



# GRACE

RHYTHMS

Dec 30 - Jan 27





# GRACE

R H Y T H M S

---

**Dec 30 - Jan 27**

---

© 2018 City Church  
Beijing, China  
All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<b>6</b>	Week 1	Intro
<b>12</b>	Week 2	The Word
<b>18</b>	Week 3	Prayer
<b>25</b>	Week 4	Celebration
<b>32</b>	Week 5	Confession

## **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES**

**James KA Smith refers to them as calibrations of the heart.**

**Dallas Willard speaks of it as soul shepherding. Dave Matthis calls them habits of grace. It matters not what name you give to the regular activities that are given us by God in order to build up our soul, but that they are practiced and practiced rightly.**

**Over the next few weeks we will explore the most important disciplines that if neglected will prove to be fatal to our spiritual growth in Christ. When you engage in these activities know that you are following in a long line of men and women who, for centuries, have nourished their souls upon these disciplines.**

**Christ has brought you to Himself with His precious blood. He longs for you to grow in godliness. He longs for you to daily commune with Him. You have been invited by God himself to sit at His table and fellowship. These disciplines are a means to that end.**

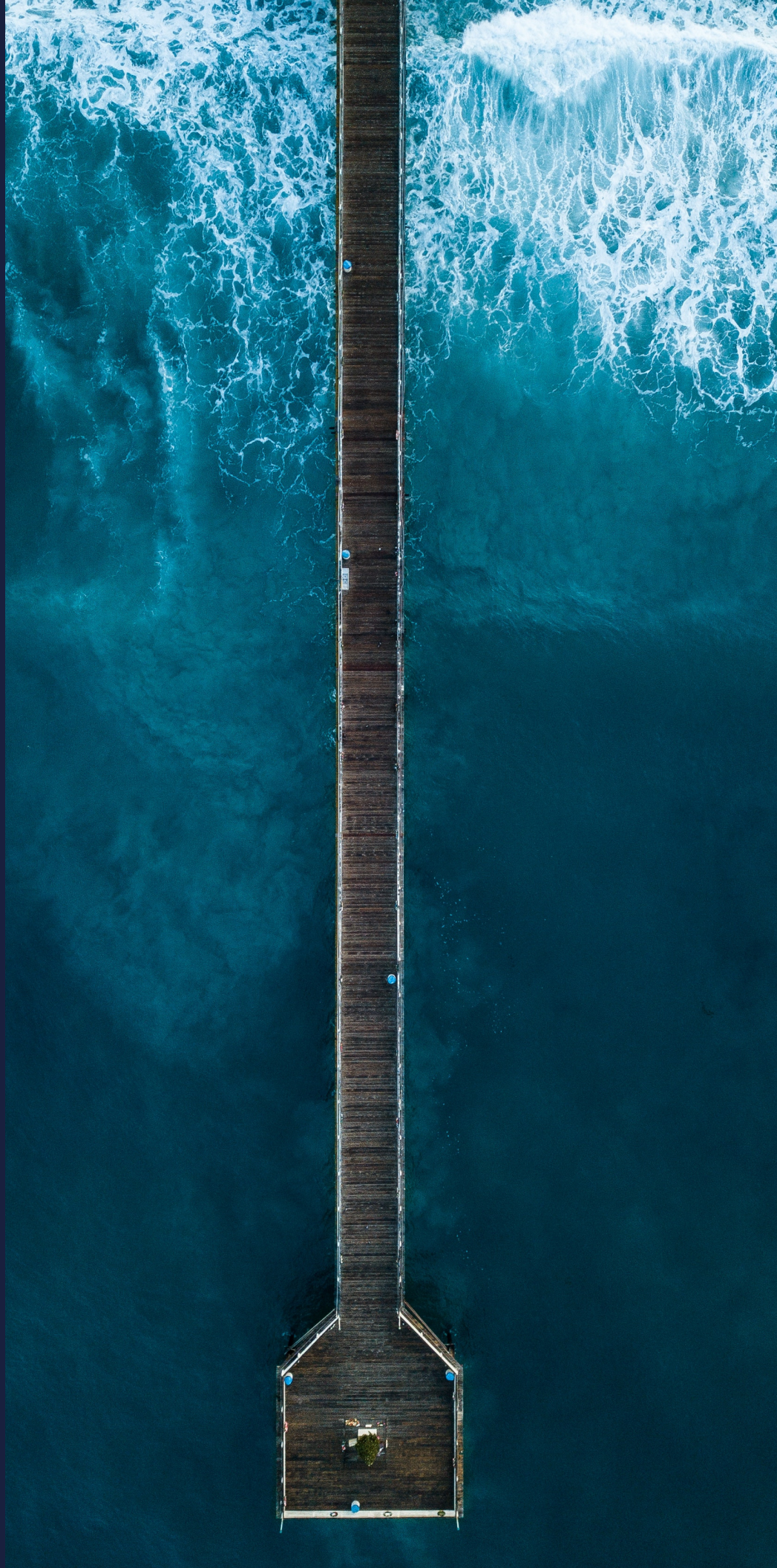
**Take up your Bible, depend upon the Holy Spirit, gather with a group of believers, and use this guide to help you Go Deep in your understanding of the Disciplines.**



# INTRO

*Grace  
Rhythms*

*Week 1  
Dec. 30*





**TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO WRITE OUT A DEFINITION OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES:**

**READ THE FOLLOW DEFINITION AND UNDERLINE THE 3 KEY FEATURES OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES:**

*Spiritual disciplines are those practices found in Scripture that promote spiritual growth among believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are habits of devotion that have been practiced by God's people since biblical times. -Donald Whitney*

