

Perseverance in the Disciplines

For the purpose of Godliness

"We must discipline our lives, but we must do so all the year round, and not merely at stated periods. I just discipline myself at all times."

-Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Let's Chew on these thoughts together:

- The Godly person is a "busy" person
- Devoted to God and to people, which leads to a full life
- Jesus himself was "a busy man" ... ministering all day even past dark, praying before dawn, occasional nights of sleeping, moving "immediately" from place to place. (Gospel of Mark.) Everyone wanted his time and attention
- Laziness does not lead to Godliness
- God makes Christlike people out of busy people through spiritual disciplines.

Remember: _____ without _____ is _____.

Feeling anxious or discouraged to be able to add keep up these disciplines when you already feel too busy to manage your existing schedule and life?

- Most of these disciplines can be practiced together with another one
- Ex. During times of silence and solitude, you can also practice bible intake, journaling, various forms of prayer and worship, you may be fasting, etc.

THE ROLE OF THE _____

"A major temptation in the self-discipline approach to holiness, however, is to rely on a regiment of spiritual disciplines instead of the Holy Spirit. I believe in spiritual disciplines. I seek to practice them... but those disciplines are not the source of our spiritual strength. The Lord Jesus Christ is, and it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to apply His strength to our lives."

-Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace*

-We cannot make ourselves more like Jesus- the Holy Spirit does that through our submission to Him in the spiritual disciplines.

-In our natural condition, we don't have a passion to be like Christ, but where the Holy Spirit dwells, there is a hunger for holiness, making us want to be more like Christ.

-2 Timothy 1:7- Whether or not your natural temperament or personality inclines toward orderly and disciplined habits, the supernatural presence of the Holy Spirit equips you with enough of a supernatural "spirit of discipline" for you to obey the command to "discipline yourself for the purpose of Godliness."

-We must respond to the Holy Spirit's promptings in times when we feel like quitting- he helps us _____

THE ROLE OF THE _____

Spiritual maturity includes growth in fellowship with the children of God. 1 John 1:3

-Many disciplines cannot be practiced without other Christians- public worship, united prayer, serving others, etc.

-One of God's purposes of fellowship is to complement the personal spiritual disciplines and to stimulate our growth in Godliness through them.

-We have a difficult time separating socializing and fellowship (socializing = sharing human and earthly life in ways common to both believers and unbelievers. Fellowship = koinonia, talking about God and the things of God from a uniquely Christian perspective.) Socializing is good, valuable, and a gift from God, but we engage in true fellowship much less than we think, and often substitute socializing for it.

-Ephesians 4:16- mutual edification

-Your individual growth contributes to building up others.

-If you practice the disciplines alone, you will not develop in a biblically proportioned way.

-Hebrews 3:13- we're even warned to not give up meeting together.

-When we withdraw from fellowship, we're more easily deceived by sin.

THE ROLE OF THE _____

Although trust and rest are core values of the Christian life, so are discipline and struggle.

-1 Timothy 4:7-8- for this we toil and struggle.

-1 John 2:15- We're warned of many flesh struggles we'll have to war against.

-It can be a battle to engage in spiritual disciplines... our flesh rises in defiance. (The spirit and flesh are opposed.)

-Although disciplining yourself is often difficult and involves struggle, self-discipline is not self-punishment.

Instead, it's an attempt to do what, prompted by the Spirit, you want to do.

-Through perseverance in the spiritual disciplines we will most consistently experience victory over the enemies of the practice of the disciplines.

-The Puritans' motto- "Vincit qui patitur" = he who suffers conquers.

-2 Peter 1:6- perseverance connects discipline, or self-control, with Godliness.

Hebrews 12:10 – No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace in those who have been trained by it.