



worship challenge:

- Worship with your church family this weekend.
- Come “full” to worship Sunday... not just to receive but to give.

- Choose to worship—especially when you don't feel like it.

This is our last week on spiritual disciplines...

Preview of new study starting next week...

Before we get to our last couple of disciplines, I want to talk about choosing a course of discipline...



Choosing a Course of Discipline:

- Some are foundational
- Some added based on personal goals
- Abstinence: help stop
- Engagement: help start

Each of us needs a 'training program' that works for us...

Different programs for different types of athletes... Same way: different course for different goals...

Some are foundational... *what are those?* (prayer, Bible reading, study, solitude, worship)

Some added based on personal goals... what God is calling you to change right now...

Disciplines of abstinence... help stop unwanted behavior, increase self-control...

Disciplines of engagement... help us to do what we've been unable to do... increase strength

DISCIPLINES FOR THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

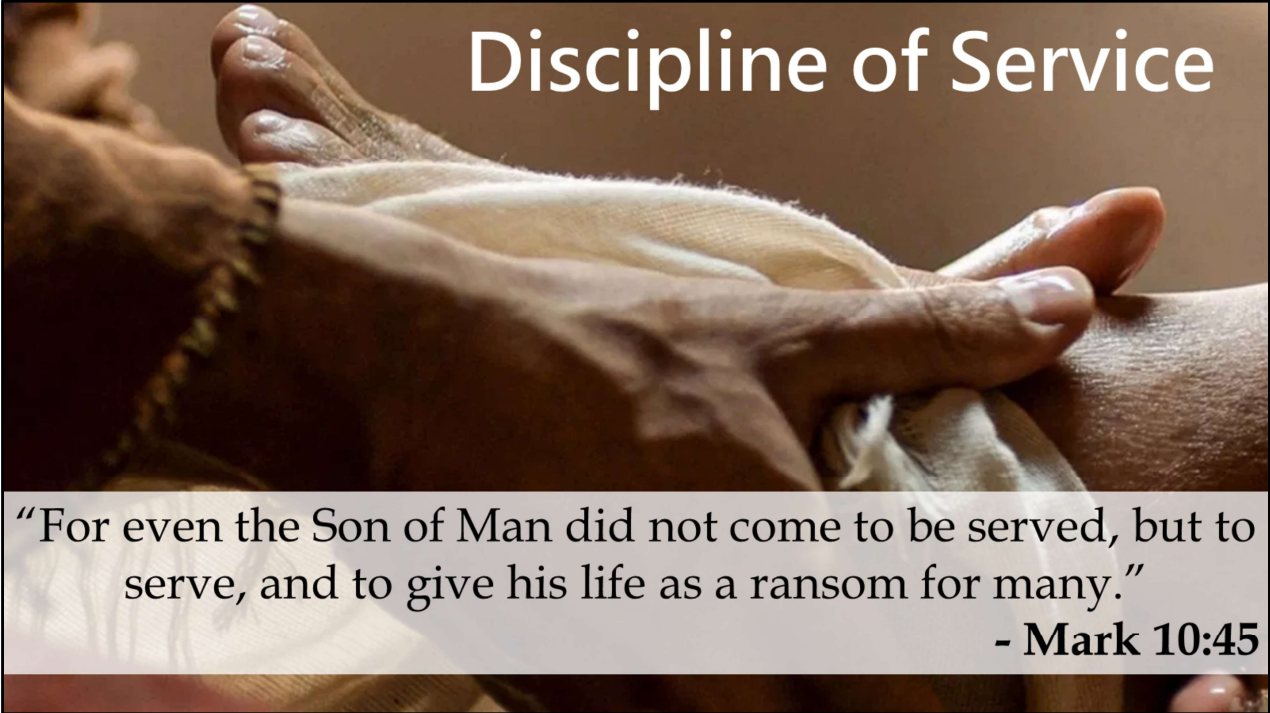
Richard Foster and Dallas Willard

<i>"...The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" — Mark 14:38</i>	Disciplines of Abstinence	Disciplines of Engagement
Inward disciplines	<i>Fasting</i>	<i>Meditation Prayer Study</i>
Outward disciplines	<i>Simplicity/ Frugality Solitude Silence Chastity</i>	<i>Submission Service</i>
Corporate disciplines	<i>Secrecy Sacrifice Giving</i>	<i>Confession Worship Celebration Guidance Fellowship</i>

(Give examples of a course of discipline)

Worship is one corporate discipline... talked about it last week...

Talking about two more today: service and giving



Discipline of Service

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

- Mark 10:45

Service listed as ‘outward’ discipline on chart... something done yourself, outside of yourself...

Also can be a corporate discipline...

Jesus’ example is one of a servant...

“Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it

over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

- Mark 10:42-45



Discipline of Service

“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.”

- John 13:14

“When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked

them. “You call me
‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and
rightly so, for that is what I
am. Now that I, your Lord
and Teacher, have washed
your feet, you also should
wash one another’s feet.”

- John 13:12-14



Discipline of Service

“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross.”

- **Philippians 2:5-8**

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to

your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself

and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!”

- **Philippians 2:4-8**

-Service is an imitation of Jesus

-Service grows us to be more like him

-Service trains us to see the needs of others — and meet them.



