

## “What If ...” Session IV

### “What if you only had 28 days left?” Practice Makes Perfect!

“What If” Mission Statement: The purpose of this class is to help you recognize the incredible resource you have been given called “time” and to embrace it and use it to its fullest potential.

Life change lessons so far:

1. Make God part of your everyday.
2. Be willing and wanting to change.
3. Begin becoming who God has destined you to be.

**John 3:30:** He must become greater; I must become less.

**1 Samuel 16:13:** So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power.

**1 Samuel 17:15:** ... but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep in Bethlehem.

**Job 23:9–10:** When he is at work in the north, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of him. But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.

**Hebrews 5:7–10:** During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

While in the pasture ... you're getting prepared!

**Hebrews 12:1–3:** Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

### What “Spiritual Disciplines” don't do:

- No discipline is able to create or start one's relationship with God. Nothing we do can do that; Christ did it already.
- No discipline can earn us heavenly brownie points, because there are no such brownie points to earn.
- No discipline gives us even the briefest moment of escape from our broken and imperfect nature.
- No discipline can make us more valuable as persons, or make us inherently more worthy as a leader. Your life may go smoother because of it, but it could get much rougher, and neither is really the point of practicing it.

## What are “Spiritual Disciplines”?

1. A habit or regular pattern in your life that repeatedly brings you back to God and opens you up to what God is saying to you.

**Question:** Has the church placed so much emphasis on making converts that we have neglected to make disciples?

**Revelation 3:2:** “Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.”

2. Practices given by God **to** be used as tools that allow us to cooperate with the Spirit through the task of “remaking” us into who God wants us to be.

**Spiritual Discipline Training Skill #1:** Love God first, then love what God loves.

*“Self-respect is the fruit of discipline: the sense of dignity grows with the ability to say no to oneself.”*  
— Abraham J. Heschel

**Spiritual Discipline Training Skill #2:** Act on what God shows you.

*“If you get the idea to do something good, just do it. It might be the Holy Spirit.”*  
— Mary Stearns Sgarioto

**Spiritual Discipline Training Skill #3:** Let God overcome your distractions.

**Spiritual Discipline Training Skill #4:** Focus on the things that matter most to God.

**Spiritual Discipline Training Skill #5:** Rest in the Lord.

**Spiritual Discipline Training Skill #6:** Know that it’s done in God’s power!

## 14 Spiritual Disciplines

Solitude, silence, fasting, frugality, secrecy, sacrifice, scripture study, prayer, service, submission, worship, celebration, fellowship and confession.

### Ask yourself:

1. What am I currently not doing that, if I did, would open myself up more to God's work of grace in my life?
2. What am I currently doing that, if eliminated, would open myself up more to God's work of grace in my life?

## Life Change Lesson Four: Live seeking more of God and less of ourselves.

Things to do for the next seven days:

- ✓ Read one chapter of Proverbs and five chapters of Psalms every day.
- ✓ Pray thanking God for the day He has given you and ask for His guidance every morning. Talk with Him and listen throughout the day. Close the evening considering what you accomplished in His name.
- ✓ Start a journal recording your thoughts, plans and goals for the next 28 days and record what happens each day.
- ✓ Look up scripture to find out what it says about the 14 spiritual disciplines listed above.