— FOUND IN SCRIPTURE —



***2 Timothy 3:16***

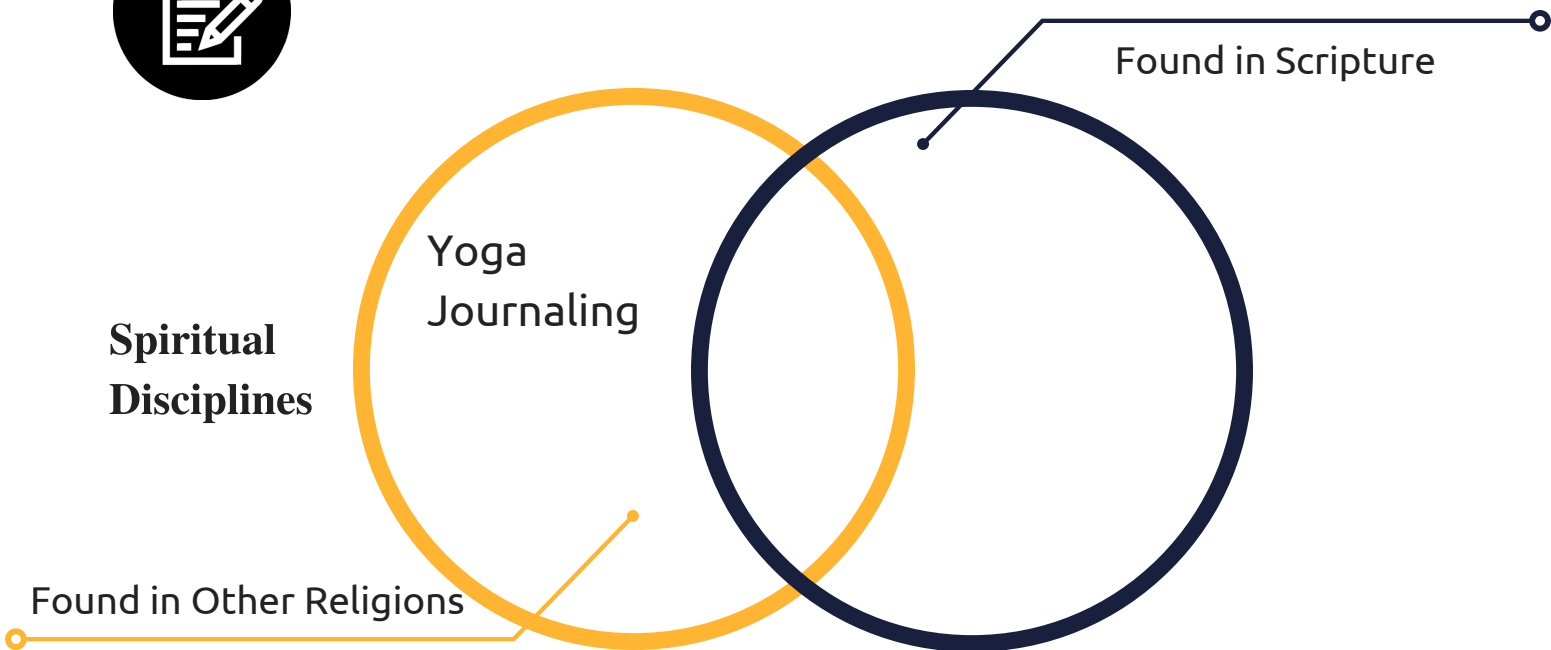
*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,*



**WHY SHOULD WE LIMIT THE DISCIPLINES TO THINGS FOUND IN SCRIPTURE?**



### FILL IN THE FOLLOWING VENN DIAGRAM



*We are not saying that these are not useful, helpful practices, but only that the graces most necessary for vibrant, growing faith are those presented in scripture.*



### READ THROUGH THESE SCRIPTURES AND LIST THE DISCIPLINE TAUGHT OR MODELED:

Psalm 1:2	Acts 2:42
Psalm 7:17	Acts 17:11
Psalm 47:6	I Cor. 16:2
Neh. 8:8	Phil. 4:6
Joshua 1:8	Col. 3:16
Matt. 6:16-18	James 5:16





— PROMOTE SPIRITUAL GROWTH —

*Charles Spurgeon*

*“It is not enough to do the correct thing; it must be done in a right spirit, and with a pure motive. A good action is not wholly good unless it be done for the glory of God, and because of the greatness and goodness of his holy name.”*



**WHAT ARE SOME WRONG MOTIVES (GRACE KILLERS) FOR PRACTICING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES?**



*The disciples are meant to move our hearts toward Jesus; that we would know him more intimately, and by knowing him our awe would be increased, enabling us to give him the honor he deserves.*

— HABITS OF DEVOTION —



**WHEN WE THINK OF HABITS WE GENERALLY THINK OF NEGATIVE THINGS, BUT HABITS CAN BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL. WHAT ARE SOME HEALTHY HABITS YOU HAVE?**

*For example: brushing your teeth, exercising, etc. Be sure to include healthy spiritual habits.*



Our sermon series is titled Grace Rhythms. Rhythms or habits are things that are repeated over and over. It's not something that is just picked up, but takes time and practice in order for it to stick.



**READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT, DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE:**

*“People do not drift toward Holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith, and delight in the Lord. -DA Carson*

**Grace-driven effort is what we call Grace Rhythms. Notice the word effort. Effort means something is required of you. Note how scripture describes that grace-driven effort:**



*Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather **train yourself for godliness**; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come (1 Timothy 4:7-8).*



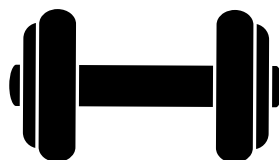
**WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD TRAINING?**

**DIFFICULT**

*What are some difficulties of practicing spiritual disciplines?*

**REWARDING**

*What are some rewards you have experienced from spiritual disciplines?*





## **REFLECTION:**

1 Cor. 15:10 reminds us that while grace is a free gift of God, it is nonetheless costly and full of effort. What grace-given effort do you want to pursue this week?

Is there anything in your life preventing the "hard work" that Paul speaks of in 1 Cor. 15?

