

# Growing Strong Through Spiritual Disciplines

by Israel Wayne

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual disciplines such as prayer, worship, and Bible study in growing stronger in faith and relationship with God.*

**Duration:** 44:17

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:9, Psalm 119:11, Jeremiah 29:11-13, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 10:31, 2 Timothy 2:15, 2 Timothy 3:14-16

**Topics:** "Spiritual Disciplines"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the life and ministry of John Wesley, highlighting his dedication and service to God. Wesley traveled thousands of miles on horseback, preached countless sermons, and published numerous books. Despite his age, Wesley continued to serve God diligently, although he admitted that laziness was starting to affect him. The speaker encourages the audience to follow Wesley's example and surrender themselves for service, emphasizing the importance of loving others and using their talents for God's glory. The sermon also emphasizes the significance of worship and scriptural study in the life of a believer.

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## Transcript

Growing Strong Through Spiritual Disciplines This workshop is going to be sort of a continuation of the message that I gave this morning on the call to discipleship. And, of course, the question that we have is, well, what are spiritual disciplines and why do we need them? Well, spiritual disciplines are very much like any other kind of discipline. Disciplines are something that we need, something that we know is good for us, and yet it's something that doesn't necessarily come natural to us, something that wouldn't be easy for us.

And that's why we need to develop the skill of doing it through practice and through sometimes going against what our own flesh wants to do. And spiritual disciplines are, like I say, very similar to many other things. For example, we need exercise.

Exercise is something that's good for us. It's good for our body, and yet it's difficult to do. We don't feel like doing it.

It doesn't come natural to us, and that's why it's a discipline. I want to talk about a number of different disciplines today. And those of you that have outlines will be able to see these.

Basically, we're going to look at the disciplines of prayer, of worship, of daily Bible study, of self-denial, purity, integrity, honor, and service. And the first spiritual discipline that I want us to look at is prayer. And I'll have to tell you, I think for me, prayer is one of the most difficult spiritual disciplines.

It's one of the things that I find is not natural for me. It's something that I have a long way to go in terms of this spiritual discipline. I want to tell you a story about a Presbyterian minister that you may or may not have heard of.

His name is J. Wilbur Chapman. He was a friend of D.L. Moody, and he actually was the evangelist who helped to train Billy Sunday. He was a songwriter, and he wrote Jesus, What a Friend of Sinners and a couple of other songs.

And J. Wilbur Chapman was holding meetings in England, and the attendance had been very low, and he was very disappointed. And he received word that a man named John Hyde, who was nicknamed Praying Hyde, was going to be praying for his work. As it turned out, John Hyde did pray for his work, and the whole meetings there in England were totally transformed.

It was totally changed through, they believe, the praying of this man known as Praying Hyde. At Chapman's first public invitation, after John Hyde started praying for him, 50 men received Christ as Savior. I mean, we're talking about dismal attendance, no interest, and suddenly this dramatic change.

Relating the story, J. Wilbur Chapman, who was, as I say, a very well-known, at one point was the best-known evangelist in America. That's what I've heard biographers say, that at one time J. Wilbur Chapman was the best-known evangelist in the United States, right between D.L. Moody and Billy Sunday. And Chapman said this, he said, As we were leaving, I said, Mr. Hyde, because he came to the hotel room, John Hyde did, to meet with Chapman.

He said, Mr. Hyde, I want you to pray for me. He came to my room, turned the key in the door, and dropped to his knees, and waited five minutes, without a single syllable coming from his lips. I could hear my own heart thumping and his beating.

I felt hot tears running down my face. I knew I was with God. Then, with upturned face, down which the tears were streaming, he said, Oh God.

Then for five minutes, at least, he was still again. And then, when he knew that he was talking with God, there came from the depths of his heart such petitions for me as I had never heard before. I rose from my knees to know what real prayer was.

I have to tell you that that probably wouldn't describe my prayer life. If I had been there to pray with J. Wilbur Chapman, he probably wouldn't remember it to this day. And yet, there are people who have, through a sacrifice to their own flesh, to their own free time, so to speak, have so nurtured and developed these spiritual disciplines that they've become very effective in prayer and in these other disciplines.

