

ICE BREAKER

- What comes to mind when you hear "spiritual disciplines"?
- How would you describe your past experience with the spiritual disciplines - regular Christian habits like Bible reading, prayer, etc.?
 - What has gone well? Has it been easy for you?
 - What have been some of your challenges? What has been hard? Biggest hurdles?

"3 Things":
- Thesis
- Question
- Takeaway

INTRO DISCUSSION

- What is a "spiritual discipline" (definition, not example), or "habit of grace"?
- How do the spiritual disciplines fit in with an understanding that the Christian life is entirely by grace?

In other words, over and over the Bible makes abundantly clear that we cannot earn our spiritual life or growth. It is entirely by God's grace. // What place then, if any, does effort or discipline have in our Christian lives?

- What is grace? (See Piper's definition, bottom of pg. 12)
 - Can you think of any Bible passages that help us as we think through a theology of Christian growth (sanctification) and the role of discipline in it?
 - [Rom 11:6; Jn 15:4-5; 1 Tim 4:7; Col 3ff; Phil 2:12-13; 1 Cor 15:10; Heb 13:20-21
- See 1st paragraph pg. 25; highlighted portion on bottom of pg. 25; see pg. 13.

THESES

- Observations? What was helpful? Disagreements? Additions (theses)?

- > Very Helpful = Distinction between means and ends.
 - What does it mean that the spiritual disciplines are means to something else, and not ends in and of themselves?
 - "If the so-called 'means of grace' are laid out as nothing more than duties, the hinge of sanctification is obligation." - Carson
 - Think: "Privileges ^{not} vs. duties."
 - Q: What difference does this perspective make practically of you in your use of the disciplines?
 - What then is the ultimate "end" to the spiritual disciplines? (Enjoying Jesus → to the glory of Jesus.)
 - Q: What are some good, but "short-sighted" "ends" for which we can pursue the disciplines? (eg, better prayer, Bible reader, maturity, understanding)

QUESTIONS

- Things you didn't understand or you'd like to discuss?

- Mathis talks about a "low grade guilt" we can exp. in our failure to meet our standards is doing the disciplines.
 - Q: Have you - do you - exp. this? // How does understanding the disciplines as means to an end help recalibrate and shift your emphasis / focus?

OTHER SUBJECTS

- Simplified form - 3 categories.
- Cultural pressure + the increased importance of the disciplines.

- Mission - What do the disciplines have to do with our mission as a church? see Piper, 1st and 2nd full paragraphs on pg. 12.

TAKEAWAYS

- What is something you'd like to gain from this study?
- How can being a part of this group - with others - help you?