Are there any Grace Rhythms from you past that you need to begin afresh?

Grace Rhythms are meant to move our hearts toward Jesus. Take some time to honestly assess your relationship with Jesus. Have you in any way forgotten your first love? Respond accordingly.

## **PRAYER:**

Close your time together in prayer for one another. What are some praises you want to thank God for? What are some needs you have this week? How can the group best pray for your holiness?

*O MY SAVIOUR, Help me. I am so slow to learn, so prone to forget, so weak to climb; I am in the foothills when I should be on the heights; I am pained by my graceless heart, my prayerless days, my poverty of love, my sloth in the heavenly race, my sullied conscience, my wasted hours, my unspent opportunities.*

*Make it my chiefest joy to study thee, meditate on thee, gaze on thee, sit like Mary at thy feet, lean like John on thy breast, appeal like Peter to thy love, count like Paul all things dung. Give me increase and progress in grace so that there may be more decision in my character, more vigour in my purposes, more elevation in my life, more fervour in my devotion, more constancy in my zeal.*

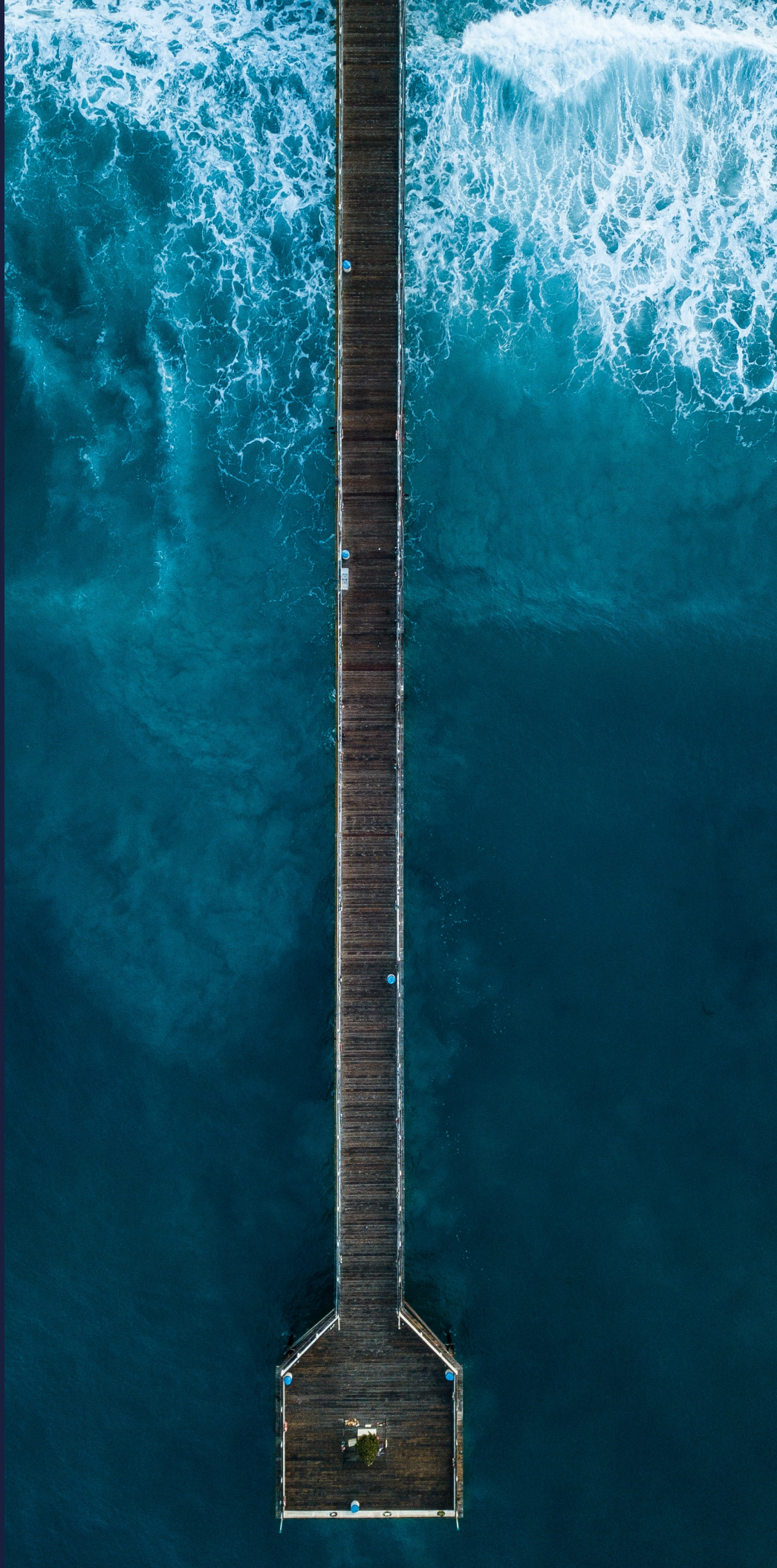
*Ride forth in me, thou King of kings and Lord of lords, that I may live victoriously, and in victory attain my end. -Valley of Vision*



# THE WORD

*Grace  
Rhythms*

*Week 2  
Jan 6*





Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible, is written to extol the beauty and worth of God's Word. Almost every verse is reflecting on His Word to us.



**TURN THERE NOW AND WRITE DOWN THE DIFFERENT WORDS USED TO DESCRIBE THE WORD OF GOD.**

Spiritual disciplines are those practices found in Scripture that promote .