James 5, 16-18 says, Confess your faults to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much. Elijah was a man subject to the same passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. Elijah was just like us, and yet he developed a relationship with God that was so close that he could pray, and for three and a half years, it wouldn't rain. That's effectiveness in prayer, and it comes through discipline.

When you pray, I'm just going to share a few things. This is not an exhaustive teaching on any of these things. This is an overview.

But when you pray, don't just talk. Listen. Make sure that you're quiet.

Make sure that you listen to God. Learning to hear from God is one of the most important things that you can do in life. Knowing how to recognize the voice of God when he speaks to you is one of the most important things that you can do.

John 10.27 says, My sheep hear my voice. I know them. They follow me.

I would encourage you to develop the discipline of daily prayer. Charles Haddon Spurgeon recommended the discipline of morning and evening Bible study and prayer. Our Lord seemed to practice the discipline of rising early, of going out early in the morning.

We read this earlier in Mark 1.35. And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed to a solitary place, and there he prayed. Matthew 14.23 says, And after he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain by himself to pray. Then he says, And when it was evening, he was there alone.

So Jesus did both. He would rise early in the morning. In the evenings, he would also find time alone with God.

I don't know. For me, people say, Well, are you a morning person or are you an evening person? I'm really neither. I don't know.

In the morning, I'm tired. In the evening, I'm tired. So somewhere in between, I'm always working.

So it's hard for me to know. Well, when is the best time for me? I tend to take the time in the morning because I found that if I can get with God in the morning, that it really makes a difference in terms of how I live my life throughout the day. If I don't take time in the morning and I go through my day, by the time I'm at the end of the day, I'm so frustrated and so discouraged that to me personally, I just feel like I'm just doing damage control.

I've made such a mess of my day. So for me, I find it very helpful to take the time in the morning. Luke 6, 12 says, And it was at this time that he went off to the mountain to pray, and he spent the whole night in prayer to God.

Now, that's something that most of us probably haven't done as a spiritual discipline, to spend the entire night in prayer. I know of a man who lived in Illinois, who died a few years ago, who even up into his 80s, he did this for, I believe, 30 years. He would go to sleep at 9 o'clock in the evening, and he would sleep until midnight.

And at midnight, he would wake up, and he would pray from midnight until 6 a.m. And then at 6 a.m., he would go to sleep, and he'd sleep another three hours until 9 a.m., and he would get up. So he had six hours of sleep every night and six hours of prayer every night, and he did that for 30 years as a discipline.

And apparently, I have a friend who was mentored by him, and apparently his prayers were very powerful and very effective.

Now, when I share these things, I'm not trying to put a guilt trip on you in the standpoint of, OK, you need to go home and start praying six hours every night. Well, maybe if you did that, that would not be pleasing to God because you'd fall asleep at work, and you'd get fired, and then you wouldn't be able to provide for your family, and that might not be to the glory of God. But I'm trying to challenge you to think in terms of what's possible.

I mean, these are just people like you and me who have made a decision that it's important for them to take time to spend with God. We can do the same thing. We can make a decision that it's important for us to have time with God, to spend time in prayer.

1 Peter 4.7 says this, The end of all things is at hand. Therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. Ephesians 6.18 says, Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere. The early church, as we see in Acts 1.19, speaks of them as being in one mind and continually devoting themselves to prayer. Leonard Ravenhill, in his book, Why Revival Terry, says the secret of praying is praying in secret.

He said, A sinning man will stop praying, and a praying man will stop sinning. The British have such a wonderful way with words. I love how the British phrase things.

George Whitefield said this, Whole days and weeks have I spent prostrate on the ground in silent or vocal prayer. When is the last time that we spent whole days or whole weeks on the ground in prayer? E.M. Bounds said, Let me read this quote from A.W. Pink first. Pink said, Oh, that we were more deeply moved by the languishing state of Christ's cause upon the earth today, by the inroads of the enemy and the awful desolation he has wrought in Zion.

