

# Spiritual Discipline Part Two

TheEDGE Academy May 2017

## The Spiritual Disciplines (based on “The Life You’ve Always Wanted” by John Ortberg)

### 4. The Practice of Humility

- a. Being humble means to not be proud, e.g. being vain, stubborn or exclusive.
- b. Being humble means submission to be willing.
- c. Being humble means we accept our appropriate smallness.”

#### Consider:

- *In pairs, blow up a balloon and squeeze it through a rubber band!*

- d. Being humble means we “let God be God” (Luther).

*“You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.*

*Though he was God,*

*he did not think of equality with God*

*as something to cling to.*

*Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;*

*he took the humble position of a slave*

*and was born as a human being.*

*When he appeared in human form,*

*he humbled himself in obedience to God*

*and died a criminal’s death on a cross.”*

*- Philippians 2:5-8*

- e. Suggested ways to practise humility in servanthood:

- Minister to the mundane
- Minister to interruptions
- Embrace our weaknesses and limitations
- Minister by holding our tongues
- Minister by “bearing” with one another

### 5. The Practice of Confession

- a. We don’t usually talk about our sin – for good or bad reasons.
- b. Confession is for our sake – in order to be healed and changed.

- c. Confession helps us to experience the power of forgiveness as a process, not an act.
- d. Confession starts with placing ourselves under God's protection and asking Him for where we need to focus.
- e. Suggested ways to practise confession:
  - Preparation
  - Self-examination: specific, concrete and particular
  - Perception
- f. The results of confession:
  - A new feeling
  - A new promise

## **6. The Practice of Guidance**

- a. Listening to God helps us receive guidance from the Holy Spirit.
- b. "Spiritual mindlessness"
- c. God speaks through:
  - Directing our thoughts
  - Circumstances
  - Words from others
  - The Bible
- d. Suggested ways NOT to practise guidance:
  - Take it as insider guidance
  - Badge of spirituality
  - Being passive
  - Avoid taking risks
- e. Suggested ways to practise guidance:
  - Listen to the Spirit continually
  - Be relentlessly responsive
  - Listen for the Spirit's voice in other's words
  - Practise listening in small matters

## **7. The Practice of Secrecy**

*“But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”*

- Matt 6:3-4

*“The alternative to a life of bondage is living freely with our critics.”*

- Lewis Smede

- a. Jesus never needed to impress others.
- b. “approval addiction”: others’ opinions are powerless until we validate them.
- c. Take thoughts of comparison, deception and resentment captive.
- d. Suggested ways to practise secrecy:
  - Stop managing your image
  - Practise good deeds in secret

## **8. The Practice of Reflection on Scripture**

- a. Purity is to have singleness in purpose and focus which gives consistency to choices and commitments.
- b. Our thoughts can be sanctified when our minds are renewed by God’s word.
- c. Suggested ways to practise reflecting on Scripture:
  - Ask God to meet you in Scripture
  - Read the Bible with a repentant spirit
  - Meditate on a passage
  - Take a verse through the day
  - Memorise the thought/verse

## **9. The Practice of Order**

- a. There is a need for a well-ordered heart:
  - Right thing
  - Right degree
  - Right way
  - Right love

*“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”*

1 Cor 10:31

**Consider:**

- *How would you do daily life activities for God's glory?*

#### **10. The Experience of Suffering**

- a. Finishing the race is what counts (Heb 12:1).
- b. The test reveals a person's true values, commitments and beliefs.
- c. Don't quit!