

# How to hear from God through spiritual disciplines (series intro)

1 Timothy 4:7-8 | Hebrews 12:5-14 | Luke 18:35-43

## INTRO:

Reflect on a time when you worked hard to achieve a goal. What role did training and discipline play in your success? Could you have reached your goal without them? Why or why not?

## 1 Timothy 4:7-8 CSB

[7] But have nothing to do with pointless and silly myths. Rather, ***train yourself in godliness.***

***(NASB) discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;***

[8] For the ***training*** of the body has limited benefit, but ***godliness is beneficial in every way***, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

## ***How do we hear from God?***

Donald Whitney says there are three primary catalysts for which God speaks to us and changes us:

- 1) Through **people**
- 2) Through **circumstances**
- 3) Through **spiritual disciplines**

## ***What are some of the spiritual disciplines?***

Prayer, fasting, silence/solitude, reading|studying|meditating on scripture, being in community(accountability & worshipping together), confessing sin, using your gifts to serve the local church to name a few.

***Sidebar:*** The first 2 stem from how we do with 3.

**If we're practicing the spiritual disciplines (3) then, how we respond to our 1's (people) & 2's (circumstances) will be in check.**

If not, how we view **people (2)** (or the health of our relationships) & our **circumstances (3)** will be out of whack.

## **BIG IDEA**

The spiritual disciplines are designed to help us grow in godliness and deepen our relationship with Christ. **They are not the ultimate goal but rather the means—pathways** that lead us toward the ultimate purpose of knowing and drawing closer to Him.

Spiritual Disciplines = **Path**

Spiritual Growth (closer to God & becoming more like Christ) = **Purpose**

## 1. MESSAGE POINT:

**Spiritual discipline is essential. Without it, you cannot grow spiritually or truly hear from God.** (Hebrews 12:5-14)

### SCRIPTURE:

#### Hebrews 12:5-14 NLT

[5] And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the LORD's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. [6] **For the LORD disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.**" [7] As you endure this **divine discipline**, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father?

If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. [9] Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever? [10] For our earthly fathers

disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how.

**[11] But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness.**

**No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening-it's painful!** But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of **right living** for those who are **trained** in this way.

[12] So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. [13] **Mark out a straight path for your feet** so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong.

[14] Pursue peace with everyone, and **holiness, for without it you will not see the Lord.**

## 2. MESSAGE POINT:

**A person's true desire to hear from God is revealed by their hunger for Him. (Luke 18:35-43)**

When someone deeply craves something, they go to great lengths to **pursue** it and **position themselves** to receive it.

If you are genuinely **hungry** for Jesus, you will do whatever it takes to **seek** Him and **place** yourself in His presence.

### SCRIPTURE:

#### **Luke 18:35-43 NLT**

[35] As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind beggar was sitting beside the road. [36] When he heard the noise of a crowd going past, he asked what was happening. [37] They told him that Jesus the Nazarene was going by.

So he began shouting, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" [39] "Be quiet!" the people in front

yelled at him. But he only shouted louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

When Jesus heard him, he stopped and ordered that the man be brought to him. As the man came near, Jesus asked him,

[41] **"What do you want me to do for you?" "Lord," he said, "I want to see!"**

[42] And Jesus said, "All right, receive your sight! **Your faith has healed you.**" [43] Instantly the man could see, and he followed Jesus, praising God. And who saw it praised God, too.

**SIDEBAR:** While you may not have control over certain circumstances, **you do have control over whether or not you choose to place yourself in God's presence.**

## **PERSONAL DISCUSSION & REFLECTION:**

1. Reflect on a time when you worked hard to achieve a goal. What role did training and discipline play in your success? Could you have reached your goal without them? Why or why not?

2. Why is spiritual discipline crucial for our relationship with Christ and spiritual growth? How does it help us hear from God more clearly? Conversely, how might a lack of spiritual discipline hinder our ability to hear from Him?

3. Consider the blind beggar's determination to be in God's presence. How did his actions demonstrate a deep hunger for God? How might your life change if, instead of making excuses, you pursued God's presence with the same passion and urgency as the blind beggar?