Alas, that a spirit of indifference or at least of fatalistic Soicism is freezing so many of us. E.M. Bounds said, Our praying, however, needs to be pressed and pursued with an energy that never tires, a persistency which will not be denied, and a courage which never fails. These were great men of God, men that God used in a mighty way.

Why were they great men of God? I want to suggest to you that they knew something that we have not yet learned about the disciplines of the spiritual life. You look at a great artist, a Michelangelo, for example. How did he get to be that way? Well, we just assume, well, God just reached down and blessed him.

Okay, he's blessed. He can paint. Well, certainly it's a gift.

Certainly it's a skill. You listen to the Overmans play music. If you would have heard them ten years ago, they didn't sound then like they do now.

It's a discipline. Right after lunch, they came down and they were practicing. Well, there's a reason for that.

It's because practice makes perfect, as they say. The more that you do something, the more skilled you become at it. Well, that's true of any occupation.

It's true of any profession, any work that we do. Anything we want to accomplish in life, we have to practice. We have to spend time at it.

We have to develop disciplines. What's more important than developing these spiritual disciplines that help us to be effective in terms of our kingdom work and that also please the heart of our Savior? What's more important than that? The second point I want to discuss with you is to become a man or a woman of worship. The Hebrew word that's primarily used in the Scripture for worship is literally to fall flat.

To fall flat on your face, on the ground. You know, I think our modern concept of worship is so messed up. So much of what I see in churches is so me-focused and entertainment-oriented.

You know, there's a sense in which we come away sometimes from worship services and people say, I really didn't get anything out of it. Is that the point? The purpose of worship is not what I can get out of it. The purpose of worship is coming out of myself.

The focus is not on me. The focus is on God. That's what worship is all about.

God said of Job, There is no one on earth like him. He's blameless and upright. A man who fears God and shuns evil.

Wow! God commended this man in a tremendous way. And yet, this righteous upright man that God said, There's nobody on earth like this guy. He's so upright.

He's such a holy man. God himself said this about Job. And yet, when Job came face to face with God, He says, My ears had heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you.

Therefore, I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes. The prophet Isaiah had a similar experience in Isaiah 6. It says this, In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the temple.

Hovering around him were mighty seraphim, each with six wings. With two wings, they covered their faces. With two, they covered their feet.

And with the remaining two, they flew. In a great chorus, they sang, Holy, holy, holy. And of course, the emphasis there in the Hebrew, repeating that three times, is making sure you understand that this is, in the Hebrew, instead of having an exclamation point, it was the reiteration that gave you the exclamation point, the importance of this.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. The whole earth is filled with His glory. The glorious singing shook the temple to its foundations, and the entire sanctuary was filled with smoke.

What was Isaiah's response to this? Then I said, My destruction is sealed, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips. Yet I have seen the King, the Lord Almighty. When we truly see God as He is, then we see ourselves.

We see who we are. And when we see who He is and how powerful He is, and then we see ourselves in comparison. All the way through Scripture, the response is face down.

The unworthiness of ourselves. There's a sense of awe, a sense of fear, a sense of dread. Every now and then when I'm traveling, I turn on the television, and I flip the channels, and I find some religious television

station.

I don't know if you watch them. I don't watch them long. Usually.

And you'll hear somebody giving some story about, Yes, and then I was taken up into heaven, and then I was walking around with Jesus, and I was asking, What's this fruit tree here? And I think, Yeah, well, I don't see that in Scripture. When someone comes into the presence of a holy God, they have a very different experience. This is not slapping each other on the back like your old college chums.

No. There's a sense in which you say, I'm undone. I want to tell you another thing that happens when you come into the presence of God, and that is that after you have developed a heart of worship, there's a gratitude that wells up in your heart because you see Him for who He is.

You see yourself and your sinfulness, and yet when you realize you've been redeemed, when you realize you've been cleansed, there's a sense in which there's a bubbling out of gratitude that says, I want to live a life that's worthy of what I've received. Listen to what happened to Isaiah. Then one of the seraphim flew over to the altar, and he picked up a burning coal with a pair of tongs, and he touched my lips with it, and he said, See, this coal has touched your lips.

Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven. Then I heard the Lord asking, Whom shall I send as a messenger to my people? Who will go for us? And I said, Lord, I'll go. Send me.

