

WEEK 1 - INTRO WEEK

Fall Focus 2023 // Canopy Guide

On Purpose // Spiritual Disciplines

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Use the questions below to kickstart a community building, all-play conversation that connects to our weekly topic. If your group meets for dinner, these might be great questions to share around a table.

- As you think about spiritual disciplines, what pictures or words pop into your mind?
- Why do you think we named this Spiritual Disciplines series, “On Purpose”?
- What is the easiest part of having faith in God? What is the hardest part of having faith in God?

YOUTUBE VIDEO INTRO

[Click here for the YouTube video!](#)

STUDY GUIDE

If we are going to take a name (Christian) and make a claim (discipleship), we need to truly know Jesus as Lord. That takes commitment and spiritual growth: the former comes from a sincere desire to know and follow Jesus, the latter comes with time and some effort. That is where Christian Disciplines come into focus. They are not limited to monk-type total absorption, but simply involve practical processes we all can use. Spiritual disciplines help us shift from self-centered to kingdom-minded vision.

These disciplines will not work automatically or just by grit and determination. We need one another, and we need the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. Some of the disciplines are personal and individual; some affect other people and serve them as the outpouring of Christ’s influence through his people; and some are corporate by which we

participate together and help one another.

Scriptures to Read

- Psalm 42:1-2
- John 3:16
- Acts 2:38-39, 42
- John 14:25-27

Deeper Discussion Questions (use as many as are helpful)

1. How many times have you wanted to be more “spiritual,” but found it just didn’t happen? Was it strictly personal and individual?
2. As a group, see if you can compile a list of Christian disciplines and talk about how they fit into Foster’s three categories, inward, outward, or corporate. Could any of them fit in multiple categories?
3. Why do you think we need to practice spiritual disciplines that are included in all three categories?
4. Where does your Christian faith connect with the larger world, people who are not Christians? How can you connect without coming across as holier-than-thou?
5. What does it mean that the Spirit helps us? How does that work?

PRAYER

Make sure to claim some time as a group each week to pray specifically for each other.

EXTRA RESOURCES/ARTICLES/RESEARCH

1. [Celebration of Disciplines, Chapter 1](#), Richard Foster. This book has inspired decades of Christians to take advantage of spiritual disciplines as they pursue the Lord.
2. 20 minute overview of Christian disciplines by theologian, Dallas Willard (Richard Foster’s primary mentor), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wpLjPUruCg>
3. Readable Interview with Don Whitney, “What are Spiritual Disciplines?” <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-are-spiritual-disciplines>