

1/24/2021

The Benefits of Spiritual Disciplines

A video introduction is available. View it at https://watch.liberty.edu/media/1_dx4xpi91

1. Motivate

Why do you think there is such emphasis on physical fitness in our society?

2. Transition

Many of us do things to better our physical fitness.

- Growth in Christ occurs when we practice spiritual disciplines.

3. Bible Study

3.1 Good Things of God Distorted

Listen for a prophecy we've seen fulfilled.

1 Timothy 4:1-3 (NIV) The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. 2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. 3 They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

What concern did Paul have about the latter times?

What are some reasons why people walk away from the church in today's world?

What are some examples of good things that have been distorted or perverted by our culture?

3.2 Focus on, Lift up God's Truth

Listen for spiritual nourishment.

1 Timothy 4:4-7a (NIV) For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving. 5 because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer. 6 If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. 7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales;

What was Timothy supposed to do for spiritual nourishment?

How do you think God's Word nourishes one's spiritual life?

In deciding what to watch, read, and listen to, how do you determine what will nourish your soul and what might be *spiritual* junk food?

What effect might the irreverent and silly myths have on those who embraced them?

What passing fads have churches embraced, only to discover later that these were empty and even destructive?

Consider significant social and religious issues in our day to which the church often speaks

- abortion,
- teen sexual abstinence,
- war,
- prayer in schools,
- the Ten Commandments in public places

These issues are *not* irreverent and silly myths. Still, as important as these issues are, what might God place as a *higher priority*?

3.3 Discipline and Train in Godliness

Listen for Paul's priorities.

1 Timothy 4:7b-10 (NIV) rather, train yourself to be godly. 8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 9 This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance 10 (and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

What appears to be Paul's view about the value of physical exercise?

How does that analogy teach us about the *value* of spiritual exercise? What is the purpose of training ourselves in godliness?

In what positive action did Paul urge Timothy to engage?

What would be some spiritual disciplines that believers might practice regularly?

- prayer
- personal Bible study
- group Bible study
- corporate worship
- fasting



Consider the practice schedule of a young lady (Mirjana Bosevska) preparing for Olympic swimming,

- *5 1/2 hours a day in the pool,*
- *with extra time for weight training and*
- *other strength-building exercises.*
- *Her training regime takes up much of her time,*

Note that she did not medal, but was among the top 20 in Sydney ... there *were* people there who trained harder and were faster

⇒ Although we are not training for the Spiritual Olympics, we *are* engaged in spiritual warfare ...

⇒ 5 minutes of Bible reading and a “now I lay me down to sleep ...” prayer don’t accomplish very much to empower us for spiritual battle

So, what will be the benefits of spiritual training?

Application

Commit.

- Commit to prepare for and attend every session of this study on spiritual disciplines.

Invest time.

- Add an additional thirty minutes each day to your quiet time for the next six weeks.
- Practice the spiritual disciplines covered in this study.

Disciple.

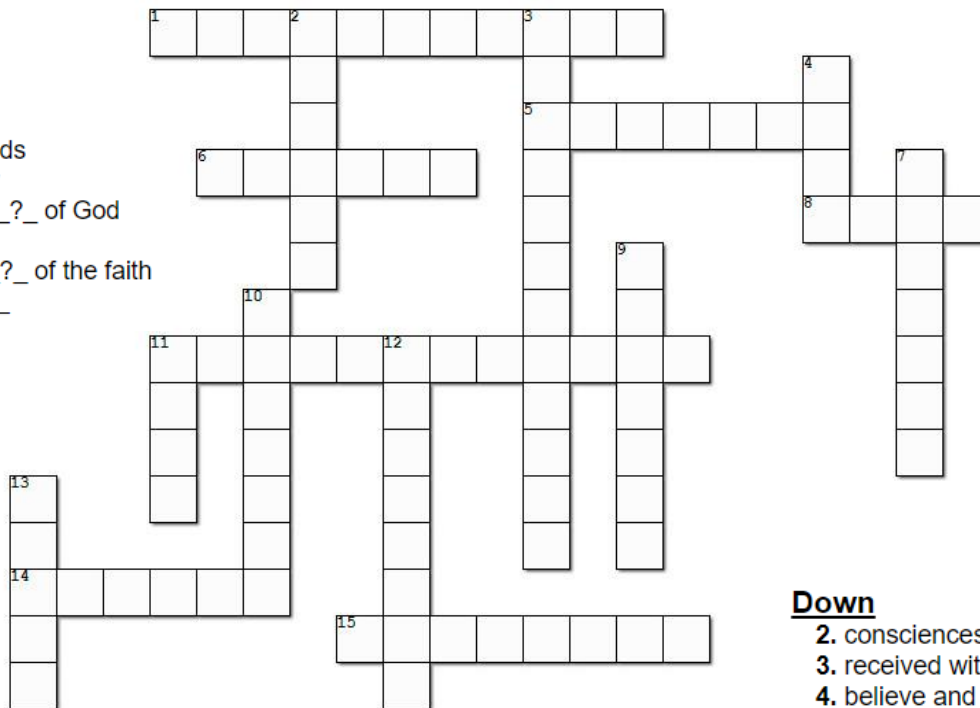
- Develop a relationship with a new or young believer (of your same gender).
- Encourage his or her growth in Christ.

Crossword Puzzle

Clues and words taken from 1 Timothy 4:1 - 10 (NIV)

Across

- 1. this is a _?_ saying
- 5. _?_ from certain foods
- 6. _?_ people to marry
- 8. consecrated by the _?_ of God
- 11. _?_ liars
- 14. brought up in the _?_ of the faith
- 15. nothing is to be _?_



Down

- 2. consciences have been _?_
- 3. received with _?_
- 4. believe and _?_ the truth
- 7. foods which God _?_
- 9. some will _?_ the faith
- 10. deceiving _?_
- 11. put our _?_ in God
- 12. _?_ with thanksgiving
- 13. godless _?_

If you're stuck, go to <https://tinyurl.com/y3vel2zb>. There are other good **exercises** there for the whole family