When you realize that you've been redeemed by a holy God, and it had nothing to do with you deserving it, it had everything to do with His mercy, there's this gratitude that wells up inside of you. Worship is always private before it's corporate. If your church does not worship well, the reason for that is that the individual members who make up your church do not worship privately.

You cannot have proper and God-honoring public worship unless you have God-honoring private worship. The whole is equal to what? The sum of all of its parts. So you get a whole room full of people together who don't know how to worship privately, who never worship privately.

The corporate worship is bound to be a little contrived. It's bound to be a little strained. It has to be.

A little put on. And I also want to tell you that worship is more than just singing. We tend to think of it as the worship service and the songs and the music.

That is a part of worship. But worship is the surrendering of all of ourselves to the will of God. That's true worship.

And so in that sense, your work can be worship. The Scripture says, whatever you do in word or deed, do it all to the glory of God. So it kind of removes worship from just what we think of in terms of choirs and cathedrals and ensembles and that type of thing.

I also want to look at the spiritual discipline of Scriptural study. Become a man or woman of the Word. Psalm 119, 9-11 asks this question.

How can a young man keep his way pure? Or how can a young woman keep her way pure? By keeping it according to thy word. With all my heart I have sought thee. Do not let me wander from thy commandments.

Thy word have I treasured in my heart that I might not sin against thee. All of Psalm 119. Now I have friends who have memorized this.

I have not. But all of Psalm 119 is talking about the Word of God. His laws, His precepts, His judgments, His statutes.

It's wonderful. If you love Scripture memory and you do that as a family, that's a great passage to study. If I'm not mistaken, I believe it goes all the way through the Hebrew alphabet.

Isn't that correct? That each section is broken into a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And I believe, according to their tradition, that the Hebrews would teach this to their children. It was sort of a catechism for them in a sense.

2 Timothy 2.15 says, Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. 2 Timothy 3.14-16 says, But you must remain faithful to the things that you have been taught. You know they are true, and you know that you can trust those who have taught you.

You know that you've been taught the Holy Scriptures from infancy and that they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration or the divine breath, is the literal word there, of God. And it's useful for doctrine, for instruction, for reproof.

Another word for reproof can mean conviction. For correction, for instruction in righteousness, so that the godly person may be complete or mature, thoroughly equipped for all good works. We need to learn how to think biblically.

We need to have a biblical world view to know how to apply the Scripture to all areas of life. To know why our beliefs are true. Not just to tell people this is what I believe, but to be able to say, this is why I believe it.

This is why my belief is true. To be able to have the ability to communicate to them from the Word of God why our convictions and our beliefs are true. It's been said that a Bible known is worth a dozen merely owned.

We have to saturate our minds in the Word of God. I do a couple of things for Bible study. Last year I went through a Bible study by Robert Murray McShane.

I don't know if you know him. He was a Scottish minister who died actually about my age. And yet he had a tremendous impact on many people including Andrew Murray.

And McShane set up a daily reading schedule which brings you through the entire Bible once in a year. And then you go through the Old Testament. I'm sorry, you go through the Gospels twice.

You go through Psalms and Proverbs twice. And maybe the entire New Testament. I didn't do it this year.

That's why I can't remember. But I went through the whole McShane reading program last year. This year I'm doing a Bible study.

One called Seeking Him that Life Action Ministries puts out. That's about a three-month Bible study. I'm just at the end of that.

I also did a Bible study two years ago called Walk of Repentance which is a six-month Bible study. And we actually have Walk of Repentance on our table. It's a wonderful Bible study.

If you don't have a daily discipline of reading and Bible study I would encourage you to start with some kind of a workbook. Something like Walk of Repentance. Something like Seeking Him because it gives you the ability to journal.

You look at the Word of God and it asks you questions and you write what God speaks to you through His Word. I think it's very helpful and it's more interactive in a sense. And so it helps you to get started with that discipline of reading God's Word.

I also have a couple of devotionals that I read as well. I'm reading one right now by a man named Reimer Schulze. It's called Abiding in Christ.

