

The Christian Worldview Transcript

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Topic: How to Discipline Yourself for the Purpose of Godliness

DAVID WHEATON: How to Discipline Yourself for the Purpose of Godliness. That is the topic for today on The Christian Worldview where the mission is to think biblically about all matters of life and faith so that we can then live accordingly. And to share the Good News that Jesus Christ is who He claimed to be, the Way, the Truth and the Life and the only way to the Father in heaven and that His Word is both relevant and our basis for living in this modern world. I am David Wheaton, the host of The Christian Worldview. Our official website is TheChristianWorldview.com.

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I hope you are ready for our topic today, How to Discipline Yourself for the Purpose of Godliness. This is our book club selection for the months of June and July. Here we are in the middle of August discussing. We typically read a book for two months and then toward the end of that two-month period, we discuss the book or have the author on. In this case, our book was called *The Disciplined Life* by Richard Taylor. The copy I have was from 1962. I really hope that you got a chance to read this book and you read all the book club selections. We don't do a lot of them over the year. We just do about five or six books a year. This little book is barely over 100 pages. I think I read it a long time ago. I saw some of my notes in there and I don't even know when it was. In re-reading portions of it, it is very powerful, very convicting and very practical. If you are one of the people who read this book, we would like to hear from you today on The Christian Worldview. I would like to know what you think about the book. It is written from a Christian perspective but it is about how to discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. That is our topic for the day.

I don't remember who said this, but I know my mother has said this to me several times in my life, "life is tons of discipline." I think the particular character quality of discipline is one that is not mentioned in the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control. It is not mentioned there but as I have read this book and have been doing some study on this topic of discipline it is the bedrock character quality that is so needed to grow into godliness or to be sanctified. If you aren't disciplined for the purpose of godliness, you won't be sanctified in your Christian life. I know we all look at ourselves and think I should be doing more, I could be this in my Christian walk, but I am not. One of the hardest things to do in life is to change. To change ourselves is one of the most overwhelming and difficult tasks that any of us face. It is really hard to change habits that are engrained for a long period of time.

I am going to start out by reading a passage from 1 Timothy where this phrase "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness," that is the verse of the week 1 Timothy 4:7. I am going to read the verses surrounding that passage because it is Paul speaking to a younger man in the faith, Timothy. Paul is telling Timothy all these different things to do in his Christian walk. Here he is giving him all these admonitions, do this, stay away from that. If Timothy didn't have the discipline to be able to actually do the right things and restrain him from doing the wrong things, all these commands of Paul would be worthless. It is the same thing in our lives today. We see Scripture, we read all these passages of Scripture where it says do this positive thing and go evangelize, disciple, live your life in a holy manner and help the poor and serve at your church, all these positive commands to do the right thing. Then there is the negative things, stay away from this, avoid immorality, don't lie, all these different things we are to restrain our flesh from doing but if we don't have discipline, we can't do any of them. That is why this particular topic of discipline is so important.

Here is the passage from 1 Timothy 4:6-16 *,In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed*

our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. Prescribe and teach these things. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love faith and purity show yourself an example of those who believe. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.

Basically, Paul is giving the marching orders to Timothy saying that you need to grow up in your faith. You need to read the word. You need to be helping others around you but you are going to need to be very disciplined to do so. That is really the goal of the show today, to try to figure out each of us today can be more disciplined, not just for the sake of discipline, but for the purpose of godliness so we can become more like Christ. That is really the ultimate goal for the Christian. Once you are saved, once you have come to a point of repentance of your sin, you put your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior and have committed to follow Him as Lord, once you are regenerated, then the goal of the Christian life is, like it says in Romans 8, to become conformed to the image of Christ. We are to become more like him. To do that, we are going to need to develop disciplines in our life so we can become more like Christ.

There is an interesting little quote at the beginning of the book, it says this about Christians, "Christians too often get an emotional experience of sanctification which is totally unrelated in their thinking to any form of rugged, self-denial. They are not apt to obtain genuine holiness of heart unless they see clearly in advance that holiness both implies and demands discipline in all of its forms and facets and at all levels of daily living." That is why it is so hard to be disciplined because it takes a lot of effort both mentally and physically. It takes a rugged self-denial. You have to say no to your flesh and that is very hard to do. The flesh is very strong. Changing your life habits is a very difficult thing to do, but God does not leave us without the power to be disciplined unto godliness as we will see in the program today.

