



Reference: The Alpha Course by Nicky Gumbel and Sandy Millar

In general, what are “spiritual disciplines”?

- First, the Bible prescribes both personal and interpersonal, or corporate, spiritual disciplines. There are spiritual disciplines that we practice alone and those that we practice with other Christians. So, for example, we are to pray alone. That is a personal spiritual discipline. We are also to pray with the church. That is an interpersonal spiritual discipline. We are to practice both. We do so because God says so AND because Jesus did. So, we don't want to think of spirituality and spiritual disciplines as something we do ONLY by ourselves.
- A second characteristic of spiritual disciplines is that they are activities. They are not attitudes. Disciplines are practices. They are things we do. They are not character qualities or the fruit of the Spirit. They are things we do. We read the Bible. That is something we do. That is a spiritual discipline. We meditate on Scripture; we pray, study, spend intentional time alone with God. These are all activities, and they are all spiritual disciplines.
- A third characteristic of the spiritual disciplines is that they are things taught or modeled in the Bible. The reason this is important, is so we don't leave ourselves open to calling anything we want a spiritual discipline. Someone might say, crafting is a spiritual discipline for me, or exercise is one of my spiritual disciplines. We could call any other hobby or pleasurable habit a spiritual discipline. The problem is that it leaves it up to us to determine what will be best for our spiritual health and maturity rather than accepting the things God has revealed in Scripture as the means of experiencing Him and growing in Christ.
- Something else to keep in mind is that spiritual disciplines are a means and not the end. The purpose of practicing the disciplines is godliness. We are not godly just because we practice the spiritual disciplines. This was the great error of the Pharisees. They thought that by doing these things they were godly. Therefore, they didn't need grace and forgiveness,, they didn't need saving, and they surely didn't need Jesus.

What are some spiritual disciplines you can think of and begin, or continue, to incorporate into your life with Christ? (solitude, fasting, tithing, etc.) _____

If I'm not consistently practicing spiritual disciplines, should I expect to be able to recognize what God really wants me to do?

There are five main ways in which God guides us. They are the five CSs...

- Commanding Scripture, which is His word the Bible
- Compelling Spirit, which is voice of the Holy Spirit
- Counsel of the Saints, which comes from other believers
- Common Sense, which is our God-given voice of reason
- Circumstantial Signs, which is when God gives us glimpses into His providential plan

How does the Lord speak to you? In the space provided, write about it using specific examples: