

Conversation Starters

- What did you do this week?
- Do you feel like you were productive?

Discuss

We live in a world that is constantly moving and changing, and our lives get swept up into the busyness. We often feel like we don't have time to do it all. It's okay to be busy, but when it leads to stress it becomes unhealthy. Often times one of the first things that we cut from our busy lives is time devoted to growing in our relationship with God. In the Bible, Jesus seemed to live a busy life as well, but he was never stressed. Why not? Because he was disciplined. You can't do it all, but you can do what matters.

- Do you constantly feel like you have too many things going on?
- Do you have multiple times of the day when you just feel overwhelmed or stressed?
- Do you feel like you are keeping busy with the right things?

We have spiritual disciplines that can keep us centered in our busy lives and focused on maintaining and growing our relationship with God. We discipline to mature our faith and allow God to transform our life. But it won't just happen; we have to put in the effort and train.

Instead, train yourself to be godly. "Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come." This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it. (1 Timothy 4:7b-9)

- Do you have time during your day that you set aside for growing in your faith?
- Do you see the value in having spiritual disciplines?

One of the most important disciplines for us is reading and reflecting on the Bible. The Bible is God's Word to us and our primary way of getting to know him better. If you want a living relationship with God and allow him to speak into your life, it starts with going to our main source of knowing him.

- When was the last time you read the Bible?
- Do you recognize the Bible as God's Word to us and how He speaks to us?
- What keeps you from devoting time to this?

Next Steps

Spend some time reading and reflecting on the Bible this week. Use these tips to help:

1. **Don't find time, make time.** Write down a time. Put it on your calendar. Set a reminder.
2. **Start small.** Start with 5 minutes.
3. **Have a plan.** Start with a biography of Jesus – Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.
4. **Aim for progress, not perfection.** If you miss a day, start back the next day. You will fail, but it won't kill you – keep going. "The greatest enemy of discipline is perfection."

**Remember this as the goal: "Will you look more like Jesus a year from now than today?" **

Further Reflection

All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. (1 Corinthians 9:25-26)

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. (Hebrews 4:12)

As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me." But the Lord said to her, "My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:38-42)

Pray

God, you are constant and unchanging, even when we get swept up in our busy lives and try to keep pace with the rapidly moving world around us. Thank you for being someone we can rely on. Thank you for how you work in our lives. Help us to take the time to stop and listen. As we approach your Word, speak to us where we are at and give us direction as we try to know you more.