**ACCORDING TO PSALM 119 WHAT ARE SOME WAYS THE WORD OF GOD PROMOTES SPIRITUAL GROWTH?**

**Read the following and underline the grace rhythms (uses) of scripture**

*“Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them; that, by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which though has given us in our Savior Jesus Christ.” – The Book of Common Prayer*



**WHAT GRACE RHYTHMS OF SCRIPTURE HAVE BEEN MOST HELPFUL FOR YOU IN YOUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH?**



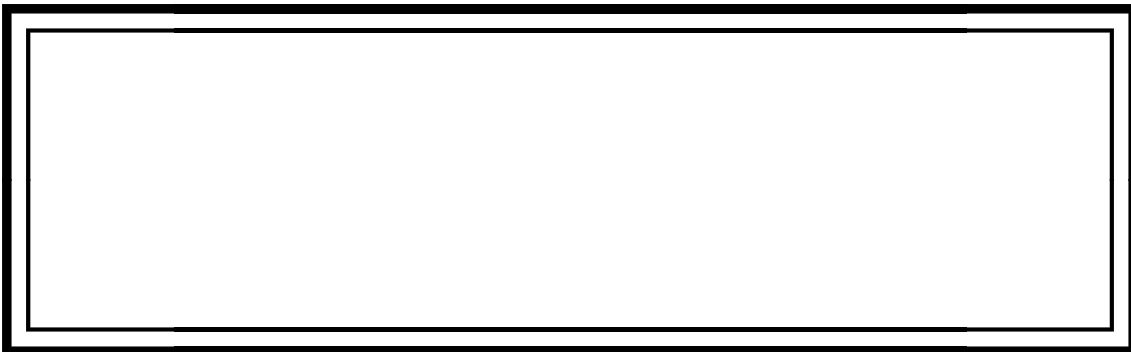
— MEDITATION —

**George Müller**

*I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God, and to meditation on it... What is the food of the inner man? ...not the simple reading of the Word of God, so that it only passes through our minds, just as water runs through a pipe, but considering what we read, pondering over it, and applying it to our hearts.”*

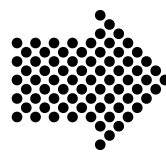


**WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AND EASTERN MEDITATION?**



**הִגָּה**

*to meditate; to speak with oneself, murmuring and in a low voice, as is often done by those who are in a continual contemplation over something.*



Read **Joshua 1:8** and discuss how this can be practically practiced this week.

## Tips for Meditation

- Choose a verse or phrase that the Lord brings to your attention.
- Summarize in one sentence or phrase.
- Choose times throughout the day to think on this truth.
- Do it throughout the day (James 1:23-25).



—MEMORIZATION—



**ALL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS PLACE VALUE ON MEMORIZATION. SHARE WITH THE GROUP SOME THINGS THAT YOU HAVE HAD TO MEMORIZE IN THE PAST. EX. POEM, MATH FACTS, ETC.**



Read 2 Peter 1:12-15. Apparently Peter valued memorizing truths about God. Share with the group Scripture you have memorized and how that has impacted your Spiritual Growth.

*John Piper*

*I'm not into mechanical memorizing. I'm into fighting the fight of faith. I want to memorize Scripture so that I can defeat the devil at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, that's why! It's so that I can minister to a saint in the hospital at 10 o'clock at night if I've forgotten my Bible. This is for our soul.*



**WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL REASONS FOR MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE?**

For tips on memorizing scripture see: Andrew Davis – An approach to extended memorization of scriptures.



— OBEDIENCE —



**READ DEUTERONOMY 6:3.**

*The Word of God is not only to be meditated upon and memorized, but God expects us to  His Word.*



**ACCORDING TO DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9 WHAT GIVES US POWER TO OBEY HIS WORD?**



**READ HEBREWS 10:24.**



**EACH OF US STRUGGLE WITH OBEDIENCE. WHAT ARE SOME COMMANDS OF GOD THAT YOU ARE STRUGGLING TO OBEY? AS A GROUP LIST OUT WAYS YOU CAN STIR ONE ANOTHER ON TO MORE FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE.**





## **REFLECTION:**

There is a danger today of undervaluing scripture. Why is it important to keep a high view of scripture?

Have you ever meditated on scripture before? If so, how did it increase your love for Christ?

Take some time to share with the group some verses you have memorized. How have they helped you in your walk with Christ?

What is one commitment you can make today to improve the grace rhythm of God's Word in your life?

## **PRAYER:**

Close your time together in prayer for one another. What are some praises you want to thank God for? What are some needs you have this week? What scripture can you pray over one another today?

*I thank thee for the holy Scriptures, their precepts, promises, directions, light. In them may I learn more of Christ, be enabled to retain his truth and have grace to follow it.*

*Help me to lift up the gates of my soul that he may come in and show me himself when I search the Scriptures, for I have no lines to fathom its depths, no wings to soar to its heights. By his aid may I be enabled to explore all its truths, love them with all my heart, embrace them with all my power, engraft them into my life.*

