**Next Steps December 27, 2020**

**Four Spiritual Habits for the New Year**

What are spiritual habits?

* These are steps that you take on a regular and consistent basis for the purpose of personal spiritual growth
  + There are many that the Bible describes for us that are beneficial
  + Others have developed over time and have a Biblical basis to them

Spiritual Habit #1: Daily Scripture Reading

* Purpose: to know God’s word and how it applies to my everyday life
  + 2 Timothy 3:16–17, “16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”
* Process: as you read, identify areas that apply to your life
  + Ask God the Holy Spirit to bring to mind areas for you to apply to your life

**S.W.I.P.E.S.**

**S**in to confess?

**W**orship step to take?

**I**nstruction to obey?

**P**romise to claim?

**E**xample to follow?

**S**omething to thank God for?

Spiritual Habit #2 Breath Prayer

* Purpose: to help you keep your focus on the Lord throughout the day, especially in times of stress, anxiety, testing, or temptation
* Biblical Basis
  + 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 ,”16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
* Practice it daily
  + Find a verse that is meaningful to you that you will memorize
  + Write the verse down and post it on your mirror, car, beside your bed, in your wallet
  + Pray the verse

Spiritual Habit #3 Centering Prayer

* Purpose: to redirect attention of mind and heart to the Lord
  + Seek to quiet your attitude so that you are aware of the Holy Spirit’s presence with you
* Biblical Basis
  + Psalm 119:105, “Your word is a lamp to my feet   
    and a light for my path.”
* Example
  + Holy Spirit, I yield control of my mind, my body and my spirit to you
  + Galatians 5:16, “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”
* Example:
  + Holy Spirit guide me to bear fruit in all I say and do
  + Galatians 5:22–23a, “22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.”

Spiritual Habit #4 Fasting

* Purpose
  + To forego something in order to devote yourself fully to hearing from the Lord
* Biblical Basis
  + Matthew 6:17, “But you, **when you fast**,   
    anoint your head and wash your face.”
* Ways to Fast
  + Abstain from food and / or drink for one or more meals
  + Replace the meal time with time devoted to prayer
  + Restrict your diet to only fruits and vegetables for an extended period of time (some refer to this as a “Daniel Fast” from Daniel 1)
  + Abstain from media (TV, social media, radio, music, cell phones)

**Suggested Reading for 2021**

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