We are not talking about discipline today in terms of discipline as in punishment for doing wrong just in case anyone was confused about that. This is about ordering your life a certain way or doing what you ought to do or being driven by the mind or the will over the emotions. This is what we are talking about today. In a positive sense, this is to pursue the right actions in life. Looking at it negatively, to restrain yourself from wrong or unproductive desires. This is about whipping yourself into shape through the power of the Spirit so that you can pursue godliness in your life.

Another quote from the book that I thought was good on this particular topic of discipline and why it is so difficult says, "In truth we may say that the finest display of such discipline is not the spectacular achievement, but the permanent adjustment of living pattern." Again that is about how to change your life. That is really what we are all after in the Christian life. We are after becoming more conformed to Christ, changing our habits and patterns so we can be more godly. This is a very important topic.

As I thought about this issue of discipline as it relates to Christians, I think there are many areas that we are undisciplined. I just picked four general areas. There are more than this for sure, but these are the four most obvious ones that came to my mind. Then we are going to ask the question, how do we increase our discipline for the purpose of godliness?

The first area that Christians lack discipline is in their daily interaction with God. In other words, basic, fundamental things that we need to do to draw near to God. It is a relationship after all. Any relationship gets closer when you spend time together and when you communicate. If our most important relationship is with God, we need to draw near to Him to communicate. He has written His words to us. He is communicating down to us already. It is up to us now to draw near to Him and have close interaction and communication with Him through reading the word daily, prayer, hearing the word preached, just basic things like that. If we are not doing those things, if we are not disciplined enough to do those things, it leads to weak, undiscerning believers in churches. There won't be evangelism, there won't be discipleship, there won't be personal sanctification, and there won't be service towards those in the church and those outside the church. This is so fundamental and I think this first area of lack of discipline for Christians has so many ramifications from not being in the word, not having your mind renewed daily like Romans 12:2 says, not being controlled by the Spirit that I

couldn't possibly think of them all, but the ramifications are incredibly profound. That is the first area and I think it is the most important area; there are too many Christians out there and I have fallen into this in my Christian walk where you get busy and the workday starts over the word. You get into the day and your mind hasn't been renewed. We are like sheep and sheep need to be led around. If sheep aren't reminded by the shepherd, which way they are supposed to go, they quickly forget and they get lost. I have seen this in my own life where you do the urgent things of the day and not the really, really important thing of the day which is interacting with God through His word, through prayer, through hearing the word preached.

I know I have said this before but there is really no excuse for not growing in your Christian walk. We have so many resources in American. There are five Bibles in every home and all kinds of Christian study books to help you study the word. On radio, there are many, many good pastors who preach every day, 26-minute sermons on the radio every day. It is not too much to ask to discipline ourselves to say I need to interact with God today. That is really the first one that I think is highly important that I see in my own life and lots of other Christian lives. If we were much more disciplined in this area, this would make a big difference.

There are three more so I will give those to you after the break and then we will ask the question, how do we increase our discipline for the purpose of godliness?

(break)

DAVID: We are talking about how do discipline ourselves for the purpose of godliness, a very important topic today here on The Christian Worldview. One thing I totally overlooked and was reminded of here is the fact that as I read the fruit of the Spirit, I said, I don't think that discipline is mentioned. Let me just read it again and see what I overlooked. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and here is the last one, self-control. There you have it right there; the last fruit of the Spirit, self-control, is basically the same thing as discipline. It makes it into the big list. Interestingly in the book, *The Disciplined Life* by Richard Taylor, this is what he says, "In a general sense, self-discipline is the ability to regulate conduct by principle and judgment rather than impulse, desire, high pressure or social custom. It is basically the ability to subordinate." In other words, it is self-control, control over self-powered by the Holy Spirit. That is what discipline is.

