

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES AND THE BIBLE

Contemporary society is fascinated with spirituality. One can find all kinds of books about self-help or spiritual guidance and practices. How are Christian spiritual disciplines different from those offered in such books? The difference is simple, though profound.

POPULAR SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES ARE:	BIBLICAL SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES ARE:
For self-improvement	For the spiritual maturity of each person and the community as a whole
For self-realization—the fulfillment of one’s abilities and potential	For realization of the fruit of the Spirit in one’s life
For self-sufficiency	For dependence on God and interdependence with other believers within God’s body
Based on one’s own work and dedication	Based on the work of the Spirit in our lives, the support and encouragement of all believers, and the effort of each believer.

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.... For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.—2 Peter 1:3, 5–8

The Apostle Peter is clear: God has given us all we need, and we must make every effort to grow.

WORSHIP

BIBLICAL BASIS AND EXAMPLES

- Worship must be to God and God alone—Ex. 20:1–6; Matt. 4:10
- Worship must be in Spirit and in truth—John 4:23–24
- Moses composed and taught a song about God to the people—Deut. 31:19–22; 32:1–47
- David danced in worship before the Lord—2 Sam. 6:14–16
- The entire book of Psalms is a book for worship—Ps. 8, 89, and 105 are examples
- Worship may be in a public place—Deut. 16:11; Luke 24:53
- It may be in a private residence—Acts 1:13–14; 5:42; 12:12; Rom. 16:5; Col. 4:15
- Worship may be done with instruments—Ps. 150
- It may be done in silence—Ps. 46:10; Hab. 2:20
- Worship may be done bowing or kneeling—Ps. 95:6
- It may be done upright or with hands raised—1 Tim. 2:8
- Paul tells believers to use psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs—Col. 3:16
- Believers are commanded to worship God regularly—Psalm 96:8–9; Heb. 10:25



© Peter Brutsch

THE DISCIPLINES TODAY

- Worship is more than an activity: it is an attitude—an attitude of awe and gratitude, of humble submission to God’s greatness and grace, of obedience and love.
- Every activity and every relationship in our daily life can be a way to worship God.
- The spiritual discipline of worship is not limited to the activities we do on Sundays.
- We must train ourselves to recognize God’s presence in the smallest of events and in the most casual of our relationships.
- This discipline will hone our humility, dependence on God, gratitude, obedience, and fellowship with God and our fellow believers.
- We can worship alone. However, worshipping with other believers has a way of connecting people in an incomparable way. Worship nurtures fellowship, promotes intimate relationships, and fosters the edification of Christ’s body.
- Sunday worship is the best initial training ground for this discipline. As we continue developing this habit of worshipping God, we will see Sunday worship as the beginning of our worship, rather than as the only worship time.
- List your daily activities from dawn to bedtime. Reflect on how each of your activities and your attitudes toward them worship God. Sometimes they do not seem to worship God; is there any way you can make them worshipful?
- Take one event, activity, or relationship at a time and find ways it can bring worship to God. Perhaps all you need to do is dedicate the activity to God in prayer, or change an attitude toward a relationship that is difficult. Perhaps you need to stop an activity or event that does not glorify God.
- Just as prayer can occur all day long in the background of your mind and spirit, worshipping God occurs often unnoticed. If you make a habit of noticing and being mindful about God throughout your day, you will be able to express your joy, gratitude, sadness, frustration, anger, or love in different ways that bring worship to God.
- It is in this discipline that the previous disciplines are handy. You can express your worship through prayer, singing, or meditating on a Bible verse.

He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

—Deuteronomy 8:3

Fasting is a way of worshiping God.

When we acknowledge God as our Provider, we worship him—we praise our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer for his limitless power and grace—leading to that deeper sense of intimacy with the Lord.

Jesus said: “And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.”

—Luke 12:29–31

Fasting is a way of asking God to move powerfully in our lives and in our world.

People in the Bible frequently fasted to seek something from God.

- › In the Old Testament, among other reasons, the people of Israel often fasted as they repented and cried out for God’s forgiveness. Examples: 1 Samuel 7:6; Jeremiah 36:6, 9; Nehemiah 1:4; Daniel 9:3.
- › In the New Testament, we see early Christians fasting for other reasons: For example, in Acts 13:2–3, the prophets and leaders of the church in Antioch fast and pray in order to seek the Lord’s guidance on a big decision: who to send out to preach the gospel in the surrounding area. Also, in Acts 14:23, Luke records that Paul and Barnabas fasted and prayed in order to commission and bless the ministry of the people they were sending out.

“I [Ezra] proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions.” —Ezra 8:21

In each of these instances (and more), God’s people fasted in the hope that he would reveal himself in one way or another. Are you facing any big decisions? Do you want to find a good way to bless someone’s ministry? Consider a fast!

Book I	Ps. 1–41	Prayers of lament and expressions of confidence in God.
Doxology	Ps. 41:13	Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen.
Book II	Ps. 42–72	Communal laments; ends with a royal psalm.
Doxology	Ps. 72:19	Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.
Book III	Ps. 73–89	Intense and bleak prayers of lament and distress.
Doxology	Ps. 89:52	Praise be to the LORD forever! Amen and Amen
Book IV	Ps. 90–106	Answers to the bleakness of book III. The theme of “The Lord Reigns.”
Doxology	Ps. 106:48	Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Let all the people say, “Amen!” Praise the LORD.
Book V	Ps. 107–150	This book declares that God is in control, will redeem his people, and praises God’s faithfulness and goodness.
Doxology	Ps. 150	...Praise the LORD!

