

Basic Disciplines of Believers

Discipline #1: BIBLE SATURATION (Be a Sponge!) – I am filling myself with God's Word

Joshua 1:8 – *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

1. **Bible Reading** – Familiarization – Knowing What the Bible Says
 - **Public Reading** – reading the Bible out loud in a group setting
 - **Personal Reading** – reading the Bible each day for ourselves
2. **Bible Feeding** – Instruction – Learning What the Bible Means
3. **Bible Treasuring** – Memorization – Saving What the Bible Says into My Heart
4. **Bible Deepening** – Meditation – Thinking About What the Bible Says
5. **Bible Keeping** – Application – Doing What the Bible Says

Discipline #2: CONTINUAL PRAYER – I am always talking to God.

Colossians 4:2 – *Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;*

What Does It Mean (& NOT Mean) To Pray?

Praying Is Talking to God (P.A.T.)

What Does It NOT Mean?

- Praying is not repeating empty words. (Matthew 6:7)
- Praying is not telling God something He does not know. (Matthew 6:8)
- Praying is not getting God to do something that He would not otherwise do. We must ask according to His will. (Matt 6:9-10; John 14:13-14; James 4:3; 1 John 5:14)
- Praying is not a way to bypass obedience. (Matt 6:12-13; 1 John 3:22; James 5:16)
- Praying is not getting God to work against the choices that people make for themselves. God will help people, but He will not MAKE someone change his mind. (Rom 1; Col 3:1-4)
- Praying is not two-way communication. Through prayer we talk to God. God talks to us through His Word.

Why Pray?

If God knows everything, and knows our needs before we ask (Matthew 6:8), why should we pray at all?

*We pray because we **can**. | We pray because we **should**. | We pray because others **prayed**. | We pray because of **good**.*

How To Be Praying

Pray secretly (pray to God, not “to” people; pray to be heard by God, not people) Matt 6:5-6

Pray concisely (more words ≠ better praying – use all the words you need, but don’t pad your prayers) Matt 6:7-13

Pray continually (Luke 18:1; Eph 6:18a; 1 Thes 5:17)

Pray persistently (patiently keep asking) Luke 18:2-8

Pray evangelistically (for boldness and opportunity to share the gospel) Eph 6:19-20; Col 4:3-4)

Pray corporately (for others) Eph 6:18

Pray completely (all) Eph 6:18; Phil 4:6

Pray watchfully (alert and aware of what is going on around you, tuned into danger?) Eph 6:18; Col 4:2

Pray thankfully (Phil 4:6; Col 4:2; 1 Thes 5:18)

Pray proactively / confidently (pray first, not as a last resort – Phil 4:6)

Pray knowingly, seriously & soberly (1 Pet 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious & watchful in your prayers.)

What to Pray For: What Did Jesus Pray For? (John 17:14-21)

17:14-15 – *Jesus prayed for our spiritual safety → PROTECTION – That We Each Would STAY PURE*

17:16-17 – *Jesus prayed for our spiritual maturity → SANCTIFICATION – That We Each Would GROW UP*

17:20-21 – *Jesus prayed for our spiritual unity → VALIDATION – That We Each Would WORK TOGETHER*

Praying About Problems: Should Our Prayers Be “Please Take Them Away” or Not?

There Are At Least 5 Reasons For Our Hard & Hurtful Circumstances (Which Change the Way We Are Praying):

1. **We experience problems because of SIN’S CURSE.** [infected with a “naughty” disease?]
2. **We experience problems because of SIN’S CONSEQUENCES.** [punishment – e.g. smoking → lung cancer]
3. **We experience problems because of GOD’S DESIRE TO GROW & CHANGE US.**
4. **We experience problems because of GOD’S DESIRE TO GROW AND CHANGE OTHERS through us.**
5. **We experience problems because of GOD’S DESIRE TO DRAW ATTENTION TO HIMSELF.**

Key Thought: **God Allows Hurt to Grow Us** (Therefore, be praying for God to teach us, not necessarily to get us out of trouble.)

What to Pray for in the Midst of Hard and Hurtful Circumstances. Instead of praying to get OUT of trouble, we should be praying in our hurt and hard times in at least 3 ways: **(1) Pray with an Understanding of Our Sinfulness; (2) Pray in Confession of Our Sin; (3) Pray in Submission to God’s Will**

Discipline #3: Yielded Followership (Submitting to Authority)

What Do You Think of When You Hear the Word “Authority”?

What Do You Think of When You Hear the Word “Submission”?

Who Do These Words Affect, and in What Realms (or Areas) of Life?

Do You Think That God Has Anything To Do With Authority?

Is Submitting to Authority “Christian?” In Other Words, Is It Christ-Like?

Romans 13:1-2

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις ὑποτασσέσθω. οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐξουσία εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ, αἱ δὲ οὖσαι ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι εἰσίν.
² ὥστε ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ διαταγῇ ἀνθέστηκεν, οἱ δὲ ἀνθεστηκότες ἑαυτοῖς κρίμα λήμψονται.

God’s Command (1a):

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities

God’s Connection (1b-2):

God Created Authority (of any kind)

God Appoints Authorities

Nebuchadnezzar

Pontius Pilot

Heb 3:12-13

Therefore

Resisting God’s Authorities = Resisting God Himself

Resisting God’s Authorities → Judgment on Yourself

Jesus’ Example of Submitting to Authority:

To God “not my will by yours” (Matt 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42)

To Pilate “you could have no power at all” (John 19:10-11)

10 Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" 11 Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

To His Abusers (Acts 8:32; 1 Peter 2:11-25)

Questions for You

What authorities are you under?

Which of these are placed over you by God?

Are you yielding to these authorities? (Changes needed?)