

Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Faith (CM2)

***Lecture 8 – Devotional Life**

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Building Your Devotional Life

What is a “Devotional Life?”

The practice of the spiritual disciplines (especially Bible study, prayer and meditation) that is centered on God and is intended to improve our relationship with God, and to make us more aware and responsive to God’s leading in our lives.

Principles of a Devotional Life

1. We are made for fellowship with God, and “our hearts are restless until they rest in Him.”
2. Fellowship with God – like with any person – requires effort. We must be willing to spend time together, talk, listen, interact and respond.
3. A devotional life is more than just Bible study – though hearing God in Scripture is foundational.
4. In addition to Bible reading and study, a meaningful devotional life also must include prayer, meditation, fasting, silence and solitude, service and stewardship.

Practical Elements for a Devotional Life

1. Making the Commitment

- Breaking an old habit takes 21 days; creating a new habit takes 21 days; so moving from NOT having a personal devotional life to HAVING a productive devotional life may take you 42 days!

2. Establishing your priorities

- Write down in one paragraph what you want from a personal devotional life; and then write down what you think GOD wants for you in your devotional life.

3. Finding the time.

- Anything you value must be giving priority. Set aside time to commit to growing your devotional time, schedule it and keep it. (SBL)

Practical Elements for a Devotional Life

4. Finding a place

- Anyplace quiet and private will do; but find a set and regular place.

5. Making a plan

- Bible reading and study plan; prayer list – focusing on God and your growth in Him, not numbers!

6. Overcoming obstacles

- Interruptions, distractions, noise, frustrations, lack of family support, no sense of fulfillment at first...

7. Keeping a record

- Journaling is one of the most powerful ways to grow; try “journaling in both directions.”

Realities of a Devotional Life

1. Start with modest expectations.
2. There will be obstacles.
3. It will sometimes feel like hard work.
4. Your goals should include moving from reading or even studying the Bible to hearing God's voice in Scripture and interacting with it.
5. Plan your devotional like in terms of "Daily" and "Weekly" commitments.
6. Don't forget to pray! (ACTS) (*Try praying out loud.*)
7. Learn to worship God (praise & adoration).
8. Learn to listen.
9. Learn to appreciate silence.
10. Learn the power of keeping a written journal.
11. Seek to grow in the disciplines of fasting, silence, solitude, service and stewardship.