



# Breakthrough Disciplines

THE ANCIENT SECRET OF LIFE TO THE FULL

## Overview:

If you're looking for breakthrough in your everyday life – with thoughts, emotions, or habits – look to the ancient secret of spiritual disciplines.

## Lessons:

1. The Ancient Secret of Spiritual Disciplines
2. How to Pray for Breakthrough
3. How to Fast for Breakthrough
4. How to Pace Yourself for Breakthrough
5. How to Read Scripture for Breakthrough



# THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

*Find discipleship resources at [pursueGOD.org/Breakthrough-Disciplines](http://pursueGOD.org/Breakthrough-Disciplines)*

## TALKING POINTS

*If you're looking for breakthrough in your everyday life - with thoughts, emotions, or habits - look to the ancient secret of spiritual disciplines.*

- A spiritual discipline is a \_\_\_\_\_ that helps us grow closer to Jesus. **John 15:5, Galatians 5:22-23**
- Spiritual disciplines aren't about earning God's \_\_\_\_\_. The intention is not to get something from God, but to experience the \_\_\_\_\_ of life that comes from Jesus. **Philippians 3:7-8**
- The secret of breakthrough is a lifestyle of \_\_\_\_\_, not a momentary effort. Spiritual disciplines help us \_\_\_\_\_ our automatic responses to everyday life. **1 Timothy 4:7-8, Colossians 3:5,10**

## DISCUSSION

1. *In what areas of your life do you have the greatest discipline? How did you develop them over time and what was your motivation to do it?*
2. *Read Galatians 5:22-23. Which of the fruits do you see regularly in your life? Which ones do you need to grow more?*
3. *Read Philippians 3:7-8. What are some examples of the "garbage" you've elevated in your life? How does a growing relationship with Jesus change our perspective on everything?*
4. *What do athletes do to prepare for the big game? Share a time you were battle ready to face a challenge because you were connected to Jesus. Share a time you struggled to face a challenge due to complacency with Jesus.*
5. *Read 1 Timothy 4:7-8. What are some things that Christians tend to get hung up on that are useless and unimportant? What should we be putting our energy toward as Christians?*
6. *Read Colossians 3:5,10. What are some of your unhealthy automatic responses that you need to retrain to be more like Jesus?*

**NOTES**

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# HOW TO PRAY FOR BREAKTHROUGH

*Find discipleship resources at [pursueGOD.org/Breakthrough-Disciplines](http://pursueGOD.org/Breakthrough-Disciplines)*

## TALKING POINTS

*If you're looking for breakthrough in your everyday life - with thoughts, emotions, or habits - look to the ancient secret of spiritual disciplines. Train yourself on the spiritual discipline of prayer.*

- Find a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ that works for you. Start with 5 minutes a day, and work toward longer times with God. **Mark 1:35**
- Use \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to get focused on God. Start by praising or thanking God before you ask him for things. **Psalm 145:1-3; Matthew 6:9**
- If your mind \_\_\_\_\_ when you pray, don't panic. Let those thoughts help you focus on the things that need \_\_\_\_\_.
- Pray with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. God is not offended when we're honest about what's on our \_\_\_\_\_. **Hebrews 4:14,16**
- Pray with humility and submission. Learn to listen to God, and be ready to hear what's on his heart. **Matthew 6:10; 26:39**

## DISCUSSION

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1. Describe your current prayer life (How often, issues). What is most challenging to you when it comes to prayer?
2. Read Mark 1:35. Even Jesus had to get away to pray to avoid distraction. What is the best time and location for you to pray without distraction or interruption?
3. How does music speak to you? Do you have any Bible verses you've clung to in your life? Explain.
4. Read Psalm 145:1-3. Why should we start with praising God and thanking him? How might that influence what we ask God to do for us?
5. Review the PRAYER acronym. How can structure help you grow in the discipline of prayer? Why is each one important?
6. Share something that's weighing on your heart right now. How can you turn your wandering or fixation into a meaningful prayer?
7. Read Hebrews 4:14,16. God knows everything so why does he even need to hear our bold prayers? Share a time you boldly asked God for something and he answered.
8. Read Matthew 6:10 and Matthew 26:39. How can you slow down in prayer to hear God's perspective? What has it looked like in your life to submit to God's will over your own?



# HOW TO FAST FOR BREAKTHROUGH

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## TALKING POINTS

*If you're looking for breakthrough in your everyday life-with thoughts, emotions or habits-don't just try harder in the moment of crisis. Train yourself on the spiritual discipline of fasting.*

- Fasting can unlock \_\_\_\_\_ in the spiritual realm that will never happen in any other way. When you fast, you reaffirm your \_\_\_\_\_ on God's \_\_\_\_\_, not your own. **Mark 9:17-18, 28-29**
- Fasting is voluntarily \_\_\_\_\_ yourself of food or drink (or some other good thing) in order to focus on \_\_\_\_\_. You can fast alone or in a group, in \_\_\_\_\_ or in \_\_\_\_\_. **2 Chronicles 20:1-3, Matthew 4:1-2, Acts 14:23**
- Fasting is a \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ exercise. It's about releasing \_\_\_\_\_ to God, not obligating him to give us breakthrough on our terms.

