

Joys in Historic Christian Spiritual Discipline

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Three Main Domains of Human Learning



Cognitive



Affective



**Psychomotor
/Behavioral**

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Cognitive

Description

- This part of human learning involves mental capabilities including *factual knowledge and its use*. Throughout the Bible the Word, Jesus Christ, is our main focus and priority.
- Symbol: **HEAD**
- Biblical References:
 - + Deuteronomy 6:1-2, 4, 6
 - + Proverbs 10:14
 - + Matthew 22:29
 - + John 1:1; 14:21

Teacher Objective

- For a lesson on love: By next Sunday's class, each student will identify—verbally or in writing—at least one example of how to show Biblical love as defined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 at home, school, or work.
- By the end of this course, each student will recite by memory—verbally or in writing and without error—John 3:16 (NASB), and accurately explain the meaning of “only begotten Son.”

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Affective

Description

- This domain involves *the students' subjective emotional orientation*, including feelings, values, motivations, attitudes, and related emotive expressions toward the subject being taught.
- Symbol: **HEART**
- Biblical References:
 - + Deuteronomy 6:2, 4-6
 - + Romans 10:9
 - + Ephesians 4:23
 - + John 14:21

Teacher Objective

- For a lesson on growth in Christ-likeness (sanctification): In next week's class session at least 10 students in this course will report to me verbally that they have begun to read their Bible and pray at least once a day.
 - + Doing so demonstrates a voluntary motivation and approach tendency.

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: **Affective**

This domain of human learning is crucial. If we teach our students all they need to know about a subject cognitively, but they don't care or have any enthusiasm about it, are not moved by it, and are not inspired to use their knowledge, that knowledge will be of little or no use to God's Kingdom and his purposes; the students won't have the incentive to use what they've learned. That knowledge will thus be wasted. Affective objectives facilitate the vital dimension of human learning that involves emotion and feeling leading to a desire to approach rather than avoid the subject and motivation to put into action what is learned. But be careful.

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Affective

Think of how especially important this reality is for teaching the Word of God. We can help people cognitively understand passages from the Bible, and even their application to daily life, but if we don't help them develop a love for God and his Word, how likely are they to read it—on a regular basis—and be motivated to apply it in their lives each day, thereby demonstrating their love for God?

God's will is that we obey his Word. Jesus said, "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." (John 14:21) Thus, if we don't know his Word, how can we obey it and show our love him?

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: **Affective**

The word, heart, must be correctly understood as it is used in God's Word; it includes but refers to more than emotions. In the Bible the human mind and heart are connected and lead to behavior.

Furthermore, the heart must be considered in the light of Biblical anthropology. Since all human beings “have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), the “heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick....” (Jeremiah 17:9 ESV)

Therefore, do not “follow your heart” as worldly people urge. We must make the Word of God our priority.

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development

As the following passages are read, listen to discern a common theme running through all the texts:

- Deuteronomy 6:1,3,7
- Matthew 7:15-29
- John 15:8
- Ephesians 2:8-10
- James 1:22-25; 2:14-26

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Behavioral

Description

- This domain involves the students' *action on the subject in life settings*, their knowledge, attitudes, and skills learned now being applied to life. How do you want your students and parishioners to act in their lives as a result of your teaching God's Word, and how will you know for sure if they do? This very important aspect of learning is what educators refer to as transfer of learning—what I sometimes call going “from text to turf.”
- Symbol: **HANDS**
- Biblical References:
 - + Deuteronomy 6:1, 3, 7
 - + John 15:8; Ephesians 2:10
 - + James 1:22; 2:26; 1 John 5:2; John 14:21

Teacher Objective

- For a lesson on hospitality:
At every class session at least three students will talk with every visitor to the class and at no time will a visitor be left alone.

For help in writing objectives, see [“Christian Education Goals and Objectives with a Focus on Level III Objectives: How to Be Sure Your Students Are Understanding and Doing What You Have Taught Them.”](#)

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship

Orientations of Leaders

- **LEFT HEMISPHERE**

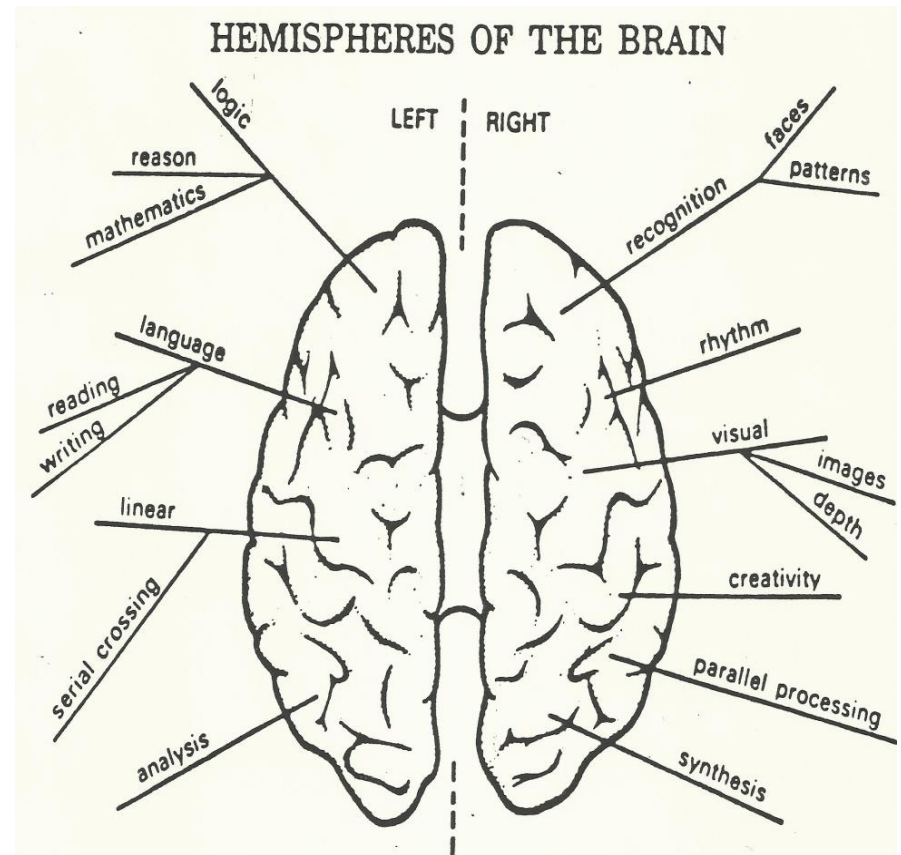
- + Cognitive/knowledge
- + Logical
- + Assertive, goal-oriented
- + Ordering & sequencing: Time conscious
- + Typically male/husband orientation (capable of both but oriented to left hemisphere)
- + Initiation of Structure focus

- **RIGHT HEMISPHERE**

- + Affective/Feelings
- + Emotional
- + Relational
- + Random exploration: Time free
- + Typically female/wife orientation (more capable of both but oriented to right hemisphere)
- + Consideration focus

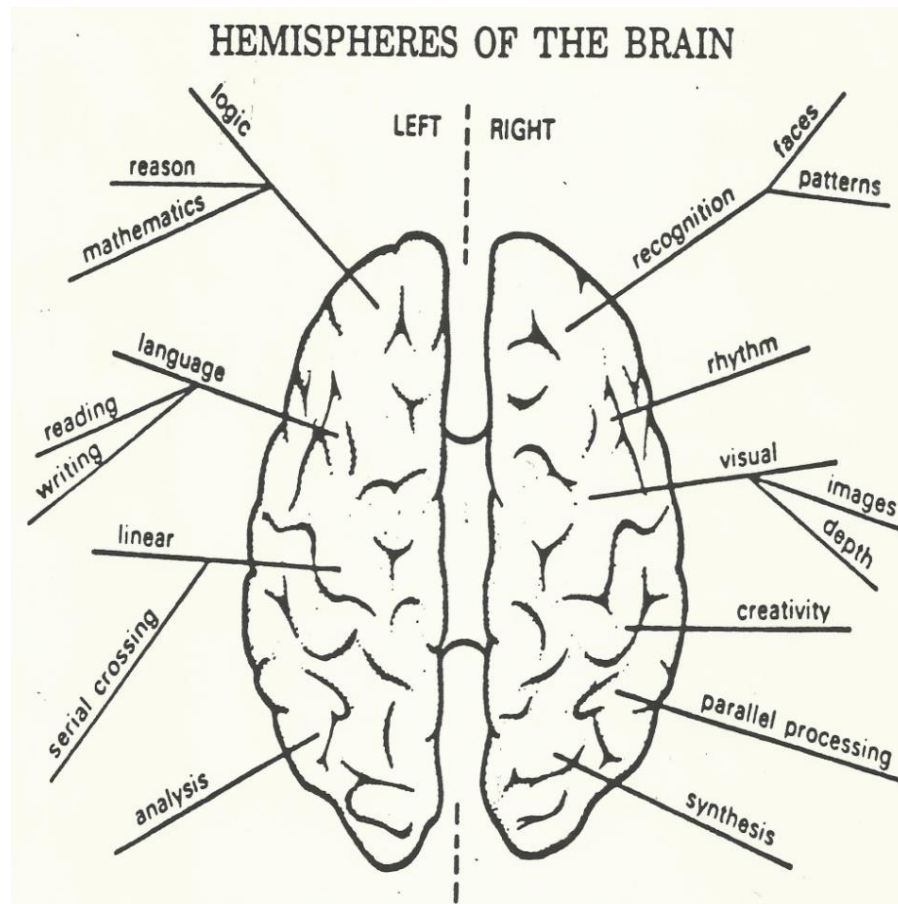
The Cerebrum

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The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship

