



Vision therapy is a combination of exercises to strengthen both eyes to work together. It is individualized to each patient's specific needs. Office visits are required, but practice at home is a must. An individual who does everything prescribed experiences success. However, if an individual returns to using only one eye, the problem reoccurs with more significant damage.

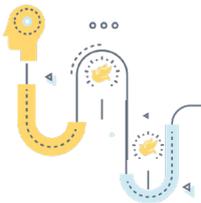
Like vision therapy, our spiritual life must be practiced with *both eyes every day*. Faithful attendance and involvement in a local church is a must. However, daily practice creates spiritual discipline.

Practice—the prescription for spiritual health.

In 1 John 3:6-7, John wrote that anyone who abides in Christ cannot continue living a sinful lifestyle. In contrast, the unbeliever continues to sin and proves he does not have fellowship with Christ. John admonishes his followers not to be deceived by false teaching. Simply, do not be led astray nor wander off the path. John then instructs the believers to practice righteousness which is right living (1 John 3:7b).

The perfect, sinless Christ defined one way to live right as listening to the Holy Spirit. Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit abides within the believer. According to *Strong's Concordance*, 'abide' means *to stay in a given place or dwell*. The Holy Spirit is at home within a child of God and will decipher truth

right is wrong and wrong is right. The only way to stay on track is to know God's Word. In Genesis 3:3, while talking to the crafty serpent, Eve said, "but God said, You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it lest you die (ESV)." However, that is



Know Scripture well enough to know how to live and then live that way.

as He resides there. As you practice right living, listening to the Holy Spirit keeps you from being deceived by false teachings and philosophies.

Webster's dictionary defines the word 'practice' as *train by repeated exercises, carry out, apply, or habit*. Daily practice of spiritual discipline is spending time in God's Word; seeking wisdom and guidance from God; dwelling in His presence; seeking His direction; and sitting in silence waiting for Him to speak. When we are abiding in Christ, our heart and mind will be seeking truth.

When walking with Christ, knowing truth is foundational. It is easy to be led astray in a politically correct society where

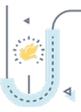
not what God told Adam! God's only command was they should not eat the fruit (Genesis 2:16).

Just like vision therapy, the daily practice of right living is necessary for spiritual health. My pastor made the following, convicting statement, "All believers have the opportunity to know all truth. God is the mark, and anything less is sin. We should live a life higher than the law. He wants us to practice spiritual disciplines and please Him. Know Scripture well enough to know how to live and then live that way."

'Steadfast' should be the description of a spiritual life. It means *unwavering, loyal, faithful, devoted, steady, and constant*. Scripture uses this word about

100 times. Just as vision therapy is specific to a patient's needs, a relationship with Christ should be individualized and specific. As you practice right living,

be constant in prayer, faithful in reading and memorizing Scripture, devoted to practicing His Word, and unwavering in defending the faith.



Spiritual Assessment:

1. Are you practicing spiritual vision therapy daily?
2. What does spiritual discipline look like in your life?
3. Does steadfastness define your walk with Christ?
4. God is the mark; anything less is sin—in what areas are you not hitting the mark?

Spiritual Discipline—*affects the people around you.*

Abiding in Christ, reaching the mark, and practicing spiritual truths—being steadfast will affect not only your life but also the lives of those around you.

Imagine being blind and getting behind the wheel of a car. What possible catastrophes would likely happen? Now imagine having a child in the car with you. Does the scenario seem worse?

You may be saying, “I would never do such a thing!” But the truth of the matter is—you are! If you are not practicing spiritual disciplines, you are driving blind with a child in the back seat.

The people around you are eternally affected, especially if

you are 'discipling' others while not being disciplined yourself. What were your answers to the spiritual assessment above? To *not* be driving blind, you must be actively growing, learning, and practicing God's Word.

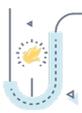
God's Word requires His followers to disciple others (Matthew 28:19a). Older (meaning spiritually mature) women are to be models for younger women. What are they to model—how to obey God's Word, love their husbands and children, be virtuous and pure, keep a good house, and be good wives (Titus 2:3-5).

Friend, we must be spiritually mature to answer the command

of discipleship. When women are practicing spiritual disciplines, Titus 2 will be evident. That chapter also challenges us to live wisely so no one can criticize God's message. Learn to live a God-filled, God-honoring life by turning against godlessness.

Women have a unique ability to communicate and see

another viewpoint. Yet, we often allow emotions to dictate actions. Titus 2:2 mentions being sober-minded. This means spiritually mature women should be examples, instructing spiritually immature women to control their desires, passions, reactions, and tongues. It is a great responsibility to live what you teach.



Spiritual Assessment:

1. Are you a spiritually mature or immature believer?
2. Do your actions match what you teach?
3. Does family time, me time, or vacation time interfere with your dedication to the local church?
4. Ask God to search your heart and show you His truth.

Read Titus 2 and journal the concepts you find. Below is my list from a recent study of this passage:

- Duty to husband and children.
- Character.
- Discreet in judgments.
- Self-controlled in affections and behaviors.
- Discreet and chaste; work well together.
- Meek with a cheerful spirit and temper. Do not be sullen or bitter.
- Love husbands and be obedient to them. Where there is true biblical love, this will not be a difficult command.
- Do not be false teachers and gossips.

When there are areas of struggle, this list can feel exhausting, or even defeating. However, just like vision therapy, we must practice and be disciplined. Create an

intimate relationship with Jesus that is intentional and authentic. Live a life that is relational, not merely following a set of rules. Remember, Christ makes His

home in a true believer.

