**What You Should Know from CM2- Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Faith**

Lakeside Institute of Theology

1. What is meant by the “Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Faith?”
   1. The Christian spiritual disciplines are the personal and corporate practices that bring us back to God, in ways that promote our spiritual growth, increase our godliness and lead us into lives filed by the presence of the Holy Spirit of God.
2. What is the critical question we most seek to answer through the spiritual disciplines?
   1. How does one live the Spirit-filled life promised by Jesus in the New Testament?

1. What are some of the traditional spiritual disciplines?
   1. Bible Study
   2. Meditation
   3. Prayer
   4. Fasting
   5. Silence
   6. Solitude
   7. Simplicity
   8. Service
   9. Stewardship
   10. Confession
2. What are the four aspects of “Scripture intake?”
   1. Receiving God’s Word, by hearing and reading
   2. Meditating on God’s Word (“What is God saying to me?”)
   3. Studying God’s Word (Observation, Interpretation, Meditation, Application)
   4. Memorizing God’s Word
3. What are the four key steps to effective Bible study?
   1. Set aside regular time for studying your Bible.
   2. Pray before and after Bible study.
   3. Write down your thoughts, observations, interpretations, questions, etc.
   4. Have the right tools to study the Bible effectively (especially a good study Bible).
4. On what four things – in descending order of authority – do we base our faith?
   1. God’s revelation in Scripture.
   2. God’s revelation to His Church down through history.
   3. God’s revelation in the world (“general revelation”).
   4. God revelation to individual people.
5. What do we believe about the Bible?
   1. It is **revealed**. (Jeremiah 30:2-3)
   2. It is **inspired**. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
   3. It is **authoritative**. (1 Corinthians 15:3-5)
   4. It is **living**. (Hebrews 4:12)
6. What is “fasting” as it refers to a spiritual discipline?
   1. To voluntarily abstain for a period of time from any practice or experience that we would ordinarily participate in, for the purpose of spiritual growth – though the word is most often applied to abstaining from food, or drink, or both.
7. Under what circumstances does the Bible record people fasting?
   1. At times of repentance
   2. At times of mourning
   3. At times of great need
   4. To seek the Lord’s guidance and/or blessing
8. What fundamental spiritual benefit do we receive when we fast?
   1. Fasting confirms our utter dependence on God by finding in Him a source of sustenance beyond food.
9. What is prayer?
10. “An address, as a petition, to God or a god in word or thought.”
11. In a deeper spiritual sense, prayer is relationship; it is intimacy with God. Prayer means to communicate with God in the context of an ongoing, worshipful relationship; to earnestly desire for God to come near and be active in our lives.
12. Prayer means to climb as a child into the lap of God, to relax and enjoy the intimacy of His presence with us.
13. Why do we pray?
    1. Because we NEED to – people pray because we have an inherent sense of need for God and for communion with God.
    2. Because Scripture command it – of the 73 NT references to prayer, almost all are instructions or admonitions to pray *(“And when you pray…”)*
    3. Because it is our strongest weapon against evil and the Devil.
14. Why does prayer often see so HARD?
    1. Because we don’t know what we’re looking for.
    2. Because prayer can be hard work, and we don’t like hard work.
    3. Because there may be something frustrating our efforts to have a prayer life.

1. What are some of the things that can frustrate our efforts to have a meaningful prayer life?
   1. Lack of faith
   2. Unconfessed sin
   3. Bad relationships
   4. Selfishness/lack of giving.
2. When our prayer life becomes an intimate relationship with God, what changes about our prayers?
   1. We get to know the mind of God, knowing more what God wants, so we know what we can and should ask for.
   2. We have more confidence God will answer.
   3. We have more grace to accept God’s answers, even if they are not the answers we wanted.
3. Why is humility important to our lives of faith and prayer?
   1. By definition, faith and prayer require humility: you can’t put your faith in God – and therefore you cannot have a fulfilling prayer life – until you’ve taken your faith off yourself.
4. What does it look like when we learn to pray humbly?
   1. We come to God admitting we don’t know for sure what is best.
   2. We say to God that we know He loves us and wants the best for us.
   3. We tell God that – within our confessed limitations – there still are desires in our heart, and specifically what they are.
   4. We are willing to accept what and how He answers.
   5. We do not become angry at God if He does not give us what we ask for – this is ANTI-FAITH!
5. What are some obstacles to prayer that we have inherited from our Western culture?
   1. Our need to be productive.
   2. Our need to stay busy.
   3. Our own impatience.
   4. Our need for a technique.
6. What is the meaning of *vacare deo*?
   1. Literally, to be “open for God,” or “available for God” – or perhaps even “on vacation for God.” As a spiritual discipline it means to be at leisure for or available to God, to set aside time and commit it to God, for Him to do with that time as He wishes, so that we might grow closer to Him.

