



Introduction to SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Based on *Celebration of Discipline*
by Richard Foster

WHY DO WE NEED SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE?

“I go through life as a transient on his way to eternity, made in the image of God but with the image debased, needing to be taught how to meditate, to worship, to think.”

Donald Coggan, Former Archbishop of Canterbury

“The desperate need today is not for a great number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people.”

Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*

- All creation is made in the image of God (imago Dei)
- Sin mars the image of God (image of God is not gone, just muddied)
- The Cross *restores* the image of God
- Spiritual Disciplines help us change our behavior to outwardly *look like Jesus*

WHO ARE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES FOR?

“God intends the Disciplines of the spiritual life to be for ordinary humans beings.”

Richard Foster, *Celebration of Disciplines*

- Everyone
- Worked out in relationships (*i.e. can't practice kindness without others to be kind with*)

WHAT ARE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES?

“The Disciplines...are *central* to experiential Christianity.”
“Spiritual growth is the purpose of the Spiritual Disciplines.”

Richard Foster, *Celebration of Disciplines*

- Christianity is the way we live - daily, hourly
- A response to longing after God
- Process of transformation
- Sowing by the Holy Spirit
- A transformed life of authenticity in the Spirit

CAUTIONS OF THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES?

“The Spiritual Disciplines are intended for our good. They are meant to bring the abundance of God into our lives. It is possible, however, to turn them into another set of soul-killing laws. Law bound Disciplines bring death.”

Richard Foster, *Celebration of Disciplines*

- Freedom vs legalism
- Internalism vs externalism
- God's work, not ours