



CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

THE DISCIPLINE OF SUBMISSION - “Take up your cross”

- a. Submit yourselves to God! (James 4:7; Heb. 12:9)
- b. Submission = freedom from always needing our own way. It is the path to wisdom (James 3:17).
- c. Self-denial vs. self-hatred = putting others' interests above our own vs. self-pity
- d. Jesus practiced submission. (Heb. 5:7). Kenosis – emptying yourself (Phil. 2:3-9).
- e. Taking up your cross is the path of submission (Mark 8:34).
- f. Submit to the **Holy Spirit** (Rom 8:6-8).



THE DISCIPLINE OF SUBMISSION - “Take up your cross”

- g. Submit to the government (Romans 13:1; Heb. 13:17; 2 Peter 2:13-18).
- h. Submit to Church leadership (1 Cor. 16:15-16).
- i. Submit to those whom society has placed over you (Eph. 5:21-27; 1 Cor. 14:33-34; 1 Tim. 2:11; 1 Pet. 5:5).
- j. The Limits of Submission (Foster, 121). Is there room for righteous rebellion? Revolution? When is the doctrine of submission being used to subjugate others?



“Revolutionary
subordination commands us
to live in submission to
human authority until it
becomes destructive.”
(Foster, 124)



THE DISCIPLINE OF SERVICE – “Take up your towel”

- The principle of service. “Love one another.”

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. Gal. 5:13

Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, 8 because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free. Eph. 6:7

The Gift of Service

- a. Obedience is too often overlooked in the Protestant emphasis on Grace over and against Law. The Apostle John especially calls us to a life of obedience. (2 John 1:6; cf. 1 John “obey his commands”)
- b. The Example of Service. “Foot-washing” (John 13:14-17).
- c. The Command to Service and Humility (Deut. 13:4; Matt. 20:25-28).
- d. Every Gift of the Spirit must be used in service to others in the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:4-7; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).
- e. There is a specific gift of service as well (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:28).
- f. Leadership is a position of service not power (1 Pet. 5:1-3).

Because leadership is
necessarily an exercise in
authority, it easily shifts into
an exercise in power. The
minute it does that, it begins
to inflict damage on both
leader and led.
(Eugene Peterson)



The Gift of Service

- g. Paul considered his own title to be “servant of Christ” (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; cf. 1&2 Corinthians). Yet even Paul’s servitude was ultimately a gift of grace from God (Eph. 3:7).
- h. As servants we are called to avoid disputes (2 Tim. 2:24-26).
- i. Types of Service:
 - i. Service of small things.
 - ii. Service of being served.
 - iii. Service of common courtesy.
 - iv. Service of hospitality.
 - v. Service of listening.
 - vi. Service of bearing each other’s burdens.
 - vii. Service of sharing the gospel

Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual gifts are divine abilities distributed by the Holy Spirit to every believer according to God's design and grace for the common good of the body of Christ.

(What You Do Best in the Body of Christ by Bruce Bugbee, Zondervan Press, page 38).

Spiritual Gifts Passages					
Romans 12:6-8	1 Corinthians 7:7	1 Corinthians 12:8-10	1 Corinthians 12:28	Ephesians 4:11	1 Peter 4:9-11
Prophecy	Marriage	Wisdom	Apostles	Apostles	Whoever renders service
Serving	Celibacy	Special knowledge	Prophets	Prophets	Whoever speaks
Teaching		Faith	Teachers	Evangelists	
Encouraging		Gift of healing	Miracles	Pastor-teacher	
Giving/ contributing		Miracles	Gift of healing		
Leadership		Prophecy	Helps		
Kindness/mercy		Distinguishing between spirits	Leadership/ Administration		
		Tongues	Tongues		
		Interpretation of tongues			

Spiritual Gifts – Key Notes to Remember

1. They are distributed by the Holy Spirit
2. Every believer receives at least one
3. They are not for you, but for the edification of the Body of Christ
4. God has given every church what it needs at any given time through the gifts

Spiritual Gifts – Key Notes to Remember

5. Some pastoral reflections on spiritual gifts
 - a. Most people have a tendency to project their particular gift on others (as a form of expectation)
 - b. One of the best ways to identify your spiritual gift is not by taking a survey, but by asking those who work with you
 - c. Another clue to helping identify your gift is to ask, “What frustrates you?”
 - d. As a leader of volunteers, your job is to get the right people in the right position, based on their gifting