Based in the Brain

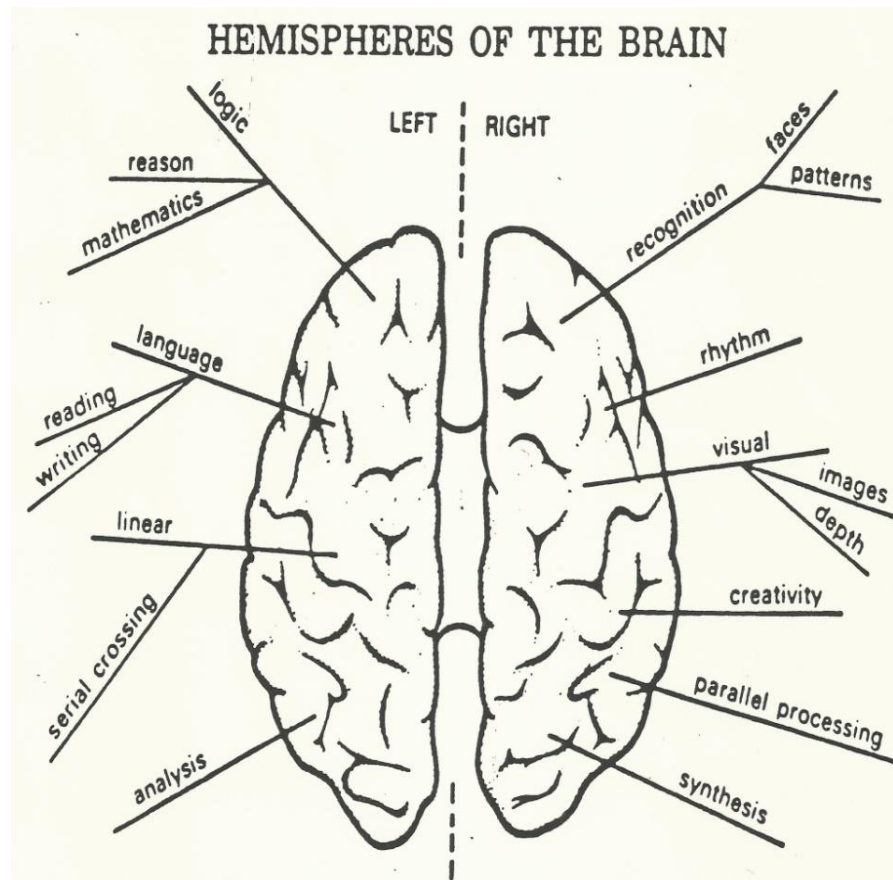


Mental Functioning

- Between the 16th and 26th weeks of gestation in the womb, the male Y chromosome triggers a flow of male hormones across the corpus callosum and the left hemisphere of the cerebrum, which causes males to become more oriented to the left hemisphere. They can use both but predominately employ the left hemisphere.

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship

Based in the Brain



Mental Functioning

- The three domains are centered, though distinguished, in the brain.
- Information about a subject is processed cognitively by the left hemisphere of the cerebrum.
- The right hemisphere processes feelings, emotions, and attitudes about the subject, visual and spatial functioning, and relationships.
- These two hemispheres don't operate independently of each other but interact across the 200,000,000 nerve fibers in the corpus callosum, the conduit, which connects both parts of the cerebrum. The resultant interaction engages the student's actions (symbolized by the hands).

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Male and Female Uniquenesses

Dr. Michelle Cretella, President of the American College of Pediatricians, cites sound science demonstrating that there are only two sexes, as revealed in the Bible. (Genesis 1-2). She further states that “There are 6,500 genetic differences between men and women.”*

Biologist Dr. Colin Wright explains: “The nature of biological sex...is connected to the distinct type of gametes (sex cells) that an organism produces...males are the sex that produce small gametes (sperm) and females produce large gametes (ova). There are no intermediate gametes, which is why there is no spectrum of sex. Biological sex in humans is a binary system.”** Very importantly, males are born with the XY chromosome and females with the XX chromosome, and no amount of hormones, surgeries, or other medical interventions can ever eliminate or change those chromosomes. This reality, combined with sin, has caused the abuse of girls and women in female restrooms and locker rooms when biological males have been allowed in those spaces.

* <https://tfpstudentaction.org/blog/dr-michelle-cretella-on-transgender-ideology> (Accessed 7/15/21).

** Mary Rice Hasson, “‘It Isn’t Hate to Speak the Truth’: J.K. Rowling Takes a Stand against Gender Ideology, and We Should Stand with Her,” *Our Sunday Visitor*, June 15, 2020 <https://eppc.org/publications/it-isnt-hate-to-speak-the-truth-j-k-rowling-takes-a-stand-against-gender-ideology-and-we-should-stand-with-her/> (Accessed 7/7/20)

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship

This observation of mental functioning is one of the main reasons why the cognitive and affective domains are understood to exist on a continuum.

- They are not discrete, separate, categories.
- Both the cognitive and affective domains reside in the human mind and contain elements of the other but to varying degrees depending on the subject and the individual. For example a man looking for a wife doesn't just notice factual information about a woman such as her height (e.g., 5' 4"); her eye and hair color; and the car she drives; he is also very much aware of how he feels about her.
- Also, most men are genetically oriented toward the cognitive domain, and most women are genetically oriented toward the affective. A PRACTICAL IMPLICATION AND APPLICATION: Ladies, don't take it personally when your husband or boyfriend doesn't hear you when he's [watching football!](#)

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship

That the cognitive and affective domains exist on a continuum and are not discrete, separate, categories, means that both domains lie in the human mind and contain elements of the other but to varying degrees depending on the subject and the individual.

- ***Think of how especially important this reality is with teaching the Word of God.*** We can help people cognitively understand passages of the Bible, and even their application to daily life, but ***if we don't help them develop a love for God and his Word, how likely are they to read it, and on a regular basis, and apply it in their lives each day?***

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship

Cognition

Affect

NOT

Cognition

Affect

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship

- The cognitive and affective domains combine to produce a behavioral response to the cognitive facts and the affective feelings about those facts. We can use this understanding to teach and live according to God's Word, thereby pleasing him.
- As we've seen, all three domains are included throughout the Bible, and many times all three are in the same verse. For example:

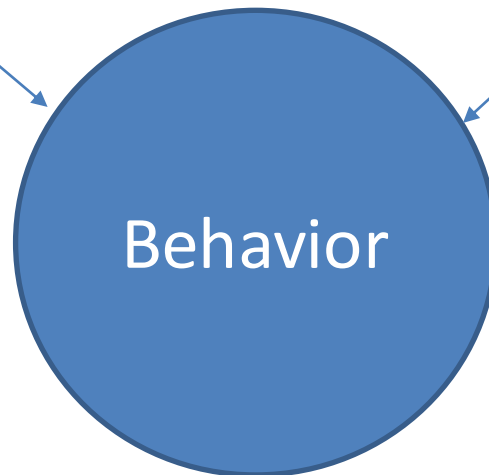
“...the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.” (Deuteronomy 30:14)

“Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” (John 14:21)

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship

Cognition

Affect



Behavior

The Three Domains of Human
Learning and Development:

**RESOURCES FOR TEACHING,
PREACHING, OTHER MINISTRIES, AND
PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development—Focus:* (Cognitive)

* In our following discussion of the three domains of human mental processing and action, it is essential to keep in mind that the cognitive and affective domains exist on a continuum. Therefore, using the word, *focus*, indicates that while concentrating on any particular subject, we recognize that attitude and emotions as well as facts are engaged; indeed, all three domains are active and interrelated, the behavioral in varying degrees of intention and beginning decision-making as to how much action will be taken on the subject. Even the decision to decide not to do something is a behavior. (See, e.g., Matthew 7:21.)

Human nature is holistic: all our parts form a system, and all the parts are connected and interrelate together. For the most effective ministry we need to plan and act with this understanding.

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development—When the Focus Is on the Cognitive

Cognitive Domain

Additional Resources to this PPT

- The part of human learning that involves mental capabilities, including *factual knowledge and its use*. This domain is prioritized, but not with an over emphasis and out of balance that eclipses the other domains.
- Symbol: **HEAD**
- Biblical References:
 - + Deuteronomy 6:1-2, 4, 6
 - + Proverbs 10:14
 - + Matthew 22:29
 - + John 14:21
- Most Important: The Bible.
- PowerPoint Program (PPT): [*Essential Christianity: Historic Christian Systematic Theology—With a Focus on Its Very Practical Dimensions*](#) by Edward D. Seely
- Book: *Basic Christianity* by Arthur H. DeKruyter
 - + An exceptionally helpful book, written by a church pastor, that summarizes the six main doctrines (themes) of historic Christian systematic theology in a way the average church member can understand.

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development—When the Focus Is on the Affective

Affective Domain

- The domain that involves *the students' subjective emotional orientation*, including feelings, values, motivations, attitudes, and related emotive expressions toward the subject being taught.
- Symbol: **HEART**
- Biblical References:
 - + Deuteronomy 6:2, 4-6
 - + Romans 10:9
 - + Ephesians 4:23
 - + John 14:21

Additional Resources to this PPT

- Most Important: The Bible.
- Book: *Journey into Joy* by Arthur H. DeKruyter
 - + A book explaining the main historic spiritual disciplines used by God's people since Bible times, for example, Scripture reading and meditation, prayer, simplicity, solitude, fasting.

NOTE: The spiritual disciplines employ *all three domains*—necessarily including the cognitive domain that many dangerously disregard to their detriment—but an important part in the practice of historic Biblically-based spiritual development is the nurturing of our affective maturation, the emotive aspect of our lives, and also our devotional behavior, while at the same time keeping in mind that all three domains are engaged in the process.

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development—When the Focus Is on the **Behavioral**

Behavioral Domain

- The domain that involves *action on the subject in life settings*: the application of knowledge, attitudes, and skills being learned to life in daily experiences.
- Symbol: **HANDS**
- Biblical References:
 - + Deuteronomy 6:1,3,7
 - + Ephesians 2:8-10
 - + James 1:22; 2:26
 - + 1 John 5:2
 - + John 14:21

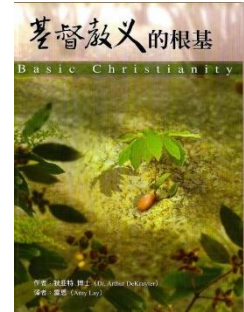
Additional Resources to this PPT

- Most Important: The Bible.
- Website:
www.fromacorntoak12.com
 - + Many of the essays on this website have been translated by Amy Lay into traditional and simplified Mandarin.
- *Journey into Joy* by DeKruyter

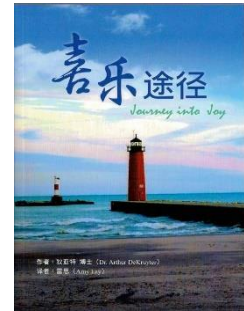
Three Domains of Human Learning



Cognitive 认知



Affective 情感



Behavioral 行為



All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

Prayer is communing with God.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- Matthew 6:6; Luke 5:16
- Jeremiah 15:15-21
- Matthew 15:21-28; 17:14-20 (cf. Mark 9:14-29); 1 John 5:14-15

Discipline/Practice

- Pray only to our triune God.
- Pray without ceasing.
- Pray in private.
- Pray honestly but humbly.
- Pray with faith, believing that God can do what you ask and will when it's best in his perfect sight and in accord with his perfect will.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

Prayer is communing with God.