The Psalms Show a Movement from David to God.

The first three books in the Psalter highlight God’s covenant with David. The last two books emphasize God’s kingship. The Scriptures have not rejected David’s kingship. On the contrary, the theological point of the psalms is that God will be faithful to his promise to David: to always have one of his descendants on the throne of Israel (2 Sam. 7:5–16). However, instead of a human king, God himself would fulfill the promise to David. This shift suggests that hope should not be placed on human institutions but on God’s merciful and mighty acts. The teaching about the coming of the Messiah arises from this view of God’s kingship.



King David, Westminster Abbey
Psalter c.1200

Types of Psalms—Knowing the Genres in the Psalms

A genre is a particular kind of writing—or painting, or music, for example—that shares specific elements of content and form. Most of the time we read the psalms in a devotional way. This type of reading is refreshing for our spirits and leads us closer to God and other fellow believers. However, other times we may want to explore a given psalm more deeply. In those times, knowing about its genre will help us in our spiritual exploration. Each main genre below lists a sample of representative psalms:

The Hymn of Praise

- The beautiful and glorious songs of praise to God characterize these psalms. These hymns highlight God’s character and deeds, such as his goodness, majesty, and virtue (Ps. 8; 19; 29; 33; 65; 100; 145), or his righteous kingship over all of creation (47; 93–99).

- The psalmist acknowledges that God is great and worthy of praise. These psalms praise God as creator (Ps. 8; 18; 104; 148), as protector and benefactor of his people (66; 111; 114; 149; 199), and as the Lord of history (33; 103; 113; 117; 145–147).

Psalms of Lament

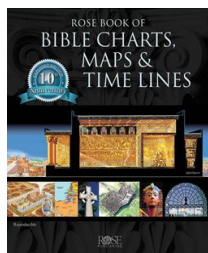
- The psalms of lament outnumber any other type of psalm. This fact might reflect the messiness of life, or the many reasons for suffering and sadness. However, the psalms do not typically end in lament. They move from lament to praise, from grief to joy.

- The conclusion of the psalms, the magnificent hallelujah songs (Ps. 146–150), reflect that with God, all tears will be dried, all sufferings will turn to joy, and all injustices will receive the proper and righteous response.

- There are individual prayers of lament (13; 22; 31; 42–43; 57; 139; etc.) and community laments (12; 44; 80; 85; 90; 94).



Psalm 136 from St. Albans Abbey
England, 12th Century

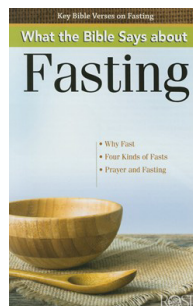


Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps and Time Lines

This #1 Bible Reference book celebrates its 10th anniversary with an updated 230-page edition that features more Bible maps, charts and illustrations than the original! This stunning, easy-to-understand reference book still provides the same full-color, REPRODUCIBLE Bible charts and overviews that made the original a favorite, but in an easier-to-use, updated format! Plus! It includes over 37 ADDED pages of ALL NEW content on popular Bible topics, including Psalm 23, Lord's Prayer, the 12 Tribes of Israel, and more!



Spiral Bound 978-1-4964-7266-3 \$34.99

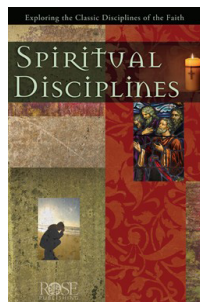


What the Bible Says about Fasting, Pamphlet

Have you ever wondered why fasting is important? Do you want to fast, but not sure if you are doing it "right?" Have you fasted before, and nothing happened? Fasting is a key spiritual discipline that will grow your spiritual intimacy with the Lord and refresh your prayer life. Deepen your understanding of fasting and see key information at a glance with this quick-reference pamphlet packed with charts, dozens of fasting verses, and practical tips!



Pamphlet 978-1-62862-318-5 \$4.99

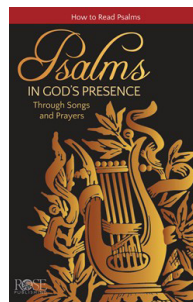


Spiritual Disciplines, Pamphlet

Explore the 8 classic spiritual disciplines that help us follow Jesus and learn to unpack and apply them practically today! This pamphlet addresses questions such as: What does it mean to be Jesus' disciples in the twenty-first century? Do spiritual disciplines look different in an electronic age? How can spiritual disciplines be a joy, not a legalistic burden? The *Spiritual Disciplines* pamphlet makes an excellent handout or Bible study on Christian maturity for a small group or Sunday school class.



Pamphlet 978-1-59636-354-0 \$4.99



Psalms, Pamphlet

Enrich Your Understanding of the Book of Psalms with Rose's Psalms ebook. Explore this most beloved book, by learning the who, what, when and where about these favorite Bible passages. Discover the 10 different types of Psalms from Psalms of Lament to Psalms of Thanksgiving, and learn how to effectively read these beautiful scriptures. This Psalms Bible study covers the basics everyone should know in order to fully unlock, appreciate, and learn from these heart-filled cries.



Pamphlet 978-1-59636-736-4 \$4.99



www.hendricksonrose.com | csresponse@tyndale.com
or call 1-855-277-9400



Money Back Guarantee!