Self-righteous service

- Looks for “big deals”
- Requires external rewards
- Highly results-oriented
- Highly selective
- Affected by mood and whims
- Temporary
- Insensitive: demands opportunity to help
- Fractures community

True service vs. self-righteous service (Richard Foster)

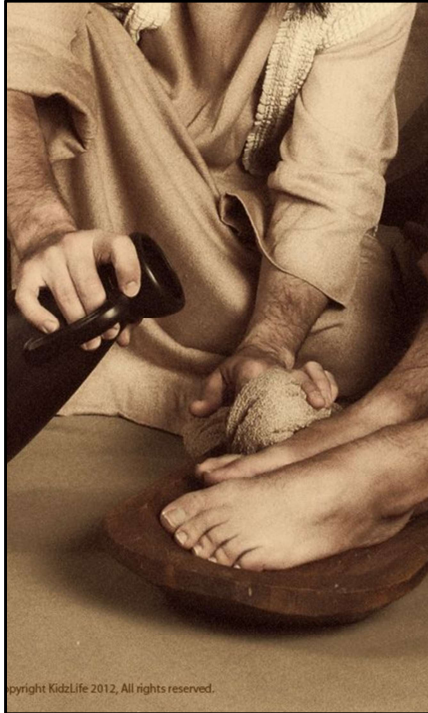
Self-righteous service

Picture a politician showing up for photo op... happens with us... “acts of righteousness for men”

- Looks for “big deals”
- Requires external rewards... know that ppl see and appreciate the effort
- Highly results-oriented... needs some sort of reciprocation
- *Husbands and housework here*
- Highly selective – picks and chooses when/where to serve... stays in control
- Affected by mood and whims... only when they feel like it
- Temporary... only active during specific acts, can be turned on and off
- Insensitive: demands opportunity to help... “insists on meeting need even when it

is destructive”

- Fractures community... centers on glorification of individual



True service

- Welcomes all opportunities
- Seeks hidden service
- Can serve anyone w/o reward
- “Servant of all”
- Subordinates feelings
- Lifestyle
- Listens and understands
- Builds community

True service vs. self-righteous service (Richard Foster)

- Looks for “big deals” → welcomes all opportunities, appreciates impact of small things
- Requires external rewards → looks for hidden service, only concerned with God’s approval
- Highly results-oriented → can serve anyone, enemies as well as friends
- Highly selective → “servant of all” dictated by needs
- Affected by mood and whims → makes feelings a servant, too!
- Temporary → lifestyle
- Insensitive: demands opportunity to help → able to wait with patience, listens and understands before barging in
- Fractures community → builds community



Forms of Service

- Formal roles in church
- Service programs
- Ministry of “small things”
- Hospitality



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Effects of Service

- Humility
- Sensitivity to needs
- Going from “serving” to being a servant.



Discipline of **Giving**

We'll begin by looking at a story from Luke 12...

Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

Jesus replied, “**Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?”**

Then he said to them, “**Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”**

- Luke 12:13-15

Luke 12:13-15—“*read*”
Explain situation

And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

“Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” ’

“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

“This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.”

- Luke 12:16-21

Gives a parable: Luke 12:16-21—“*read*”

The man’s sin was in accumulation...

Then Jesus said to his disciples: “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes... Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?”

- Luke 12:22-23, 25-26

Jesus gives instruction: Luke 12:22-23, 25-26—“read”



Two commands: watch out for **greed** (v. 15) do not **worry** (v. 22).

Two disciplines to help:

Meditation: vv. 24, 27-31—“Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!” “Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.”

Giving: vv. 32-34—“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth

destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”



Refuse to accumulate for yourself

“Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.”

- Luke 12:33

How do I give?

v. 33: “sell your stuff and give mercy/mercifulness”

sell (aorist): once and for all... state of mind as much as an action

Make a commitment: Refuse to **accumulate** for yourself

Look at stuff: take you closer or further away from God? Help others?

How can you take what you enjoy having and offer it to God?



Commit to excellence in giving

“But just as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us – see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”

- 2 Corinthians 8:7

Commit to excellence in giving:

2 Cor. 8:7—“But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us —see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”



**Give
conscientiously,
regularly, and
sacrificially**

Simplicity

Steps to simplicity

#1: *Live free of clutter*

“Sell your possessions and give to the poor....”

- Luke 12:33

Jesus is teaching us to practice **simplicity**... three steps...

Live free of **clutter** (demands your time, energy, affection, money).
Ever watch *Hoarders*?

Meme: When my house is messy...

Cultural disease taken to extreme to make us feel better about ourselves...

Give away excess regularly!

Simplicity

Steps to simplicity

#2: *Give regularly in regular amounts*

*On the first day of every week, each one
of you should set aside a sum of money
in keeping with his income...*

- 1 Corinthians 16:2

Give regularly in regular **amounts**:

1 Cor. 16:2—“On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income...”



Simplicity

Steps to simplicity

#3: *Stay out of debt*

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.

- Romans 13:8

Stay out of **debt**: Romans 13:8

“Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.”

Goal: Freedom from greed and worry



*Now you are the body of Christ,
and each one of you is a part of it.*

1 Corinthians 12:27

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many... Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

- 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 27

Conclusion...

Body of Christ: 1 Corinthians 12 (read passage)

Each needs to be healthy → inner disciplines

Each needs to do its part → corporate disciplines

Challenge for This Week

- Worship with your church family this weekend.
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Weekly challenge:

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