

DISCIPLINES OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

June 6th, 2021

Week 8: Service

Scripture: 2 Cor. 5:15; Matt. 25:31–40

When we discipline our heart, soul, and mind, we grow in God's grace. This transformational process takes practice. When we work at these spiritual disciplines, we can experience peace, joy, and freedom through Christ. This week, Lead Pastor Christian Andrews Javy Diaz from World Vision talked about the discipline of service.

Definitions:

Jesus came to show his followers what it means to truly live. His example of serving others shows us the life God wants for us, carrying out his mission to restore the world. This Sunday, we have a unique opportunity to partner with World Vision and make a lasting difference in the lives of over 100 children and families in Honduras.

Introduction Questions

1. Silly Question: Would you rather have unlimited plane trips for the rest of your life or unlimited gas for your car?
2. Have you ever gone on a missions trip or travelled internationally to a developing nation? What was that like?
3. Follow-up from last week: How did thinking about simplicity shape your last week?
4. Javy shared a story about how his church community came alongside him in a really hard time. Have you ever had someone or a community come alongside of you when you were in need? What was this like?

Scripture Study Questions: Have someone read Matthew 25:31–40

1. What comes up when you read this?
2. Who receives eternal life in this story? Why?
3. How does this mesh with our understanding of salvation through faith in Jesus alone? Discuss.

Simplicity Questions

1. Javy said that God calls us to both “restore broken circumstances” and “affirm inherent dignity.” Which one do you naturally gravitate working toward? Why?
2. Even though God calls *us* to restore broken circumstances, why do you think it is easy to think, “I’ll let someone else do it?”
3. What broken circumstances do you see in the world around you that you feel drawn to restore?
4. How do we affirm the inherent dignity of someone else?
5. Whom is God calling you to serve?

Challenge:

1. Sponsor a child through World Vision!

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RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Below are some curated resources from the Renaissance Church staff that have been helpful in our journey through studying and growing in spiritual disciplines. These are just a few of the resources out there! To find more, check the bibliography and endnotes of each resource. That is where the true gold is found!

Spiritual Disciplines:

- *Celebration of Discipline*, by Richard J. Foster
- *Sacred Rhythms*, by Ruth Haley Barton
- *The Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun

Prayer:

- *Discovering How to Pray*, by Hope MacDonald
- *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*, by Richard J. Foster

Study:

- *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart
- *How to Read the Bible Book-by-Book*, by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart
- The BibleProject: This has great scripture study resources and is produced by a great scholar and pastor in Portland, OR. Helpful for setting the context, diving into specific passages, and providing personal encouragement.
bibleproject.com

Solitude:

- *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, by John Mark Comer
- *Silence and Solitude* by Ruth Haley Barton

Guidance:

- *Soul Friend*, Kenneth Leech— provides a great overview of Spiritual Direction and the links to psychology
- *The Dark Night of the Soul*, St. John of the Cross—a classic on the spiritual life showing God's guidance and teaching in the experience of stillness and quiet

Worship

- *Wholeness in Worship*, Thomas and Sharon Neuffer Emswiler
- *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*, Eugene H. Peterson presents the core tenants of a life of a Christian disciple.

Confession

- *Celebration of Discipline*, chapter 10, by Richard Foster
- *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* by Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert.

Simplicity

- *Freedom of Simplicity: Finding Harmony in a Complex World*. By Richard J. Foster
- *The Wisdom Pyramid* by Brett McCracken
- *Be the Parent, Please: Stop Banning Seesaws and Start Banning Snapchat: Strategies for Solving the Real Parenting Problems*. By Naomi Scheafer Riley
- *An Experimental Mutiny Against Excess* By, Jen Hatmaker