

February 20th, 2008 Command of Christ → Spiritual Disciplines
Character Quality → Faith
Scripture Text → Matthew 6:1-18

A "disciple" is one who is mastering certain disciplines.

- Sports are not won and lost in a two hour contest.
- What happens during the two hour contest is a direct result of what has transpired during many weeks of practicing the basics.

We are commanded to practice spiritual disciplines.

- They are essential to our development and growth.
- They are necessary to maintain spiritual strength.

The disciplines prepare us for effective service.

- Champions are those who have mastered the basics.
- Most failures and not just random – it is usually because something in the basics has either been ignored or disregarded.

What are the disciplines?

Prayer – communication / communion with God

Giving – a heart of benevolence (anti-self nature)

Forgiving – yielding all justice to God

Fasting – bringing our flesh and soul under subjection to our spirit

The disciplines keep us in close proximity to Jesus.

- In close fellowship with God.
- Maintaining an environment of peace so that we can hear God's voice.
- They keep us "single-minded" and centered on God.

We are admonished to practice them in secret.

- We don't do them to impress men or to be noticed as being spiritual.
- It is more spiritual to do them in secret.
- What happens in secret determines what is visible in public.
 - God will reward us openly.