



SEVEN DISCIPLINES FOR DISCIPLES

When Christ calls you to be His disciple, it is an invitation for you to enter a life of growing, maturing, equipping and training for a glorious work here on earth and in the earth to come. Disciples are learners or trainees. People who are in training need disciplines or learning conditions which mold or grow them into experts or masters.

The Bible describes at least seven disciplines that help believers become like Christ. In order to grow, we must practice these disciplines until they become second-nature to us.

1. Meeting with fellow-believers

In Acts 2, the believers met together daily for worship, teaching, teaching and ministry to one another. God planned the best way for you to grow – within a community of grace – in His church. He wants you to be with other believers who are committed to fulfilling the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

2. Communing with God

Developing and maintaining an intimate relationship with God require spending time in talking to Him, listening to His Word, and enjoying His presence during your quiet time. Your daily communion time with God is your opportunity to worship God and experience His presence, know Jesus and become like him in character, receive God's direction for that day and make a commitment to obeying him, and receive the power, wisdom and love of the Holy Spirit. The more time you spend with God, the more you will know Him. The more you become acquainted with Him, the more you will trust Him. The more you grow in God's Word, the more effective you will be in giving others the Good News.

3. Caring for the Kingdom

God entrusted to man the management or "dominion" of all created things on earth. This arrangement gave man's existence a purpose and significance in God's system of government. You have a special partnership with God under which God is the Owner and Provider of all things and you are responsible to God as His manager or steward of all things that you possess. This partnership enables God to bless you abundantly so you can bless His Kingdom work and other people in need. If you are not growing in this area of your Christian experience, make a decision today to learn this discipline.

4. Loving Your Family

God intended for marriage to be the relationship where the

husband and the wife can become one at the level of their deepest personal needs. God designed the Christian family to be the institution where true intimacy is experienced through spirit oneness, soul oneness, and body oneness. You build intimacy in your home on the foundation of God's grace.

5. Caring for Your Body

God wants you to maintain your physical health because it has a direct impact on your ability to worship, to receive God's instructions, and to engage in effective and fruitful ministry. You maintain your physical health by putting priority on your spiritual food, eating the best food available for healthy living, regularly exercising and getting adequate rest, and adjusting your lifestyle to manage stress in your daily life.

6. Pursuing Christlikeness in Lifestyle

We are called to be godly people who will think, feel, and act in a Christ-like manner. God wants us to live the life of simplicity that Jesus lived. God's plan is for us to be transformed in the way we think. He wants us to be modest and simple in our possessions and apparel, avoiding expensive display and fancy styles because we believe that true beauty is found inside and not in outward adornment.

7. Sharing the Good News

Jesus wants us to share the Good News with everyone – especially those in our life circle – because we possess the greatest news available to humankind. We do this because we are compelled by Christ's love to share it with people who are lost without Christ. We share the Good News by ministering to others through our spiritual gifts.

Throughout the history of Christianity, these seven disciplines have enabled believers to become committed and effective followers of Christ. I believe that they will work for us too. Gospel Life's GROWING IN GRACE curriculum (GRACE 101, 202, 301, 401, 501, 601 and 701) was designed to help believers in our church community to grow as followers of Christ. I encourage everyone to study the courses that you have not taken in your small groups.

Life is about growing. The opposite of growth is death. It is the same way in our Christian experience. The moment you stop growing, you begin to die. We were meant by God to grow to maturity, to measure up to the full stature of Christ (**Eph. 4:13**). Let's not settle for anything less. Let's grow up!