

Missional COMMUNITY GR:UPS

HABITS OF GRACE | DISCUSSION GUIDE – WEEK 1

OPEN

- **Recap!** As you begin, check with your group to make sure everyone did the reading this week (Forward & Intro). If anyone missed it, ask someone to give a quick recap.
- **Ice Breaker!** Have you ever studied the spiritual disciplines before? Prior to our reading this week, what was the first thing that came to mind when you heard “spiritual disciplines?”

BOOK DISCUSSION

- This book is all about understanding and practicing the spiritual disciplines or “habits of grace.” In your own words, what are “spiritual disciplines”? How would you explain them?
- In our reading this week, we’re given some metaphors to help us grasp how the disciplines work in our lives: pipelines (p13), light switches (p25), and water faucets (p25). What do these teach us about the disciplines? What role do they play in our lives? What role does God play in our lives through them?
 - Read **Luke 18:35-42**. What role did the blind man’s effort play in his healing? What role did the grace of Jesus play? How do you see similarities to the disciplines here?
- On p30, Mathis teaches us that purpose of the disciplines is to know and enjoy Jesus. He writes – “When all is said and done, our hope is **not** to be a skilled Bible reader, practiced pray-er, and faithful churchman, but to be the one who ‘understands and knows [God]...’”
 - Do you think it’s possible to be a disciplined Bible-reader/pray-er/churchman without truly knowing and enjoying Jesus? (*Consider the Pharisees in Matt 23:27-28*)
 - How can we prevent this from happening as we walk through this study? How can we make sure to keep the main thing (enjoying Jesus) the main thing?
- In the forward, John Piper unpacks the idea of “enjoying Jesus” like this – “If you enjoy Jesus more than life, you will live with a radical abandon for Jesus that will make the world wonder. Enjoyment of Jesus is not like icing on the cake; it’s like power in the shell.” (p12)
 - What do you think this means? What do you think a person who enjoys Jesus this way look like practically (what to they do, how do they live, etc)?
- **Let’s Get Personal!** Take a moment to evaluate your habits of spiritual discipline. What do they look like in your life right now? How often do you study the Bible? Pray?
 - How is your spiritual health right now? If the disciplines are ways “God has given for drinking at the fountain of life” (p13), are you in a drought right now or well-watered?
 - What is your greatest area of unhealth in your spiritual life right now? How are you most wanting to grow there during our time studying this book?
- **Let’s Pray!** Close the evening by praying together over these “areas of unhealth” that have been shared. Ask God to help us drink deeply of his grace as we pursue him in the disciplines.
- **Homework!** Read Chapters 1-2 (p37-54) and come ready to discuss next time.