



Spiritual Disciplines Toolbox

10 Discovery

“Love the Lord your God with all your . . . mind.”
— Jesus Christ, Matthew 22:37

What are Spiritual Disciplines?

At some point we all get stale, stuck, or start searching for more. Most often all we need is the right tool to break through in our relationship with God. Spiritual disciplines are the biblical tools Christians have been using for centuries to draw closer to God. We use the disciplines because we need help, not because we are so holy. Experiment with the tools to find out what helps you connect with God the best.

What is Discovery all about?

Every human being is born with the amazing capacity to learn. Like sponges, we soak up every touch, every word, and every sight. A believer grows into maturity much like a child becomes an adult. There is the excitement of the first days after being born again when everything is new. Then a desire to know everything there is to know and experience everything there is to experience propels us toward more of God. This is often followed by the awkward stage of self-discovery where there are more questions than answers, and it takes time to find stability. Eventually, a believer reaches spiritual adulthood. But the journey does not stop there. Life only ends when learning stops. Have you ever met the person that has seen a thousand sunsets but it still steals their breath away? The person who keeps learning keeps living.

Just as you cannot drink the ocean dry, you cannot discover all there is about God. There is always more to discover. We are invited to know God (John 17:3), called to seek God as the source of wisdom (Prov. 2:6), urged to chase wisdom for life (Prov. 3:13-18), and to master truth (2 Tim. 2:15) so that we will not be fooled by counterfeits (Acts 17:11), be able to discern the right path (Heb. 5:14) and live meaningful lives bringing glory to God (Prov. 3:4).

Where do I start?

5 Minutes. Try something new for five minutes. Cook a simple meal. Watch a YouTube video on how to fix something. Read one chapter in the Bible. Google a question you never get around to answering. Develop an attitude of curiosity and teachability. See if always learning doesn't lead to better living.

What other ways can I use this tool?

Get the Bible Inside You. If there is one thing every Christian knows they should do but struggles to pull off, it is reading the Bible. Take some of the pressure off by starting where you are at today. You could start with a devotional like *My Utmost for His Highest*. If you have never read the Bible consistently, start by reading for five minutes every day. Pick a small book like Philippians (four chapters) or Ephesians (six chapters) and read through it each week for a month, jotting down notes or highlighting key passages.

Read Christian Literature. You live in a time where there is an unprecedented amount of Christian resources available to you. You not only have scores of versions of the Bible available in your language, but you also have more current and classic works than you could read in a lifetime. When the fire in your soul is burning low, spend some time next to the bonfire of a Christian author. You could read Christian fiction like C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* or Bunyan's allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*. You could be inspired by men and women who walked with God by picking up a Christian biography about Amy Carmichael, Hudson Taylor or Jim Elliot. You could grow tremendously by reading a classic like *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis or something from today like *Not a Fan* by Kyle Idleman.

Harness the Digital for Discovery. Harness the power of the Internet for discovery instead of distraction. Follow great spiritual leaders and apologists on Twitter. Watch videos of debates on YouTube from people like William Lane Craig or Ravi Zacharias. Follow helpful Christian blogs like Tim Challies or Desiring God. You can also listen to insightful Christian communicators like Andy Stanley, Matt Chandler, Chip Ingram, and James McDonald online or via podcast.

Interview. Someone else knows what you need to grow. So ask. Invite someone to coffee or your home and have some questions ready. Let them be the expert. Listen far more than you talk (James 1:19). You will be surprised how much you learn.

“Call to Me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”
— Jeremiah 33:3