

Discipline Yourself to Be Godly

by Bishop M.A. Lalachan

This sermon emphasizes the importance of discipline in building a strong foundation for a godly life, and provides principles for spiritual discipline and holiness.

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Amos 5:4, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:24, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 9:24, 1 Timothy 4:7, Hebrews 11:6, 2 Peter 1:3, Revelation 21:27

Topics: "Spiritual Discipline", "Sanctification"

Description

Bishop M.A. Lalachan emphasizes the importance of returning to God's eternal principles found in the Holy Scriptures in a time where situational ethics prevail. He highlights the significance of building our lives on a solid foundation by not only hearing God's words but also putting them into practice, as illustrated in Matthew 7:24-27. The sermon stresses the necessity of discipline in pursuing godliness, as outlined in 1 Timothy 4:7-8, and the distinction between justification and sanctification. Bishop Lalachan urges believers to cultivate spiritual discipline, emphasizing the transformation of character over a lifetime and the importance of daily commitment to living a godly life.

Transcript

We are living in a most revolutionary era of world history, when situational ethics and ease have taken the precedence. Therefore we need to go back to God's word and principles, which God has laid down in Holy Scripture. These principles are eternal truth, fixed, firm and unbending, that has everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3) Everyone is building their life on some kind of foundation. There are only two choices: you either build on a solid and deep foundation or you build on a shallow and weak foundation.

Jesus said "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." (Matthew 7:24-27) It is not enough to KNOW about God. It is not enough to know what God wants you to do. It is not enough to know how to apply His word. If we are going to build on a solid foundation we must actually DO what God wants us to do. Remember the times of testing reveal the foundation on which we have built.

Bible says "Discipline yourself to be Godly. 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." (I Timothy 4:7,8)

There is no such thing as instant godliness. There are no "one minute," forty days, or "easy steps" to a life of righteousness that pleases God. That is not the way God planned for our sanctification. We are justified instantly by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. But justification and sanctification are completely different.

Oswald Sanders said, "Only the disciplined person will rise to his highest power. He is able to lead because he has conquered himself". We must face the fact that many today are disgracefully careless in their living. We have liberty, we have money, and we live in comparative luxury. As a result, discipline practically has disappeared and overpowered by temptations, distraction and superficial form. Many people fail to consistently train themselves for Godliness because they settle for second best agendas. Remember that the biggest source of objections to Godliness will be our own sinful nature. Jesus said, "It is not what is on the outside of a person that defiles them, but what comes out of their heart

In our old nature we have spent a life time developing patterns of sinful attitudes, thinking and behaviors. These habits will not be broken and replaced with godly behavior and thinking without commitment and discipline. The apostle Paul uses an athletic image to tell us we must discipline ourselves to live godly. "Why is it so important? .Because "it holds the promise for the present life and also for the life to come." It has immediate pay offs in this life, and eternal rewards.

Discipline is that determined effort on our part that corrects molds and perfects the character of a person. Godly character does not come all at once, but over a lifetime. Spiritual discipline is the training that is needed for the unhindered pursuit of God's will and purposes. Discipline puts into daily practice our commitment to live a godly life. It begins in the mind. "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). This inner transformation takes place as we memorize, meditate, and put into daily practice the precious truths of the Bible.

Here are 8 set of principles for spiritual Discipline]

1: Seek God, not the things. This is what the LORD says "Seek me and live." Amos 5:4"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33

2: Fear God, not men. "The fear of the LORD leads to life; then one rests content, untouched by trouble." Proverbs 19:23.The A.W. Tozer said, "It is impossible to keep our moral practices sound and our inward attitudes right while our idea of God is erroneous or inadequate." When we lose the fear of God and don't respect Him and His commandments, we are going to live our lives without accountability to God and one another, which is the cause of a number of sins.

3: Love God, not the world. "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father[d] is not in them. For everything in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.. --1 John 2:15-17.

4: Listen to God, not the devil. Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out

your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." John 8:42-44.

5: Obey God, not our appetites. "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." (1 Corinthians 9:24-27.)

Obedience to God demands courage to say no to self, no to appetites, no to lusts of the flesh, no to what's easy, and yes to carrying the cross. It also demands faithfulness--the plodding endurance to God, to his call, and to that which He calls you to suffer. Only by yielding to the cross can you obey God, not your appetites.

6: Serve God, not riches.

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Mathew 6:24

7: Worship God, not comfort. Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. -- Habakkuk 3:17-18.

8: Trust God not self. Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5. "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Hebrews 11:6.

Godliness is a relationship in Jesus Christ in which the individual is being transformed into an ever-expanding likeness of Christ Himself. When a person understands the truth about Godliness, it becomes the most desirable possibility in all of human experiences. There is nothing so beautiful, so satisfying and so natural in all of human life. The very reason for our creation, the purpose for which God made us and the most complete life, is found in Godliness. It is not just a standard someone is trying to live. It certainly is not legalism or narrow-mindedness. Godliness is the work of the Holy Spirit by the Word and by the Blood of Jesus. It actually lifts man into the image of God. In Godliness, we become God-like and God-filled. The Bible is a Holy Book from Genesis to Revelation and every standard set in Scripture is the joy of transformed saints. Godly women or men will separate themselves from activities that are declared off limits by the Holy Bible.

Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God, according as we find His mind described in Scripture. It is the habit of agreeing in God's judgement-hating what He hates-loving what He loves-and measuring everything in this world by the standard of His Word. He who most entirely agrees with God, he is the most holy man.

Why holiness so important?

The Scripture plainly commands it. The Lord Jesus says to His people, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:20). "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Mt. 5:48). Paul tells

the Thessalonians, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:3). And Peter says, "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy'" (1 Pe. 1:15, 16).

We must be holy, because this is one grand end and purpose for which Christ came into the world. Paul writes to the Corinthians, "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:15). And to the Ephesians, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it" (Eph. 5:25, 26). And to Titus, "He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). We must be holy, because this is the most likely way to do good to others. Our lives will always be doing either good or harm to those who see them. They are a silent sermon which all can read.

We must be holy, because this is the only sound evidence that we are true children of God. Children in this world are generally like their parents. Some, doubtless, are more so, and some less-but it is seldom indeed that you cannot trace a kind of family likeness. And it is much the same with the children of God. The Lord Jesus says, "If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham."-"If God were your Father ye would love Me" (John 8:39, 42). If men have no likeness to the Father in heaven, it is vain to talk of their being His "sons". If we know nothing of holiness we may flatter ourselves as we please, but we have not got the Holy Spirit dwelling in us: we are dead, and must be brought to life again-we are lost, and must be found. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they," and they only, "are the sons of God" (Rom 8:14). We must show by our lives the family we belong to. We must let men see by our good conversation that we are indeed the children of the Holy One, or our son-ship is but an empty name.

We must be holy, because without holiness on earth we shall never be prepared to enjoy heaven. Heaven is a holy place. The Lord of heaven is a holy Being. The angels are holy creatures. Holiness is written on everything in heaven. The book of Revelation says expressly, " Nothing evil will be allowed to enter, nor anyone who practices shameful idolatry and dishonesty--but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." (Rev. 21:27).

May God help us to search our heart's hidden intentions, and replace any self-centered motivations with the excellent way of Christ's love. Then our works will be of eternal value.

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