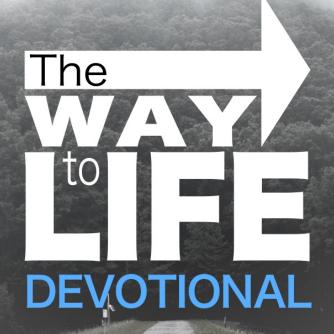
Uncovering the Power of Spiritual Disciplines





INTRODUCTION

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. | John 14:6 (ESV)

I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. | John 10:10b (ESV)

We live in a culture preoccupied with death. In particular, we are obsessed with avoiding, eluding, and cheating death. **Yet, there is a big difference between living life and escaping death.** But what does it look like to live life?

In sharp contrast with death, Jesus presents himself as a way to life. He even goes as far to say that he came that we might live life and live it to the fullest. His point is further accentuated in light of His resurrection on Easter. In Jesus, through Jesus, and because of Jesus, He has conquered death, the absence of life, with his abundant life. If this is all true, drawing closer to Jesus is the only real way to experience a life overflowing. So how do we draw closer to Jesus?

In his seminal book, <u>Celebration of Discipline</u>, Richard Foster takes an extensive look into the classic practices of spiritual disciplines. Today, these common disciplines are often overlooked or considered too legalistic and antiquated. Yet, might we be overlooking some age-old wisdom? In the beginning of his book, Foster shares, "The classical Disciplines of the spiritual life call us to move beyond surface living into the depths." Could it be that Jesus' offer to live an abundant life is a call to live deep?

Spiritual disciplines may not save us and frankly, they can be challenging to commit to do (hence the name discipline), BUT they are a worthy pursuit in the Christian life. Why? Foster speaks to the purpose of scriptural disciplines when he states, "We must always remember that the path does not produce the change; it only places us where the change can occur. This is the path of disciplined grace." This change happens at the feet of Jesus!

Will you join with us on a spiritual journey through these ancient disciplines? Each week we will highlight different disciplines and invite you to commit to practicing these disciplines. At times, it may be challenging and be forewarned, you may never be the same...such is the experience when we discover the WAY TO LIFE that is Jesus!

GRACE & PEACE,
Patrick Cherry
Associate Pastor of Next Generation Ministries

