

## **Series: Born to Be a Pilgrim**

### **Lesson 3: The Right Tools**

#### **Lesson Objectives:**

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Name and describe and interact with the spiritual disciplines identified in Richard Foster's benchmark book, *Celebration of Disciplines*.

#### **Materials Needed:**

- ☐ A back pack and things you would (and would not) take hiking (water bottle, bathing suit, towel, change of clothes, rain coat, map, sleeping bag, pillow, journal, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, hat with a brim, books, camera, binoculars, high heels, game console, etc.)
- ☐ A weigh scale
- ☐ Double-sided copies of pages A-32 and A-33
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Finally, this lesson depends heavily on the book *Celebration of Disciplines*, by Richard Foster (Harper Collins, 1988). I highly recommend this book for you and your students. If you can, read it before you teach this lesson.

## Lead In:

Here is this week's warmer message from the writer. Read it to the students. It includes instructions for a lead-in where they must pack a hiking pack with the best materials for a literal pilgrimage.

*What you do before a pilgrimage is just as important as what you do on it. What you pack and how you prepare will affect you greatly when you are walking long distances and sleeping in rustic accommodations or tents. A rule of thumb when walking a long pilgrimage is to carry 10 percent of your body weight, including your filled water bottle, sleeping bag, extra clothes, and everything else! Pilgrims pack and unpack and repack their backpacks over and over again to achieve the right fit and weight. They weigh their packs down to the grams and practice walking with them. When you are walking a thousand kilometres, a few grams make a big difference.*

*Here are some things that you might take on a pilgrimage. Show materials. Work together to pack a pack with no more than 12 pounds in it. (That's ten percent of me in case you're wondering). That must include the pack itself and if you take a water bottle, it must be filled. When you are done, weigh the pack. Work together until you are all agreed.*

When they are done, read them the end of the message:

*How did you do? Did you agree on the 12 pounds? When I go a-pilgriming, I take only two sets of clothes—the one I'm wearing and another one. I take no pillow, no towel, no hat, no books, no camera, no spare anything! It's tough to make a pack like that! While each pilgrim packs slightly differently, all pilgrims try to pack as light as possible. What you pack makes all the difference between a good trip and a miserable trip.*

*It is also important to pack well on a spiritual journey. What we pack can make a big difference too. We don't pack water bottles, sleeping bags, and extra clothes, but we do*

*pack something called spiritual disciplines. Your leader is going to guide you through some tasks to get you familiar with spiritual disciplines. Here goes!*

### **Task One:**

Group the students in pairs and give each pair a double-sided copy of pages A-32 and A-33X. Also, give each pair a pen. The instructions are on the sheet. The pairs will work together to name the twelve classical disciplines that can be found in the spiritual classic, Richard Foster's *Celebration of Disciplines*. Give ample time for this task. It contains all of the information for this lesson and may be challenging for the students. That's okay. Allow them to confront the challenge. It may generate good discussion, good alternative answers, and good questions. When they are done, allow them to suggest their answers to the whole group and work together to arrive at the following answers. Guide the conversation, allowing for debate and disagreement, before clarifying the answers.

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|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Prayer     | 7. Submission   |
| 2. Meditation | 8. Service      |
| 3. Fasting    | 9. Confession   |
| 4. Study      | 10. Worship     |
| 5. Simplicity | 11. Guidance    |
| 6. Solitude   | 12. Celebration |

### **Task Two:**

The students should stay in their pairs for this task because they have built some rapport with their partner. Instruct the students as individuals to group the 12 disciplines into three categories: a) disciplines that I am working at mastering, b) disciplines that I have tried a bit or am interested in working on, and c) disciplines that I have never tried or find very hard. Have them share one from each category (or whatever they are comfortable sharing) with their partner. Ask them to identify if there were some common patterns.

After they have done this, solicit some answers and ask the why questions. For example, if one pair shares, “We found that we had never tried fasting or meditation,” ask them why they think this is so. If another pair shares, “We both want to get better at service,” ask them why this might be so.

A note of caution: there is a chance that a discussion of spiritual disciplines, while very helpful for the average Christian person, can also lead to guilt and anxiety as most of us confront the realization that we are weak and inexperienced in the disciplines. You as the leader should be prepared to address these feelings. My own bent is to focus on what students *are* doing and *can* do, rather than on what they are not doing or find difficult. Celebrate their effort and remind them that God loves them. Empathize with their guilt or difficulty by sharing your own. Remind them that the disciplines are tools that enable them to know God more if they choose and desire to do so. Remind them that it takes practice and work to get better at the disciplines and that small steps forward are a major victory. These conversations may happen in and around the lesson or may require more of your attention. Be prepared to listen and guide the students where they are at.

### **Closing:**

Have each pair pray together for each other. Instruct them to share whether there is a discipline that they want to master or put effort towards. Instruct them to pray for one another and remind them that by doing so they are practicing one of the disciplines. Instruct the pairs to pray that they would be people of spiritual depth.