1. What do the letters in the A.C.T.S. model of prayer stand for?
   1. Adoration
   2. Confession
   3. Thanksgiving
   4. Supplication
2. What is meant by “silence” as a spiritual discipline?
   1. The discipline of silence is to voluntarily and temporarily refrain from speaking (and perhaps from external noise and distractions as well) so that we might hear God more clearly and grow closer to Him.
3. What is meant by “solitude” as a spiritual discipline?
   1. The discipline of solitude is to voluntarily and temporarily withdraw to privacy that we might grow closer to God.
4. What are some reasons for us to pursue silence and solitude as spiritual disciplines?
   1. To follow the example of Jesus, who practiced periods of silence and solitude throughout his earthly ministry
   2. To hear God’s voice more clearly
   3. To express worship of God
   4. To express faith in God
   5. To seek the Lord’s salvation
   6. To be physically and spiritually restored
   7. To regain spiritual perspective
   8. To seek the will of God
   9. To learn to control our tongues
5. What are some practical ways to begin to practice silence and solitude in our lives?
   1. Look for and reclaim moments of silence throughout our day.
   2. Develop daily time of being alone with God, especially as part of Bible study and prayer.
   3. Find a quiet place to be alone and quiet – at home, at the church or elsewhere – and then plan for regular times of silence and solitude in that place.
   4. Ask God to give us peace about being able to talk less, and when it is appropriate. Try to live for an entire day without talking.
   5. Consider a longer retreat of silence & solitude – a day, weekend, week or longer – at a retreat center or other place where it is possible to be alone and quiet.
6. What is “worship?”
   1. The act of ascribing the proper worth to God (*worth-ship*), to acknowledge that He is worthy of praise, and to approach and address God as worthy of all glory and honor.
7. What are the two primary ways in which we can worship God?
   1. Worshipping Him for Who He is.
   2. Worshipping Him for What He does.
8. When does true worship happen in our lives?
   1. True worship of God happens when we put God first in our lives…
      1. when we intentionally cherish God and value Him above everything else in life;
      2. when what God says matters more than what others say;
      3. when loving God matters more than being loved.
9. What does it mean to “practice the presence of God?”
   1. To recognize that God is always present to us, and to keep ourselves in a habitual, silent, and secret conversation with God.
10. What is meant by “Christian Service?”
    1. Christian Service means to reflect the love of God by doing the work of God with a willing heart, especially in caring for the needs of others.
11. What are three key reasons we need to be of service to others?
    1. People need our help; it’s the compassionate response.
    2. When we help others we are helping Jesus – quite literally! (Matthew 25:35-40)
    3. We NEED to help others for our own sake; it changes us; it makes us more like Jesus. We NEED to serve others in order to be whole ourselves.
12. What is the meaning of “stewardship” as a spiritual discipline?
    1. Christian Stewardship refers to the responsibility Christians have to maintain and use wisely the gifts that God has bestowed, especially by giving back to Christian work that seeks to glorify God and serve people in need.
13. What, according to Scripture, are the two reasons God has entrusted us as stewards of His creation and material resources?
    1. For our enjoyment and benefit, that we might have an abundant life.
    2. So that we might share with those who are in need, whenever they are in need.
14. What are the basic truths on which the discipline of stewardship are based?
    1. God created everything that is, and it all still belongs to Him.
    2. God has chosen us to be caretakers (stewards) of His creation, both for our own enjoyment and benefit, and to share with others.
    3. Since God owns everything, He does not need for us to give in order for His will to be accomplished; but He graciously allows us to be blessed by joining with Him in the working out of His will in the world.