

Spiritual Discipline: Abstinence

2 Peter 1:5–7 (TNIV)

⁵For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.

1. How do you see the concept of “abstinence” embedded in today’s memory verse?
2. How would you define the Spiritual Discipline of Abstinence?
3. Reflect and comment on Dallas Willard’s quote from Bishop Wilson of the Isle of Man who said, “Those who deny themselves will be sure to find their strength increased, their affections raised, and their inward peace continually augmented.” (Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 159)
4. With Resurrection Sunday a couple of months away, many Christians choose to practice the Spiritual Discipline of Abstinence as a way to prepare for this holy day of worship. What is something that you might consider abstaining from in order to be more focused on God this Easter season?
 - a. Perhaps think of things that take up more of your time than they should
 - b. Perhaps think of something that you enjoy or desire so much that it is affecting your enjoyment of and desire for God
 - c. Perhaps think of something that would represent a sacrificial love gift to God
5. Abstinence is sometimes applied to one’s sexual life which is usually referred to as the Spiritual Discipline of Chastity. To practice this discipline, one purposefully turns away from dwelling upon or engaging in the sexual dimensions of our relationships to others – even our husbands and wives.
 - a. How might husbands and wives apply this discipline? (See 1 Cor. 7:5 for guidelines)
 - b. How might those who are dating apply this discipline?
 - c. How might single people who are not dating apply this discipline?

Special Challenge: As a K-group, why not agree on something that you could abstain from corporately in order to more radically pursue God together. Be sure and set a beginning and ending point to your discipline. Also, be sure and celebrate and reflect after the time period is complete.