Small Group Guide

Connection: Prayer and Meditation
Growing as a Disciple (Part 2)
November 1, 2026

Overview

This week's sermon focused on what it means to take personal responsibility for growth in our walk with Christ. Rather than remaining passive consumers of church programs, disciples are called to actively pursue deeper intimacy with God through intentional habits and rhythms -- beginning with prayer and meditation on Scripture.

Key Takeaways

- A disciple commits to a lifetime of progress in becoming more like Christ, not just attending church or consuming its programs.
- The 2007 Reveal study found that spiritual growth stagnates when people fail to take personal responsibility for their own faith development.
- Galatians 2:20 sets the standard: the goal is not self-improvement but a complete reorientation of life around Christ living in us.
- Prayer is meant to be an ongoing, all-day conversation with God, not just a formal ritual.
- Christian meditation is the active engagement of the mind with Scripture -- reading, reflecting, praying over, and committing to apply God's Word.
- The Holy Spirit provides the divine power we need to grow; our job is to keep in step with him (Galatians 5:25).

Opening Question

Take a few minutes to check in with one another. Then start with this:

When you hear the phrase "growing as a disciple," what is the first feeling that comes to mind -- excitement, guilt, confusion, motivation, or something else? Why do you think that is?

Discussion Questions

On Taking Responsibility

1. The Reveal study found that many churchgoers had become passive in their faith -- attending programs but not growing deeper in their walk with Christ. Where do you see that tendency in yourself, and what do you think causes it?

2. The sermon described the difference between seeing Jesus as only a forgiver versus also embracing him as the leader of your life. How would you describe where you currently stand in that relationship? Has there been a moment when that distinction became clear to you?

3. Galatians 2:20 describes a life where Christ lives in us and we live by faith in him. How big is the gap between that description and your daily experience? What do you think narrows that gap?

On Prayer

4. The sermon described prayer as an ongoing, all-day conversation with God rather than a formal beginning-and-end routine. Does that picture feel natural or unfamiliar to you? What would it take to move toward that kind of prayer life?

5. The ACTS model of prayer covers adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication. Which of those four elements comes most naturally to you, and which do you tend to skip? Why do you think that is?

6. The sermon highlighted confession as an essential and often neglected part of prayer -- not just acknowledging sin but moving toward repentance and concrete action. How comfortable are you with making confession a regular part of your prayer life? What makes it difficult?

7. Psalm 46 calls us to be still and know that God is God. In the middle of a busy or overwhelming day, what would it look like practically for you to pause and simply rest in God's presence?

On Scripture and Meditation

8. The Reveal study concluded that personal engagement with the Bible is the primary catalyst for spiritual growth. On an honest scale, how would you describe your current relationship with Scripture -- distant, occasional, routine, or genuinely life-giving? What has shaped that?

9. The sermon drew a clear distinction between Eastern meditation, which empties the mind, and Christian meditation, which actively engages the mind with God's Word. How does understanding that difference change the way you think about building a meditation practice?

10. Psalm 119 describes God's Word as sweeter than honey and something to meditate on all day long. Have you ever experienced Scripture in that way -- as something you returned to throughout the day? What made that possible?

11. The sermon suggested a simple framework for meditating on any passage: ask what God is saying about himself, about you, and about his work in the world. Try applying that framework right now to Colossians 3:1-4. What do you notice?

Going Deeper

For groups ready to wrestle with harder questions:

- The sermon said that crossing the line into faith means committing to a life where it is "no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." In what specific area of your life does that feel most unresolved or incomplete right now?
- Accountability was mentioned as part of genuine repentance and growth. Do you have someone in your life who knows your real struggles and speaks honestly into your walk with Christ? If not, what is holding you back from pursuing that?
- If someone observed your daily habits this past week, what evidence would they find that prayer and Scripture are central to your life? What would they not find?

Practical Applications

Choose at least one of the following to put into practice before your group meets again:

1. Start a daily prayer rhythm. Choose a consistent time each day to pray using the ACTS model. Try it for one week and note what feels natural and what feels difficult.

2. Experiment with ongoing conversation. Rather than limiting prayer to a set time, try speaking to God briefly throughout the day -- during your commute, before a meeting, at a meal, or at the end of the day. Reflect on how it changes your awareness of God's presence.

3. Begin reading a book of the Bible. Start with Luke, Genesis, or Psalms if you are unsure where to begin. Read a passage each day and before you close it, ask: What is God saying about himself? What is he saying about me? What is he saying about his work in the world?

4. Pick one topic and trace it through Scripture. Choose something you are currently facing -- anxiety, a major decision, a relational conflict -- and look up what the Bible says about it. Let that shape your prayer for the week.
5. Practice stillness. Set aside five to ten minutes at some point this week to simply be quiet before God. No agenda, no list. Just acknowledge his presence and rest in it.
6. If you have children at home, try one of the following: pray aloud together as a family, encourage your children to pray for someone other than themselves, or pick up a copy of the Nurturing Faith at Home resource mentioned in the sermon.

Closing Reflection

Read Colossians 3:1-4 together as a group. Then close in prayer, asking God to show each person specifically what their next step looks like -- and asking the Holy Spirit for the strength to take it.

For Further Study

The sermon referenced several resources and passages worth exploring on your own:

- Galatians 2:20
- Romans 12:1
- Colossians 3:1-4
- 2 Peter 1:3
- Galatians 5:25
- Psalm 61:1-2
- Psalm 46:10
- Psalm 119:97, 103
- Joshua 1:8
- Ephesians 6:18
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- Daniel 10:12
- 2 Timothy 3:14-17