

devil wants is for you to come to realize this truth, for the glory of God is at stake in your life through your conformity to it. This is because **the degree** of your practical **sanctification** is largely related to the **disposition of your heart before God**, and therefore your spiritual awareness of your life in relation to God and others, as you live out your daily life. It is imperative then to be **focused in your daily life** on this great purpose of God in your life, His process of making you like Christ and causing you to bear the image in greater degree over time. Therefore to deal with your heart attitude, your disposition and posture before God and others, is the first and foremost priority in daily Christian living. And so the **renewing of the mind** is of utmost importance here. We must be **renewed in this great heart attitude of humility**, having cast down our high thoughts of self (pride), and looking to the power and presence of God to live the daily Christian life of virtue, which puts the glory of God on display as we bear His image. Often times this spiritual growth (or sanctification) looks like growth downward, the downward progression of humility, as we **establish a servant's mindset**, and a humble and contrite heart attitude toward God and others. This is how Jesus described becoming **“great in the Kingdom of God.”**

Matthew 20:26-28 - 26 "It is not so among you, but **whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, 27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave;** 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. " NASB

Therefore we must continually renew our minds with this knowledge of God's purpose in our life and be equipped in the war that is taking place in our daily lives. As we learned back on pages 52 and 53, **the mind is the battlefield in the war against sin**, and we must be renewed in our minds daily by the Word, looking to God in faith to live out the Christian life. Our minds must be focused on God and His will, that is, the knowledge of God and His Kingdom, each day to live and walk in all of His ways.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 - 3 For though we walk in the flesh, **we do not war** according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are **destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,** NASB

We are taking the **“thoughts captive”** in order to live in **obedience to Christ**. Therefore our thoughts need to be renewed and fixed upon God and His ways, and His wonderful work in us through the Word and by the Spirit. We must **mortify** the old man of sin (**put off**) and **vivify** the new man of righteousness (**put on**) each day in our minds.

Ephesians 4:22-24 - 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness** of the truth. NASB

Colossians 3:9-10 - 9 Do not lie to one another, since **you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One** who created him NASB

We must remember who we are (the saints and children of God), and humble ourselves daily before God (our heart attitude), looking to the power and presence of God (our union with Christ and God by the indwelling Spirit) to live an obedient life (God dependent effort), that puts His glory on display by the way we live (image bearing). This daily renewal of the mind is **vital** to living an effective and fruitful Christian life. It also puts us in the place of maximum blessing and equips us to live the powerful spiritual life of the Spirit. The Bible calls this daily pursuit **“walking in the Spirit,”** (Rom 8:1-14, Gal 5:16-18). It is of utmost importance that you learn to be **disciplined in this practice**, to the point that you train yourself to live in this godliness and walk in God's ways. This is where the **basic disciplines of Christian life** are so important.

The 3 Basic Disciplines of Christian Life

Effective Christian living is not something that happens effortlessly. We are called to follow Christ, that is, to actively live the way He does, to go where He goes and do what He does. We are disciples of Christ, that is, followers who have been disciplined or trained in the **school of Christ**. There are important facets of daily Christian living that Jesus and the Apostles taught us that require discipline and training, they require rigor and restraint to carry them out. One **definition of discipline** is;

An activity, exercise, or a regimen that develops or improves a skill; rigorous training.

In this sense, Christian life is seen as training in godliness, training to become like God in character and practice. In his book “*Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*,” Donald Whitney gives at least 9 disciplines; Bible Intake, Prayer, Worship, Evangelism, Serving, Stewardship, Fasting, Silence and Solitude, and Learning. These of course are all things that we learned from Jesus as we saw Him live His life. But they are also things he taught His disciples about how to live, by living like He lived, or doing what He does. Each of these things, and others as well are all important things we are commanded to carry out in Christian living. Now I believe all of these are important and could be developed and understood in the context of each one. For example in my mind, **worship is the ultimate priority for Christian life**, and almost everything we do is an act of worship in the Christian life. But I believe that there are **three essential disciplines of the Christian life** that we must become skilled and disciplined at in order to live effective and fruitful lives to the glory of God. Without these three, our Christian life will definitely lack vital elements that it must have to be fully fruitful. They are;

- **daily meditation on the Word**
- **daily communion with God in prayer)**
- **regular fellowship with godly Christians),**

Now consider how these relate to sanctification and image bearing, and how they relate to the war against sin we wage by mortification and vivification, and how we live a humble life of dependence on God, rely on His power and presence to be like Him, through the Word and by the Spirit. If you are focused on God and His will (**daily meditation on the Word**), and daily seeking to live in dependence on His presence and power to walk in His ways (**daily communion with God in prayer**), and regularly being encouraged and encouraging others in this godly living (**regular fellowship with godly Christians**), then you are equipped for growing in sanctification and bearing the image in your daily life. These three disciplines are vital to and effective Christian life. It is imperative to be in God’s Word daily to nourish spiritual life.

Matthew 4:4 - 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, **'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'**" NASB

As we meditate on the Word regularly, it equips us with the knowledge of God’s will for our lives, and skills to **discern virtue from vice**, goodness from wickedness, and recognize the evil of indwelling sin so that it can be mortified by the Spirit. **A right understanding of God and His Word is vital to fruitful and effective Christian living**. Our minds must be informed and renewed by the Word in order to live the supernatural life by the Spirit in the Kingdom of God. We must come to **know the Word of God** and **understand God’s will** for our lives so that we might walk in it. We are called to this vigilance of **renewing the mind** in Scripture.

Romans 12:2 - 2 And do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is**, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. NASB
Colossians 3:1-2 - 1 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.** NASB