



PRACTICE MAKES

perfect

WITH **TRAVIS
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Session 1: A Community of Devotion

Acts 2:46

Being together with a group of disciples brings heightened awareness of our spiritual need. Yes, the Holy Ghost can convict us wherever we are, yet the combined desire of a gathering of disciples invites His presence (Matthew 18:20). And His holy presence makes us aware of our unrighteousness so we can come to God and find redemption. Let's dive into this series as we discuss the importance of community.

1. If community discipleship is so beneficial, why do we often find it difficult to embrace?
2. In your experience, what reasons does the enemy provide to keep us away from fellow disciples? Why do you think his devices are effective?
3. Beyond regularly scheduled worship times, how and when do you engage fellow disciples?

Let's take a moment to pray this simple prayer: "Lord, thank You for placing other believers in my life. Thank You for the leaders in my life. Help me to be aware of the spiritual needs in my life. Help me to be a better encourager to those in the body of Christ. I want to serve others better." Optionally, consider exchanging prayer needs and setting up prayer partners to commit to deeper community.

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Session 2: It's What We Do

Key Scriptures:

Ecclesiastes 12:13; Joshua 6:25

Opening Remarks

While Israel's faithlessness was revealed by their inaction, Rahab's faith was revealed by her action. Rahab's story was included in this important juncture because her actions illustrated her faith. She set the example for Israel, and all disciples, going forward into the Lord's promise: faith includes action. More than a mental knowledge of the Lord or a verbal confession of His coming victory, Rahab acted on her faith; she hid the messengers. If Israel would experience victory on this second attempt at the Promised Land, it would only come through obedience. Between faithless wandering and faithful promise, there is sincere obedience. Faith includes action.

Watch the Session 2 Video

Discussion Questions:

1. Consider an interest or skill in your life that is inactive or rarely engaged. Why is it dormant?
2. "Most disciples are educated far beyond their level of obedience." Does this describe you? Does it describe someone close to you? Why do you think we fail to act on our understanding?
3. What is it about the story of Rahab, the prostitute, that makes you uncomfortable? What about the story inspires you?

Closing Remarks

Without action and without obedience to the Lord's directions, we do not enter into His Promised Land. Rather, like faithless Israel, we are left wandering in the wilderness. Sure, there are some victories (Og and Sihon). Yes, there is some manna. Yes, we can worship, and there is a tabernacle. But this is not what the Lord designed. Following Jesus is an action. Disciples move forward. Discipleship happens as we obey the Lord's directions, as we act on His spiritual direction. Take a moment to jot down ideas for one thing you can do this week to practice your faith by putting it in action.

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Session 3: The Path of Scripture

II Timothy 3:16-17

When we understand and pursue the spiritual disciplines—freedom instructions—provided by the one who gave us freedom, we enjoy a wonderful assurance. We are assured that the disciplines we practice are certain. They will work as designed and will accomplish the new nature goal. When we follow the paths the Lord gives for freedom living, we know we have not fallen victim to deception. In God's plan we overcome deceptions of our humanity. In the Lord's purposes, we derail deceptions of our adversary. Living in biblical, spiritual practices brings disciples comfort and peace that we are living in truth.

1. How does our culture determine teachers, authorities, or influencers? How does society decide whose thoughts matter?
2. Explain a recent situation in your life that clarified the difference between the ways of your “old” life and the Lord’s expectancy for your “new” life.
3. The video explains the Bible as the Lord’s “Ultimate Plan for New Territory”. What does this mean to you, and how would you explain it to someone else?

Living in freedom requires different skills than living in bondage. As we conclude this lesson, let's take a moment to pray this prayer: "Lord, thank You for the guidelines for freedom Your Word provides. Thank You for the faith-filled thoughts Your Word helps to produce in my mind. Thank You for the direction Your Word gives when my path seems unclear. Thank You for spiritual disciplines that promise me a successful Christian life. Thank You for the truth of Your Word that shields me from deception."

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Session 4: Eyes on the Prize

I Timothy 4:7-8

In the process of our discipleship, as we progress from our old nature to our new nature, there is also the possibility of getting “lost.” In our case, it is not lost in translation but lost in the transition process. There are times when disciples become so caught up in the spiritual disciplines associated with this transition, we forget the ultimate purpose of the disciplines.

Discussion Questions:

1. Think about your spiritual practices over the past week or two. As you remember the time you spent and your approach to the Lord, in what ways were you more like the Pharisee or more like the tax collector?
2. What spiritual discipline would you like to add to your weekly routine? What outcome do you desire from this new practice?
3. Imagine a close friend confides that he feels as if his spiritual practices are “in a rut.” What would you recommend he do to renew freshness and breathe life into his efforts?

When overwhelmed by any of the day-to-day demands, the wise parent stops everything and looks closely into that precious child's eyes. Rather than finishing the ever-growing mound of laundry, the wise parent sits down with her son and reads a book, or he leads his daughter into the yard where they play with the dog. When daily duties are overly mundane, wise parents scoop up their little ones and head to the park or play in the sprinkler. Parents are readily recharged when reminded of the purpose for their family tasks. When parents actively engage in loving, fulfilling, enjoyable relationships with their children, day-to-day obligations are recognized as merely necessary components of the overall goal: loving relationship. Sometimes when mired in the daily slog of repetitive duties, we need a healthy revisit of the purpose for our deeds.

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