



IN-PERSON BIBLE STUDY

Summit Studies • Spiritual Discipline 101

Pastor Kennedy Young, Jr.

will be teaching. Plan now to be in the sanctuary.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2025 | NOON DAY & 7:00 PM

Mount Zion MBC
1300 E. 50th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90011

Zoom Also Available:
Meeting ID: 828 3310 4481 Passcode: 654944

Bring your Bible and a Pen.

Summit Studies • Spiritual Discipline 101

Reverend Kennedy Young, Jr., Senior Pastor

DISCIPLINES ?

Why use the term discipline? And what are spiritual disciplines, and how do they benefit me? I really like Donald Whitney's definition in his book *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*: "Spiritual disciplines are those practices found in the Scriptures that promote spiritual growth among those who believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are the habits of devotion and experiential Christianity that God's people have practiced since biblical times."

PURPOSES

The purpose of these practices is not that we might have a list to check off or a method by which we can change God's will. Nor is the purpose to fulfill our desires. The spiritual disciplines are for our growth, for our blessing, and they are instruments that help us grow in godliness. When we come before God in prayer, presenting our petitions, desires, dreams, difficulties, and plans, we come to recognize His sovereignty, power, dominion, love, fidelity . . . and the list goes on! As I practice spiritual disciplines, God changes my mind and makes me focus on Him, on His plans, and shows me the way to go. Remember, we are called to imitate Jesus, and He is our best model when it comes to prayer.

CULTIVATING

Spiritual disciplines do not develop overnight, and we must be intentional in making them part of our lives. They are not something we feel but something we do. That's why we need spiritual "sharpness," meaning that we have to discern those activities that are biblical spiritual disciplines and separate them from those that are not. A spiritual discipline is not simply what we like to do in our time with the Lord or some fashionable activity that some say is "spiritual." Let's not forget that the world constantly seeks to deceive us, and we have to be wise as we evaluate these practices.

DISTINCTIVES

The What and Why of Spiritual Disciplines. These spiritual disciplines are recorded in the Bible:

- Prayer
- Worship
- Evangelism
- Service
- Stewardship
- Fasting
- Silence
- Retreat

Each of these is modeled primarily by Christ, but if we look closely, there are undoubtedly Christians around us who practice at least one.

It may seem daunting to look at that list and think, "How could I possibly implement ALL of those?" But the truth is that normal circumstances in our lives provide obvious opportunities to begin the practice of one of the spiritual disciplines. Whether the situation includes pain, suffering, joy, or even anger, there is a spiritual discipline that will reorient a believer to keep her eyes on Jesus. If I think back for a moment about something that provoked a reaction in me, I ask myself, am I being moved to pray, worship, and fast? Or am I moved toward self-sufficiency, bitterness, and complaining?

We must remember that the goal of every spiritual discipline is to love God and to live for Him. We do not need to become more spiritual; we need to become more like Christ. We do that by growing in the knowledge of Him and His Word. Practicing spiritual disciplines will not change your life overnight, and perhaps your prayer will not be answered exactly as you expected, but I assure you that your life will not be the same.

Which of these disciplines are, will pr sharpen your focus on going forward to start practicing, or which ones are you already practicing?

CURRICULUM

Mount Zion's 8-Week Curriculum on Spiritual Disciplines Based on the Teachings of Jesus

Week 1: Prayer

Scripture Focus: Matthew 6:5-13

(The Model Prayer)

Lecture outline:

1. Keep it _____ – vv.7-8
2. Follow the _____ – vv. 9-13
 - Our Worship – “Hallowed be thy name.”
 - Our Will – “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.”
 - Our Wants – “Give us this day our daily bread.”
 - Our Walk – “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”
3. Acknowledge the _____ – vv.13 – “. . . For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”
4. Avoid the _____ (Unforgiveness) -vv.14-15

Discussion Questions:

1. What insights do you gain about the nature of prayer from Jesus' instruction in Matthew 6:5-13?
2. How does the Lord's Prayer serve as a model for our own prayers, and what components are essential in our communication with God?
3. In what ways can we ensure that our prayers remain sincere rather than merely ritualistic, as cautioned by Jesus?
4. How does understanding God as our Father shape the way we approach prayer?