- Psalm 25:5; 31:3; Proverbs 3:6
- 1 Samuel 1:12-16
- John 17
- Matthew 6:7

Discipline/Practice

- Pray only to our triune God.
- Pray for God's guidance.
- Pray silently.
- Pray audibly.
- Think cognitively about what you are saying, no babbling.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

A method of prayer used by many Christians: The ACTS model.

- A: Psalm 113
- C: Psalm 19:12; 1 John 1:9
- T: Psalm 100; Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- S: Numbers 12:1-15; John 17:9-26

Discipline/Practice

A well-known and time-honored model for prayer, the ACTS model, is helpful, as I've found for leading in corporate worship and for my own devotional prayer life. Notice the logic (cognition) as well as the affect and behavior.

- A: Adoration, praise
- C: Confession
- T: Thanksgiving
- S: Supplication

Use this model also in pastoral care.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

A helpful method of prayer: ACTS

- A: Psalm 113
- C: Psalm 19:12; 1 John 1:9
- T: Psalm 100; Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- S: Numbers 12:1-15; John 17:9-26

Discipline/Practice

A well-known and time-honored model:

- A: Adoration, praise
 - + When beginning to pray, take several moments to contemplate God—who he is: your most precious heavenly Father; only-begotten Son, Christ Jesus; and Holy Spirit, Three in One; who is listening to you; who loves you; who is ready to communicate with you—then offer words of praise to him.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Historic and Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer—A: Adoration, praise

- When beginning to pray take several moments to contemplate God, who is triune, three persons who share one substance: Father, only-begotten Son Christ Jesus, and Holy Spirit and each having specific functions.
- A helpful analogy to understand God as triune is the sun. The sun consists of a ball of fire, and light and heat coming from the ball. All three elements are distinct but not separate, and all three are always present. One never exists apart from the other two, and no two ever function without the other one. Thus, it is reasonable to conceptualize an entity as being three distinct elements that share one substance at the same time, as God reveals himself to be in the Bible: three distinct individual beings who share one substance. (Cf., e.g., Hebrews 1:3, ὑποστάσεως [*hupostaseōs*], substance)
- Contemplate also his characteristics, such as his love, his being most holy, his being transcendent and immanent at the same time, his goodness, and his being every where present.
- Concerning his goodness consider that everything you have that you value, cherish, and view as good, has come from him. (James 1:17)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

- C: Psalm 19:12; 1 John 1:9

Discipline/Practice

- C: Confession

- + Ask God to forgive you of your sins.
- + Ask God to forgive your loved ones and fellow church members.
- + Ask God to help you not repeat those sins.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

- C: Psalm 19:12; 1 John 1:9

Discipline/Practice

- C: Confession

- + Ask God to help you avoid temptations.
- + Ask God to deliver you from evil.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

- I: Psalm 100; Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; James 1:17

Discipline/Practice

- I: Thanksgiving
 - + Thank God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for as many of his countless blessings to you (already this day!) that come to your mind.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

- I: Psalm 100; Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; James 1:17

Discipline/Practice

- I: Thanksgiving
 - + As you proceed through the day and observe all that is pleasing to you, thank God for them. Each one is evidence of where his loving hand has been, and still is!

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

- **S**: Numbers 12:1-15; John 17:9-26

Discipline/Practice

- **S**: Supplication, e.g., for these:
 - + God's creation, including the rest of the world and certain countries in particular, including ours.
 - + The global church's needs.
 - + Our church home, including corporate needs and individual needs.
 - + Our family's needs.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

S: Numbers 12:1-15; John 17:9-26; Ephesians 5:18-21

Discipline/Practice

- S: Supplication
 - + Our personal needs. Instead of trying to block out and unbiblically attempt to empty your mind and to escape all pressures, problems, and bad things in your life, do just the opposite: ask God to fill you with his Spirit, help you overcome those matters with his all-sufficient power and love for you.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Prayer

Connecting with God's Resources

Postures of prayer: In the Bible we see people praying in all the following positions:

- 1 Kings 8:22; Luke 18:13
- 1 Chronicles 17:16; Luke 10:13
- Daniel 6:10; Acts 20:36
- Exodus 34:8; Psalm 95:6
- 2 Samuel 12:16; Matthew 26:39
- Psalm 28:2; 1 Timothy 2:8

Discipline/Practice

- Standing (Most common in Bible)
- Sitting
- Kneeling
- Bowing down
- Prostrate on the ground
- With uplifted hands

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Meditation

Focusing on God

Meditation consists of pondering in quiet reflection (a cognitive process) about God, his Word, his mighty acts of love for us and our love for him, the applications of his acts for our lives, inviting him to speak to us, and patiently waiting for him to do so.

- Joshua 1:8
- Psalm 1:2; 119:97-99
- Psalm 77:12; 119:27; 145:5
- Psalm 77:1-6

Discipline/Practice

The Bible doesn't say much about how to meditate; it just says to do it and usually by mentioning people who did it, in general what they were to do, and showing what they did.

- The Hebrew word means ponder while reading God's Word softly aloud.
- Pondering God's Law day and night.
- Pondering God's works and mighty deeds.
- Pondering God and evaluating one's spirituality.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Meditation

Focusing on God

Meditation consists of pondering in quiet and obedient reflection (a cognitive and behavioral process) about God, his Word, his mighty acts of love for us at great cost to himself, and our love for him (an affective and behavioral response [1 Corinthians 13:4-7; John 14:21]), and the applications of his acts to our lives, inviting him to speak to us, and patiently waiting (behaviors) for him to do so in the context of our covenant relationship with him.

- 1 Timothy 4:15

Discipline/Practice

The Bible doesn't say a lot about how to meditate; it just says to do it and usually by mentioning people who did it, in general what they were to do, and showing what they did.

- Paul commands (μελέτα [*meleta*, meditate on {imperative mood}]) Timothy to ponder upon several matters including Timothy's gifts, the public reading of the Bible, preaching, and teaching. The verb's present tense denotes continuously doing so.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Meditation

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- Luke 11:24-26

Discipline/Practice

The Bible doesn't say much about how to meditate; it just says to do it and usually by mentioning people who did it and what they did. **Yet we do see a major and most important contrast between meditation in the Bible and meditation as done in other religions, especially those in and from the Eastern Hemisphere.**

- Non-Christian religions practice meditation by trying to empty and clear their mind. Jesus explains why this attempt is very dangerous.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Meditation

Focusing on God

Meditation consists of pondering in quiet and obedient reflection (a cognitive and behavioral process) about God, his Word, his mighty acts of love for us at great cost to himself, and our love for him (an affective and behavioral response [1 Corinthians 13:4-7; John 14:21]), and the applications of his acts to our lives, inviting him to speak to us, and patiently waiting (behaviors) for him to do so in the context of our covenant relationship with him.

- Luke 11:24-26

Discipline/Practice

In the Bible an empty mind is not valued and is very dangerous. See, e.g., Luke 11:24-26.

- ²⁴"When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.'
²⁵When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order.
²⁶Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first."

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Meditation

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Meditation consists of pondering in quiet and obedient reflection (a cognitive and behavioral process) about God, his Word, his mighty acts of love for us at great cost to himself, and our love for him (an affective and behavioral response [1 Corinthians 13:4-7; John 14:21]), and the applications of his acts to our lives, inviting him to speak to us, and patiently waiting (behaviors) for him to do so in the context of our covenant relationship with him.

- Ephesians 5:18

Discipline/Practice

In the Bible an empty mind is not valued and is very dangerous, spiritually and otherwise. Just the opposite of trying to empty our mind, we are to fill our mind. How? See Ephesians 5:18.

- “...be filled with the Spirit.”
+ The Greek verb is very informative. Read on....

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Meditation

Focusing on God

Meditation consists of pondering in quiet and obedient reflection (a cognitive and behavioral process) about God, his Word, his mighty acts of love for us at great cost to himself, and our love for him (an affective and behavioral response [1 Corinthians 13:4-7; John 14:21]), and the applications of his acts to our lives, inviting him to speak to us, and patiently waiting (behaviors) for him to do so in the context of our covenant relationship with him.

- Ephesians 5:18

Discipline/Practice

The Greek verb, πληρόω (*plēroō*, “be filled”) in 5:18 contains the following inflections:

- + Greek **present tense** = continuous, repeated, not a once-for-all experience. Never “one and done.” Continually be filled with the Spirit.
- + Greek **imperative mood** = God commands us to be filled: by inviting him to fill us, involving true freedom. (John 8:31-32)
- + Greek **passive voice** = we are to be acted upon; we cannot fill ourselves. Our part is to ask God to fill us, direct us, to lead us to do what pleases him (and is thus in our own and others’ best interests).
- + Greek **number** = plural, 2nd person: for the whole church, not just me privately. We are filled with the Spirit together in Christ.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, **Cognitive**, **Affective**, and **Behavioral**, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Think of how especially important this reality is for teaching the Word of God. We can help people cognitively understand passages from the Bible, and even their application to daily life, but if we don't help them be filled with the Spirit and develop a love for God and his Word, how likely are they to read it, and on a regular basis, and be motivated to apply it in their lives each day? **DISCUSS: What can we do to help people KNOW, LOVE, and OBEY God's Word more intentionally and regularly in their daily lives (and ourselves too)?** Let us continue to reflect (a cognitive process) in love (affect and behavior) on this question as we plan and function in our ministry for the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Solitude

Removing the Distractions

Solitude involves the conscious and intentional removing of distractions in order to commune with God.

- Psalm 46:10
- Matthew 6:6

Discipline/Practice

Find a place where you can concentrate on communing with God.

- Be still and know God. (The Hebrew word here for “know” is a covenant term where the knowledge is by relationship and experience.)
- When you pray go into a private room and close the door.

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Discipline/Practice

Find a place where you can concentrate on communing with God.

- Solitude is not being alone! One need not fear being lonely. Solitude heightens our awareness that we are not at all alone, but that we are with God, who meets all our needs!
- A time of solitude is especially important for busy people.

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Self-esteem

Accepting His Creation

Self-esteem is viewing one's being and abilities as having value and respectability.

