



6:30pm Bible Study: Pastor Chip Luter

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

Getting Back In The Habit: Essential Spiritual Habits for Every Devoted Follower

Tonight's Spiritual Habits: Bible Study, Prayer, and Fasting

Biblical Foundation

I. Bible Study

- Key Text: 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (Whole chapter is great for context)
- Key Principles
 - The Bible is Trustworthy, for it is directly from God.
 - John 17:14-17
 - The Bible is helpful for Teaching and Training, for God uses it to develop us.
 - 2 Peter 1:3-11
 - The Bible is the key tool for Transformation, for when we obey it, our lives are changed.
 - Psalm 1; 119:9-16; Hebrews 5:11-14; James 1:22-25
- Why don't we study the bible more consistently?
- What will it cost to spend more time in the Word consistently? (From Dr. Howard Hendricks in "Living By The Book")
 - Openness to Study
 - Scripture does not yield its fruit to the Lazy.
 - Openness to God
 - Openness to Change
 - Spiritual growth is a commitment to change.
 - Romans 8:29
 - Are you willing to allow God to invade your character and conduct with His truth?
- Three main components for effective bible study
 - Observation (What do I see?) – Interpretation (What does it mean?) – Application (How does it work?)
- Nine questions to ask that will help you apply the Word of God:
 - Is there an *example* for me to follow?
 - Is there a *sin* to avoid?
 - Is there a *promise* to claim?
 - Is there a *prayer* to repeat?
 - Is there a *command* to obey?
 - Is there a *condition* to meet?
 - Is there a verse to *memorize*?
 - Is there an *error* to mark?
 - Is there a *challenge* to face?

II. Prayer

- Definition – Direct communication with God that results in intimacy, worship, and fellowship.
- Key Text: Matthew 6:5-15
- Key Principles
 - Prayer is **Commanded**, so it is not an option.
 - Prayer is a **Privilege**, not a right given to anybody.
 - Psalm 8:4; Romans 8:14-17, 26-27
 - Praying should be **Personal** and **Authentic**, not a public showcase.
 - Praying should be **Directional** and **Intentional**, not random words or phrases.
- Tim Keller book on Prayer, "...if we don't pray together to God, we're not going to make it... We have to pray, we can't let it just slip our minds."

III. Fasting

- Definition – Deliberately abstaining from physical pleasures in order to seek God for sincere repentance and spiritual renewal that leads to supernatural results.
 - Joel 1:14
- Key Text: Matthew 6:16-18
- Key Principles
 - Fasting is an _____ spiritual discipline for every follower of Christ.
 - Fasting should be done in _____ and with _____.
- What is the purpose of Fasting?
 - To **deepen** your relationship with God through bible study and prayer.
 - To **reconnect** with God through the withdrawal of normal daily activities that might have become addictive.
 - Also, fasting is done when you need answers for specific requests, breaking strongholds, or seeking certain breakthroughs in your life.
 - Psalm 42:1
- Types of Fasting
 - Normal – Eliminate solid food but drink liquids. (Daniel 10:3)
 - Absolute – Eliminate both solid food and liquids. This should only be done for a short period of time. 1-3 days. (Acts 9:8-9)
 - Partial – Eliminate certain items like fried foods, desserts, sodas, etc. (like the Daniel fast).
 - Leisure/Media – Eliminate certain activities and entertainment.

Practical Application

A. Bible Study

- ❖ Seek or develop a personal bible study plan.
 - Daily devotional, bible apps, bible reading plan, etc.
 - If you're married and/or have kids, you can also do one as a family.
 - Include meditation and memorization as part of your plan.
- ❖ Set a sacred time and space where you can focus.
- ❖ Search for ways to listen to the bible as well.
- ❖ Choose a translation that works for you.
- ❖ Pick a journal or notebook so you can write out what you're learning.
- ❖ Pursue deeper study after Sunday School or Wednesday Bible Study class.

B. Prayer

- ❖ Seek or develop a personal plan for prayer
 - Scripture reading plan that prompts prayer
- ❖ Set a sacred time and space where you can focus.
- ❖ Start a prayer journal so you can capture what the Lord is doing
- ❖ Create prayer lists
- ❖ Pray the scriptures
 - Example: Pray using the words in Psalms

C. Fasting

- ❖ Prepare yourself
 - Physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually
 - Look at your calendar to see if there are any significant events or activities that could be a hinderance to the fast.
- ❖ Choose a plan that works best between you and God
 - Philippians 2:12
- ❖ Increase your personal time in prayer.
- ❖ If you fall, get right back to it.

D. Christian Community

- ❖ Share your plans with a mature believer for prayer, encouragement, and accountability.
- ❖ Share what you're learning with others so that what has helped you grow can help them.

"Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny."