

# 50 Days: Introduction



February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023

## Core beliefs of our church:

- **Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 5:18**: all of us are to be and to make disciples.
- A disciple is defined in **Matthew 4:19**: one who is following, being changed by, committed to the mission of Jesus, and walking it out where we live, play, and work.
- A disciple is made in relationship.
- A mature disciple is defined by relationship—love for God and others (**John 13:35**).

## The real reason for spiritual disciplines:

### 1. The disciplines are about growing and protecting our relationship with Jesus.

- Adding things that promote relationship.
- Subtracting things that create roadblocks.

**Hebrews 12:1-2 (NLT)** <sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. <sup>2</sup>We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting Him, He endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now He is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.

### 2. Why would I want to do that? Because Jesus is better than anything else.

- Because of what Christ has done for me.
- Because nothing compares to Jesus. He is best!
- Because to have a relationship with Jesus is to be alive forever.

**Philippians 3:7-11 (NLT)** <sup>7</sup>I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. <sup>8</sup>Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ <sup>9</sup>and become one with Him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with Himself depends on faith. <sup>10</sup>I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised Him from the dead. I want to suffer with Him, sharing in His death, <sup>11</sup>so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

### 3. To know Him produces abundant life—spiritual fruit.

**John 15:4-5 (NLT)** <sup>4</sup>Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. <sup>5</sup>"Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.

**John 7:37-38 (NLT)** <sup>37</sup>On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, "Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! <sup>38</sup>Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.' "

**John 10:10 (NLT)** <sup>10</sup>The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

## The Bottom Line: **"With"**

**Micah 6:6-8 (NLT)** <sup>6</sup>What can we bring to the LORD? What kind of offerings should we give Him? Should we bow before God with offerings of yearling calves? <sup>7</sup>Should we offer Him thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins? <sup>8</sup>No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what He requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly **WITH** your God.