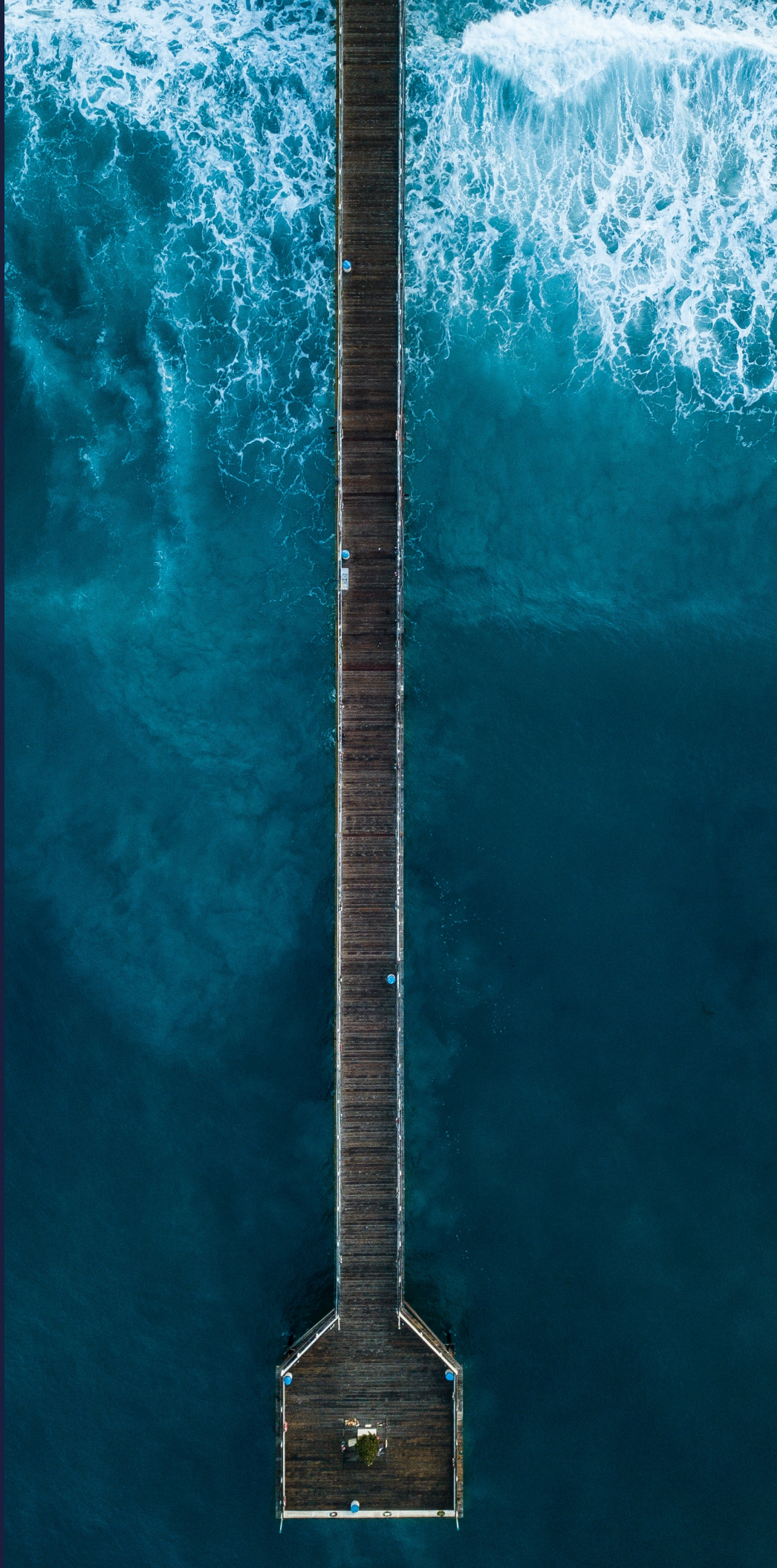
*Bless to my soul all grains of truth garnered from thy Word; may they take deep root, be refreshed by heavenly dew, be ripened by heavenly rays, be harvested to my joy and thy praise. Help me to gain profit by what I read, as treasure beyond all treasure, a fountain which can replenish my dry heart, its waters flowing through me as a perennial river on-drawn by thy Holy Spirit. -Valley of Vision*



# FASTING

*Grace  
Rhythms*

*Week 3  
Jan 13*





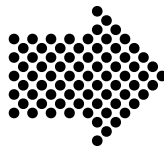
**HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN A FAST BEFORE?  
IF SO, SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE.**



**THE BIBLE IS FULL OF GREAT MEN AND WOMEN  
WHO FASTED, FILL IN THE LIST BELOW WITH  
PEOPLE THAT COME TO MIND.**

Sometimes when Christians use the word “fast” they include extra-Biblical fasts. For example, abstaining from social media, or coffee, etc. While there is value in this, it is never used in this way in the Bible.

How does the Bible use the word “fast”? (See Esther 4:16, Jonah 3:5)



**νηστεύω**

*to abstain as a religious exercise from food and drink: either entirely, if the fast lasted but a single day, or from customary and choice nourishment, if it continued several days.*



— MOTIVES —



**READ ROMANS 14:23**



**IF FASTING IS NOT FROM FAITH IT IS SIN. NOT ONLY IS RIGHT ACTION IMPORTANT, BUT RIGHT MOTIVE IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT. READ THE FOLLOWING VERSES AND DISCUSS THE WRONG MOTIVE BEHIND EACH FAST.**

Matthew 6:16

Luke 18:11-14

Isaiah 58:3-5

Zech. 7:4-6



**WHAT ARE SOME OTHER WRONG MOTIVES FOR FASTING?**

— PURPOSE —

*Augustine*

*He loves Thee too little who loves anything together with Thee which he loves not for Thy sake.*



## READ MATTHEW 6:17-18

Jesus doesn't tell us in these verses what the reward for fasting is, but if we read in context we can be fairly confident what reward Jesus speaks of.



- **Read Matthew 6:9-10.** Where does Jesus teach us to orient our hearts with our prayers?
- **Read Matthew 6:19-20.** Where does Jesus teach us to orient our hearts with our possessions?
- **Read Matthew 6:33.** Where does Jesus teach us to orient our hearts with our concerns?