## DISCUSSION

1. *Have you ever fasted before whether for spiritual reasons or another reason? How did you do?*
2. *Read Mark 9:17-18. What do you think the disciples were feeling when they were unable to cast out the demon? What was at stake for them when they failed?*
3. *Read Mark 9:28-29. What do you think Jesus means? What does it reveal about the disciples' view of their own abilities?*
4. *Share a time you relied on your own power to do something and failed. What would it have looked like if you sought God's power for that situation instead?*
5. *How does denying yourself food or drink impact your focus? Share how a time of fasting strengthened you in a tough time.*
6. *Read Matthew 4:1-2. What do you notice about Jesus' physical condition? Why do you think Jesus felt the need to fast for forty days and nights?*
7. *Read Acts 14:23. Have you ever fasted before making a big decision? Explain. How could fasting set you up for better decision-making?*
8. *Revisit Richard Foster's quote, "More than any other discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us." What are the things that would be hard for you to give up for a time? What do those things reveal about what you care most about?*
9. *Read Mark 9:21-23. Where do you need a new breakthrough in your life? How can you release control and take hold of God's power in a new way to overcome it?*

**NOTES**



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# HOW TO PACE YOURSELF FOR BREAKTHROUGH

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## TALKING POINTS

*If you're looking for breakthrough in your everyday life - with thoughts, emotions, or habits - don't just try harder in the moment of crisis. Pace yourself on three of the lesser-known spiritual disciplines.*

- A \_\_\_\_\_ life keeps us from being present enough to love God and people. "\_\_\_\_\_" is intentionally putting ourselves into situations that teach us to wait. **Matthew 17:4-5**
- A \_\_\_\_\_ life gives the world permission to shape us into its mold. "\_\_\_\_\_" is withdrawing from the constant barrage of stimulation (highs and lows) to let God \_\_\_\_\_ us. **Romans 12:2, Mark 6:30-31,45-46**
- A \_\_\_\_\_ life tempts us to use our words to control things. "\_\_\_\_\_" is choosing not to speak so you can hear from God and learn to \_\_\_\_\_. **Ecclesiastes 5:1-2, Isaiah 30:15, Psalm 46:10, James 3:2**

## DISCUSSION

1. *Share a time you were too caught up in your own stress you missed an opportunity to help someone you love (spouse, kids, friend, co-worker). What do you wish you would've done differently?*
2. *Why does it take slowing and patience to show genuine love for God and others? Share a time you sacrificed your own agenda to help someone else.*
3. *Read Matthew 17:1-5. How are you like Peter? What does "slowing" look like to you so you can really connect to and listen to God?*
4. *Read Romans 12:2. What are the "noises" in your life that have derailed your pursuit of God? What are some practical steps you can take to practice solitude in your week?*
5. *Mark 6:30-31, 45-46. Jesus is God and he needed time to rest and pray. Why do you think Jesus took that time for himself? How does that challenge you?*
6. *Review Foster's quote. On a scale from 1-10, how much of a control freak are you? Defend your answer. How have you been derailed in your life by staying entrenched in your own perspective that you couldn't even hear what God had to say?*
7. *Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-2. What are mindless offerings we give to God? What should our attitude be when we come into God's presence?*
8. *Read and memorize Psalm 46:10. Apply this to an issue you're facing right now. How will you be still and let God lead you through it.*





# HOW TO READ SCRIPTURE FOR BREAKTHROUGH

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## TALKING POINTS

*If you're looking for breakthrough in your everyday life - with thoughts, emotions, or habits - don't just try harder in the moment of crisis. Discipline your thought life with the spiritual habits around scripture.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ the Word is reading through someone else. What can you learn about a passage from a godly pastor or mentor?  
**Romans 10:17, Romans 1:17**
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Word (devotionally) is reading for \_\_\_\_\_. What does the passage mean for you today? **Revelation 1:3, 2 Timothy 3:16-17**
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Word is reading for \_\_\_\_\_. What did the passage mean in its original context? **Acts 17:11, John 8:32**
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Word is reading for \_\_\_\_\_. Will you be able to recall the passage in a moment of crisis? **Psalms 119:11, Matthew 4:3-4**
- \_\_\_\_\_ on the Word is reading for \_\_\_\_\_. Will you allow the Author of the passage to do his work within you?  
**Psalms 1:1-3, Hebrews 4:12, Romans 12:2**

LESSON #5 OF 5

## DISCUSSION

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1. Describe your relationship with the Bible currently. (Read it everyday, intimidated by it, occasionally, not sure it's relevant, etc).
2. Read Romans 10:17. When did you first hear the Gospel message? Who played a major role in helping you understand the message of the Bible?
3. Read Revelation 1:3 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17. What are these verses saying? Why do many Christians miss the "devotional piece" of reading God's word? What does it look like to approach the Bible looking for application, not just knowledge?
4. Read Acts 17:11. Why does context matter? Share a time your words were taken out of context. What were the consequences for that? How do Christians take Scripture out of context? What are the consequences for that?
5. Read Psalm 119:11 and Matthew 4:3-4. Share a verse you've memorized and have drawn strength from in times of crisis. How has speaking God's word during a crisis helped you through it?
6. Read Psalm 1:1-3. How have you mocked or ignored God's word in the past? What does it mean to delight in the law of the Lord? How will you grow in the discipline of reading the Bible this year?

