

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

Now that you know a little more about your Spiritual Gifts from last weeks session, and what you might be good at. If you want to get better at something (gifts included) in your life, what is something you need? Answer: Discipline.

- Define the word "Discipline": Means to train or develop by instruction and exercise especially in self control. Discipline is training that corrects, molds, fine tunes or perfects mental faculties or moral character. (NOTICE THE WORD "DISCIPLE" IS PRETTY MUCH IN IT. You know what a disciple is, and you know that that calls for discipline.)

This leads us to the word "Spiritual Discipline".

- What do think that means? DEFINITION: A Spiritual Discipline is basically a good habit that allows you to remain open to God and develop yourself spiritually.

As Lutherans, our faith develops over time. Spiritual disciplines are there to help us become stronger in faith. Unlike the spiritual gifts, which are provided by the Holy Spirit, spiritual disciplines are more like finely honed tools that aid us in our spiritual walks. Each of the spiritual disciplines takes time to develop and effort to incorporate into our daily lives.

- How do they work? Discipline is one of the hardest things for us to learn. Think of the best athletes, most of them have a strong sense of discipline, because they have to build up strength, endurance, and skill to be good at their craft. Likewise, surgeons spend years developing their skills and learning the human body so that they are able to skillfully fix what is malfunctioning in the body. That is what spiritual disciplines are to our faith. They exercise our spirit, mind, and emotions so that we become closer to God. They help us see his will for our lives more clearly so that we can live the life that he desires for us. The more we practice disciplines, the better we get at them, and the stronger we make our faith.

STUDENTS: DO THE FOLLOWING

- Now, using the definition for "Spiritual Discipline" and knowing how they work, grab a pen and paper and list any spiritual disciplines that you can think of. (If you are still struggling to come up with some, here are some examples. But if you use some of these, i want you to think of a few others I didn't list.

Some examples that I thought of are:

- * Prayer (probably the most obvious to everyone)
- * Worship
- * Evangelism (Spreading the word)
- * Serving Others
- * Fasting
- * Silence & Solitude (Meditation)
- * Journaling
- * Learning (Reading scripture)

Add to these. Really write down a good list.

STUDENTS: SHARE YOUR LIST WITH A PARENT

- Once you develop your table list, ask the following questions:

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING WITH A PARENT (And have them share to, based on your list :)

- Which of the disciplines you listed are you best at doing? Why is that the case?
- Which do you struggle with most? Why is it so hard?
- What ones do you wish that you were better at? Any? All?
- What do you feel are the most important ones? What is #1 to you?
- Talk about someone you know who is good at a spiritual discipline? Which one? What makes them good at it?
- Think of, and share, an example from your own life where you have had to use one or more spiritual disciplines?

STUDENTS: PLEASE LOOK UP "1 TIMOTHY 4:7-8" IN YOUR BIBLE AND READ IT TO YOURSELF

Read it twice, so you really focus in on what its saying.

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- What is this verse all about?
- What does it say about discipline?

Remember that, by practicing spiritual disciplines we also keep our eyes on God more often (just like you just read about in the 1 Timothy passage). When we focus on God, we stop letting other things get in our way or cloud our vision. Our lives find a better clarity when we become more disciplined in our faith.

STUDENTS: DO THIS THIS WEEK

Encourage yourself to really try to work on one spiritual discipline from your list that you want to get better at, as well as, keep up with the ones that they are already good at so they become stronger.

**PLEASE EMAIL ME BACK ONCE YOU'VE COMPLETED THIS LESSON,
SO I CAN RECORD YOUR PARTICIPATION!!**