Before I give you the next three areas where I think many Christians lack discipline, I want to emphasize one thing about discipline. Discipline itself is not godliness. In other words, if you are a disciplined person that doesn't make you godly. There are lots of unregenerate folks out there who are really quite disciplined, who really pull themselves up by the bootstraps and are very disciplined in certain aspects of their life, not in all areas, but in certain areas. I think a perfect example of this is Tiger Woods. For so many years, we saw Tiger Woods as this incredibly disciplined golfer. Up at five in the morning, out at the practice range at six, play his round and he was successful. After he finished playing a round he would be back out there hitting balls on the practice range. He was incredibly disciplined about this golf and his fitness and his diet and everything else. Then, of course, we find out about another area of his life that is completely without self-control, not subjugated to the teachings of Scripture with the marital infidelity.

Discipline in and of itself does not mean you are going to be godly. Waking up at six and going through your perfectly organized schedule all day doesn't make you godly. It says discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. It doesn't say discipline is godliness, it says discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. You need to be disciplined to be godly. It is a step on the way to godliness. I think that is an important distinction to make.

The first major area where Christians lack discipline on godliness is daily interaction with God through reading the word, prayer, hearing the word preached. We do lots of other things, but we often don't discipline ourselves to do this most fundamental thing. It is like getting dressed in the morning. You have to put the word on to draw near to God to be able to know what He wants you to do and to be able to have the Spirit strengthen you to be able to do it. It is so fundamental but there is a lot of lack of discipline in that area. Sometimes when I speak to students about that, it is one of the things I talk about in *University of Destruction*, what is the game plan for being successful on campus? It is about raising your spiritual GPA and the first one is interaction with God. I always feel that this is so basic to say that we need to interact with God daily and

they have probably heard that a million times in their life, but it doesn't matter if you are not doing it. If you are not disciplining yourself to do it, you are not doing it. It needs to be done.

Number two is the area of health. Whether it is eating, exercise or sleep, I think this is a major area where Christians do not exercise discipline. From an eating standpoint, the Bible talks about gluttony. You go into any church today and I know there are sometime pre-existing conditions that pre-dispose someone to be overweight and I am not talking about those kinds of things. For Christians who eat too much and weigh more than they need and gain all kinds of weight, it just shows a complete lack of discipline to be totally honest, it really does. I have felt it in my own life too. I don't have that pre-disposition to be overweight, but I can easily gain ten pounds if I am not disciplined in what I eat. I just know that I have to exhibit some self-control and restrain the flesh. I would love to have a gigantic dish of Hagen Das after dinner every night, but just a little bit is enough. It starts with a little bit of restraint there. I think this is a bigger area than many Christians want to admit, the issue of gluttony and eating too much and being grossly overweight is something that we really don't talk about. I think it is significant that Christians lack discipline unto godliness.

The Bible talks about disciplining your body and all these types of things. It is a clear sign as is exercise; it goes together. The body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and we should take care of that temple well. It is not the most important thing. Godliness is more important than physical exercise, but it is not to say it isn't important as well. It has some importance.

I think another one to do with health is sleep. If we are not disciplined about sleep, when we get to bed, when we wake up, getting enough sleep so that we can be recharged and rested, I know if I don't get enough sleep or am tired, you are so much less disciplined because of the fact that you are just tired. Look at what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane when Christ was about to be betrayed in Matthew 26, Jesus said to them, *"My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death. Remain here and keep watch with Me."* He is telling them to do something positive, keep watch, stay awake, be alert. *He went a little beyond them and fell on His face and said, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me, yet not as I will but as You will. He came to the disciples and found them sleeping and said to Peter, "So you men could not keep watch for me for one hour? Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation. The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."* When you are tired, you get overcome by any of your basic human desires. It is interesting how much discipline Christ is showing here. He was just as tired as the disciples. He had been up just as long as they had, all day into the middle of the night and they were falling asleep which Christ Himself is becoming stronger, more alert, praying and watchful. This issue of health is a major area where Christians lack discipline.

Number three is the tongue. Whether it is gossip, backbiting or slander, Christians, and I include myself in all of these, do not have good enough discipline or self control over their tongue. This leads to disunity amongst the body, it leads to conflicts and it leads to all sorts of things. You have read James 3, *So also the tongue is a small part of the body yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by a small fire and the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity. The tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body and sets on fire the very course of our life and is set on fire by hell. With it we bless our Lord and Father and with it we curse men who have been made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth comes blessing and cursing my brethren. These things ought not to be this way.* That is from James 3 and that is exactly the case. We know from working in Christian circles and being in churches the amount of backbiting, the gossiping, the abusive words are not very different from the world. It may be done in a nicer way, but not very much different from the world. A major area where Christians lack discipline is over their own tongue.

