

Practice Matters: Forming Faith in Adult Life

What are the Spiritual Disciplines?

Spiritual disciplines are intentional practices given in Scripture that position believers to grow in Christlikeness and experience life with God.

1. Being With God

Moving from busy belief to intentional relationship

Many adults believe in God but struggle to consistently *be with Him*. Formation begins by structuring life around relational connection, not just information.

“You must arrange your days so that you are experiencing deep contentment, joy, and confidence in your everyday life with God.” — Dallas Willard

Core Disciplines:

Scripture, Prayer, Solitude & Silence

Practices to try:

- Daily Scripture and prayer rhythm (10–20 minutes, distraction-free)
- Practicing silence (2–5 minutes of stillness before God)
- Journaling with God (processing decisions, pressures, and prayer)
- Scripture before screens

Scripture:

Psalm 1:1–3
John 15:4–5
Luke 5:16

Key shift:

From *thinking about God occasionally* → to *building your day around being with Him*

2. Slowing Down (Sabbath & Margin)

Resisting hurry by intentionally creating space

The primary barrier to formation in adult life is not knowledge—it is **lack of margin**.

“Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day.” — John Mark Comer

Core Disciplines:

Sabbath, Fasting

Practices:

- Weekly Sabbath rhythm (half-day or full day set apart for rest and worship)
- Schedule margin on purpose (protect open space in your calendar each week)
- Limit overcommitment (intentionally say no to good things)
- Digital boundaries that create space

Scripture:

Exodus 20:8–10

Mark 6:31

Psalm 46:10

Key shift:

From *a full, reactive life* → to *a deliberately structured life with space for God*

3. Becoming Whole (Heart Formation)

Learning to bring your inner life to God

Adults often learn to manage behaviour while leaving the inner life untouched.
Spiritual formation is the **renovation of the heart**.

“The greatest need you and I have—the greatest need of collective humanity—is the renovation of our heart.” — Dallas Willard

Core Disciplines:

Confession & Repentance, Fasting

Practices:

- Naming your inner life before God (emotions, pressures, desires)
- Practicing confession and repentance
- Daily reflection or examen
- Examining your desires

Scripture:

Psalm 139:23–24
1 John 1:9
Romans 12:2

Key shift:

From *managing outward behaviour* → to *allowing God to transform your inner life*

4. Living in Community

Formation through relationships, presence, and hospitality

Adult faith drifts toward isolation unless it is intentionally built around shared life.

“We are not meant to live the spiritual life alone.” — Richard Foster

“Practicing hospitality is one of the clearest ways we make space for the kingdom of God in everyday life.” — John Mark Comer

Core Disciplines:

Community (Fellowship)

Practices:

- Consistent involvement in church community (Sunday + smaller setting)
- Pursuing spiritual mentorship and guidance
- Practicing presence
- Practicing hospitality

Scripture:

Hebrews 10:24–25

Acts 2:42

Proverbs 13:20

Key shift:

From *attending church occasionally* → to *building a shared life shaped by others*

5. Living on Mission

Moving from self-focus to outward love

Faith matures when it turns outward. Mission is not an event—it is a lifestyle of obedience.

“The test of spiritual life is not ecstasy but obedience.” — Richard Foster

Core Disciplines:

Service, Witness (Evangelism)

Practices:

- Regular, consistent service
- Relational evangelism
- Awareness beyond yourself
- Practicing generosity

Scripture:

Matthew 5:14–16
Matthew 28:19–20
Micah 6:8

Key shift:

From *a faith centred on yourself* → to *a life oriented toward others*

6. Embodied Faith

Following Jesus with real limits, bodies, and rhythms

Apprenticeship to Jesus includes learning to live within God-given limits—just as Jesus did.

“If you want to experience the life of Jesus, you have to adopt the lifestyle of Jesus.” — John Mark Comer

Core Disciplines:

Simplicity (Generosity)

Practices:

- Protecting sleep and rest rhythms
- Practicing technology boundaries
- Engaging in joy and delight
- Honouring physical limits

Scripture (Jesus' model):

Mark 1:35

Luke 5:16

Matthew 14:23

Key shift:

From *living beyond your limits* → to *living within the rhythms of Jesus*

Final Word

Most of us already feel like our lives are full enough.

What this is about is recognizing that your life is already being shaped—every day.

Your calendar is shaping you.

Your phone is shaping you.

Your habits, your routines, your patterns—they are forming the kind of person you are becoming.

The question is not *are you being formed?*

The question is *what is forming you?*

Spiritual disciplines are simply choosing to be intentional about that formation.

They are practices that open your life to God—so that over time, you don't just believe in Jesus, you actually begin to **become like Him**.

Small, consistent rhythms—especially in **time, attention, and relationships**—are what form a lasting faith.

As a starting point, pick one practice from above and try it for a few weeks. Over time add a weekly rhythm or an outward practice. Move slowly, inching your way to Christlikeness.

■ 1 daily practice: _____

■ 1 weekly rhythm: _____

■ 1 relational or outward practice: _____

If you want to dig into this topic more, here are some books to start with:

1. John Mark Comer - *Practicing the Way: Be with Jesus, Become like Him, Do as He Did*
2. Justin Whitmel Earley - *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms*
3. Richard Foster - *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*
4. Dallas Willard - *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*
5. John Mark Comer - *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*