

TRAIN YOURSELF TO BE GODLY

1 Timothy 4.7b-8

As long as we remember what we are going to become, our discipline will have a direction, a goal that will pull us into the future. Yes, effort will be involved, but you could hardly call it drudgery.

First, we must understand what we shall become.

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Romans 8.29

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3.2

¹³ *Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.* ¹⁴ *As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.* ¹⁵ *But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;* ¹⁶ *for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.'* 1 Peter 1.13-16

This should lead us to ask what every Christian should ask: How then shall we pursue holiness? How can we be like Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

Train yourself to be godly. *For physical training is of some value, but **godliness** has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.* 1 Timothy 4.7b-8

These verses are the theme for the entire series. In this message I will attempt to unpack its meaning; the rest of the series is an effort to apply it in practical ways. I will refer to the scriptural ways Christian's discipline themselves in obedience to this verse as the **Spiritual Disciplines**. I will maintain that the only road to Christian maturity and Godliness (a biblical term synonymous with Christlikeness and holiness) passes through the practice of the Spiritual Disciplines. I will emphasize that Godliness is the goal of the Disciplines, and when we remember this, the Spiritual Disciplines become a delight instead of drudgery.

THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES – THEY ARE THE MEANS TO GODLINESS

²³ *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* ²⁴ *The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.* 1 Thessalonians 5.23-24; John 17.17; Hebrews 2.11

Luke 18.35-43; Luke 19.1-10

THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES – THE LORD EXPECTS THEM FROM US

*Apply your heart to instruction
and your ears to words of knowledge.* Proverbs 23.12

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Matthew 11.29

Then he said to them all: 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.' Luke 9.23

Principles for Spiritual Disciplines

- Personal responsibility
- The object of training is growth
- There is a need to understand there are minimum characteristics necessary for Discipline

The Minimum Characteristics Necessary for Spiritual Disciplines

- Commitment
- A competent leader or coach
- Practice, practice, and more practice

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John Ortburg. *The Life You've Always Wanted*. Zondervan. Grand Rapids, MI. 2002.
Donald S. Whitney. *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*. Navpress. Colorado Springs, CO, 1991.