

DISCIPLINE FOR GODLINESS

COSMIC CALL

We cannot overemphasize the importance of this call to spiritual discipline. Listen to Paul again from [1 Timothy 4:7-8](#): “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 4:7 \(NASB\)](#)

⁷ But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;

[1 Timothy 4:7 \(AMP\)](#)

⁷ But refuse *and* avoid irreverent legends (profane and impure and godless fictions, mere grandmothers' tales) and silly myths, *and* express your disapproval of them. Train yourself toward godliness (piety), [keeping yourself spiritually fit].

[1 Timothy 4:7 \(NIV\)](#)

⁷ Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.

[1 Timothy 4:7 \(ESV\)](#)

⁷ Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness;

[1 Timothy 4:7 \(NKJV\)](#)

⁷ But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.

Whether or not we have disciplined ourselves will make a huge difference *in this life*. We are all members of one another, and we are each either elevated or depressed by the inner lives of one another. Some of us affect others like a joyous tide, lifting them upward, but some of us are like undertows to the Body of Christ. If you are married, the presence or lack of spiritual discipline can serve to sanctify or damn your children and grandchildren. Spiritual discipline, therefore, holds huge promise for this present life.

As for “**the life to come**,” spiritual discipline builds the enduring architecture of one’s soul on the foundation of Christ — gold, silver, and precious stones which will survive the fires of judgment and remain a monument to Christ for eternity (cf. [1 Corinthians 3:10–15](#)).

Bible Study: Discipline for Godliness

Discipleship Series:

Pastor Eddie Idefonso

Some may minimize the importance of spiritual discipline now, but no one will then! “[G]odliness has value for all things”! The disciplined Christian gives and gets the best of both worlds — the world now and the world to come.

The word *discipline* may raise the feeling of stultifying constraint in some minds — suggesting a claustrophobic, restricted life. Nothing could be farther from the truth! The obsessive, almost manic discipline of Mike Singletary liberated him to play like a wild man on the football field. Hemingway’s *angst* over the right word freed him to leave a mark on the English language second only to Shakespeare. The billion sketches of the Renaissance greats set Michelangelo free to create the skies of the Sistine Chapel. Churchill’s painstaking preparation freed him to give great “impromptu” speeches and brilliant ripostes. The disciplined drudgery of the musical greats released their genius. And, brothers in Christ, *spiritual discipline frees us from the gravity of this present age and allows us to soar with the saints and angels.*

Do we have the sweat in us? Will we enter the gymnasium of divine discipline? Will we strip away the things that hold us back? Will we discipline ourselves through the power of the Holy Spirit?

I invite you into God’s Gym in the following chapters — to some sanctifying sweat — to some pain and great gain.

God is looking for a few good men!

Food for Thought

What is spiritual discipline, and why is it so important? What usually gets in our way (see [Romans 3:9–18](#))? What can a lack of spiritual discipline do to your life?

Reflect on [1 Timothy 4:7-8](#) (“**train yourself to be godly**”). What is the literal meaning of “**train**” here? Practically, step by step, what does this mean you should do?

What does [Hebrews 12:1](#) say about this? What things are holding you back in your walk with God? Why are you hanging on to them?

Is there a cost to spiritual discipline? Check out [1 Corinthians 9:25–27](#). What could greater discipline cost you? Are you prepared to pay the price? Why or why not?

“No manliness no maturity! No discipline no discipleship! No sweat no sainthood!” True or not true? How do you feel, deep inside, about this challenge?

How does spiritual discipline differ from legalism? Which do you most often practice? Is a change needed? If so, how can you bring this about?

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Application/Response

What did God speak to you about most specifically, most powerfully in these last four teachings? Talk to Him about it right now!

Think About It!

Can we really become disciplined men of God — a spiritual Mike Singletary or Winston Churchill? Aren't we just setting ourselves up for defeat? Answer this in your own words, without using evangelical cliché.