- To rightly understand this term we must understand its source: God.
+ “Jesus [said (Greek)]: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Matthew 22:37-39)

Discipline/Practice

- Jesus implies that love of oneself exists and is prerequisite to loving others.
- True self-esteem that withstands external (e.g., other people's rejection of us) and internal (e.g., self-doubt) attacks is grounded in God's love that can never be taken away.
+ Remember also 1 John 4:19, “We love because he [God] first loved us.”

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Self-esteem

Accepting His Creation

Self-esteem is viewing one's being and abilities as having value and respectability.

- To rightly understand this term we must understand its source: God.
 - + Jesus said, "...everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." (Matthew 7:24-27)

Discipline/Practice

- False self-esteem that falls apart when attacked externally (e.g., by mocking and ridicule) and internally is wrongly based on material matters that can be taken away.
 - + Such material matters can be external (e.g., money) or internal (e.g., narcissism).

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Self-esteem

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Self-esteem is viewing one's being and abilities as having value and respectability.

- To rightly understand this term we must understand its source: God. God is sovereign.
 - + God reveals through Isaiah that “My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.” (46:10)
 - + “Jesus...said, ‘...with God all things are possible.’” (Matthew 19:26)

Discipline/Practice

- Since God alone is sovereign, his view of us cannot be taken away by others (human or demonic), by ourselves, or by life circumstances, but this faith must be nurtured daily.
- Therefore, we have worth and dignity because God created us in his image (Genesis 1:26-28); he loves us (the greatest demonstration of which is his only-begotten Son's dying for us); and his value of us is all we need upon which to base a love of ourselves, which permits us to love God and others, even those who are hard to love and whom society rejects.

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Discipline/Practice

- A false sense of self-worthlessness and a failure to love oneself afflicts many people, including not a few in the church.
- The church must be careful to:
 - + Encourage one another.
 - + Point out and affirm other believers' gifts and abilities.
 - + Teach Biblically accurate theology, e.g., avoiding “worm theology” and instead emphasizing that in Christ we are a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17). Our sin does not define us; Christ does.

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 - + “We love because [God] first loved us.” (1 John 4:19)

Discipline/Practice

- “A mark of true spirituality is understanding that God loves you.” (DeKruyter, 86)
- “We use the following, very appropriate phrase often: ‘What you are is God’s gift to you; what you become is your gift to God.’” (DeKruyter, 86)
 - + And even that gift is from God! (James 1:17)
- This basis for a strong self-esteem enables us to serve God wherever he leads us to do so without fear of what others will say and do. (Colossians 1:10)

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Discipline/Practice

- Here is another reason why the historic Biblically-based spiritual disciplines are so vitally important.
- In this postmodern age, which rejects any concept of a vertical criterion of ultimate truth (especially God) and thereby reduces the standard of what is to be judged as right and wrong to a norm-based standard, i.e., horizontal, peer-oriented judgment, if your peers don't like you, you are considered worthless. That is largely why mental illness is skyrocketing in this age, for too many people have no higher standard, especially God, whose opinion counts infinitely greater than horizontal peer opinions.
- We have worth, because we bear the image of God! (Genesis 1:26-28; 9:6; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15) Since God loves us, and God is the ultimate truth (John 3:16; 14:6), we have value, worth, no matter what peers say.

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Simplicity

Avoiding Life's Complexities

Simplicity consists of seeking God's will and becoming free from life's complicating constraints and constricting complexities.

- Matthew 6:33

Discipline/Practice

- With this Biblical and most realistic worldview, it is easier and with joy to practice tithing. (Deuteronomy 26:12; Mark 12:35–44; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7-8)
- But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6:33 KJV)
+ *Make God's opinion of what you do most important to you.*

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Discipline/Practice

1. Make your top priority seeking God's kingdom and his righteousness.
2. Make God's opinion most important over the opinions of all others. (Also don't seek to control others.)
3. Obey without asking any reason of God...just do it.
4. When you fail don't stay down; ask for and accept God's forgiveness and move on in his all-sufficient grace and love.

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Fasting

Using Your Secret Weapon

Fasting consists of limiting or completely denying the intake of food, drink, or both for a limited time.

- Isaiah 58, esp. vss. 3-11
- Matthew 6:18

Discipline/Practice

- “‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it?’...Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers....You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high...Is this not the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice...set the oppressed free...share your food with the hungry...provide the poor wanderer with shelter...[to clothe the naked] ...and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?” (58:3-7)
- “...your Father, who sees what is done in secret will reward you.” (6:18)

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Discipline/Practice

- Fasting has physical as well as spiritual benefits. It cleanses the body's system and focuses attention on God's presence and his will. It draws you closer to God, when done in "a very secret, voluntary, personal commitment, with a desire to grow in your faith." (DeKruyter, 100)
- Be sure to obtain your physician's approval or prescription before trying fasting in an extensive manner. (100)

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Discipline/Practice

- Check with your physician to make sure your body can withstand the loss of food and drink that you plan.
- If the fast is of any extended period of time, consider drinking water at certain points; water is vital for keeping your body functioning well.
- Keep your fast secret, between you and God with a desire to grow in your faith.
- Let the fast remind you of what Jesus gave up for us and of his immense suffering for our sins.

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Discipline/Practice

When hunger pangs attack ask yourself,

- “Have I ever desired the presence of God as much as I now desire food?”
- Use those pangs as a reminder of your quest for a greater awareness of the presence of God.
- Use them as a reminder of God’s love for you.
- Focus your thoughts on the pain Jesus Christ suffered for your sins.

Doing the above puts the distractions of hunger pains to a positive use and as a reminder of why you are fasting.

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Discipline/Practice

- Many Christians do a simple fast, such as giving up something they like during Lent.
- While such simple fasting may not have the full effect of more extensive fasting, it is not without value,
 - + IF what is given up for that period of time is of **significant value** to the one giving it up, and therefore
 - + IF doing so **reminds** him or her of what Christ gave up because of his great love for him or her.

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Fasting

Using Your Secret Weapon

Fasting consists of limiting or completely denying the intake of food, drink, or both for a limited time.

- Isaiah 58
- Matthew 6:18
- Romans 5:8

Discipline/Practice

- The smaller fast is less likely to become a matter of pride.
- The main point of any fast is to remind one of—not to match—Jesus' sacrifice. No one can match Jesus' sacrifice, but fasting helps us remember and be grateful to him.
- A smaller fast may lead to a more extensive fast.
- In either case, Remember: As long as you do the fast, let it remind you of Christ's suffering for our sins and his great love for us. (Romans 5:8)

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Faith

Believing without Fear

- “True faith is not only a certain knowledge by which I accept as true all that God has revealed to us in his Word, but also a wholehearted trust which the Holy Spirit creates in me through the gospel, that, not only to others, but to me also God has given the forgiveness of sins, everlasting righteousness and salvation, out of sheer grace solely for the sake of Christ's saving work.” (*The Heidelberg Catechism*, Q & A 21)
- Hebrews 11:1 (NASB)

Discipline/Practice

- “Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1 NASB)
- Faith is based on trust in and commitment to God in an ongoing relationship with him.
 - Faith also involves being willing to take action in a given situation based on that trust.
 - Faith provides courage to act when we sense something we are considering is what God would have us do and would please him.

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Discipline/Practice

- “Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1 NASB)
- Such faith relieves worry, anxiety (Philippians 4:6), and stress.
 - Faith does not require understanding why.
 - God gives us the strength we need to function in faith.

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Discipline/Practice

- “Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1 NASB)
- Numbers 13:3--Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."
 - Matthew 26:42--He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."
 - Polycarp's famous statement before being burned at the stake.

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Discipline/Practice

- “Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1 NASB)
- Recall Polycarp’s famous statement before being burned at the stake in A.D. 155. Refusing to save his life by cursing Christ, he said, “Eighty and six years have I served Him, and he did me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my king, that saved me?”
 - Remember the faith of another, a much younger martyr, Perpetua, and that of fellow believers.

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- In the third century A.D. an anguished father pleaded, “Think of your mother, your brother, your aunt. Please Perpetua, think of me, your aging father. But most of all, think of your little baby!” Her father’s pleas sliced deeply into her heart, especially since he was well-respected, and a daughter’s denial of her father’s wishes in this patriarchal society would disgrace him. Yet, the young 22 year-old Christian woman refused to deny that Jesus was her Lord and offer incense to the Roman gods.
- Perpetua, Felicity, a young married slave who had just given birth in prison, and three men refused to recant their faith in Christ and were thrown to the wild beasts. When a mad cow mauled but did not kill Perpetua, an executioner was sent in to behead her. Being nervous, his hand slipped and the sword entered another part of her body. She screamed but calmly guided his hand to her neck. Her and the others’ bodies were enshrined in the Basilica Maiorum at Carthage.

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Love

Practicing God's Motivation

- John 3:16 (NASB)
- Romans 5:5
- 1 John 4:19

Discipline/Practice

- “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”
- “...God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”
- “We love because he first loved us.”

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- “...God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”
- “We love because he first loved us.”
- + In each text above the word for love is *ἀγάπη* (*agapē*), the highest form of love in the Greek New Testament.
- + Paul defines *agapē*, as behaviors that include being “patient, kind, not arrogant or rude...” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

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Discipline/Practice

- This love is essential for the calling God has given us to be his witnesses. As Arthur DeKruyter has well-written (*Journey into Joy*, p. 125):
 - + “That outpouring of [God’s] love from us to the world defines the Christian. The world understands God’s love as it sees it in you and me and recognizes that his love sets you and me apart from mankind in general.”
 - + This work is part of our holiness to God. The root meaning of holiness is to be separate to God, uncommon.

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Love

Practicing God's Motivation

- John 3:16 (NASB)
- Romans 5:5
- 1 John 4:19

Discipline/Practice

- God's love has many benefits. As DeKruyter has also written (*Journey into Joy*, p. 127 ff.): God's love
 - + is a constant source of strength and a solid rock upon which to stand;
 - + frees us to look ahead with expectation and anticipation;
 - + provides motivation;
 - + enables acceptance of a situation;
 - + provides a sense of Him working through us;
 - + and God's presence becomes very real in our lives; and
 - + God's love produces great peace.

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Love

Practicing God's Motivation

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- Romans 5:5
- 1 John 4:19

Discipline/Practice

- God's love has other benefits, as DeKruyter has written (*Journey into Joy*, p. 129 ff.): God's love also
 - + is present in good times and bad;
 - + enables us to love those who are hard to love; and
 - + assures us of his love for us.

