

# HOW TO HEAR FROM GOD?



LEARNING HOW TO THINK



## INTRO | WHAT IS DISCIPLINE?

- What do you think of when you think of discipline?
- Do you think of a time you got spanked by your parents because you did something you weren't supposed to, or was there a time you acted up in class and were called out into the hallway, perhaps it was time-out, or getting your phone taken.
- All of these things are familiar forms of discipline.

## THERE ARE 2 DIFFERENT FORMS OF DISCIPLINE BIBLICAL AND WORLDLY

- Webster's Dictionary defines discipline as: "the practice of training oneself or people to obey rules or a code of behavior, often using punishment to correct disobedience."
- How I have defined discipline: "Discipline is the practice of training oneself to be intentional with all the time and ability they are given."

# WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLINE?

- Source of Authority, Purpose, Motivation, Methods, and End Goal.

## MOTIVATIONS OF DISCIPLINE

- Worldly Discipline: often motivated by fear of failure, a desire for control, competition, or social approval. Worldly discipline is not built on a firm foundation, and often creates bad habits that lead to disobedience down the road.
- Biblical Discipline: seeks obedience through love, grace, and mercy. Biblical discipline creates a desire to reflect Jesus onto others, and seeks to correct disobedience in a way that restores and heals.
- **Ephesians 6:4 (AMP)**: “Fathers do not provoke your children to anger [do not exasperate them to the point of resentment with demands that are trivial or unreasonable or humiliating or abusive; nor by showing favoritism or indifference to any of them,] but bring them up [tenderly, with lovingkindness] in the discipline and instruction of the LORD.”
- **Hebrews 12:11 (ESV)**: “For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”

# NOW THAT WE HAVE A BETTER IDEA OF WHAT DISCIPLINE IS, WE CAN LEARN ABOUT THE DISCIPLINE OF **LEARNING HOW TO THINK**



SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES ARE NOT A “WORK”. SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES DON’T MAKE GOD LOVE YOU ANY MORE OR LESS. THE PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES ARE TO PUT US IN A POSITION TO WHERE WE CAN BETTER AND MORE CLEARLY HEAR FROM GOD.



- **Romans 12:2 (ESV):** “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewal** of your mind, that by testing you may be able to **discern what is the will of God**, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

## WHAT IS RENEWAL?

- Renewal is a transformation/restoration process that aligns our thoughts and actions with God.
- Renewal simply means to make new; to restore; to bring back to position something that has faded or disappeared.

## WHAT IS DISCERNMENT?

- Simply put, discernment is the ability to be able to determine what is from God and what is not.
- Discernment involves using wisdom, understanding, and spiritual insight to make decisions or evaluate situations in alignment with God’s Word and Will.

# THINK OF ALL THE INFORMATION YOUR BRAIN CONSUMES IN A DAY?

- American architect Buckminster Fuller wrote a book in 1982 called the “Critical Path” where he describes the rapid growth of knowledge by way of graph.
- Before 1900: Human knowledge doubled roughly every century.
- After World War II: Knowledge doubled every 25 years.
- 2013: Knowledge doubled every 13 months on average.
- Today: Knowledge is almost doubling every day.



OUR BRAINS ARE CONSTANTLY ABSORBING SO MUCH INFORMATION. MANY OF US HAVE TOO MUCH GOING ON IN OUR LIVES AND EVENTUALLY, IT ALL PILES UP INTO ONE BIG NOISY, CHAOTIC MESS AND WE’RE LEFT WONDERING WHY WE CAN’T HEAR FROM GOD.



WE AS HUMANS, ADULTS, KIDS, MIDDLE SCHOOLERS, HIGH SCHOOLERS, ETC. HAVE SIMPLY FORGOT HOW TO SLOW DOWN, AND THE CONSEQUENCE OF THAT IS WE’VE FORGOTTEN HOW TO THINK. WE’VE NEGLECTED THE RENEWAL PROCESS.

## HOW DO I RENEW AND DISCERN MY THOUGHTS?

- Renewing oneself requires you to come before God with repentance, it requires you to examine yourself humbly, it requires you to align everything you do, think, or say with God.

**Psalm 51:10:** “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”

# TAKE THOUGHTS CAPTIVE

**2 Corinthians 10:5 (AMP):** “We are destroying sophisticated arguments and every exalted and proud thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God, and we are taking every **THOUGHT** and purpose captive to the obedience of Christ.”

- What thoughts in your mind don't reflect Christ? What are you doing to stop/limit your impure thoughts?

# FOCUS ON THE THINGS OF GOD

**Philippians 4:8 (ESV):** “Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, **THINK** about these things.”

- What is the best way to get rid of impure thoughts? Replace them with pure thoughts.

# PUT OFF THE OLD SELF

**Colossians 3:8-10 (ESV):** “But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being **RENEWED** in knowledge after the image of its creator.”

- Get rid of sinful habits that your old sinful self was defined by. Let Jesus transform you from the inside out.

## APPLICATION

- Spend time DAILY in Scripture and prayer.
- Identify thought patterns that do not align with God's truth, and attack them with prayer and truth (Scripture).
- Get rid of distractions or things that keep you from pursuing after Jesus.
- Surround yourself with godly influences and accountability.

## SUMMARY



CONSISTENCY, DISCIPLINE, AND RENEWAL ARE KEY TO LEARNING HOW TO THINK. BY CONSISTENTLY APPLYING THESE APPLICATION POINTS TO YOUR LIFE, YOUR THINKING WILL INCREASINGLY REFLECT GOD'S PERSPECTIVE, THUS LEADING TO LASTING SPIRITUAL GROWTH.



WHAT WE SEE AFFECTS WHAT WE THINK. WHAT WE THINK ULTIMATELY DETERMINES HOW WE LIVE.

## CHALLENGE

- Read and study Romans 12. Look for any spiritual disciplines or commands from Paul that you could start applying to your life.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the difference between worldly discipline and Biblical discipline? Examples?
  - What is the purpose of spiritual discipline? How can spiritual disciplines help us in our walk with Christ?
  - What does it mean to renew your mind according to Scripture? (Romans 12:2)
  - How do we align our thoughts and actions with God's Word? Why is alignment with God's Word important when seeking to hear from God.
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# REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Have you / Do you struggle to hear from God?
- What lies or worldly influences might be hindering your ability to hear from God clearly?
- How do you personally guard your mind against distractions that can negatively affect your thinking?
- What practical steps can you take to renew your mind daily?
- How can meditating on Scripture or memorizing God's Word help you recognize voice?