**FROM THE ABOVE CONTEXT, WHAT IS THE GREATEST REWARD WE SHOULD SEEK WHEN FASTING?**

*John Piper*

*The supremacy of God in all things is the great reward we long for in fasting. His supremacy in our own affections and in all our life choices. His supremacy in the purity of the church. His supremacy in the salvation of the lost. His supremacy in the establishing of righteousness and justice. And his supremacy for the joy of all peoples in the evangelization of the world*



— RESULTS —



**READ ROMANS 4:4. WHEN WE FAST DO WE WANT OUR FASTING TO BE AN ACT OF WORKS OR GRACE?**

*Joseph Wimmer*

*The weakness of hunger which leads to death brings forth the goodness and power of God who wills life. Here there is no extortion, no magic attempt to force God’s will. We merely look with confidence upon our heavenly Father and through our fasting say gently in our hearts: “Father, without you I will die; come to my assistance, make haste to help me.”*



**WHAT ARE SOME FALSE EXPECTATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF FASTING THAT CAN QUICKLY TURN IT INTO A WORKS BASED FAST?**



**BELOW ARE A FEW RESULTS OF FASTING. WHAT WOULD YOU ADD TO THE LIST? THINK BIBLICALLY.**

- Intimacy with Christ. Luke 2:37, Matthew 9:14-17
- Knowledge of sin and renewed relationship with God. Jonah 3:10, Ezra 8:21-23
- Wisdom and Guidance. Acts 13:2-3, 14:23
- God’s glory displayed in and through you. I Peter 4:11, Ezra 8:21-23



— PATTERN —

Fasting is almost never done by itself. Note what is accompanying fasting in the following verses:



**NEHEMIAH 1:4**  
**LUKE 2:37**  
**ACTS 14:23**  
**DANIEL 9:3**  
**JOEL 2:12-15**  
**PSALM 35:13**



**AS WE ABSTAIN FROM FOOD WHAT ARE SOME ACTIVITIES WE SHOULD BE PARTAKING OF?**



**WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL TIPS FOR FASTING?**

- Stay hydrated
- Break your fast with a light meal, nothing heavy.
- ?

*For more tips on fasting search for: 7 Basic Steps to Fasting and Prayer by Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ*



## **REFLECTION:**

Many Old Testament believers fasted on Monday and Thursdays. The early Church fasted on Wednesday and Fridays. Fasting is a rich tradition in both the Old and New Testament times. Why do you think many today are reluctant to fast?

Share with the group about a meaning fast you once participated in.

How does fasting re-calibrate our hearts to love Christ as we ought?

If appropriate, commit as a group to fast this week. It could be very meaningful if you fasted the day before your next meeting and broke the fast together, taking time to share your experience.

## **PRAYER:**

Close your time together in prayer for one another. What are some praises you want to thank God for? What are some needs you have this week? If members have committed to fast this week, pray Matthew 4:4 and John 4:31-34 over them.

*I can but tell thee that thou knowest I long for nothing but thyself, nothing but holiness, nothing but union with thy will. Thou hast given me these desires and thou alone canst give me the thing desired. My soul longs for communion with thee, for mortification of indwelling corruption, especially spiritual pride.*

*Lord, give me more of thy likeness. Enlarge my soul to contain fullness of holiness; Engage me to live more for thee. Help me to be less pleased with my spiritual experiences, and when I feel at ease after sweet communings, teach me it is far too little I know and do.*

*Wrap my life in divine love, and keep me ever desiring thee. – Valley of Vision*





# CELEBRATION

*Grace  
Rhythms*

*Week 4  
Jan 20*





**Richard Foster**

*Celebration is central to all the Spiritual Disciplines. Without a joyful spirit of festivity the Disciplines become dull, death-breathing tools in the hands of modern Pharisees. Every Discipline should be characterized by carefree gaiety and a sense of thanksgiving*



**READ PSALM 149:2, 14:7, 32:11, PHILIPPIANS 3:1, DEUT. 26:11. WHAT IS THE COMMAND IN THESE VERSES?**



**JOY AND CELEBRATION ARE NOT OPTIONAL FOR THE CHRISTIAN. QUICKLY SHARE HOW YOU HAVE REJOICED IN GOD THIS WEEK.**



**JOY IS NOT ALWAYS EASY. MATCH THE JOY-KILLER WITH THE APPROPRIATE VERSE AND ADD OTHER JOY-KILLERS TO THE LIST BELOW:**

Jealousy  
Suffering  
Unfulfilled expectations  
Relationships

Ezra 3:13  
Esther 5:9  
Proverbs 17:21  
Lamentations 3:16-18



**IN ROMANS 14:17 HOW DOES PAUL DESCRIBE THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND WHAT PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS DOES THAT HAVE ON OUR LIFE NOW?**



**TURN TO I KINGS 19 AND DISCUSS THE PRACTICAL PROVISIONS GIVEN BY GOD TO ELIJAH IN ORDER TO RESTORE JOY.**

*Jonathan Edwards*

*“God is the highest good of the reasonable creature. The enjoyment of him is our proper; and is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven, fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Better than fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of any, or all earthly friends. These are but shadows; but the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are but scattered beams; but God is the sun. These are but streams; but God is the fountain. These are but drops, but God is the ocean.”*

— JOY IN WAITING —



**READ PSALM 37:7, PSALM 27:24, HEBREWS 6:15, JAMES 5:7. THE BIBLE AGAIN AND AGAIN TELLS US TO WAIT PATIENTLY. HOW CAN WE WAIT WITH JOY?**



God is more concerned with our holiness than our comfort, for holiness produces a joy that no one can take away (John 16:22).



**WHY IS IT SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO WAIT? WHAT DOES IT REVEAL ABOUT US?**

——JOY IN SURROUNDINGS——

Whether we are hiking in nature or sitting in a board room, we are always surrounded by the glory of God (Ps. 19:1, Colossians 1:15-18). Everything He creates is meant to be an occasion for enjoying (glorifying) Him.



**IN WHAT SURROUNDINGS HAVE YOU SEEN HIS GLORY THIS WEEK?**

**ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL PLACES WHERE YOU LIKE TO GO AND BE FILLED WITH HIS PRESENCE IN ORDER TO BE FUELED FOR PATIENCE?**



— JOY & WISDOM —



SOMETIMES WE SUFFER FROM A LACK OF JOY  
BECAUSE WE LACK **WISDOM.** .....

MAKE A LIST OF UNWISE CHOICES AND THEIR  
CONSEQUENCES

Choice	Consequence
1. Procrastination at work 2.	1. Added stress 2.