5. What role does corporate prayer play in the life of a believer, and how can we foster a prayerful community?

Week 2: Worship

Scripture Focus: John 4:21-24 (Worship in Spirit and Truth)

Lecture outline:

1. A word about the _____ vv.21
2. A word about _____ vv.22
3. A word about the _____ vv.23-24

Discussion Questions:

1. How does Jesus redefine worship in John 4:21-24, and what implications does this have for our practices today?
2. In what ways can worship be both a personal and communal experience?
3. How can we ensure that our worship is genuine and rooted in truth as Jesus instructs?
4. What are some barriers to authentic worship we might encounter in our modern context?
5. How does the concept of worship as a lifestyle challenge the way we typically view it as a specific event?

Week 3: Evangelism

Scripture Focus: Matthew 28:19-20 (The Great Commission)

Lecture outline:

1. To relinquish all _____ vv. 18
2. To reach all _____ vv.19
3. To teach all _____ vv.20

Discussion Questions:

1. What does the Great Commission reveal about Jesus' expectations for His followers regarding evangelism?
2. How can we effectively share the Gospel in a way that is relatable and respectful to those around us?
3. In what ways does our understanding of Jesus' authority in Matthew 28:19-20 empower us in our evangelistic efforts?
4. How do we balance the call to evangelism with the importance of building genuine relationships?
5. What are some practical steps we can take to be more intentional about sharing our faith in our daily lives?

Week 4: Service

Scripture Focus: Mark 10:32-45 (Servanthood)

Lecture outline:

1. The Lord's _____ vv. 32-34
2. The disciples _____ vv.35-37
3. The Lord's _____ vv.38-45

Discussion Questions:

1. How does Jesus' teaching on servanthood in Mark 10:42-45 challenge societal views on power and leadership?
2. In what ways can we embody the servant attitude of Christ in our everyday interactions?
3. How does serving others reflect our love for God and fulfillment of Jesus' teachings?
4. What are some practical examples of service in our communities that align with Jesus' call to serve?
5. How can we overcome obstacles such as pride or busyness that hinder us from serving others?

Week 5: Stewardship

Scripture Focus: Matthew 25:14-30 (Parable of the Talents)

Lecture outline:

1. Responsibilities _____ vv.14-15
2. Reactions _____ vv.16-18
3. Rewards _____ vv.19-30

Discussion Questions:

1. What does the Parable of the Talents teach us about the responsibility of stewardship in relation to the gifts we have received from God?
2. How can we discern what our “talents” or resources are, and how can we use them effectively for God’s kingdom?
3. In what ways does this parable challenge our understanding of risk-taking and faithfulness in stewardship?
4. How does the concept of stewardship extend beyond finances to include our time, relationships, and environment?
5. What steps can we take to cultivate a heart of generosity in our lives?

Week 6: Fasting

Scripture Focus: Matthew 6:16-18 (Fasting)

1. A focus of _____ 16a
2. The focus of _____ 16b-18a
3. The focus of _____ 18b-c

Discussion Questions:

1. What insights does Jesus provide about the purpose and practice of fasting in Matthew 6:16-18?
2. How can fasting become a transformative spiritual discipline rather than a mere ritual?
3. In what ways does Jesus' teaching challenge us to examine our motivations for fasting?
4. How can we incorporate fasting into our spiritual lives in a way that draws us closer to God?
5. What are some practical tips for preparing for a fast and maintaining focus during that time?

Week 7: Silence

Scripture Focus: Mark 1:35

(Jesus' Early Morning Solitude)

Lecture outline:

1. The Lord's _____ 35a
2. The Lord's _____ 35b

Discussion Questions:

1. How does Jesus' practice of seeking solitude in Mark 1:35 inform our understanding of the importance of silence?
2. In what ways can silence and solitude enhance our relationship with God and our ability to hear His voice?
3. What are the challenges we face in our noisy, busy lives that make practicing silence difficult?
4. How can we cultivate a habit of silence in our daily routines?
5. What benefits have you experienced (or do you hope to experience) from intentional moments of silence and reflection?

Week 8: Retreat

Scripture Focus: Luke 5:16

(Jesus' Retreats)

Lecture outline:

1. The Lord's _____ life vv.16
2. The Lord's _____ life vv.17

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Jesus' example of retreating to pray (Luke 5:16) reveal about the importance of rest and reflection in our spiritual lives?
2. How can planning retreats, whether personal or communal, contribute to our spiritual growth and renewal?
3. In what ways can a retreat help us gain clarity on our spiritual journeys and life decisions?
4. What practical steps can we take to organize a retreat in our church or community?
5. How can we prioritize regular times of retreat within our busy lives to foster deeper intimacy with God?