

Ten Major Causes of Failure – Part II

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If you want a long sermon today I may to disappoint you, because I do not plan to be long. We are going on a dinner outing this afternoon w/my Mom and she told me not to be long because she said “she will be hungry”. So I will not be long.

It has been a very tragic week

I can not remember when I have experienced such a tragic week. This week has been extremely difficult, extremely sad. On Monday we learned that my niece who is like a sister to me, Dad was taken-taken in the presence of our Wonderful Lord. On this same evening in Washington DC, our Nations Capital, the city where I work experienced the worst Metro Rail wreckage in the history of the Rail system. Two metro trains collided. Both traveling in the same direction, one ran into the back of the other killing nine people. We also had the deaths of Michael Jackson, Farah Fawcett, and Ed McCann, among others.

A very tragic week and what is God saying in the midst of all this.

I believe God would have us to be reminded of the fact that our lives are but a vapor. None of us have any guarantee of tomorrow. We are here one day and we may be gone the next, but for the Grace of God. Perhaps God would have us to live each day as though it were our last day because it may very well be our last day. My son prayed @ dinner “thank you Lord for giving us another day”. I know that @ 12 I was not nearly as spiritual or as conscientious about how precious life truly is.

I believe God would have us to maximize each and every moment of every day. Someone said we should live as though Jesus died yesterday, rose today, and is coming back for us any moment! Do you know anyone who lives like that? Well to live like that requires discipline and that is my subject today. Today I want to speak for just a few moments on “The power of a disciplined life”.

We have begun a new sermon series. A series we have entitled the ten major causes of failure. A few weeks ago we began our series looking initially at our first cause of failure which was a Lack of a Specific Purpose in Life, than on last week we took a break for father’s day sermon on the Prodigal Son. The son is not really the star of this story but the father is and that father is illustrative of our Heavenly Father. Today we begin our second message in the series which is another cause of failure, the Lack of Self Discipline which I have chosen to call “The power of a disciplined Life”.

Sermon title: “The power of a disciplined life”

Sermon text: 1 Timothy 4:1-8

Let us pray:

Sermon Introduction:

Discipline means self-control. You must control yourself and decrease your negative habits, and replace them with positive Godly habits. If you don't conquer your flesh, it will conquer you. In this message we would like to share a few practical ways one can conquer or gain victory over the flesh, and it comes through discipline. This discipline will lead to a powerful dynamic Christian life. Without discipline the Christian will live a defeated fleshly life. Discipline is essential if we are going to be the Christians God has saved us to be.

Why is discipline so important? Let me give you some things:

Without discipline it would be impossible to live a life of integrity. It takes discipline. Without discipline it would be impossible to stay faithful to my wife, my family or my church, my employer, yea even myself. It takes discipline.

Without discipline it would be impossible to maintain any degree of health and fitness

Without discipline it would be impossible to maintain a consistent devotional life

Without discipline one can not control his tongue, his emotions, his pride (I started to say ego-but I edited)

Without discipline one can not live above the status quo-mediocre (the fair, average, below average, the ho hum) It takes discipline.

You say if discipline is so important why don't more people have it? Well because it requires effort, it requires work, sacrifice, energy, commitment and discipline does not come easy and not all of us want to experience the pain of discipline, but we want the gain. We want the results, but we don't want to pay price for it. So that brings us to a definition, what is discipline?

When we talk about discipline I am not talking about giving your child a spanking nor am I talking about church discipline. I am talking about personal discipline. The Christian disciplines that leads to Godliness. So what is discipline? Well I often do not like to quote Webster's dictionary in a sermon but I like his definition here for he defines discipline as "training that develops self control, efficiency, etc". This exercise is another word for discipline and this source of power in the Christian life. Now how do I become a more disciplined Christian?

This sounds like 1 Timothy 4:7-please turn to 1 Timothy 4:7-8 and notice what it says there:

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

Notice the word *rather* is italicized-that means it did not appear in the early manuscripts but was added. **(Illustration of this, look at Luke 23:1-2 fellow...We found this, this**

thing...Do you know who Jesus is? Jesus Christ is the very God of very God. He is the only way out of the mess of this world. He is ...One thing is certain those who have gone in eternity this week now know who Jesus is!) The verse should read, But refuse profane... In other words Paul is saying do it Timothy. This is not a suggestion Timothy exercise yourself in godly living. Paul is saying to this young preacher Timothy give up profane, and old wives fables, but do this-exercise (this is our word). Discipline is exercise. Discipline means exercise, calisthenics in Godly living. Now you know what happens when one exercises they go to the gym or to the track or the weight room and they work out. Why to they do this so that they can develop strength or get fit.

What will happen if an athlete does not exercise?

What happen if a soldier does not exercise and stay in shape?

I want to share a few verses with you and make three observations and than I will be all done.

1 Timothy 4:13-17

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

Take heed unto thyself. Give attention yourself! Do you give attention to your own Spiritual development? We need to go to school. The school of spiritual fitness.

Ephesians 5:3-11

3 ¶ But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometime darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light;

9 (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*. The word discipline come from disciple, and the disciple is a learner. He is in school, Gods school and we are always in Gods school.

Exodus 17:11-14

11 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Am'alek prevailed.

12 But Moses' hands *were* heavy; and they took a stone, and put *it* under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

13 And Joshua discomfited Am'alek and his people with the edge of the sword.

14 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Am'alek from under heaven. [Deut. 25.17-19](#) · [1 Sam. 15.2-9](#)

This is interesting: As long as Moses held up his hand Israel prevailed but when his hands came down they began to loose and Amalek prevailed. So what happened, first the rock, and than the help of Hur and Aaron.

Often times we face lapses in our discipline and we need someone to come along side us to help us. We need someone to be accountable to.

How do we develop discipline? Le me share three points and I am done.

1. Starts small! Pick up after yourself. Keep your word. If you say to someone I am going to do something, do not make excuses do it, and if you can not do it have the courage to say so.
2. Deprive yourself of something that your flesh enjoys. Start saying no to your flesh.
3. Be patient. Patience is a virtue and it is not easy for any of us.
4. Be on time! Be on task, on target, and on a mission!