**דָּבָר**  
*the knowledge and the ability to make  
 the right choices at the opportune time  
 by viewing them from God's  
 perspective and not man's.*

*Read Prov. 15:21 and discuss the false,  
 temporary joy that unwise choices can  
 produce. Then compare the two types  
 of joy.*

— JOY IN COMMUNITY —

God places us in community to help grow joy in one another.



**READ PHIL. 2:2, 1 JOHN 1:4, 2 JOHN 1:12, ECC 9:9.**



**WHO DO YOU HAVE IN YOUR LIFE THAT HELPS YOU  
GROW JOY?**

**IS THERE ANYONE IN YOUR LIFE IN WHOM YOU  
ARE HELPING TO GROW JOY?**

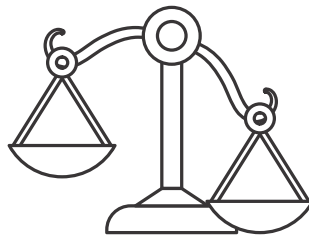


— JOY & POSSESSIONS —

Every good gift is from God and is meant to be enjoyed (James 1:17, Ecc. 2:24).



**READ 1 TIM. 6:17 AND 1 COR. 6:12 AND DISCUSS THE BALANCE OF ENJOYING ALL THINGS AND OVERINDULGING IN ALL THINGS.**



*CS Lewis*

*Joy is the serious business of heaven.*



**READ NEHEMIAH 8:10.**

*Think of the circumstances surrounding those in Nehemiah's day. What circumstances do you face that threaten your joy?*



**READ JOHN 15:11**

*Discuss how joy can be found even in the most dire of circumstances.*



## **REFLECTION:**

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, therefore a joyless Christian is an oxymoron of sorts. Yet, for most of us joy isn't something we think about on a regular basis.

Would your co-workers, friends, family, and neighbors say you were a person marked with joy?

What are two ways this week you will celebrate the life God has given you?

Are there any life choices that need to be reconsidered in order to increase joy?

## **PRAYER:**

Close your time together in prayer for one another. What are some praises you want to thank God for? What are some needs you have this week? If there are any members present who are joyless take time to lay hands on them and pray for the fruit of joy.

*O Christ, All thy ways of mercy tend to and end in my delight. Thou didst weep, sorrow, suffer that I might rejoice. For my joy thou hast sent the Comforter, multiplied thy promises, shown me my future happiness, given me a living fountain. Thou art preparing joy for me and me for joy;*

*I pray for joy, wait for joy, long for joy; give me more than I can hold, desire, or think of. Measure out to me my times and degrees of joy, at my work, business, duties. If I weep at night, give me joy in the morning. Let me rest in the thought of thy love, pardon for sin, my title to heaven, my future unspotted state. - Valley of Vision*



# CONFESSION

*Grace  
Rhythms*

*Week 5  
Jan 27*







*Augustine of Hippo*

*The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works.*

Confession is a normal practice in the catholic church, but among protestants it is a lost art.



**BELOW YOU WILL FIND SOME EVENTS INAUGURATED THROUGH CONFESSION. MATCH THE EVENT WITH THE SCRIPTURE.**

1. Preparing the way for Jesus.
2. Church growth at Pentecost
3. Day of Atonement
4. Rebuilding of the wall
5. Job's restoration
6. Daniel's Vision
7. Forgiveness
8. An entire nation is saved

- Job. 42:1-6
- 1 John 1:9
- Jonah 3:5-10
- Leviticus 16:21
- Neh. 1:6, 9:1
- Acts 2:37-38
- Matthew 3:6
- Dan. 9:20

— POWER OF CONFESSION —



**READ PSALM 32:3-6.**

**Discuss the practical effects of holding in sin vs the fruit of confession.**

הִתְוַדַּת

*To confess (sin, the name of God); to give thanks, to praise or celebrate.*



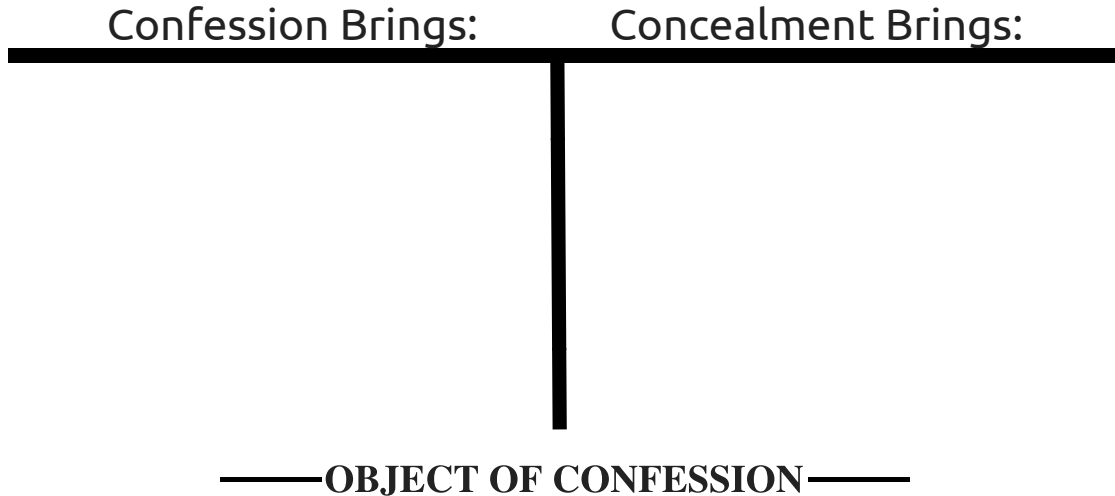
**Ryan Griffith**

*Confession of sin in the presence of others is applying and celebrating the gospel, together.*



