*THE PRACTICE of GODLINESS* by Jerry Bridges

**Chapter Three– “Train Yourself to be Godly” – 1 Timothy 4:7**

*“The apostle Paul did not take for granted the godliness of his spiritual son Timothy. Though Timothy had been his companion and co-laborer for a number of years, Paul still felt it necessary to write to him, “Train yourself to be godly.” And if Timothy needed this encouragement, then surely we also need it today.” (page 23)*

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

**T** o “train” or “exercise” yourself to be godly in not optional. This is a clear and direct command

**R**  ecorded in the pages of scripture for you and I to be *personally responsible* for. As an athlete

**A** ctively undergoes rigorous mental and physical training for an athletic competition, we are

**I** nevitably to train ourselves in the same way spiritually when it comes to *growth* in godliness.

**N** ow it’s very likely that as Paul exhorted Timothy to train himself to be godly, he had some essential characteristics in mind when he compared physical training with training in godliness.

**Y** ou and I have learned that one essential element in our training to be godly is: **Commitment.**

**O** ur comprehension of commitment is taught throughout the Bible. As we open our Bibles we

**U** nderstand for example from 2 Peter 1:5-7 that we are to “make every effort” to be godly.

**R** ightly so, Paul’s purposeful choice of the verb “train” implies a persevering, painstaking effort.

**S** erious training realizes not only a need for commitment, but a need for a **Competent Coach.**

**E** very competing athlete needs a skillful coach who upholds the highest standard of excellence.

**L** ove for his trainee, a proficient coach sees and corrects every minor fault. In the same way,

**F** or us to be able to make any spiritual progress, we cannot train ourselves to be godly without the teaching and training ministry of the Holy Spirit. (pg.’s 25-26)

**T** he Holy Spirit of God holds us to the highest standard of spiritual excellence as He teaches,

**O** penly rebukes, corrects, and trains us. And that training is through His Word. It is “the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness” (Titus 1:1)…it is spiritual knowledge taught by the Holy Spirit as He applies the truth of God to humble and teachable hearts. (pg.26-27)

**B** efore we briefly review how the Word of God plays a crucial role in our growth in godliness

**E** ach of us must remember that **Consistency** is one more essential element to godly training.

**G** rowth towards being fully devoted to God requires practice. It is the daily consistent practice

**O** f prayerfully being in the Word of God that the Spirit of God will help us be imitators of God.

**D** ay in and day out **we must** take time to delight in and enjoy sweet communion with our God:

**L** *istening*, *reading*, *studying*, *memorizing* and *meditating* upon Him in His Word. Are you

**Y** earning to know Him more intimately? It is impossible to practice godliness without a constant, consistent, and balanced intake of the Word of God in our lives. (pg.29-36)

Ladies, training in godliness requires **commitment**, **a competent coach** and **consistency** in the Word of God. *“You will always find time what is important to you.”* “How important is the practice of godliness to you? Is it important enough to take priority over television, ‘scrolling through your phone’, books, magazines, recreation, and a score of activities that we all somehow find time to engage in?” (pg.34) What are the hindrances from keeping you from training to be godly? Are you prepared to accept your responsibility and make that commitment? As you ponder these questions, let me remind you that “godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come” (1 Timothy 4:8).(p.36)

Pressing onward and looking upward,

Christyn