Number four is in the moral realm. We have our interaction with God; not disciplined there. Number two, our health, not disciplined enough there. Number three, our tongue and number four, the moral area. This has to do with issues of moral impurity or sexual immorality, pornography or any of these things. If we are not disciplined and self-controlled and restrained in these areas, this leads directly to divorce, broken marriages, broken relationships, guilt, regret and spiritual impotence. We look at the example of King David in Scripture from 2 Samuel 11. This is supposedly a man after God's own heart, the disciplined leader of the army of Israel yet in a moment in time showed a stunning lack of discipline. 2 Samuel 11:1, *Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem.* Even in the first verse here it says, this is the time when all the kings go to battle every year, why isn't David with them? Why is he

staying home and sending someone else to do his work? There might be other reasons for that but I think that is one potential interpretation that he wasn't where he was supposed to be. He wasn't fulfilling his duty.

2 Samuel 11:2-3, *Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"* We all know the rest of the story about how David lost his kingdom for a time and almost lost it for good.

Those are the four areas I see and I am sure there are more. The question is what should Christians do to discipline themselves for the purpose of godliness? How do we do it?

(break)

DAVID: The listener question for today is how do we increase our discipline for the purpose of godliness? We know we are supposed to be disciplined. It is one of the fruits of the Spirit, self-control; we know that. We know discipline in and of itself doesn't make us godly. It is the path to godliness, the purpose; we discipline ourselves so we can be godly. We know all that. We know the major areas where Christians often exhibit a lack of discipline whether it is their daily interaction with God, their health, the tongue and the moral aspect. There are more, I am sure but how do we increase our discipline for the purpose of godliness? This is a difficult thing to do. Like it said in the book and we know in our own life, change is hard. How do we become more disciplined? It is like the New Year's resolution. People make them but they can't keep them because they don't have discipline.

I am going to go into a couple of things I wrote down that I think are important. I thought a lot about this because there are certain things in my life that I look at and I know I want to change. There is one thing recently. I came from being a professional athlete and I was exercising all the time, six days a week. To be honest, I got a little tired of it. After so many years of doing it, you get tired of it. I always had something I was training for so there was always a motivation. I need to get ready for this particular tournament. Now that I am not doing that full time any more and am working more in radio and writing and speaking, exercise has become something I have had to discipline myself to do. I often go a couple of days without working out and I know I feel so much better when I do, but it is hard to make yourself do it. My life has been so different the last nine or ten years as opposed as to what it was back in the days when I grew up playing tennis. I have gone from this active, athletic lifestyle to one that is necessarily a little more sedentary. When you are writing, preparing speeches and doing a radio program, you spend time at a desk. That has been an area in my life that I have had to look at and say, how can I change. It has been very difficult. Even though I am relatively active, I know I could do better in this area. There are other areas as well that I won't go into.

The first thing I wrote down to answer the question of how do we increase our discipline for the purpose of godliness starts with honestly examining ourselves against Scripture to see what needs to improve. If you don't know what needs to be changed, then you are not going to change. You have to have some understanding that things aren't as good as they should be in our lives. I have heard a pastor that I respect say that the Christian life should start from a point of dissatisfaction. We can be more like Christ. To answer the question, the first point is to examine ourselves against Scripture to see what we need to be more disciplined in.

2 Timothy 2:15 says *Be diligent to present yourself and approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.* We need to workman like about how we evaluate ourselves and what we need to change. The first step in increasing our discipline for the purpose of godliness is identifying what needs to change. What do we need to be more disciplined in?

I will go to one of our listeners in Tucson and Jamal welcome to The Christian Worldview. What do you think are areas that Christians need to be more disciplined in and if so how do we increase our discipline for the purpose of godliness?

JAMAL: I believe our time is a big subject. It is one of the biggest organizational tools we have on earth. It talks about fasting. Jesus fasts a lot throughout His ministry. I think fasting will allow us to control our flesh

desires and allow us to reflect back on the Spirit. Like you said, we have to ground ourselves in the word so that fasting and pouring the word back into us is like we are taking away the power of our flesh and giving the word back the power in our lives.