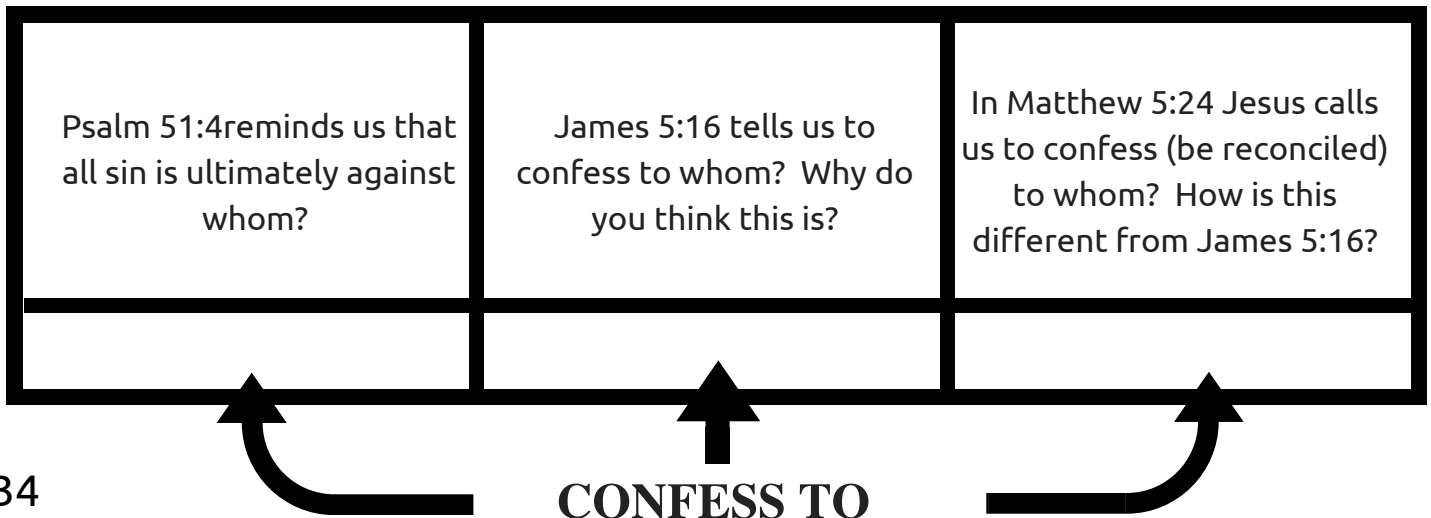
**READ PSALM 7:12 AND 1 JOHN 1:9.**

**In the chart below list the outcome of confession vs concealment.**



*Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

*“You are a sinner, a great, desperate sinner; now come, as the sinner that you are, to God who loves you. He wants you as you are; he does not want anything from you, a sacrifice, a work; he wants you alone. . . . You can hide nothing from God. The mask you wear before men will do you no good before him. He wants to see you as you are, he wants to be gracious to you.”*





## — BARRIERS TO CONFESSION —

*Paul Tripp*

*The theology behind much unconfessed sin is that my greatest problem is outside of me, not inside of me. In so arguing, I'm telling myself that I don't really need to be rescued by the Lord's mercy. No, I'm telling myself that what I need to be rescued from is that sinner in the room who caused me to respond as I did.*



**WHAT ARE SOME WAYS IN WHICH WE DELAY CONFESSION THROUGH BLAME? CAN YOU GIVE CONCRETE EXAMPLES?**



**PRIDE BLINDS US FROM SEEKING CONFESSION. HOW DOES THE BIBLE EQUIP US TO FIGHT AGAINST PRIDE?** See: Prov. 16:18, 8:13, 11:2, I Cor. 1:26-31, 1 Cor. 4:6-7, Phil. 2:3-8

## — WAYS OF CONFESSION —

*Thomas Watson*

*Our hearts must go along with our confessions. The hypocrite confesses sin but loves it, like a thief who confesses to stolen goods, yet loves stealing. How many confess pride and covetousness with their lips but roll them as honey under their tongue.*



**READ NUMBERS 5:6-7.**

**Consider Zacchaeus. When he confessed his sins it was accompanied with action. Discuss why he did what he did and how that can apply to us in confession.**



*John Piper*

*May the Lord give us the wisdom to know the difference between an unhealthy indulgence in self-exposure on the one hand and the biblical risk of authenticity and confession on the other.*



**NOT ALL SIN SHOULD BE CONFESSED PUBLICLY. NOT EVERY DETAIL OF YOUR SIN SHOULD BE CONFESSED. HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN TO AND WHEN NOT TO CONFESS?**

If we're not careful confession can actually become a form of sin (a way to brag or compare your sin against another, or simply have something to add to the conversation).



**HOW DO WE GUARD AGAINST CONFESSING WRONGLY AND HOW DO WE HELP OTHERS WHO STRUGGLE IN THIS AREA?**

*Richard Foster*

*Honesty leads to confession and confession leads to Christ. May God give grace to the church once again to recover the discipline of confession.*



## **REFLECTION:**

Share about a time when confession was healing to your soul.

Is there any unconfessed sin in your life that you need to confess to God?

Is there any sinful addictions that you need to confess to someone in your group?

Is there any corporate sin that the group needs to confess together?  
(See Daniel 9:1-9 as a model)

## **PRAYER:**

Close your time together in prayer for one another. What are some praises you want to thank God for? What are some needs you have this week? If appropriate, break into smaller groups and spend time bearing your souls with one another.

*HOLY LORD,*

*I have sinned times without number, and been guilty of pride and unbelief, of failure to find thy mind in thy Word, of neglect to seek thee in my daily life. My transgressions and short-comings present me with a list of accusations, But I bless thee that they will not stand against me, for all have been laid on Christ;*

*Go on to subdue my corruptions, and grant me grace to live above them. Let not the passions of the flesh nor lustings of the mind bring my spirit into subjection, but do thou rule over me in liberty and power.*

*Deliver me from every evil habit, every accretion of former sins, everything that dims the brightness of thy grace in me, everything that prevents me taking delight in thee. Then I shall bless thee, God of Jeshurun, for helping me to be upright.*