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Love

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- Romans 5:5
- 1 John 4:19

Discipline/Practice

- How we know God's love is in us, as DeKruyter has written (*Journey into Joy*, p. 130 ff.):
 - + We have been changed on the inside.
 - + We are concerned about and care for others throughout the world.
 - + "Once you are filled with his love, it quickly begins to overflow."

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Spiritual Biblical Disciplines.

Joy

Feeling What You Believe

Not defined per se in Scripture, but well described, joy in the Bible can be understood as a quiet, warm, peaceful, heartfelt contentment, and gladness to the depths of one's soul due to the assurance of one's being right and secure with God in Christ forever and that sometimes is expressed in celebration with others.

- Nehemiah 12:27
- Philippians 4:4
- 1 Peter 1:8

Discipline/Practice

- “At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the Levites were sought out from where they lived and were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate joyfully the dedication with songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, harps and lyres.”
- “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!”
- “Though you have not seen [Christ], you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

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- Nehemiah 12:27
- Philippians 4:4
- 1 Peter 1:8

Discipline/Practice

- Biblical joy must **not** be confused with happiness.
- The word “happy” is not a Biblical concept, and the word does not appear in the original Hebrew of the Old Testament or the Greek of the New Testament.
- The English word comes from the root hap, meaning chance or luck, both concepts contrary to the Word of God, e.g., James 1:17.
- For more on this subject see my [*Essential Christianity: Historic Christian Systematic Theology*](#) PPT.

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Discipline/Practice

Additional Blessings that Are Part of Joy in Christ Jesus

- We can have a deep sense of well-being even in times of significant difficulty.
- It is our source of satisfaction and inner peace. (DeKruyter, 140)
- We can “rejoice in the Lord always.”
- “[Christ] can make Easter out of every calvary in your life.” (145)

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- Philippians 4:4
- 1 Peter 1:8

Discipline/Practice

Ways to Obtain this Joy

- Accept God's trustworthiness.
- Walk in God's ways; obey him.
- Maintain the eternal perspective, keeping God not only in the picture but viewing him as holding the picture!
- "If you have slipped away from a close walk with God and a personal relationship through Jesus Christ, his Son, you can come back!" (DeKruyter, 146)

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- Philippians 4:4
- 1 Peter 1:8

Discipline/Practice

More Ways to Obtain this Joy

- Keep in mind that whatever you experience in life, God will bring good out of it for you and for the accomplishment of his purposes. (Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28)
- Remove or ignore distractions when having daily moments of meditation and praying to God.
- Remember to thank God daily not only in all things but for all things. (Philippians 4:6; Ephesians 5:20)

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Healing

Accepting God's Powerful Touch

Healing involves a complete restoration to normal well-being for one's age. That is, healing doesn't connote rejuvenation. It can also involve a partial restoration of an aspect of one's being that has become ill or injured.

- Mark 5:34: "...your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

Discipline/Practice

We need to discern and distinguish the difference between healing and the gift of healing.

- Some people have an extraordinary gift given by God to bring about healing apart from the normal process. (1 Corinthians 12:9)
- All healing is from God, but often he does so through answers to prayer and through medical treatments.

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- Mark 9:24 (NASB):
"...Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief."

Discipline/Practice

God answers all prayers. His answers include "Yes," "No," and "Wait."

- He gives us what we need and what others need in the right timing in his sight.
- When we ask for healing for ourselves and others, we must ask in faith.
 - + We ask believing without doubt that God can do what we are asking.
 - + We pray that God grants the healing we request, but acknowledge that he knows best, and ask that the healing be his will: "thy will be done."

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Accepting God's Powerful Touch

Healing involves a complete restoration to normal well-being for one's age. That is, healing doesn't connote rejuvenation. It can also involve a partial restoration of an aspect of one's being that has become ill or injured.

- Acts 14:8-10 "In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed and called out, 'Stand up on your feet!' At that, the man jumped up and began to walk."

Discipline/Practice

God answers all prayers. His answers include "Yes," "No," and "Wait."

- God will heal his people. The only question is when: in this phase of life or in paradise?
- If you want healing now, ask God for it in faith. It pleases him to have us ask him for what we want.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Healing

Accepting God's Powerful Touch

Healing involves a complete restoration to normal well-being for one's age. That is, healing doesn't connote rejuvenation. It can also involve a partial restoration of an aspect of one's being that has become ill or injured.

- Acts 3:16 "By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see."

Discipline/Practice

God answers all prayers. His answers include "Yes," "No," and "Wait."

- In praying for others, ask them first what they would like us to pray for them.
- If they don't mention praying for their healing, ask if they would like you to pray for their healing. (Don't assume all people want to be healed; some don't.)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Healing

Accepting God's Powerful Touch

God knows that it is best sometimes to not permit healing.

- 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 "To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Discipline/Practice

God answers all prayers. His answers include "Yes," "No," and "Wait."

- God heals some people directly.
- He heals some indirectly, i.e., through medical means.
- "In his wisdom, he sometimes chooses to let a particular disease or infirmity run its course." (DeKruyter, 155)

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Discipline/Practice

God answers all prayers. His answers include "Yes," "No," and "Wait."

When the answer is "No:"

- "...when we come to God for his help we must come with the right attitude. Our perspective should be that God alone can decide whether or not to remove the physical pain, suffering, or illness from us. If we must endure it, then we call on God to lighten our burden along the way. We ask God to give us the strength and wisdom to deal with the problem." (DeKruyter, 162)

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Healing

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Discipline/Practice

God answers all prayers. His answers include "Yes," "No," and "Wait."

When the answer is "No:"

- "Ponder these words for a moment...Your sins are gone in Christ. Because of your relationship to Christ, you find power and strength that you would not otherwise have within you...if you do not receive physical restoration, you have the assurance that you will find the spiritual and emotional recovery that you require." (DeKruyter, 163)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Healing

Accepting God's Powerful Touch

- “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.” (Philippians 1:21-24)
- “we are confident, then and well pleased rather to be away from home out of the body and to be at home with the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 5:8 EDS translation)

Discipline/Practice

God answers all prayers. His answers include “Yes,” “No,” and “Wait.”
When the answer is “No:”

- Don't obsess with looking for reasons. “Sickness is *not* a sin, but it is an evil. It comes upon us as a result of being here.” (DeKruyter, 161)
- When the answer is “No,” “...[w]e must accept this. But if we walk more closely with [Jesus], he will guide us through our burden of sickness or hurt.” (DeKruyter, 161)
- Keep in mind that death is not at all the worst experience one can have. (Cf., e.g., 2 Corinthians 5:8)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, **Cognitive**, **Affective**, and **Behavioral**, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

“...remember that the practices of spirituality are the most healing forces there are in all the world, for they make us whole. They bring harmony in our lives, enable us to overcome troubling character flaws, and lead us to restore broken relationships. Through them we may forgive and forget those incidents or words that may have lurked in our minds, causing resentment and bitterness. Our memories and emotions can be repaired. They thereby provide the body with the optimum conditions for physical health.” (DeKruyter, 162)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

Believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ worship

- Individually (See especially the sections above on prayer, meditation, and solitude.)
 - Corporately with others who identify with Christ.
- + The focus of this section is on corporate worship.

Discipline/Practice

- Come into God's presence and blessing regularly. (Romans 12:1-2; Hebrews 10:25)
- "We mistake our religion if we look upon it only as a system of notions and a guide to speculation. No, it is a practical religion, that tends to the right ordering of the conversation. It is designed not only to inform our judgments, but to reform our hearts and lives."
(Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible, Romans 12:1-2, p. 455)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

- To worship God effectively do so in a true church congregation. Jesus said, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)
- If your church doesn't conform to the historic marks of a true church, find one that does.

Discipline/Practice

The Marks of a True Church

1. The pure doctrine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.
2. The pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ is maintained.
3. Church discipline is administered in punishing unrepentant sin [of clergy and lay people] according to the Bible.
4. Jesus Christ is acknowledged as the only Head of the Church.*

**Confessio Belgica (The Belgic Confession)*, A.D. 1561, Revised 1619, written by Guy de Bres, adopted by the Reformed Synod at Emden, 1571. Article XXIX.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

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Discipline/Practice

The Marks of a True Church

The Belgic Confession, as other faithful statements of the historic Christian church, summarizes the marks of the true church as being where "all things are managed according to the pure Word of God, all things contrary thereto are rejected...."*

**Confessio Belgica (The Belgic Confession)*. Article XXIX.

Answers to Three Critics of Corporate Christian Public Worship

Objection 1

- Free form advocates: True fellowship with God should be free of convention, standard procedures, or prearranged order, such as any kind of liturgy.

Answer

- “Let [γινέσθω (*ginesthō*) imperative mood (command), present tense (continuously)] all things be done decently and with order.” (1 Corinthians 14:40 EDS translation)
- God requires*—and is honored when—his worship is done decently and with order.
- While the Bible permits considerable flexibility in God’s worship, we see a general pattern in worship services in the Bible.

* God informs us in his Word that we will all have to give account before him for what we have done, e.g., Matthew 12:36; Romans 14:12; Hebrews 4:13.

Answers to Three Critics of Corporate Christian Public Worship

Objection 1

- Free form advocates: True fellowship with God should be free of convention, standard procedures, or prearranged order, such as any kind of liturgy.

Answer

- Human beings need structure and discipline for physical as well as spiritual health.
- Following the Biblical patterns satisfies the human mind and heart and facilitates focusing on God and his dialogue with us in his worship.
- Historic Christian worship contains profound Biblical theology with its spiritually joyful and uplifting liturgical elements, most of which are from God's Word.

Answers to Three Critics of Corporate Christian Public Worship

Objection 2

Answer

- Do-your-own-thing advocates: Why do Christians need to come together? God can be worshiped out in the woods or elsewhere in nature.
- In the light of God's special revelation in the Bible, that we are created in his image (including having the capacity for fellowship and desiring social interaction), and for other reasons, Scripture urges us to worship corporately. (Hebrews 10:25)
- Biblical worship is a very special experience God's covenant community has when we come together as a result of God calling us to meet with him. The worship service is a dialogue with God and his people in which we reaffirm our covenant relationship with him. He uniquely blesses us individually and through others, and he is honored by us, in his corporate worship. This does not occur for those who try to worship alone out in the woods.

