

Summer Reading

Small Group Questions: Part 1 The Life You've Always Wanted

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Read

1 Timothy 4:6-10

Reflect

In 1 Timothy 4, Paul advises young Timothy to train himself in godliness. Physical training has value, but godliness has value in every way. How does “godliness” have value “in every way”?

Pastor Darrin Patrick helps us define and pursue spiritual disciplines:

Discipline: doing what we don't necessarily want to do now, so that we can experience what we most want later.

- How does God use discipline to actually free us?

Spiritual maturity: living as Jesus would in our place—to think what he would think, feel what he would feel, and do what he would do. ~ John Ortberg

- We need to engage God with our head, heart and hands. Which comes most naturally to you?
- When have you given in to “a spirit of fear”? When have you relied on the power and love of God to overcome your fears?

Training: arranging your life around certain practices that will enable you to do what you cannot do now by willpower alone. ~ John Ortberg

- Which way do you sometimes lean in spiritual practices? Hyper mysticism: more into the experience of God's presence, or hyper legalism, where you're more committed to God's law than God himself?

1. Pursuing spiritual discipline must be communal.
 - a. How is solo spirituality a shortcut? Does this mean we don't need time “alone” with God?
 - b. How does Jesus' example show us that “community” is a central pillar of spiritual discipline?
2. Pursuing spiritual discipline must be intentional.
 - a. Intentionality produces habit. What habit do you need to instill? Prayer? Reading God's Word?
 - i. Give an example of something you've initially done out of obedience and discipline, but it became something you wanted to do—and missed when you didn't do it.
 - b. How can you better combine and balance the things that draw you closer to God: church, podcasts, books, prayer, worship, and serving? Other?
3. Pursuing spiritual discipline will be painful.
 - a. Why do we need to toil and labor to become spiritually disciplined? (think: worldly temptations)
 - b. We have access to God's spirit, his Word, and his people. Which are you most underutilizing in fighting the enemy and his lies? Why is each of the three an essential part of the “whole”?
 - c. What empowers prayer? How often do you meditate (chew on) God's Word? Which verses have affected you most, and why?
4. Where are you wasting time?
5. What's hardest: thinking, feeling, or doing—and why?

6. Who is helping you grow?

Respond: Where is God leading you? How can your small group support you?