It's a great devotional. So whatever it is that fits you whether it's a devotional whether it's like a Bible study workbook or whether it's just simply having a daily reading schedule make it a daily practice. Make it a daily discipline to read God's Word.

The next point is to become a man or woman of integrity. It's been said that reputation is what others think of you. Character is what God thinks of you.

Others can destroy your reputation but only you can destroy your character. Peter 2.12 says, Be careful how you live among your unbelieving neighbors. Even if they accuse you of doing wrong they will see your honorable behavior and they will believe and give honor to God when He comes to judge the world.

I remember my grandfather one time said that character is doing the right thing even if no one will ever know what you did. It's a sign of character. 1 Timothy 4.12-13 gives an admonition to you young people.

Don't let anyone think less of you because you're young. Be an example to all the believers in what you teach, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity. I read this quote and it caused me to think.

It says, You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him. That is particularly poignant for me because I get to go to a lot of Christian leadership conferences and Christian booksellers conventions. You're there with these wonderful people that you see on television and you read their books.

I get to speak at conferences with them sometimes. You talk to them and they're always doing this. Yeah, yeah, uh-huh, uh-huh.

And they're looking around and they go, Oh, hey, I've got to go, sorry. And then they go over and here's this important person or maybe someone who's a big financial donor. They're always like, Oh, hey, how you doing? Yeah, yeah.

And you think, yeah, well. You kind of come away feeling a little disillusioned. You're like, maybe this person's not such a great man or woman of God after all.

I think there's some truth to be said in that, that you can judge someone's character perhaps by how they treat those who can do nothing for them. The psalmist said in Psalm 107, verses 2 through 7, I will be careful to live a blameless life. I will lead a life of integrity in my own home.

I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar. I hate all crooked dealings. I will have nothing to do with them.

I will reject perverse ideas and stay away from every evil. I will not tolerate people who slander their neighbors. I will not endure conceit and pride.

I will keep a protective eye on the godly so they may dwell with me in safety. Only those who are above reproach will be allowed to serve me. I will not allow deceivers to serve me and liars will not be allowed to enter my presence.

That's a description of someone who walks with integrity. And remember that character is more easily preserved than it is recovered. It's much harder to recover your character than it is to merely maintain it.

Become a man or woman of self-control, of self-denial. We read this earlier, but Jesus said if you're going to be a disciple, you're going to have to deny yourself. You're going to have to tell yourself no.

Jesus said in Luke 9, 23, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. The Greek word for deny actually means abstain, which is where we get the word abstinence. We don't always need to have everything that we want.

We don't. It's good to sometimes tell ourselves no. Become a man or woman of purity.

Guard your heart and mind. Keep your bodies pure. Young people, this is an impure world.

Everything about our culture is set up to make you fall. Everything about it. The enemy of your souls does not want to see you succeed in the area of purity.

The enemy wants your mind to be filled with filth. But you know what, young people? You can have a pure mind. You can.

God has made a way available for you. Guard your heart. Galatians 5, 19-23 says when you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results.

Sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the kingdom of God. But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, He will produce this kind of fruit in us.

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Self-control. Job said in Job 31-1, I have made a covenant with my eyes not to look with lust upon a young woman.

Young people, especially in the area of seeking God regarding marriage and about finding someone that you can give your love to and spend your life with and so forth, trust God with that. Trust God with it. I want to share with you and encourage you if you haven't done so, this is a story of how the Lord brought my wife and I together in marriage without dating.

Actually, without dating or courting. You'll want to listen to that CD of our story. And this is a CD that we have on preparing for marriage.

And for those who think that it's impossible to enter marriage in a day and culture like this and still be pure, I'm telling you, that's not true. You can do it. Is it difficult? Yes.

Will you have to swim upstream? Yes. Will your friends laugh at you? Yes. Is that Christianity? Yes.

You can do it. And you must. Not only because God requires it of you, but because it's best.

I'm married. I've been married six years now. What a blessing to be married and have no regrets.

To look back and say, we did it right. God smiled on our marriage and it's good and it's wonderful. I'm so happy that I waited.

I'm so happy that my wife waited. Become a man or woman of honor. Honor God.

One of my favorite scriptures is in 1 Samuel 2 30. Those who honor me, God says, I will honor. But those who despise me will be disdained.

Honor God. If you honor God, he will honor you. Young people, honor your parents.

Yeah, I'd expect to hear that at the biblical worldview conference. But you know, there's a promise attached to that. Honor your father and mother.

Deuteronomy 5 16 says, as the Lord your God commanded you that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the Lord your God gives you. I used to think that just meant if I didn't obey my parents, they'd kill me. No, that's not exactly what it means.

There's a promise. There's a blessing. It's always better to do things God's way.

Honor other people. Look at Romans 13 7. Romans 12 10 says, love each other with a genuine affection. Take delight in honoring each other.

First Timothy 5 1 through 2 says, never speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him respectfully as though he were your own father. Talk to the younger men as you would to your own brothers. Treat the older women as you would your mother.

Treat the younger women with all purity as your own sisters. Treat people with respect. Treat people with honor.

Honor other people. If you do that, if you develop that discipline of honoring other people, of thinking of them as better than yourself, of not always having to be right, not always having to win the argument, not always having to have everybody do things your way. Honor other people.

Try to make other people look good. Don't always look for a way to cut somebody down so that you look bigger, so that you look like, you know, so everybody thinks that you're good. Find a way to bring somebody up, to build somebody up.

Honor other people. And God has promised, if you'll do that, even to the least, these people, you're doing it to him. If you honor him, he will honor you.

Take the lowest place at the table. Don't look for the most important place. Take the lowest place.

Let God call you up. Let God lead you up. I'll just share this.

This isn't in my notes, but I remember a few years ago, there was this little conference in Ohio. And this little conference just had, oh, I don't know, 150 people, something like that. It was a homeschool conference.

And I really felt like the Lord wanted me to go and speak there. And I don't usually do this. I mean, usually, you know, I wait.

If somebody asks me to come, I will, but I don't just intrude. And yet I felt like the Lord wanted me to speak there. So I called the lady who was doing the conference.

I said, look, I know your conference is already planned. I know that you already have all your speakers lined up and your brochures already printed. I just feel like, I don't know, I'd like to make myself available to be able to come and speak at the conference.

I just feel like it's something I'm supposed to offer anyway. It's up to you what you do with it, but I'd like to offer. She said, oh, that would be great.

Would you please? And so I came and I said, you know, you don't have to pay me anything. You know, just let me set up my tables and, you know, I'll come speak. And I spoke.

And I mean, my first workshop there, you know, I had maybe like eight people in the room and it was great. And I talked to them and some more people came and more people came. And well, it turned out, I didn't know this, but it turned out that the people who ran the Ohio State Convention were there and they came and sat on one of my sessions.

And then after the event, they kind of all gathered around me and they were asking me all these questions. And I'm like, I don't know what they want. Well, I got a letter in the mail a while back or a while later, and they said, we want you to come and speak at our state convention.

Four thousand people. I said, really? So that was amazing. I said, OK, I'll come.

So I went and I spoke there and little I know, but the convention coordinators for Kentucky were there and they asked me to come and speak at the Kentucky homeschool convention. And so I did that. And then after that, I got a call from California and they said, you know, we'd like you to come and speak at our conference.

We've heard good things. We were talking to the directors of these other state conventions that had you there and we heard really good things. And, you know, last year we had Josh McDowell and Michael Ferris and this year we want you.

What? You know, and so they have five thousand people there and, you know, and so on and so forth. Now, the reason I say that is because the Scripture talks about not despising the day of little things. You know, there wasn't anything great or, you know, attractive about speaking at this little event in Ohio.

I didn't even get paid. You know what I mean? I mean, just from a secular viewpoint, you could look at it and say, oh, this isn't important. And yet it was important to God.

And God will honor you if you're faithful in the little things, if you honor him in the little tasks that you're given. There's also another proverb that says that he who does this, and this is my paraphrase, but he who does good work, basically, won't serve little people. They'll serve kings.

They'll serve kings. I used to work on a construction crew when I was a teenager in Texas with some people in our church, homeschoolers. And man, they're picky.

