

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE – JUNE 2018

Credit: authenticdiscipleship.org

Service:

THE NEED FOR SERVICE:

- *“As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another.”* 1 Pet. 4:10
- *“Learn the lesson that if you are to do the work of a prophet, what you need is not a scepter but a hoe.”* Bernard of Clairvaux
- *“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. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”*
-John 13:13-17

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE SERVICE AS A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE?

- This involves doing things I would not normally do in the service of others rather than serving myself.
- There is the spiritual gift of helps where people are prepared to help others as a means of ministry calling... this often involves social justice matters of meeting needs of others in the name of Jesus. All of us have some level of each spiritual gift, and we can find an appropriate means of exercising that gift to be a blessing to others.
- It is doing for others what they cannot do for themselves as an act of obedience and worship in advancing God’s Kingdom on earth.

WHY WOULD YOU INCORPORATE SERVICE AS A DISCIPLINE INTO YOUR LIFE?

Introduction to the Spiritual Disciplines

- We do these things because it is important to God in the OT and to Jesus in the NT who championed the rights and the needs of the weak and disenfranchised.
- It is a way to get past our normal selfish nature and identify with Jesus – being Jesus’ hands and feet in the world today.
- It prepares us for reigning with Jesus.

- Serving in obedience and love builds humility and breaks the hold of self-righteousness.
- How might you incorporate service as a discipline into your life?
- As Christians we should always be kind, merciful, courteous, etc., and we can do so as a deliberate act of service to those around us – where ever we are and whatever we do.
- Acts of kindness is certainly one way to demonstrate this gift.
- Another way would be to help those who can't help themselves – giving money, time, and talent to make another's life more meaningful.
- Meeting needs in another who has no means to return the favor.
- This may sometime mean choosing to perform an act that by its nature is humbling... something that will help shape my character.
- Visitation of the ill or infirm, calling on retirement homes, serving on missions teams to clean homes or even build homes.
- Richard Foster lists some acts of service as:
 1. Guarding the reputation of others by refuting slanderous talk.
 2. Extending common courtesy and kindness.
 3. Extending hospitality.
 4. The gift of listening and bearing burdens.
 5. Speaking truth in love.
 6. Sharing the Gospel.