

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINES
LIFEGUIDE® BIBLE STUDY

Living the Way
God Wants You To Live
12 Studies
for individuals or groups

by
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LifeGuide Topical Bible Studies - Christian Disciplines.

Introducing Christian Disciplines

Fast-food restaurants. Rapid weight-loss diets. Instant 24-hour banking. Getting rich quick. Today's society looks for instant gratification and results. More. Better. Quicker. Richer. Often the values of society shape our view of discipleship. We demand instant godliness, overnight "success" in the Christian life. As a result we end up discouraged and frustrated by the shallowness of our walk with God. Richard Foster spells out our dilemma: "Superficiality is the curse of our age. The doctrine of instant gratification is a primary spiritual problem. The desperate need today is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people" (*Celebration of Discipline* [New York: Harper & Row, 1978], p. 1).

Christian Disciplines is designed to strengthen your foundations in Christ and deepen your relationship with him. We have prepared twelve inductive Bible studies which will help you grapple with the basic disciplines of the Christian life. *Discipline* is not a very popular word today. We tend to think only of its negative connotations—of rules, punishment, limitations on our freedom, and legalism. We have somehow lost the positive biblical emphasis on discipline which leads to freedom and joy in the Holy Spirit. Paul's instruction to Timothy reminds us of the importance and value of a disciplined life: "Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come" (1 Tim. 4:7-8).

While dealing with the foundational disciplines of the faith, we have also sought to cover a wider range of topics which are crucial for the body of Christ in this generation: missions, cross-cultural ministry, social justice, and managing time and gifts. Although the studies in this guide are arranged in a particular sequence, please feel free to change the order to meet your needs.

Our prayer is that in the midst of a turbulent world, God will use this guide to establish you in his truth so that the Lord Jesus may commend you as he did the church at Thyatira: "I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first" (Rev. 2:19). May God keep us from complacency, and may we press on to know him more deeply and obey him more fully!

Notes: