

## ***A Lenten Challenge***

During this Lenten season we are going to get a taste of the *Spiritual Disciplines*. The spiritual disciplines are habits that Christians do to learn about God or experience his presence. Some of the ones listed below might seem familiar and you already practice them often. Some might seem new. Each discipline is a way of experiencing God's goodness or grace to us. Therefore, all of them have their place in our lives.

### **The Challenge**

Pastor Ashley and myself are challenging you to practice one of these habits weekly for the 7 Sundays of Lent. Choose one that you may struggle with or don't like. We would especially like to emphasize Sabbath/worship. If you struggle to attend church regularly on Sundays, we challenge you to make church a priority for the 7 Sundays of lent. Our hope is that by intentionally trying something new, God brings you a fresh awareness of himself.

### **Habits:**

*Scripture/Study:* Scripture is the Word of God meant to shape our lives. We as Christians should be diving into the Word of God regularly.

- Read the Bible at mealtimes.
- Memorize a Bible passage each week.
- Read a small devotional in the morning or evening.
- Join a weekly or Bi-weekly Bible Study.

*Prayer/Meditation:* Prayer is more than just talking to God. It is really about being in His presence.

- Once a week make a list of ways God has blessed you; pray through the list.
- Write a small prayer. Pray it once a day for Lent.
- Find a friend. Pray with them each day during Lent.

*Submission/Service:* This is the habit that reminds us, it is not always about us. By submitting to God and serving others, we remember God calls us into an active faith.

- Be generous; once a week do something generous without any thought of getting something back.
- Volunteer to help a ministry or charity weekly.

*Confession:* Perhaps the least favorite disciple and the most necessary. The gospel begins in confession. If we cannot admit we are wrong, we don't understand Christ. Confession is key for our growth in Christ.

- For one week, study and read Psalm 51, considering God's mercy, forgiveness, and cleansing.
- Once a week write "I am sorry" notes to people you did something to.
- For one week, begin and end your day with a confession, either concerning a wrong you have done or a truth you believe.

*Community:* Everyone needs someone else, especially when life isn't so great. God gave us community to help us. But if we don't invest in other people, they won't invest in us.

- Send 5 notes/messages once a week to people encouraging them.
- Have one long/meaningful conversation with a friend each week.

*Sabbath/Worship:* This at first seems like two different habits: Sabbath is about rest; worship is about praising God. And certainly, you can worship on different days than a Sunday. But both are about refreshing your soul, which makes them best friends.

- Worship: Make church a regular part of your week
- Actually, stop working on Sunday
- Do something enjoyable like a walk or bike ride on Sunday.
- Turn off the TV or devices
- Spend some time with others playing games, making food,

*Celebration:* This habit is about celebrating things God has done or enjoying God's blessings. Often done on Sunday, this can also be done

- Try making a special meal once a week. Bonus points if you invite family/friends to join you.
- Intentionally get together with friends once a month
- Do something you want to do, even if for 20 minutes once a week.
- Write a list of things that bring you joy. Try to cross off as many things in the 7 weeks of Lent