Answers to Three Critics of Corporate Christian Public Worship

Objection 2

Answer

- Do-your-own-thing advocates: Why do Christians need to come together? God can be worshiped out in the woods or elsewhere in nature.
- How would you feel if you invited some people—whom you love and for whom you have sacrificed a lot—to a party and they turned you down, preferring to “do their own thing” somewhere else?
- We need the encouragement and guidance of fellow believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- As sinners we need the comforting affirmation of forgiveness that comes from God’s anointed spokesperson whom he has called to speak for him and to assure us of our forgiveness.

Answers to Three Critics of Corporate Christian Public Worship

Objection 3

Answer

- *Ad hominem* critics: How can one worship with all the hypocrites in those pews?
- We need to remember God's standard for judgment is a criterion not a norm.
- Since God sets the standard, all humans fall short and are in need of his forgiveness. (Psalm 51:1-5; Romans 3:23) Maybe my sins are different, but they're just as spiritually deadly, rendering me ineligible to be in God's holy, holy, holy presence.
- This is why Biblical worship services early include a prayer of confession, as repentant believers recognize they need to be cleansed of what interferes with their relationship with God who is Most Holy as they come before him in his presence.
- When we then hear God's comforting words of assurance pardoning us of our sins, that is a supreme comfort!

More Blessings of Corporate Worship

- As DeKruyter has well written, corporate worship “is entirely different from being alone with God...The Holy Spirit [releases] mysterious power when God’s people come together” in public worship. (167) God works in and through what the Bible calls *koinonia*, the unique fellowship believers have with each other in the Holy Spirit. (143)
- In Ephesians 5:18-21 we see in the Greek verbs that we are to be filled with the Spirit and how such filling occurs in church worship.
 - + In 5:18 the verb “be filled” is in the imperative mood, i.e., it’s a command.
 - + “Be filled” is in the second person plural, meaning that it takes place with others, and the context reveals a corporate worship setting.
 - + The five verbs following in vss. 19-21 are participles indicating how this filling occurs:

More Blessings of Corporate Worship

- In Ephesians 5:18-21 we see in the Greek verbs that we commanded to be filled with the Spirit and informed as to how such filling occurs.
 - + The five verbs following in vss. 19-21 are participles indicating how this filling occurs:
 - ++ speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs
 - ++ singing [Biblically accurate psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs]
 - ++ making music in your heart to the Lord
 - ++ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ
 - ++ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.
- Consider corporate worship primarily as a blessing to God as many of his children come together to glorify him instead of just one or a few. By analogy, would not an earthly dad be more glad to have several of his children come to him and express appreciation for him rather than just one doing so?

More Blessings of Corporate Worship

- Worship involves edification; we learn God's Word and his will for our lives.
- We are commanded and motivated to put into action what we learn in hearing God's Word.
- We experience a dialogue with God as he engages his people in worship.
- An evangelistic aspect of worship occurs as visitors hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed in Word and Sacrament.
- All five senses are employed in God's worship.
- Children are included as in Bible times.
- We are blessed, as is God, when worshiping him with people from different backgrounds. (Revelation 5:9, 7:9)
- Corporate Christian worship involves our mind, heart, and commitment with accountability in love to obey.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

- Psalms 65; 68:35
- Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22-28
- Hebrews 10:25

Discipline/Practice

- Pause to consider and sense what a privilege it is to come into the presence of God in his sanctuary!
- Pause to think about the meaning of Jesus' shed blood causing the death of the believer's sin.
- Come into God's presence and blessing regularly. He blesses us directly and also indirectly through fellow believers who are maturing in Christlikeness.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

- To experience the joys of God's presence most fully, it is helpful to prepare to meet him.

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”
(Hebrews 10:25)

Discipline/Practice

During the week visualize your worship experience in the Nave.

- Imagine yourself in God's presence.
- Picture yourself in the pew praying for others as they pray for you.
- Visualize Jesus in the sanctuary.
- Envisage the joy you feel as you sense you're in the presence of almighty God who loves you.
- Praise Christ for all he has done for you at such great cost to himself! (DeKruyter, 177-178)

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(Hebrews 10:25)

Discipline/Practice

- Previous generations began on Saturday evening with quiet time, reading God's Word, praying together as a family, and singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs together. Those with musical capability and instruments used them too.
- Rising early enough to not be rushed, having a good breakfast, and dressing as able in a dignified manner, help shape a mentality conducive to coming into God's most holy presence with due respect and proper preparation.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

- To experience the joys of God's presence most fully, it is helpful to prepare to meet him.

Discipline/Practice

How We Enter His Sanctuary Affects Our Mentality in God's Worship.

- Even before leaving for church thank God for the opportunity to worship him with brothers and sisters in Christ!
- Try to arrive a few minutes early; save greeting friends until after the worship service. If you must greet friends, do so in the Narthex or entryway.
- Be quiet in the Sanctuary.
- Upon being seated, pray asking God to guide your thoughts, feelings, and actions. Kneel if that helps.

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Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

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Discipline/Practice

How We Enter God's Sanctuary (the "house of prayer" [Isaiah 56:7; Matthew 21:13]) Affects Our Mentality in His Worship. Pray for:

- People who have needs known to you who you see as you walk in from the parking lot.
- People who you see sitting near you.
- The pastor and other church leaders officiating in the worship service.
- Others with needs known to you.
- Pray that we all make the changes we need to make in God's sight.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

- To experience the joys of God's presence most fully, it is helpful to prepare to meet him.

Discipline/Practice

How We Enter His Sanctuary Affects Our Mentality in God's Worship.

- Avoid distractions that take your focus off the triune God and your relationship with him and what he would have you do with your life. He loves you and knows what is best for you.
- View and meditate on the symbols and their meaning (e.g., the pulpit, the baptismal font, the communion table, the cross).
- Read Scripture, e.g., Psalms 122:1; 66; 73:1-17; John 4:24.

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Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:25)

Discipline/Practice

To Experience Worship in the Vibrant Biblical Manner Focus on:

- Honoring Christ
- Being grateful for what he did for you
- Listening to him, his Word
- Feeling his love for you
- Loving him
- Knowing and relating to him more deeply
- Developing your relationship with God by meeting him with his people regularly

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

⁶If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

⁸If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:6-9)

Discipline/Practice

“The confession of sin that is part of the worship service is a special blessing. Those who feel dirty in their souls and in need of cleansing make that admission and then receive assurance of God's blessing. Like so many other parts of worship, this is an essential ingredient in the reconciliation of God and his sinful people.”
(DeKruyter, 168)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

- ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:7, 9)
- Other texts that can be used:
 - + Psalm 32:5
 - + Isaiah 1:18; 6:5-8; 53:4-6
 - + 2 Corinthians 5:17

Discipline/Practice

What a joy it is after confessing our sins to immediately hear God's comforting words assuring us of our pardon from the mouth of the pastor whom God has called to lead his people in worship!

- It is best if these words of assurance are from God's Word.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

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⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:6-9)

Discipline/Practice

Biblical scholars have identified what they call major motifs, i.e., themes or doctrines that recur throughout the Bible. One such motif is the unity of word and deed, as we see in this text.

Unrepented and unabandoned hypocrisy is condemned by God (cf. Matthew 7 and 23) and renders one as unable to experience the joy of God's presence in his or her life.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Worship

Experiencing God's Presence

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:25)

Discipline/Practice

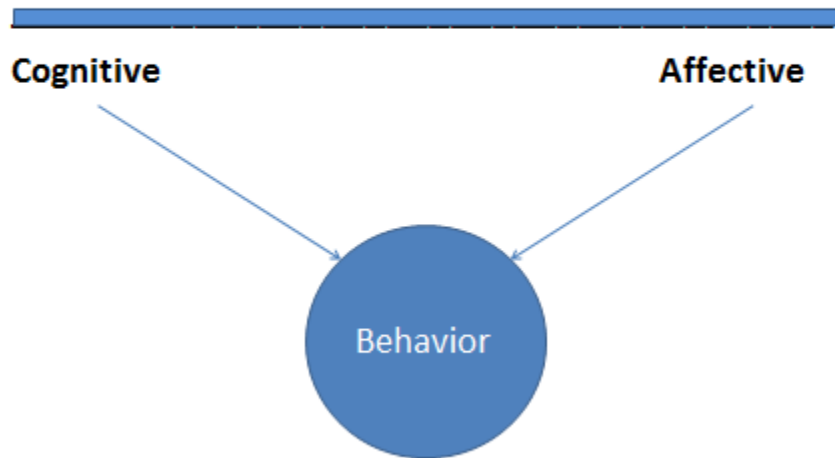
“Make worship the capstone of each week. Make it the high point and the culmination of all that you aspire to be and to do as a Christian. Open your heart and let God touch your life.” (DeKruyter, 178)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Are Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Balance

Linking Mind, Heart, and Behavior

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship



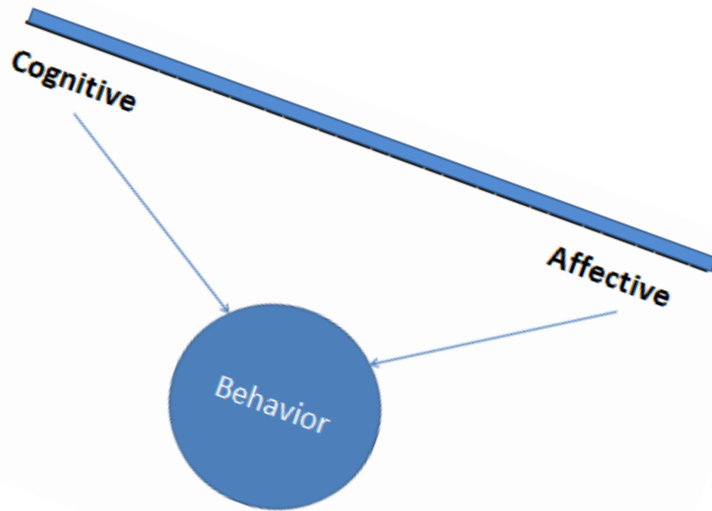
Discipline/Practice

Our maturity in Christ, our joy in spiritual development, and our service for the Lord will be maximized by keeping the three domains of human learning and development in balance, albeit with the cognitive, especially the Bible, prioritized. This balance has characterized Christian education throughout church history and, as stated above, is seen throughout the Bible.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Balance

