

THE ABC's
of
Becoming
A Better Christian

***D*ISCIPLINE**

WHAT IS DISCIPLINE?

DISCIPLINE means to **TRAIN OR DEVELOP BY INSTRUCTION**

DISCIPLINE is **TRAINING THAT DEVELOPS SELF-CONTROL**

DISCIPLINE is an activity that is **DONE REGULARLY** as a way of **training yourself** to **ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING**

DISCIPLINE is the **ability to pursue** what one thinks is right **DESPITE TEMPTATIONS TO ABANDON IT.**

2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and **TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS,**

The military is a prime example of **what discipline looks like.**

Soldiers must strictly adhere to **A SET OF RULES, GUIDELINES, AND A SCHEDULE.**

THESE THINGS AREN'T SUGGESTIONS, THEY ARE A MUST.

2 Timothy 2:3-5 (NIV)

3 Endure hardship with us **LIKE A GOOD SOLDIER** of Christ Jesus.

4 No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs--**he wants to please his commanding officer.**

5 Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown
unless he competes according to the rules.

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Highest Paid Athletes In America

Cristiano Ronaldo ~ \$275 Million

Lebron James ~ \$125 Million

Steph Curry ~ \$98 Million

Patrick Mahomes ~ \$84 Million

Tiger Woods ~ \$77 Million

SPORTS ANALOGIES IN SCRIPTURE?

Galatians 2:2 (NLT)

2 I went there because God revealed to me that I should go. While I was there, I met privately with those considered to be leaders of the church and shared with them the message I had been preaching to the Gentiles. I wanted to make sure that we were in agreement, for fear that all my efforts had been wasted and **I WAS RUNNING THE RACE FOR NOTHING.**

1 Timothy 4:7-8 (NLT)

7 Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Instead, **TRAIN YOURSELF TO BE GODLY.**

8 **“Physical training is good,** but **training for godliness is much better,** promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.”

Hebrews 12:1 (NLT)

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us **strip off every weight** that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up.

And let us **run with endurance the race God has set before us.**

2 Timothy 4:7 (NLT)

7 I have fought the good fight, **I have finished the race,** and I have remained faithful.



Key Passages

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NLT)

24 Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize?

So run to win! 25 All athletes are **DISCIPLINED IN THEIR TRAINING**.

They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.

26 So I run **WITH PURPOSE** in every step. I am not just shadowboxing.

27 **I DISCIPLINE MY BODY** like an athlete, **TRAINING IT TO DO WHAT IT SHOULD**.

Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.



The Battle Around Us

The Enemy vs. The Child Of God

John 10:10 (NIV)

10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy;

vs.

I have come that they may have life and have it MORE ABUNDANTLY.

The Battle Within Us

Romans 7:21-23 (NLT)

21 I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong.

22 I love God's law with all my heart.

23 But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind.

THIS POWER MAKES ME A SLAVE TO THE SIN THAT IS STILL WITHIN ME.



The Battle Around Us

To Defeat The Enemy's Attack...

We Must Be Disciplined In Our Preparation For Battle

Job 1:4-5 (NLT)

4 Job's sons would take turns preparing feasts in their homes, and they would also invite their three sisters to celebrate with them. 5 When these celebrations ended—sometimes after several days—Job would purify his children. He would get up early in the morning and offer a burnt offering for each of them. For Job said to himself, "Perhaps my children have sinned and have cursed God in their hearts." THIS WAS JOB'S REGULAR PRACTICE.

Job 1:6-10 (NLT)

6 One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. 7 "Where have you come from?" the Lord asked Satan. Satan answered the Lord, "I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that's going on."

8 Then the Lord asked Satan, "Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil."

9 Satan replied to the Lord, "Yes, but Job has good reason to fear God.

10 You have always put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property.

YOU HAVE MADE HIM PROSPER IN EVERYTHING HE DOES.

Introduction

Spiritual Development Comes Through *Spiritual Discipline*

Spiritual Growth Is The Result Of *Cultivated Habits*

Many People Refuse To *Pay The Price Of Cultivation* And Expect *A Consistent Crop*
They Desire Prosperity without *The Discipline of Preparation*

Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility

Philippians 2:12-13 (NLT)

12 Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. **WORK HARD TO SHOW THE RESULTS OF YOUR SALVATION**, *obeying God with deep reverence and fear*. 13 *For God is working in you, GIVING YOU* the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

1 Corinthians 15:10 (NIV)

10 But *by the grace of God I am what I am*, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, *I worked harder than all of them--yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.*



Discipline Begins With A Destination In Mind

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NLT)

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So run to win! 25 All athletes are **DISCIPLINED IN THEIR TRAINING**.
They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.

