Jesus, help us become worshipers, friends, apprentices, and guides who live as disciple-makers in all areas of our everyday.

Spirit, help us become a disciple-making hub, loving the lost and proclaiming Jesus in all we do and say so our communities will flourish.