DAVID: Jamal, that is a great call and that is something I did not think of for the purposes of this show. Time is a big issue where Christians are undisciplined. I would say that is category number five. Your point about fasting is critical as well. This is certainly a forgotten discipline. You see all over Scripture these times of fasting. Not necessarily forty days, but just regular fasting has the effect of putting the fleshly desires in subjugation, subordinating them to the spirit and the mind. We have this natural desire every day to eat. When we suppress that and say that no I am not going to eat, maybe fast for a meal or a full day or two days, this really puts the flesh in a position of not being in control. Great point Jamal, thanks for that.

Let's go next to Macon, Georgia and Jackie how do we increase our discipline for the purpose of godliness? Or what others areas do you see in our Christian walk that we are undisciplined?

JACKIE: First of all, I was going to say disciple means the disciplined one. I think it is important when it says we are to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. I agree with the fasting and prayer but also more Scripture. I desire to be more and more like Jesus so I would like to spend more and more time in the word so God can change me in the areas where I need more change. I think also we are to be accountable to one another. I have friends who say, Jackie, what about this in your life. I really appreciate that because they are telling me things that sometimes I don't see in my own life. I think having prayer partners and people in our church that we can be accountable to and say how are you doing with the Lord this week. I think that is important.

DAVID: I think that is an interesting point about an accountability partner. Two things on that; one is an accountability partner doesn't necessarily help us restrain our flesh. We are all experts on putting on one front and doing another on the inside. It is not a fail-safe thing. Too often Christians think of an accountability partner as the all-encompassing solution to something going wrong in their life; it is not. On the other hand, you are right. An accountability partner or someone you are close to can be very helpful. Here is what I have often noticed. Sometimes as Christians we are a little afraid, fearful of not necessarily confronting someone else, but just bringing something out in another's life that may need to change because we will get the do not judge lest you be judged thrown back at us. I think that has become a major hindrance to being involved in each other's life.

JACKIE: That is true because we have a lot of people in our churches that don't even have Christ in their lives so a lot of times they are doing a lot of things that are wrong. I think we should approach them, but never approach them unless God has shown us that is what we are to do. First do a lot of praying and encourage them by being with them and saying, how are you doing with the Lord? How do you feel like your walk is with the Lord? Encourage them and hopefully they will come to know Christ. If they are already a Christian and are doing a lot of things wrong, it is the Holy Spirit that is going to impress them to do what is right but if you have a brother or sister in Christ that loves them and is praying for them and encouraging them in love, that is a good thing.

DAVID: Thank you for the call. It is a good point. I think if it is done with the right attitude and motive and the right tone, if someone responds to the wrong way, sometimes we can't help that but we should certainly do it in a gentle way with means of restoration and correction. Again the verse that has been brought up a couple times today from Romans 12:2, And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. It is always interesting in this particular passage, the renewing of your mind. One of the biggest things in being more disciplined for the purpose of godliness is that we feed the mind and the spirit. We prioritize the mind and the spirit far more than the emotions. I don't feel like it is not an adult like response. It is not a mature Christian response to not wanting to do something. We go way too much on our emotions. When we go on our emotions, that is what children do. Being disciplined is like the difference between a child and an adult. Children do what they want and go on their desires. An adult should (most adults don't in today's culture) act in the basis of responsibility and duty, doing what they ought, not just what they want.

(break)

DAVID: We are talking today about how to discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. We are asking the question, how to increase our discipline for the purpose of godliness. The first one I mentioned was to honestly examine ourselves against Scripture to see what needs to improve. The second one is to start with simple, achievable things to develop more discipline. In other words, simple things like going to bed on time to get more sleep, to be a little more orderly in your life, to have a better diet, to eat less, to be a little more punctual. Just simple, basic things in how we order our life. Start with achievable things and the basic things. Try to make small gains in those other areas we mentioned. We talked about interaction with God daily. Don't try to start reading an hour a day. It is not going to happen that is too much of a life change too quickly. Can you read one chapter of proverbs a day? That will take you less than five minutes before you go to bed or before you wake up in the morning. That doesn't seem like too much to ask. Can we hear one message from a pastor during the week between church? You go to church on Sunday, sometime maybe on Wednesday, download a message or listen to the radio. Pick a sound, biblical teacher and listen to one message a week. That is not too much to ask.

