THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS by Jerry Bridges

**Chapter Ten– “The Place of Personal Discipline” -1 Timothy 4:7**

**“Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives’ tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.” (1 Timothy 4:7NIV)**

*“We may determine by God’s grace to stop a particular sinful habit…But alas, only too frequently we find we don’t succeed. We do not achieve that progress in holiness we so intensely desire. Jay Adams puts his finger on the problem when he says, “You may have sought and tried to obtain instant godliness. There is no such thing….We want somebody to give us three easy steps to godliness…The trouble is, godliness doesn’t come that way.” pg.75*

**T** he way to obtain godliness and holiness is through Christian discipline. pg.76

**H** ow sad it is that the concept of personal spiritual discipline is debatable in our society today.

**E** ncouraging personal discipline in the church today is said to be “legalistic and harsh.” pg.76

**P** utting aside what others say, God’s Word says that godliness requires diligent effort from us.

**L** isten to what Paul says in 1 Timothy 4:7b “…discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.”

**A** ccording to Paul we are to train, to exercise or discipline ourselves to be godly.(1 Cor. 9:25)

**C** ompeting in any kind of athletic event as we know requires strict training and self-discipline.

**E** ven though physical training is good, spiritual self-discipline is better- resulting in a godly life.

**O** ur discipline toward godly and holy living must begin with the inspired Word of God. pg.76

**F** or “It is by willing, prayerful and persistent obedience to the requirements of the Scriptures that godly patterns are developed and come to be a part of us.” (Jay Adams-pg.76)

**P** aul says that when we put off our old self (repented of our sin & submitted to Christ as Lord),

**E** ach one of us was spiritually united with Jesus Christ and given a new heart with new desires.

**R** ecalling these vital truths only come from a ***regular intake in the Word*** of God.(Eph. 4:22-24)

**S** o, as we seek to have a planned time each day to learn His Word, we can be confident that in

**O** ur learning, the Holy Spirit will faithfully bring His Word to our minds as we need them. pg.77

**N** othing is more encouraging to know that as we seek to apply God’s Word to daily situations,

**A** lthough we must respond to the Holy Spirit’s work, He will work in us to strengthen us. pg.77

**L** ean not on your excuses to not be in the Word, but discipline yourself to be alone with God!

**D** isciplined intake of the Word of God not only involves a *planned time*, but a *planned method*.

**I** n order to make progress in holiness we must be disciplined in ***hearing the Word*** taught by

**S** ound pastors and teachers (Jer.3:15), ***reading the Word*** ourselves (Deut.17:19), ***studying*** and

**C** rying out for wisdom as we ***dig deeply into the Word*** (Prov.2:1-5), ***memorizing the Word***,

**I** nscribing it into our hearts & minds (Psalm 119:11) and lastly ***we must meditate on the Word***.

**P** racticing meditation on the Word of God—simply thinking about it and its application to our

**L** ives—is a habit we must develop through discipline. (Josh.1:8; Ps. 119:15;23;27;48;78) pg.80

**I** f the goal of our meditation is application, then we must aim for specific obedience. pg.81

**N** ever will we be able to put specific sins to death in our lives without a specific plan to do it.

**E** ven though ***practicing the Word*** (Jn.3:21)of God is a necessary ingredient in our exercise to become godly, ***persevering in the Word*** of God is also just as necessary. pg.’s 81-83

So ladies, as you can readily see that this kind of structured training in godliness and holiness is a lifelong process as we cooperate with the Holy Spirit. It does not happen in three easy steps. “We keep wanting instant success, but holiness doesn’t come that way. Our sinful habits are not broken overnight. Follow-through is required to make any change in our lives, and follow-through requires perseverance…If we succeed in our pursuit of holiness we must persevere in spite of failure.” (Prov.24:16; Ps.37:24; Rom.7) pg.82,84

*“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have* ***hope****. Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 15:4-5NASB),*

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