Linking Mind, Heart, and Behavior



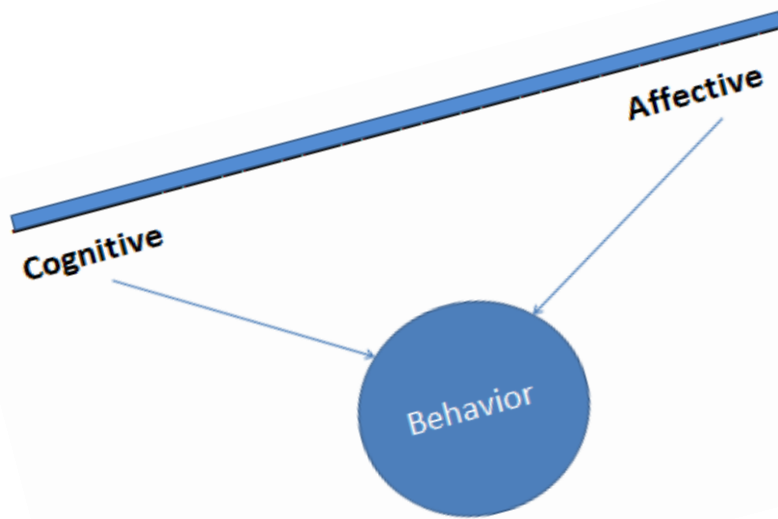
Discipline/Practice

- While Bible study must be prioritized, when the cognitive is overemphasized and the heart is minimized or ignored, the result can be a dry analytic intellectualism and dissatisfaction, a sense that “something’s missing,” and lacking in motivation to behave according to God’s Word and will.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Balance

Linking Mind, Heart, and Behavior



Discipline/Practice

- When the focus on the heart is overemphasized, and the mind is downplayed, minimized, or even ignored, the result is often uncontrolled, unedifying, and superficial emotionalism that is often focused on the self, and when directed toward behavior is unbiblical. The result is also a superficial and inaccurate theology that is vulnerable to error and misleading fads.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

In last decades of the 20th century, a popular loosely organized trend developed in the church and in other Christian circles that was heavily oriented to the affective domain. It's referred to by several terms: spiritual direction, spirituality, and spiritual formation. It also overlaps with the [contemplative prayer movement](#).

1. The growing trend quickly caught on with many, following a frequent phenomenon among Christian leaders who—without sufficient Biblical and theological reflection—climbed onboard the spiritual direction bandwagon and joined what has come to be called the Spiritual Formation Movement (SFM).
2. Adherents to this movement who were leaders in their church's Christian education department—and like-minded pastors—no longer wanted to use the traditional term Christian education, which they felt denoted and connoted too much cognition, including formal study. Instead of Christian education ministry, they changed the name to spiritual formation ministry.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, **Cognitive**, **Affective**, and **Behavioral**, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

3. Of course, those and other related changes resulted in an overemphasis on the affective dimension of learning to mature in Christ and minimizing the cognitive, thus also resulting in demonstrable immaturity in the sanctification process. Beginning with the next slide, we'll look briefly at what the change means for the church and its mission to extend and nurture God's kingdom.
4. We first look at the positive contributions of the SFM. Then we will examine its shortcomings, some of which are serious, deadly serious.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Contributions of the Spiritual Formation Movement (SFM)

1. The emphasis on the spiritual disciplines, e.g., Bible reading, meditation, prayer, as described and explained above, together with the work of the Holy Spirit, indicate the importance of the disciplines. When believers in and followers of Christ Jesus participate in these practices—as the Bible teaches—they facilitate sanctification, believers' maturity in Christ.
2. Conscious attention to these practices assure they will be included in the department's program, including the curricula, and that they will neither be minimized nor overlooked. This inclusion must also assure the Biblical aspects of the spiritual disciplines will be taught and that they will be practiced, for God's Word is clear that they are necessary for and do result in spiritual maturity, when they are properly balanced with the cognitive prioritized and behavioral teachings—**being consistent—with God's Word**. However, doing so has always been a part of historic Christian education.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement (SFM)

1. The emphasis on the affective dimension of human learning and development quickly grew to reduce as much as possible the cognitive and behavioral (e.g., obeying) dimensions. The reduction occurred not only in content, including problematic subtractions and additions, but also in programming.
 - a. Pertaining to cognitive content, some of the more serious *subtractions* include the following.
 - 1) Cognitive content changes have resulted in reducing or eliminating such subjects as the exegesis of Biblical texts, with little to no interest in the profound meaning of the original Hebrew and Greek words and grammar that inform God's people of what he has provided for our cognitive as well as our affect and behavior to serve him well. These changes occur also in preaching.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

1. Overemphasis on the affective dimension of human learning quickly reduced the cognitive dimension, resulting in a loss of the necessary balance of the two and with behavior.
 - a. Some of the more serious cognitive content *subtractions* include the following.
 - 2) Cognitive content changes also involve eliminating such subjects as historic Christian theology, especially the substantive systematic theology that is necessary to understand and explain to others the basic message of the Bible—God’s plan of redemption in Jesus Christ—its logic, and its application to our lives, individually and corporately in the mission to which God has called us to serve him, and how to do so most effectively.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

1. Overemphasis on the affective dimension of human learning quickly reduced the cognitive dimension, resulting in a loss of the necessary balance of the two and with behavior.
 - a. Some of the more serious cognitive content *subtractions* include the following.
 - 3) Cognitive content changes also involve eliminating the study of church history, resulting in congregations today repeating mistakes of the past.
 - 4) Key church leaders are not being taught what the Bible teaches about their calling and how to function accordingly. Thus, they cannot fulfill their Christ-given command to “make disciples” and teach them “to obey.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

1. Overemphasis on the affective dimension of human learning quickly reduced the cognitive dimension, resulting in a loss of the necessary balance of the two and with behavior.
 - b. Some of the more serious content additions include the following.
 - 1) The unbiblical concept that all religions believe in the same god is (spiritually) deadly and demonstrably untrue.
 - 2) Inclusion of beliefs and practices from Eastern non-Christian religions.
 - 3) For more ways the SFM contradicts the Bible, see [“Balancing Bible Study, Spiritual Disciplines, and Behavioral Outcomes: A Critique of the Spiritual Formation Movement and a Call to Renew Christian Education.”](#)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

1. The emphasis on the affective dimension of human learning and development quickly grew to reduce as much as possible the cognitive dimension. The reduction occurred not only in content, including problematic subtractions and additions, but also in programming.
 - c. Pertaining to programming, some of the more serious subtractions include the following.
 - 1) Programming with levels was eliminated. Believers mature in Christ in a process called sanctification. They have traditionally been significantly helped by a [church education program](#) that offers classes linked to the human developmental process: e.g., easier to understand classes for those in elementary stages and more substantive studies for those in more advanced stages.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

1. The emphasis on the affective dimension of human learning and development quickly grew to reduce as much as possible the cognitive dimension, which occurred in content and in programming.
 - c. Pertaining to programming, some of the more serious subtractions include the following.
 - 2) Resources for church education were considered unnecessary.
 - a) Church libraries were eliminated or reduced to much less attention and support.
 - b) Resource centers were eliminated or significantly reduced to primarily include materials designed to heighten affect.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

1. The emphasis on the affective dimension of human learning and development quickly grew to reduce as much as possible the cognitive dimension, which occurred in content and also in programming.
 - c. Other programming subtractions include the following.
 - 3) Cognitively substantial programs such as a lecture series featuring accomplished speakers on specific informative and substantive subjects are eliminated or deemphasized.
 - 4) Christian education to teach Christ's followers how to witness for Him as the only Way to salvation (John 14:6) are removed or deemphasized.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

2. The overemphasis on the affective dimension of human learning with the resultant deemphasis on cognition, has produced minimal and inaccurate understanding and inability to explain God's plan of salvation and its applications to fellow church members and to non-Christians.
 - a. The SFM has also significantly reduced the substantive cognition in worship, including but not limited to, music that lacks theological depth and often is inaccurate.
 - b. These unbiblical aspects have contributed to the inability of Christians to “always be prepared to give an answer [ἀπολογία (*apologian*, apologetic, defense)] to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have...with gentleness and respect...” (1 Peter 3:15)

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

2. The overemphasis on the affective dimension of human learning with the resultant deemphasis on cognition, has produced minimal and mistaken understanding of the Bible and inability to explain God's plan of salvation and its applications to fellow church members and to non-Christians.
 - c. An example of such cognitive decline is observed by current empirical research* and by older people who can remember, when they were young adults, participating in conversations around the coffee table before and after public worship in which the discussion involved such Biblical and theological subjects as calling, regeneration, justification, and sanctification. They contrast those discussions with the current conversations involving sports, entertainment, trips, and other subjects having more to do with affect than mission-equipping cognitive and behavioral matters.

* See "[Balancing Bible Study, Spiritual Disciplines, and Behavioral Outcomes: A Critique of the Spiritual Formation Movement and a Call to Renew Christian Education.](#)"

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

3. The overemphasis on the affective dimension of human learning, with the resultant deemphasis on cognition, also ignores and negatively impacts the behavioral dimension of sanctification. The SFM does not emphasize the Biblically vital importance of behavior—the growing and observable expression of increasingly Christlike behavior—which is *not only nice but necessary* in God’s sight. Recall Jesus’ words, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 7:21 [also 20; 22-23]; cf., such passages as John 14:21.) Failing to include an emphasis on behavior is serious; it is even dangerous...spiritually and otherwise.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

3. The overemphasis on the affective dimension of human learning, with the resultant deemphasis on cognition, also ignores and negatively impacts the Biblically vitally important behavioral dimension of sanctification.
 - a. To be sure, salvation is by God's grace, enabling us to have faith in Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 12:3; Acts 5:32; Matt. 7:20; Romans 4; 10:9 [Notice all three—cognitive, affective, and behavioral—in 10:9.]) Nevertheless, God expects to see concomitant behavior that demonstrates the genuineness of our faith, the necessary saving faith, that enables us to honor and glorify him, serving him in the ways he has called us—his covenant people—through whom is working to accomplish his plan of redemption for his creation. (Ephesians 2:8-10) Humans are also looking for that in us.