If You Are Not **Determined To Go Anywhere...** You Don't Need **Discipline To Do Anything**
Your Goals Give You The Fuel To Keep Pushing

Everyone Is Running ~ Not Everyone Is **Running To Win**
Destination Needs To Be **Defined** In Order To Stay **Determined**

Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV)

13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind
and **straining toward what is ahead**, 14 **I press on toward the goal to win the prize**
for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)

9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, **FOR IN DUE SEASON** we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

Mark 5:27-28 (NKJV)

27 When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment.
28 For she said, "**IF ONLY I MAY TOUCH HIS CLOTHES**, I shall be made well."

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GOD HAS A DESTINATION IN MIND

James 1:2-4 (NKJV)

*2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,
3 knowing that **the testing of your faith** produces patience.
4 But let patience have its perfect work, that **YOU MAY BE PERFECT AND COMPLETE, LACKING NOTHING.***

*Many People Only Have **Material or Geographical** Destinations In Mind*

*What Is Your Destination ~ Are You **Disciplined Enough** To Arrive*



Discipline Has A Price To Be Paid

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*Disciplined In Their Training ~ To Exercise Strict Restraints or Abstinence From Certain Things
There Is A Cost Connected To Discipline*

Discipline means giving up the good and the better for the best.

Luke 14:26-28 (NLT)

*26 "If you want to **BE MY DISCIPLE**, you must hate everyone else by comparison—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, **YOU CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLE**.
27 And **if you do not carry your own cross and follow me**, you cannot be my disciple. 28 "But don't begin **UNTIL YOU COUNT THE COST**. 33 So you cannot **become my disciple** without **giving up everything you own**.*

*Joshua 1:8 ~ Study and Meditate Day and Night... You Will Have Good Success and Make Your Way Prosperous
Psalm 1 ~ Watch Your Company, Counsel, and Crowd... Meditate Day and Night ~ Whatever You Do Will Prosper*

There Is A Price Connected To Discipline



Discipline Has A Price To Be Paid

Mark 10:17-22 (NKJV)

17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him,

"Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

18 So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

19 You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' "

20 And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth."

21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."

*22 BUT HE WAS SAD AT THIS WORD, AND WENT AWAY SORROWFUL,
FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS.*

HE WAS NOT WILLING TO DENY HIMSELF THE PLEASURES OF LIFE



Discipline Is Connected To Purpose

1 Corinthians 9:26 (NLT)

26 So I run **WITH PURPOSE** in every step. I am not just shadowboxing.

Life Is Too Precious To Waste Minutes and Moments

Strength Is Too Valuable To Waste It

Each Day, We Must Ask Ourselves... What Am I Accomplishing Today, This Week, This Month....

If You Aim At Nothing, You Will Hit It Every Time

Are You Spending Your Time On Things That Just Don't Matter?

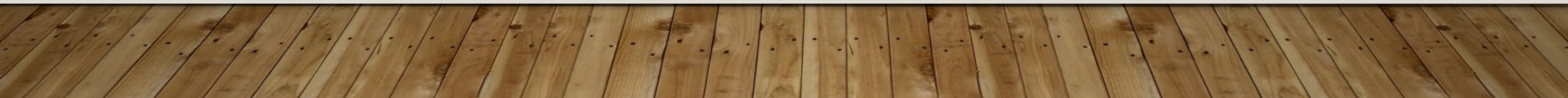
Quote: "We Are Giving First-Class Dedication to Second-Class Causes"

We Must Learn To Be Intentional In Our Efforts

Because.... Spiritual Growth IS INTENTIONAL.... NOT AUTOMATIC

Philippians 2:16 (NLT)

16 Hold firmly to the word of life; then, on the day of Christ's return, I will be proud that **I did not run the race in vain** and that **my work was not useless**.



Discipline Requires Personal Dedication

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NLT)

27 I DISCIPLINE MY BODY like an athlete, TRAINING IT TO DO WHAT IT SHOULD. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.

Personal Pronouns ~ I, my body, I fear, I myself....

We Will Never Experience A Powerful Congregation Without Personal Dedication

It Is My Responsibility To Discipline My Body By Following My Trainer's Instructions

Are You Controlling Your Passions/Desires or Do They Control You?

Many People Allow Their Body To Tell Their Minds What To Do...

Galatians 5:16 (NIV)

16 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

*Thoughts leads to Actions,
Actions lead to Habits,
Habits become your Character,
Character becomes your Destiny*



Discipline Fears Disqualification

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Paul Did Not Want To Lose His Credibility As A Witness

2 Timothy 2:20-22 (NLT)

- 20 In a wealthy home some utensils are made of gold and silver, and some are made of wood and clay. The expensive utensils are used for special occasions, and the cheap ones are for everyday use.*
- 21 IF YOU KEEP YOURSELF PURE, YOU WILL BE A SPECIAL UTENSIL FOR HONORABLE USE. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work.*
- 22 Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.*



In Conclusion.....

DISCIPLINE is TRAINING THAT DEVELOPS SELF-CONTROL

*To Defeat The Enemy's Attack...
We Must Be Disciplined In Our Preparation For Battle*

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