



Spiritual Disciplines Toolbox

11 Community

“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you,
in order to bring praise to God.”
— Revelation 5:12

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 Community all about?

You were made in the image of a relational God. You were specifically designed to thrive spiritually when you offer all that God created you to be for the benefit of others, and they do the same in return. It's true that relationships are often some of the greatest sources of pain and frustration in our lives. But the opposite is true as well—God-saturated relationships bring profound joy and transformation to our lives. Loving, intentional community is God's plan for His children (Heb. 3:13).

The Bible overflows with God's vision for intimate communities of believers characterized by loving relationships. So loving, in fact, that these communities reveal God's presence to a watching world (John 13:35). Communities where the enslaved are set free (Gal. 6:1,2), the hurting find comfort (2 Cor. 1:4), the growing continue to grow (1 Thess. 4:1), the weak find strength (1 Thess. 5:14), the needy are healed as the community prays (James 5:16), the discouraged find encouragement, and the one that is in danger of falling away is saved (Heb. 3:13). This is how we were meant to live—in community.

Where do I start?

Get in a Group. Everyone needs a group and someone in a group needs you. So find a group at Parker Hill where you help others as they help you. A community group is where you can build authentic relationships, encourage each other to take next steps, and impact your community. You will grow best in a group. So what are you waiting for?

What other ways can I use this tool?

Open Your Home. Hospitality is a lost art in our independent culture. We eat out, park inside garages, and know very few people beyond the surface level. Inviting someone over is inviting someone into your life. Having someone into your home is an act of loving one another (1 Pet. 4:9). So put your insecurities on the shelf and open the door.

Intercede for Each Other. To “intercede” means that you step in on behalf of someone in difficulty or trouble, that you plead their case. It’s more than just wimpy prayers that God would “just” do His will. James 5:16 explains that normal people can intercede, and awesome things can happen. Are you willing to step between your friend and their pain and intercede?

Shoulder Each Other’s Burdens. Our love is certainly tested when another person’s problem becomes our problem. Talking them through an issue once doesn’t cost us much. When it doesn’t go away easily; are you willing to stick it out and shoulder some of the burden so that your friend won’t be crushed under their load (Gal. 6:1,2)?

Forgive Each Other. Before too long, someone in your community will mess up, and they might not even fess up. As long as you are focused on their screw up, you won’t be able to forgive. But the moment you remember what Jesus has forgiven you, it becomes easier to wholeheartedly forgive and restore the offender. That’s what it means to “Forgive as the Lord forgave you” (Col. 2:13).

Put Each Other First. If you are struggling with someone else in your community, there is a good chance that you are trying to put yourself before the people you are called to serve. Selfishly seeking your pleasure leads to ruin, but selflessly seeking the best for others brings personal joy (Phil. 2:4).

“We come to faith as individuals, but we grow in community.”

— Kenneth Boa