

# LIFT

## Ministry Group February Resource

### Reconstruction 101

When rebuilding your devotional life there are a series of questions you should ask yourself?

1. What do I hope to gain from my time with God?
2. What does God hope to gain from His time with me?

**Take a moment to discuss this with the group.**

3. What spiritual disciplines draw me near to God?
4. What obstacles most often get in the way of my devotional life?

**Take a moment to discuss this with the group.**

5. Are my “routines” causing me to become stuck in a spiritual rut or are they strengthening my spiritual foundation?
6. Have I allowed ministry activity (my doing for Jesus) to replace or consume the time I would invest in my devotional life (my being with Jesus)?
7. Am I willing to admit that my current devotional life needs an overhaul? Am I willing to take it apart so that I can rebuild it with intentionality?

**Discuss:** What’s the first thing that needs to change about your devotional life?



### Deconstructing Your Devotional Life

There is something exciting about pulling in the driveway and seeing a delivery on your porch that you’ve been waiting on. However, the anticipation quickly fades when approaching the package, you read those three infamous words on the side of the box... **“Some Assembly Required.”**

Have you ever been assembling something, and you realized, as you were completing the last step, that you either forget to put a piece in its proper place, have multiple pieces left over, or installed something upside down?

**Discuss:** What are you most likely to do?

- a. Do you leave it and move on hoping that piece wasn’t important or that no one will notice?
- b. Do you take the whole thing apart and put it back together correctly to ensure its stability and functionality?

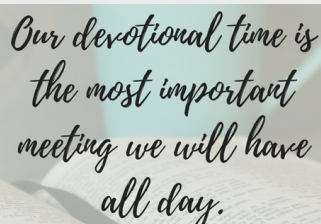
Are you more apt to sacrifice quality to save time? Or are you more likely to undertake the emotionally painful task of deconstructing everything you just built to ensure that it is put together correctly?

***A devotional life is not something we are given, it is something we develop.***

### Reconstruction 101 (Cont.)

Here are some tips for improving your devotional life...

1. Consistency is important to a strong devotional life but avoid the tendency towards legalism by establishing habits that reflect regularity but not rigidity.
2. Study the Bible as a disciple and not as a teacher/preacher. Although sermons may emerge from our time spent with God, that should not be the intention of the time we spend in His presence.
3. Pray through the scripture to deepen your connection with God. Using Bible verses to align your prayers with God's will can move your prayer time from the mundane to motivating.
4. Read biographies of great men and women of God. Learn from their devotional lives: Corrie Ten Boom, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Hudson Taylor, Brother Lawrence or George Muller are a few great examples.
5. Stay accountable. Share your insights with a mentor or prayer partner who can encourage and equip you, but who can/and will challenge the status quo in your life.
6. Serve beyond your church: Sometimes being in a different environment produces different opportunities, helps us meet new people, and causes you to look at scripture in a fresh way.



*Our devotional time is  
the most important  
meeting we will have  
all day.*

### Deconstructing Your Devotional Life (Cont.)

Another factor that may determine our response is the significance that item plays in our daily lives. You may be more willing to “leave it and move on,” if that item is simply going to sit on a shelf or in a corner and not be used daily. Or perhaps it's something that stays stored in a closet, garage or storage building that people will rarely see. This may cause us to feel less compelled to take it apart and fix the issue.

A pastor's devotional life, however, is packed with significance. It is something we should engage in daily and be developed to ensure our spiritual stability and growth. **A strong devotional life strengthens our faith, undergirds our decisions, births vision, identifies our shortcomings, and keeps us connected to God.**

Looking back, I never had anyone teach me how to construct a healthy devotional life.

**Discuss:** Did anyone ever take the time to teach you as a young believer how to construct an effective devotional life?

I was told that I should read my bible, pray and worship God every day, but I was never taught expressly what that should look like.

***Over the years, I constructed a devotional life that was more convenient, than it was intentional.***

My devotional life aligned well with my daily schedule, but its spiritual impact was mitigated by the limitations placed on it by my routine. It was soothing my soul, but not challenging me to grow. When I came to the district office, my entire routine was upended. It was then that I got a glimpse of how faulty my construction had been. I started recognizing all the missing pieces and had to determine if I was going to try and salvage what I had built, or if I was going to deconstruct my devotional life and rebuild it with more intentionality. I began asking myself some difficult questions:

- What am I trying to accomplish with my Bible reading? Is my time spent in God's Word personal or perfunctory? Has it simply become a source for sermon preparation or is it shaping me into the image of Jesus?
- Is my prayer life just a litany of petitions or is it a time of intimate communion with God.
- Am I practicing solitude, sabbath, and silence in a way that is replenishing my soul?
- Would I describe my devotional life as being comfortable or engaging? Routine or challenging?