

Moms...

To Honor and Challenge You

Notes:

The Emmaus Road

...and he opened to us the Scriptures (Luke 24:32)

We celebrated the glory of Easter 5 weeks ago. Jesus died and rose again that we might have life and have it in abundance. In the following weeks the theme of abiding in Christ has been, well, abundant. Whether you are a mother or father trying to raise your children, a wife or husband trying to honor your spouse, a child trying to respect your parents you need to be connected to the vine. If you are single, married, divorced, widowed, no matter who you are you can not be who you were purposed to be without the life and love that flows, overflows, from Christ to you. This week the Emmaus Road will look a little different. Instead of Bible passages and questions we will have different Spiritual exercises or disciplines to help you keep your focus on Loving Christ and Loving Others. These spiritual disciplines are designed to help you ABIDE in the vine.

Monday: The discipline of Slowing

“People nowadays take time far more seriously than eternity” – Thomas Kelly

It is Monday and for some the race is on. Work, sports, lessons, meetings, the day can go by quickly. Are you remaining in the vine? Are you connected to Christ like you were this weekend at Church? This evening perhaps when the kids are asleep take some time in solitude. Find a comfortable place where you and God can have uninterrupted conversation. Take time to review your day with God. Here is guide in how to do just that:

1. Be still for a moment and quiet your mind
 2. Acknowledge that Jesus is present. Invite him to teach you.
 3. Go back in your mind to when you first woke up. Watch that scene, as if on video. This may lead you to pray for patience, greater love, courage, forgiveness, or other virtues
 4. Continue through the day, going from scene to scene. As you reflect on them, some scenes may fill you with gratitude, others with regret. Speak directly to the Lord about this. You may also be led to pray for some of the people you were interacting with during the day.
 5. End with prayer of thanksgiving for God’s mercy and love. Ask him to refresh you as you sleep.
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Tuesday: The Discipline of Prayer

“Prayer Unites the soul to God” – Julian of Norwich

Prayer allows us to connect to God, lets us be who we really are before God. CS Lewis wrote, “In Prayer we lay before Him what is in us, not what ought to be in us.” Do you ever find yourself in the SADD club? The Spiritual Attention Deficit Disorder club, you can’t seem to focus long enough to really open yourself up to God let alone let him speak back to you. If this is you I encourage you to go for a walk.

Sometime today go for a walk. As you walk let each step and breathe you take help focus your every movement and word on God. Whatever thoughts come to your mind lift them to God in prayer. Don’t allow yourself to be guarded; don’t be afraid to talk out loud. Let your emotions, joy or sorrow, pour out to God. If your spouse or children did something good praise them to your father in heaven. If they frustrated you present your frustrations before God. If you have a hard time expressing emotion turn to the Psalms and let the emotions of the Psalmists be your guide.

Wednesday: The Discipline of Servanthood

"We are all worms. But I do believe that I am a glowworm." - Winston Churchill

At some point in life we all learn that the world does not revolve around us. The ultimate example of servanthood was Jesus Christ. The one who created the earth, who holds it in his hand came to the earth to not be served but to serve. We are not called to simply remain in the vine but to also bear fruit, to not just benefit from the love of God but to also pour it out upon others. WE do this by practicing servanthood. Today look for small opportunities to serve others; help someone bag their groceries, allow your schedule to be broken to lend an ear to someone who needs to talk. At home do something unexpected for your spouse. Go out of your way to bless your children by taking time out of your schedule and your plans to do something with them.

Thursday: The Discipline of Secrecy

"Nothing disciplines the inordinate desires of the flesh like service, and nothing transforms the desires of the flesh like serving in hiddenness." – Dallas Willard

Today take the practice of servanthood one step further. I encourage you to do something for someone and make sure they never know it was you who did it. Our flesh whines against service but screams against hidden service. We strive for recognition when truly anything we do is for God's glory. Remember the video of the "Invisible Woman" the builders of the great cathedrals went unknown and found purpose in glorifying God and not themselves. We push and pull for credit and try to take away from the Glory of God. Do something today purely for God's glory and let him receive all the credit.

Friday: The Discipline of Reflection on the Scripture

"Purity of heart is to will one thing" – Soren Kierkegaard

I hope you are still with me this week for I want to help you with one more important practice. That is connecting to God through His word. We often make reading the Bible a chore rather than a relationship. I want to help you read the Bible in a special way to help you allow the words of God to sink into your heart. It is called Lectio Divina or spiritual reading. It follows four steps to reading scripture; Lectio (Read), Meditatio (Meditate), Oratio (Pray), and Contemplatio (Contemplate). Use the following steps to read through John chapter 15:1-17.

Lectio

- Read the passage slowly, pausing between phrases and sentences.
- Read the passage aloud or whisper it to help yourself really hear the words.
- Let the words linger in your mind, allowing their meanings to sink in.
- If a word or phrase seems especially important, stay with it, turning it over in your mind or heart.

Meditatio

- Once you hear words or phrases important for you, explore their significance for your life.
- Consider how God is catching your attention with these words or phrases.
- If the passage is a story, consider how you fit into the story and how the story connects with your life experience.
- Reflect on what God might be saying to you with this passage.

Oratio

- Let your prayer emerge from your encounter with the text.
- Consider how the words move you to pray for yourself, others and the world.
- Express as fully as you can what comes from your heart.

Contemplatio

- Now the work is done. Take time to rest in God's presence.
- Release all your thoughts and feelings to God.
- Enjoy the moment and the experience of spiritual reading.
- This is the "Amen" of reading. So be it!

I pray you use these tools and practice again and again. I encourage you to keep this Emmaus Road for future use. Use the Lectio Divina for any passage in the Bible.

