

TEN SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES TO PURSUE GOD

By Bob Young

Spiritual roots become apparent in both one's public life and private life. Some of the strongest spiritual roots are developed in the private devotional life. Here are ten spiritual disciplines for your one-on-one time with God. These are your spiritual job description; make them an expectation for your life.

Read God's word

God's word is not just verbal—it is written down. God asks, "What do you think of my book?" Do you want to read God's word? You can learn something new, do not just read, but study. Be always learning.

Study God's word

Are we students of the Word, or are we students of someone else's interpretation? The Holy Spirit lives in us; he will guide us and help us. God has a plan for your life. God has a way. God has a plan for your ministry. Use available applications and helps.

Memorize God's word

Consider significant passages: Ps. 34; Jeremiah 20:7-9, a fire within us; 119:11—the word hid in our hearts. In Matthew 4, we come to know the heart of God. If we do not know the heart of God, we are not spending enough time in the Word. Be accountable. Can you memorize two verses each week? The pursuit of ministry can overtake the pursuit of God. Grab onto God's word.

Meditate on God's word

Chew it, digest it, and let the Holy Spirit work. Have the word available for life, think it through. Read it through, because every time we see it, it is different. It applies to life, wherever we are. Think of this sequence: living in holy fear; the terror of the Lord; incorporating terror into life.

Personally Discern the Word of God

You can read, study, memorize, and meditate and still come away pretty empty. The goal is to discern God's message. This requires insight and wisdom. Spiritual discernment is an activity of the body of Christ, but individuals can seek to discern God's will and way in time spent with God's word.

Apply the Word of God

After the will of God is discerned, it must be personally applied to my life. This requires that I think about life—opportunities, challenges, problems, strengths, and weaknesses. I must meditate about life. The application of God's word occurs at that point where God's Word and my life meet—after I have read, studied, memorized, mediated, and sought discernment.

Pray the Word of God

Learn the prayer of humility. Openly confess, submit, and obey. Give opportunity for repentance and confession. Consider a “concert of prayer.” Use humility, request, petition, and intercession. Paul asked people to pray for him. We should intercede. We have opportunity to get in touch with God through his Word as we pray the Word. How many people do you pray for each day? How many pray for you each day? The average is less than three. We are underprayed for and we under-pray. God will have his way when we see the strength in numbers. This is God’s power within us.

Prayer is foundational, as in Exodus 17 we encounter the story of holding up Moses’ hands. What is the plan? Intercession, lift up your hands for others in the work of God. We all need intercessors; we need someone on the hill praying for us, regardless of how strong we may be. A primary thing we need, in ministry, is prayer. Why would we live prayer-less lives, why would we encourage others to live prayer-less lives on our behalf?

Listen to God in daily life

We live too fast; we live in a 90-mph culture. The most important thing in life is not speed, but direction. We need to consult our spiritual compass. Get quiet before God and listen. Seek those precious times, often in the middle of the night, when the question is not what I need to do, but what about God? These are opportunity to focus; we all need listening times. Consider times of personal retreat—daily, or weekly, or monthly, in addition to regular listening. Spend a whole day listening to God to recharge and refuel. Listen to God, be hearers.

Seek God’s priorities in fasting

What a way to God’s heart! We are addicted to food—we need opportunities to say that there are other priorities more essential. Fasting is an underutilized spiritual discipline because we fear hunger. Yet one-third of our world goes to bed hungry at night. If we do not eat before going to bed, there is a good chance we can starve to death in our sleep! Is Jesus Lord, or is food lord? When you fast.... Not if.... Why do others fast and your disciples do not? Jesus’ response was, they will fast when the time is right.

Personally worship God

This is not corporate worship, but this is me and God. Personal worship enhances our spiritual, corporate worship. We were created for God’s glory. Get out of bed asking, “How and when will I spend quality one on one time with God today?” Out of that flows Christian living. Attribute worth to God. You can send personal worship love notes—they are called prayers! Attribute worth. Give him majesty, splendor.