Start small because when you have little, small successes and you start getting those engrained in your habits, then there is going to be a desire for more. Just the opposite happens, when we get more undisciplined it is easier to be more undisciplined. Have you ever noticed that? It is when you get 10 or 15 pounds overweight, it is easy to say well one more ice cream bar is no big deal, I am already overweight. It works both ways. The momentum starts to gain going both directions.

Let's go next to Cincinnati, Ohio and Terrance what do you have to say on this issue of discipline?

TERRANCE: Actually, the funny part is you just said it. I was just going to say small, early wins. I think that all the things you mentioned are great for getting that balance in your life, especially your Christian life. I think that if someone hasn't gotten all of those things in place, just trying to do too much, too fast wouldn't be as effective or as long-lasting. You summed it up in the last segment.

DAVID: I must have read your mind, but thank you for the call Terrance. I think it is true. There are some practical things that we need to do here. The whole expression, "let go and let God" that is not only unbiblical, it just doesn't work. There is a major aspect to needing the power of the Holy Spirit inside of us. That is the reason why believers can change and often unbelievers can't change. That is the critical difference. When you are saved, when you repent of your sin and come to Christ in faith, as a seal, God gives you His Holy Spirit to help you live a victorious, Christian life over sin and temptation, the flesh and the devil. If you don't have the Holy Spirit, it is really, really hard, if not impossible to change. When you do have that Spirit, you can change. Doing some of the small, little gains first is important. Little small successes lead to more.

The third point on how to increase our discipline for the purpose of godliness is to understand yourself and operate from your mind and will over your emotions. I already talked about this from Romans 12:2, feed the spirit, feed the mind. The emotions are there but there to follow the mind and the will. They are not to lead. When you understand yourselves you are going to understand particular areas of your life that you need to show more discipline in. Then you are going to be driven by your mind and your spirit and not so much your emotions.

The fourth way to increase your discipline for the purpose of godliness is to realize you can win the battle because of the Spirit within. I already mentioned this. Philippians 2 says *So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*

In other words, work out your salvation. You do have responsibility, you do have duties to do, but it is God through His Spirit who is working inside of you both to give you the will and the ability to work for His good pleasure. Feed the Spirit, feed the mind; that is how you are going to be able to have the will to be able to change and to be more disciplined.

Those are my four points. Let's go to Augie in Tampa, Florida. What is your comment on this issue of discipline?

AUGIE: I feel that the way to increase your discipline would be if you were to walk in love, like God want us to walk in love, regardless of whether you are receiving love or not. If you are walking in love, you will want to speak right to people and you will watch your tongue whether they are being mean to you or not. When you are walking in love, you will watch your tongue.

DAVID: It is a good point. I think that is more of our motivation, the love motivation. Why do we want to be more self-disciplined? It is not just to be disciplined so we can think better about ourselves, it is really about becoming more godly and becoming more holy so we can interact with others in love. Having the restraint to respond in love when those around us don't.

Clifton, New Jersey and Joe welcome to The Christian Worldview. What is your comment on discipline?

JOE: I just wanted to say that discipline has a purposeful end. I was in the Marine Corp and everything we did according to discipline had a purposeful end. In other words, if we are to discipline our bodies with something we are eating it is to glorify God in our bodies. The same thing, we are going to learn Scripture, practice Scripture and read Scripture we are doing that to have an end as to witness someone, to debate worldviews and just be more intelligible in the things of Christ.

DAVID: Joe, that is a great point and that is what our verse of the day actually says, Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. What higher purpose is that? When you are godly, you will evangelize, you will disciple, and you will live a life of Christian service. Discipline itself is not godliness but a regenerated person who is under control of the Spirit needs discipline to not only obey God, but to restrain his or her flesh.

You know we do live in a changing and challenging world everyone, a world where it is tough to be disciplined, but there is one thing you can trust in and can count on to do so, Jesus Christ and His word are the same yesterday, today and forever.