

SESSION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

1. The Heart of the Christian life:

- Glorifying God Isaiah 43: 6-7. Ephesians 1: 3-14.
- Knowing God. John 17: 1-5. Galatians 4:8-9.
- Becoming like God Ephesians 4: 22-24, 5: 1-2.

2. The Christian life and growth: 2 Peter 3: 18

Read. 2 Peter 3: 18

What does this verse teach us about the Christian life?

Why do you think Peter talks about grace as well as the knowledge of Christ?

What are the implications of the verb 'grow' – its meaning and its form (a command).

3. Our growth in joy and God's glory

- God's plan to give us joy (and hope) Romans 15: 4, 13; 2 Corinthians 1:24, Philippians 1:25, 1 Peter 1:8, 1 John1:4, John15:11, 17:13.
- Delighting ourselves in God: Psalm 37:4; Psalm 32:11
- Understanding that God is glorified in us as we are satisfied in him.

4. **How we grow:**
God's Change Agents, the Word and the Spirit, working through and in

- **Other People, especially the church community** (Ephesians 2: 21, 3: 17-19)
- **Circumstances** (Romans 8:28, Hebrews 12: 4-13)
- **Personal Discipline** (1 Tim 4:7)

Disciplines of obedience (John 15: 9-12 etc).

Disciplines of devotion (2 Corinthians 3: 18. Romans 12: 1-2)

Group Work

1. 1 Timothy 4:7 'discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness' (NASB). How do you feel about the word 'discipline'? What associations does it have for you? How does our culture view the concept of 'discipline'? What is actual your experience of 'spiritual disciplines' – positive, negative or a mixture?
2. God wants us to be happy in him. What do you think of this statement? What does it mean to be satisfied by God? 'God is most glorified in us when we are most happy in him.' What do you make of this assertion?
3. Put your answers to questions 1. and 2 together. What is the relationship of spiritual disciplines to the purpose of the Christian life? How is this different to the way you have understood 'quiet times'?
4. Spend some time in praise to God and prayer for each other.

For Personal reflection

What have I learned this evening?

What does God want me to do in response?

Assignment for the week

Say the Lord's Prayer at least once each day this week (Luke 11: 1-4 plus 'Thine is the kingdom..').

Next week we'll share what kind of an experience this has been!