

The Joys and Fruits of Discipline

Zoom Bible Study | Tuesdays @ 7:00pm (CST)

May 16, 2023

Lesson Three

Our purpose for this study is to acquire a more disciplined life, as followers of Jesus Christ because:

- we want to be good stewards of all that God has given us.
- we want our lives to glorify God.
- we want to do the good works he put us here to do.
- we want to hear “Well done, good and faithful servant” when we stand before Jesus.
- we want to please Jesus because of his great love for us and because we love him supremely.

Consider these passages:

Hebrews 5:14

But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

1 Timothy 4:7 - 8

Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives’ tales; rather, 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.

2 Timothy 3:16

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and **training in righteousness**.*

Notice that we are to train ourselves if we want to be mature Christians. So, these sessions are training sessions.



Training in godliness involves spiritual activities like prayer, Bible study, Christian fellowship and others. But it also involves everyday issues of our lives.

Training can be hard, and it involves self-sacrifice.

Luke 9:23

Then he said to them all: Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

Jesus never sugar-coated discipleship. This passage from C. S. Lewis's book, *Mere Christianity*, refers to Matthew 5:48 where Jesus said: *Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

The command Be ye perfect is not idealistic gas. Nor is it a command to do the impossible. He is going to make us into creatures that can obey that command. . . If we let Him—for we can prevent Him, if we choose—He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a . . . dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine. . . The process will be long and, in parts, very painful; but that is what we are in for. Nothing less. He meant what He said.

Here's something I read in an old book that is a relevant proverb:

“Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere *walking bundles of habits*, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state.”

Walking bundles of habits—this study is really just examining the habits we've established and replacing the bad ones with good ones.

Being on Time

What makes people on-timers? And why are some people habitually late? Here are some of the reasons:

- They don't start early enough.
- They don't set a "drop dead" time to leave which will allow them to arrive on time.
- They don't allow for Murphy in their "drop dead" time.
- They try to do too much in too little time.
- They don't have enough respect for others.
- They just lolly-gag!

If you have difficulty being on time, seriously analyze the causes of your tardiness.

What can you do to impose this discipline in your life?

Talk to yourself? That includes inside your head and out loud. Become your own cheerleader, your own trainer, your own encourager.

Keeping Promises and Commitments

When was the last time someone made a commitment or promise to you and failed to keep it? How did that affect the way you feel toward this person?

Proverbs 13:12

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.

Ecclesiastes 5:5

It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it.

Promise keeping is a very important habit.

If you have to admit that dependability is not one of your strong suits, ask yourself why you have developed this bad habit of being undependable, of breaking promises. Whatever the cause, you have the power in Christ to become a very dependable person.

Not Putting Things Off

"Do it now and do it right!"

Are you a procrastinator?

Here are some of the reasons we procrastinate; see if you can identify with any of them:

- We procrastinate because we're simply lazy.
- We put things off when we're facing an unpleasant task or something we just don't enjoy doing.
- We procrastinate when the task seems overwhelming - too big.
- We procrastinate when we feel insecure about how to do it or we're afraid of failing.
- We procrastinate because we don't know how to get started.

Here are some cures for procrastination:

- Whatever you have to do today that you don't want to do, do it first.
- Break big jobs up into small pieces.
- Start a job in the middle.
- Refuse to be captive to a fear of failure.

2 Timothy 1:6 – 7

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.