

LOST

Sermon Title: *An Introduction to Spiritual Disciplines*

Speaker: David Baumgartner

Main Passage: Romans 12:2

Date: May 16, 2010

TAKE OFF

- » Share a time when you've been really lost. This might have been a time when you got separated from a parent when you were a child or a time when you got lost hiking, etc. How did you feel? What did you do?
- » If you watch the TV show **LOST**, share with the group what you like about the show (don't be a spoiler if there are some who haven't seen it). Do you see any spiritual applications in the show?
- » What have you been taught about Spiritual Disciplines in the past? Have you had generally positive or negative experiences with them? Why do you think that is? What do you hope to get out of the next 13 weeks?

IN-FLIGHT DISCUSSION

- » In your spiritual life, do you think you are just "spiritually surviving" or are you doing better than that (or worse)? What would it mean for you personally to be "spiritually thriving"?
- » Read **HEBREWS 5:11-6:1** out loud. Paul is calling his readers spiritually immature, they aren't growing up like they should be. Where do you think you are on the spiritual growth path? Newborn, Infant, Toddler, Teen, Adult, Mature? How do you think you grow and develop in your Christian walk? How has that happened in the past?
- » David read the following quote from page 7 of Richard Foster's book *Celebration of Discipline*:

"God has given us the Disciplines of the spiritual life as a means of receiving His grace. The Disciplines allow us to place ourselves before God so that He can transform us...by themselves the Spiritual Disciplines can do nothing; they can only get us to the place where something can be done. They are God's means of grace."

Discuss your reactions and thoughts about this quote and the principles Foster brings to light regarding Spiritual Disciplines.

- » We will be unpacking the following twelve Spiritual Disciplines during this sermon series:

Inward Disciplines

1. Meditation
2. Prayer
3. Fasting
4. Study

Outward Disciplines

5. Simplicity
6. Solitude
7. Submission
8. Service

Corporate Disciplines

9. Confession
10. Worship
11. Guidance
12. Celebration

Which of these have you had experience with? Share your experience(s)—both positive and negative.

Which are new to you? Are there any you are dreading? Any you are excited about learning and experiencing?

- » Read **ROMANS 12:2** and **PSALM 42:1-2** out loud and discuss as a group. How does this passage apply to Spiritual Disciplines? What do you think is the end-goal of going through these disciplines? Have you thought about them as a means for growing spiritually and deepening your relationship with God? Why/why not?
- » Take a look at the twelve Spiritual Disciplines listed above and do a quick survey of Scripture on some of the items on the list you aren't very familiar with (or that you want to know more about). What does Scripture say about them? Who used them in their spiritual life? Do you see any particular guidelines or warnings?
- » Do you think you typically have a **Philosophic** (don't think they really work) or **Practical** (don't know what to do) issue when it comes to Spiritual Disciplines? Why do you think that is? What can you do about it? Discuss.

living beyond spiritual survival

LANDING THE PLANE

- » Share with the group the Spiritual Discipline (or two) that you think you need to work on the most (either because you've never done them, are "afraid" of them, or simply don't know anything about them). How can the group help you work on integrating that discipline into your spiritual life?
- » Time tends to be a major reason that people struggle with practicing many (if not all) of the Spiritual Disciplines. As a group, brainstorm ways that you can make time in your life so that you can include these important elements in your spiritual life. Be creative, but also remember that it will likely involve a sacrifice or two (i.e.: giving up a TV show or three).
- » If you've had an especially hard time with one or two of these disciplines in your own life—or if you aren't growing like you should be—spend some time confessing that to the group and asking them to pray for you and keep you accountable.
- » At the end of the sermon, David challenged us to prepare for the voyage we'll be taking together through this series. Talk about ways you think you can/need to prepare yourself and then spend some time together in prayer asking God to prepare you for the journey ahead (including asking Him how you can better prepare).
- » As a group, discuss the danger of turning Spiritual Disciplines into legalism. How does that happen? How can we guard against it? Share any experience you've had with legalism in the past.
- » Are there any unanswered questions, thoughts, or ideas we haven't discussed yet? Don't be shy...someone else is probably just waiting for you to get the discussion started.
- » Next week we start talking about "Meditation". If you're going to read *Celebration of Discipline* as we travel through this series, you'll want to read through Chapter 2 (up to page 32) this week. Try and read the Introduction this week as well.
- » Whether you are reading Foster's book or not, do your own personal Bible study this week about "meditation". You might even include some study on how other religions use meditation. How does this differ from how Christians can/should use it? Does the idea of meditating freak you out? Why do you think that is?

CARING COMMUNITY

- » **SHARE** with the group how God has been speaking into your life or challenging you this past week (this may be as a result of the sermon or something in your personal journey). Is there anything from this week's LifeGroup discussion you need to work on?

- » Are there any **NEEDS** you have coming up in your life that the group can help you with (this may include spiritual needs, life needs, pretty much anything...)

- » **PRAY** for one another. Share your requests and praises with one another. Write them down here. If you commit to praying, please be sure you do it...

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