

I Am in Training

Introduction:

Compiled by Paul R. Blake

A. 1Tim. 4:7 - "exercise yourself toward godliness"

1. Compare other translations...
 - a. "train yourself for godliness" (ESV, NET)
 - b. "train yourself to be godly" (NIV, NLT)
 - c. "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness" (NASB)
2. "Timothy is told that as an athlete trains his body, so the Christian must train his soul." - Barclay
 - a. 1Tim. 4:8 - "godliness is profitable for all things"
3. "Dad, how do you remember so many scripture references?" Daily use for over 35 years as a preacher, 42 years as a Christian, and 51 years of Bible classes. A lifetime of training and discipline, and I must do it for the rest of my life.

I. DISCIPLINE

A. Spiritual discipline

1. Discipline means: "any training intended to develop moral character, or produce a pattern of behavior; training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character (Merriam-Webster)
2. "A spiritual discipline is, when practiced faithfully and regularly, a habit or regular pattern in your life that repeatedly brings you back to God; spiritual disciplines can be described as behaviors that facilitate spiritual growth." (<http://www.wcg.org/lit/spiritual/group/discip1.htm>)

B. Examples of spiritual discipline

1. Prayer - in which one spends time talking to God - Dan. 6:10; Col. 4:2
2. Meditation - in which one contemplates God's Word, or other worthy matters - Psalm 1:1-2; Phil. 4:8
3. Fasting - usually accompanied with prayer, in which one abstains from food and material comforts - Neh. 1:4; Acts 13:2-3, 14:23
4. Singing - through which one can praise God and be edified - Psalm 71:23; Acts 16:25
5. Giving - by which we can please God - Heb. 13:16; Acts 20:35
6. Assembling - where we exhort each other - Psalm 122:1; Heb. 10:23-25
7. Hospitality - showing kindness to strangers - Heb. 13:2; 3John 5-8
8. Teaching - benefits the teacher as well as the student - Heb. 5:12-14

II. DISCIPLESHIP

A. Disciple literally means "a learner; one who follows another's teaching" - Vine

1. A disciple is not only a learner, he is a follower in the sense that he imitates the manner of thought, speech, and life of his leader

B. A disciple's chief goal: to be like the teacher - Luke 6:40

1. Be conformed to the image of God's Son - Rom. 8:29

III. DETERMINATION

A. Christians are in training until death - 1Cor. 9:24-27; 2Tim. 2:1-5; 1Tim. 4:7-9