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

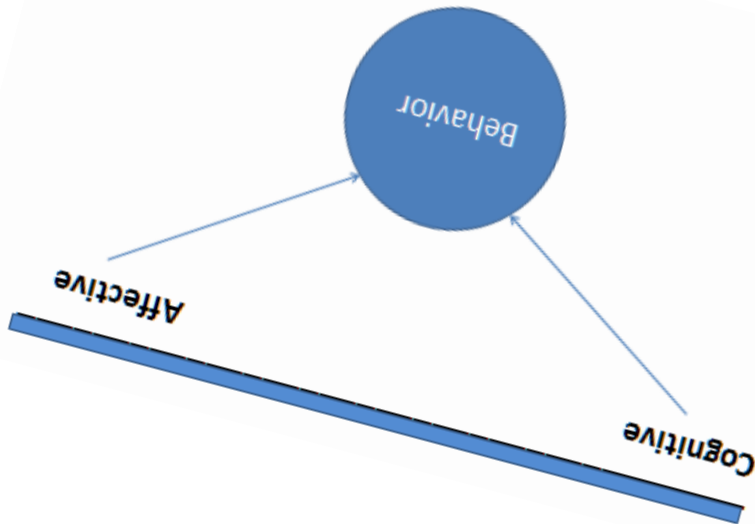
Unbiblical Aspects of the Spiritual Formation Movement

3. The overemphasis on the affective dimension of human learning negatively impacts the behavioral dimension.
 - b. Our fellow humans are also looking for behavioral evidence of the genuineness of our faith. Jesus condemned hypocrisy (Matt. 23); so do solely human beings everywhere. Words aren't enough; we have to live out our words.
 - c. The field of education has developed a means of identifying and measuring the degree of accomplishment of specific behavioral objectives for all three domains of human learning and development in sanctification. SFM ignores this valuable means of facilitating sanctification. We must use this excellent educational method. See [*Christian Education Goals and Objectives: With a Focus on Level III Objectives*](#).

All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Balance

Linking Mind, Heart, and Behavior



Discipline/Practice

When behavior is overemphasized, and is usually accompanied with an overemphasis on the heart, results include a social gospel liberalism, works righteousness, and much else contrary to God's Word, insufficiently informed, and inadequate in love. Harsh judgmentalism also occurs. Caring is done without adequate linkage to, and accurate instruction in, the Word of God and other compatible resources to help avoid the circumstances that caused the problems being addressed.

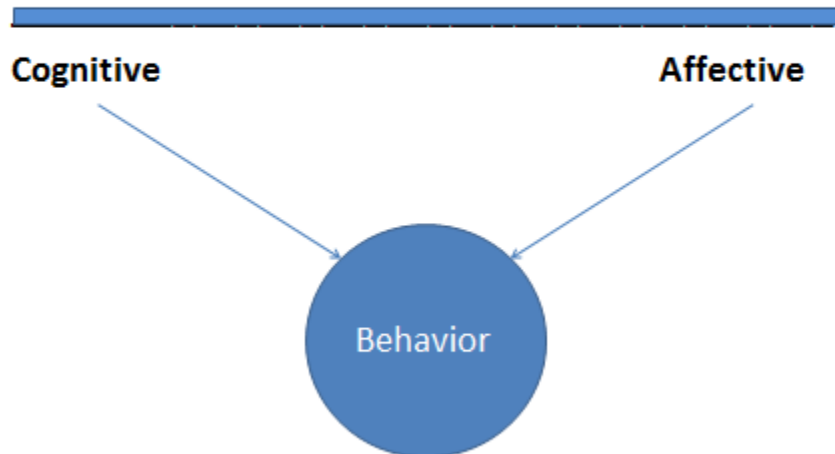
All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Balance

Linking Mind, Heart, and Behavior

- 2 Thessalonians 2:13

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship



Discipline/Practice

- “...God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.”
- Keeping all three domains in balance results in productive and joyful sanctification in actively responding to God’s call to serve him on mission for Jesus Christ.

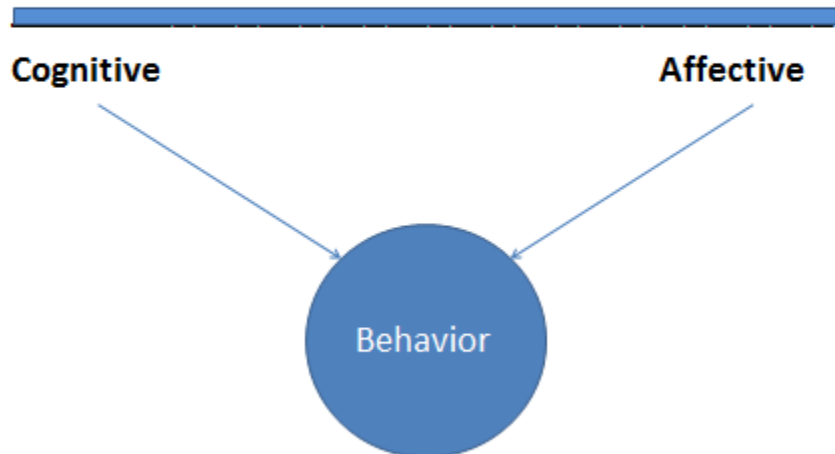
All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Balance

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- 2 Thessalonians 2:13

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship



Discipline/Practice

A Vision of Seven Applications
(DeKruyter, 190-191)

1. Pastors and other church staff implementing these domains.
2. Bible study groups also listening for God's voice, and then testing the messages with God's Word to confirm their validity.
3. Seminary students including spiritual disciplines with their studies.

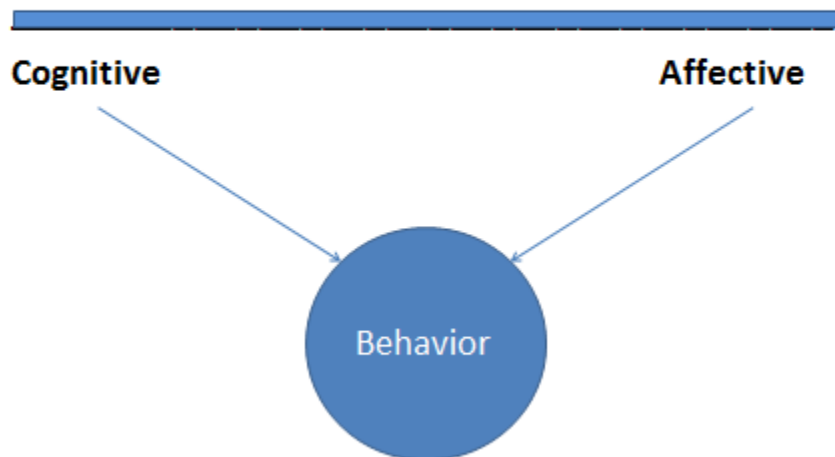
All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Balance

Linking Mind, Heart, and Behavior

- 2 Thessalonians 2:13

The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship



Discipline/Practice

A Vision of Seven Applications
(DeKruyter, 190-191)

4. Church congregations that are “solid but stagnant... infused with new godly energy.” (190)
5. Groups of “Christians who have had little in common exchange insights and together share God’s rich, indwelling love.” (190-191)

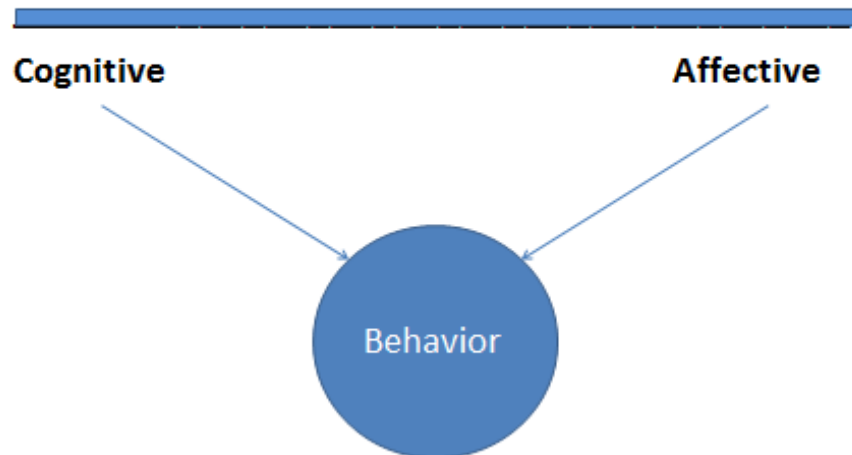
All Three Domains of Human Learning and Development, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral, Must Be Rightly Engaged in the Biblical Spiritual Disciplines.

Balance

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The Three Domains of Human Learning and Development: Their Relationship



Discipline/Practice

A Vision of Seven Applications (DeKruyter, 190-191)

6. In the home “homemakers making time in their busy schedules to draw on God’s strength and love—and then they pass that love on to their families.”
7. Children growing up in Christian homes learning basic spiritual truths and feeling at ease practicing these disciplines as they grow up.

Balance feelings with a focus on intellect to produce effective service for Christ Jesus. Christian Education in the Bible and throughout church history has always included the affective domain.

A Concluding Caveat

CORRECT THE CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUAL FORMATION MOVEMENT.

For much more, see [Balancing Bible Study,
Spiritual Disciplines, and Behavioral
Outcomes: A Critique of the Spiritual
Formation Movement and a Call to Renew
Christian Education.](#)

Joys in Historic Christian Spiritual Discipline

- As you mature in Christ Jesus through daily practicing the Biblically-based spiritual disciplines of the historic Christian church, you'll become ever more conscious of God's constant presence and acting in your life and of your developing relationship with him that will last forever.
- You'll also be able to distinguish between Biblical and unbiblical, true and false, claims about Christ Jesus.
- When the challenges of life occur, as they do with everyone in this age, you'll never ask as many do, "Where's God in all this?" You'll know where he is; he's never left you and his all-sufficient help is constantly present with and for you!
- That is joy to its fullest, the life in abundance that Jesus came to bring! (John 10:10)

For Further Information

The following and other resources in both English and Mandarin Chinese are located on the website:

<https://fromacorntoak12.com/>

- [“Balancing Bible Study, Spiritual Disciplines, and Behavioral Outcomes: A Critique of the Spiritual Formation Movement and a Call to Renew Christian Education,”](#) Edward D. Seely
- [“Christian Education for the 21st Century and Beyond”](#) Edward D. Seely
- [“Curriculum Development and Lesson Planning For Teachers & for Teachers of Teachers,”](#) Edward D. Seely

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For Further Information

The following and other resources in both English and Mandarin Chinese are located on the author's website.

- [“Teaching-Learning Methods in Church Ministries: Using Level III Objectives,”](#) Edward D. Seely
- [“Worship: A Course on Worship in the Christian Church,”](#) Edward D. Seely

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For Further Information

The following resources are books presently in print in Mandarin Chinese:

- *Basic Christianity*, Arthur H. DeKruyter (English version yet to come.)
- *Journey into Joy*, Arthur H. DeKruyter (New and used copies in English are available from Amazon.com and other sources.)

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