You work in some construction crews, and I mean, cut corners and, you know, the building inspector, you know, cares about him and all this kind of stuff. Well, these guys were picky and they did it right and they made sure it was going to last and they made sure it was safe. They did good work.

They were people of integrity. Well, I didn't work, obviously. I'm not still working for them.

But they've continued that tradition. Well, guess whose house they got to build? President Bush's ranch. Homeschoolers built President Bush's house in Texas.

Why? Because they were faithful in the little things. They built a house for some lady they didn't know, but she happened to be friends with Laura Bush. And they're serving kings.

And a friend of mine is, you know, air conditioning guy. You know, why? Because he's the best. And they're trustworthy and they're people of integrity.

So I don't say that to, you know, to try to... That wasn't political. I'm saying that because you may think that your little work here in Boise, Idaho means nothing. That it's not significant.

It's not important. It's important. And if it's done for God, there's a hymn that I love that says, little is much when God is in it.

Labor not for wealth or fame. There's a crown and you can win it if you'll go in Jesus' name. Finally, become a man or woman of service.

Luke 10, 2 says, The harvest is so great, but the workers are so few. Pray to the Lord who's in charge of the harvest and ask Him to send out more workers for His fields. Luke 12, 48.

From everyone who has been given much shall much be required. And to whom they entrusted much of Him they will ask all the more. You know, God gives each of us talents.

He gives us abilities. We may not have much, but we have a little. There's something we can do.

Everybody, you have some gift that God's given you. You can use it for yourself. Or you can turn it over to God and let Him use it.

There are five billion people on this planet who don't make any profession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Five billion. What can you do? Maybe not much.

You can do something. And you must. You must do something.

Let me tell you about a man that I believe is somebody we should aspire to in terms of his willingness to surrender himself for service. You know, the second greatest commandment Jesus said is to love your neighbor as yourself. If you pour yourself out for other people, that's the second greatest thing you can do.

John Wesley, in over 50 years time, rode 250,000 miles on horseback on the roads of England, Scotland, and Ireland to preach 42,000 sermons. Besides this, he published 233 books. Wesley enjoyed good health for most of his long life.

His journals record the sources of his bodily strength. Number one, the power of God fitting Wesley for his calling. Number two, traveling 4,000 or 5,000 miles a year.

That's astounding on horse. Three, the ability to sleep at command day or night. Four, having risen at four in the morning for over 60 years.

Five, having preached at five in the morning for over 50 years. I don't know who he preached to. It certainly wasn't Americans, I know that.

Lastly, evenness of temper. He says, I feel and grieve, but by the grace of God, I fret at nothing. But still, the help that is done upon earth, he doeth it himself.

And this he doeth in answer to many prayers, said Wesley. At the age of 86, John Wesley preached 100 sermons in 60 towns in nine weeks. At the age of 86.

He said at this age and stage in his life, laziness is beginning to creep in. It is getting increasingly difficult to arise for prayer at 4 a.m. There's a man who sold himself out for the service of God. He's human, like us.

He's a man of little stature, just a little guy, John Wesley. What an impact a man like that has made and could make in this world. Develop these spiritual disciplines, prayer, worship, daily Bible study, self-denial, purity, integrity, honor and service.

These spiritual disciplines will help you to find meaning in life. If you're motivated by these pursuits, God will accomplish his will through your life. Proverbs 3, 5 and 6 says this, Trust in the Lord with all of your heart.

Lean not on your own understanding. In all of your ways, acknowledge him and he will direct your paths. Matthew 6, 33 says, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

And all these earthly, temporal things that we tend to get so concerned about that we think that that's the consistency of our life, those things will be added to you. God knows you need them. He knows you need food.

He knows you need clothing. He knows you need rest. He knows that.

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness. And young people, I especially want to leave you with this verse to challenge you regarding spiritual disciplines. These are the words of God.

Jeremiah 29, 11 through 13. For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you, not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope.

Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you. And you will seek me and find me when you seek for me with all your heart. That's what I want to challenge you to do.

God bless you.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/israel-wayne/growing-strong-through-spiritual-disciplines/>

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