Mentoring is messy and inconvenient. Mentoring does not mean you always have it together. It means you are practicing spiritual discipline as you teach others to do the same. When you mess up, point the correction back to the redeeming love of

Christ. Then both the mentor and mentee can learn from the situation. We are not perfect, and we will mess up.

Matthew 28:19-20 clearly states we must make disciples and train them to obey ALL God has commanded. This command is given to each one of us.

Obey—even when it is uncomfortable.

When God tells us to do something, He expects us to obey Him fully. No excuses. Begin practicing spiritual discipline by studying these passages to learn what God is teaching you. Ask yourself three questions about each passage:

What am I learning about God?

What am I learning about people?

What does this passage teach about obedience?

Read Joshua 3:1-7.

When God gives a command, it is part of His plan. We serve a God who is organized and strategic. He is not a God of chaos. He requires obedience from us. We are to obey even if it does not make sense or seems harsh. This passage seems like an impossible task to follow, but God had a plan.

Read Deuteronomy 11:13-21.

We are to love the Lord and serve Him with all of our heart and soul. Not part of our heart, but all. Obedience is an act of faithfulness. Our love of God should surpass our desires and plans. By not obeying, we are forcing God to use other people. He will accomplish His plan with or without us. He invites us to join Him in His work. We must adjust our lives and obey.

Nothing in our life should contradict the teachings of Christ. God's Word should be the foundation of our homes, as well as being consistently modeled and taught to our children.

Read Acts 8:1-8.

God wants us to spread His word to everyone, no matter the earthly cost. He empowers us to share the gospel.

Read Luke 17:12-19.

Thanksgiving in our hearts is obeying the words of Jesus. If you never get up, you will never do what Jesus has called you to do.

Read 2 Chronicles 19:9 and 20:12b.

Serving God requires obedience with our whole heart. During this time period, it was often stated they did right in the eyes of the Lord, BUT not with their whole heart. Why? The high places of idols were left standing.

Jehoshaphat's prayer should be ours, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you" (2 Chronicles 20:12b).



Spiritual Assessment:

Is there an idol in your life you won't tear down?

Until we are willing to adjust our lives, we hinder our maturity and example to spiritually immature women. Our only purpose on earth is to serve God with our whole heart, soul, and mind. Nothing should get in the way of that.

One day my husband asked me, "If money were not an issue, what would you like to do?" I replied, "I want to help people." I did not realize the significance of this initial response. I had been struggling with my identity since marriage. What does ministry look like for me now? Both brothers answered the call to preach and

were serving in their respective churches. I struggled to let go of my identity as 'the preacher's kid' while finding my place as a unit with my husband.

I spent time searching and praying but wasn't getting a clear direction. My husband found his role as a worship leader. My lack of musical talent hindered my ability to serve with him. I felt untrained and unqualified to do much. Searching for my new identity as a young wife and finding my place as a mentor to young women led me to a convicting and life-changing journey.

My husband and I agreed to

host youth group events and Bible studies in our home. We built relationships over Oreos and Dr. Pepper. This led me to mentor a student who has been through more life than anyone should have to experience. The Lord gently placed her in my life and began preparing my heart for the 'ministry' He called me to do.

Another girl called, "Can we meet? I need to speak with a counselor." Initially, I thought I

ing room holding a shattered 14-year-old girl in my arms was like staring at my reflection. Years ago I was that devastated teenager who experience dsignificant loss. My family loved and supported me, but that event tore my world apart. After years of refinement and work, I am now thankful for what I experienced. My brokenness and healing has given me empathy, connection, and perspective



True discipleship is uncomfortable, time-consuming, exhausting, and frustrating—but crucial.

am untrained and unqualified. We met, and everything seemed normal, but little did I know the journey we would take. My mentors equipped me with the resources I needed to speak truth. As they were speaking truth to my heart, I was speaking truth to her. The command in Titus 2 was full circle in my life.

Through broken words and sobbing, the voice on the other end of the phone begged, "Please come; it's my mom; I need you." My heart sank. The Lord crossed our paths for this moment.

Standing in the ICU wait-

with the young women in my life.

Before I ever realized it, He was preparing my heart to be obedient in mentoring. Discipling spiritually immature believers can be hurtful, burdensome, and discouraging, BUT God requires obedience and faithfulness.

True discipleship is uncomfortable, time-consuming, exhausting, and frustrating—but crucial. Discipling is a commitment that cannot become relaxed or complacent. It must be a priority. When we become relaxed in discipling, we stop

practicing the truths of what God teaches us.

Discipleship requires dedication and perseverance. Be prepared. Mentoring young women with no biblical background will take you on interesting, uncomfortable, and shocking twists and turns. It will be okay; you will be okay. Take the ride and guide them through.



Spiritual Assessment:

1. How will they know if they are not taught?
2. Are you obedient to the call?
3. Find your link to someone's story.

Obedience to the doctor and practice is required to have clear vision physically. Salvation is immediate, while spiritual healthiness is a process of practice that should be never-ending.



Self Relection

1. What does your spiritual practice look like?
2. Who is your mentor?
3. Who are you mentoring?
4. Are you obedient?

Ask the Lord to provide a mentor while revealing whom you should mentor. Do not miss the call of discipleship that God has commanded. You will not regret being obedient. 

About the Writer: Anna Fox and her husband Levi live in Smyrna, Tennessee, where she oversees the nursery ministry at The Grove Free Will Baptist Church. Anna uses her difficult, life experiences as ways to mentor young women whom God puts in her life. Anna is also the convention registrar and digital church directory coordinator for the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

**"If He (God) gives you a hard assignment,
be faithful. He wants to use you."**

Claude King, Final Command Retreat
August 2021