

Self Discipline

by William MacDonald

The sermon emphasizes the importance of self-discipline in the Christian life, and provides practical examples and advice on how to develop discipline in various areas of life.

Duration: 40:09

Scripture: Isaiah 50:4, Matthew 6:33, 2 Timothy 1:7

Topics: "Self-Discipline"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of discipline in studying the Bible and managing time effectively. He highlights the distraction and negative influence of television, urging listeners to prioritize the eternal value of God's Word over worldly entertainment. The speaker also encourages young people to discipline their lives by limiting their TV consumption in order to avoid being brainwashed by worldly attitudes and sensuality. He compares the discipline required in sports and music to the discipline needed in the Christian life, emphasizing that success in both areas comes from consistent effort and dedication.

Transcript

Well, I think we want to express our thanks, don't we, to those who got up so early this morning and got that lovely breakfast. Some of you, when you came here, you looked as if you were having a Big Mac attack, but you all look pretty satisfied now. That was just a little plug for McDonald's hamburgers.

You understand that, don't you? That last hymn we sang fitted in very well with what I have in mind for this morning, and perhaps you'd turn to 2 Timothy, chapter 1, verse 7. I'm going to speak for a while, and then I hope we'll have time for a question and answer session afterwards. I personally like question and answer sessions, because I learn probably more from them than you do. First, 2 Timothy, chapter 1, verse 7, says, For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

And, if some of you have a modern version of the Bible, sound mind may be translated there, discipline. Right? Is it? Anybody have that? It's in the margin of my Bible, discipline. God hasn't given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of discipline.

A lot of people misunderstand that verse. They think when it says sound mind that that means a Christian never should have a nervous breakdown, or any mental trouble. It doesn't mean that at all.

It means that God hasn't given us a spirit of power, of fear, but of power, and of love, and of discipline. And, I'd like to speak to you a little while this morning on that word, discipline. Discipleship really is discipline, and we live in a generation where I believe the young people are being shortchanged.

We live in what is known as a permissive generation, where everyone's supposed to do his own thing, and you go through life, and you try to shield yourself from as many of the shocks and blows as possible, and you live kind of as quiet and uneventful a life as possible, and frankly you get nowhere. Frankly, you get nowhere. There's a very obscure verse back in the Old Testament.

It says, Moab is settled on his leaves. He has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, therefore his taste remaineth in him. And that's referring to the process of making wine.

They put the wine in these great casks. Now, if you put wine in this great cask and just leave it there, you know, just let it settle on its leaves, it'll develop kind of a thick, gummy, sticky substance, and it'll never be good for drinking. And so, you have to go, you have to keep moving the casks, and you have to keep upsetting them.

And, from vessel to vessel, you're pouring out of one vessel into another. That's why the Bible says, Moab has been settled on his leaves. He's never been emptied from vessel to vessel, therefore his taste remaineth in him.

Moab did his own thing. He never was invaded by foreigners or anything. He never had any rough times in life, and he never made good wine.

That is, he himself. And this is true in the Christian life. I'd like to suggest to you this morning that you and I will never make history for God until we learn to discipline ourselves.

Do you believe that? You say, why does he have to get going on that subject, you know, so early in the morning? But, actually, you do discipline yourself in some areas. Some of you fellows are good in basketball. You do discipline yourself in basketball.

Actually, you do the things in life that you want to do. Isn't it right that you enjoy doing? I often think of the discipline of people in the world. I think of the discipline of the Olympic athletes.

What did they do? Just sign a form and go to the Olympics? They did not. They disciplined themselves. They ran, and they jumped, and they swam, and they put hours and hours and hours in it trying to perfect their strokes, and their strides, and all the rest.

They never got there in an instant. You can have instant potatoes, you can have instant soup, and a lot of other instant things, but you can't have instant success in sports, and you can't have instant success in the Christian life either that way. It requires tons of discipline.

I think a musician. Wasn't it nice? That girl who was at the piano this morning. If you just sat down at the piano the first time and played off like that, you'd say, don't be ridiculous.

Of course, she didn't. The hours and hours of practice, of reading and practicing scale. You never play like that until you first learn to practice, and that's hard sometimes too, you know, when everybody else is out playing baseball or softball or something else.

They said that Paderewski, one of the great pianists, they said, how'd you ever get that way? He said, by practicing scale till my poor fingers were nearly worn to the bone. That's what he said, and that's the way the musicians get where they are. I think of the actors, you know, even the actors of this world, and the actresses.

Think of the hours that they must spend learning their part. What do you think? They just get up and make them out of the thin air? They don't. They have to practice and rehearse until they're probably, they're just ready to sink into bed.

And you have this in the Bible too. The apostle Paul, I think, was a really disciplined man. You remember he said that he said, I beat my body and bring it into subjection, lest by any means, having preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

And what that means is that he disciplined. It doesn't mean he took and actually flailed his body, doesn't mean that, but it means he disciplined. Here's his body clamoring with all of these appetites, you know, physical appetites, sexual appetites, and all the rest.

And Paul says, I pummel it. He says, I bring it into submission, lest having preached to others, I myself should be put on the shelf. Paul never got where he got without living a disciplined life.

And I think of other men of God down through the history of the years. I'll never forget how impressed I was in reading the life story of Hudson Taylor, a young medical student in England years ago, and he knew that God called him to go and evangelize inland China. And while he still was in England, he decided that he had to toughen himself for the life in China, and so he did.

He started sleeping on the floor. He did everything in London that he'd ever have to do in China, so he went to China. It really wasn't a shock to him.

He had lived through it all vicariously. He disciplined himself, and he had a brother, you know, incidentally, who had different ambitions in life. His brother decided to move out to Canada and make a fortune for himself, and he did.

I think he got in the lumber business up in Canada, and years later he died, and when the newspaper wrote up his obituary, they said the brother of Hudson Taylor. Who was the one that made history for God? Well, it was that Hudson Taylor who hardened himself back there in England and went out to China and evangelized inland China. Okay, let me suggest some places in in our lives where we have to develop discipline.

First of all, in our prayer life, it takes discipline to develop a prayer life. Now, I say this because some of you young people think, oh yeah, McDonald is easy for him, you know. Forget it.

Forget it. None of the things, no spiritual exercises are easy for anyone. A thing that was a help to me years ago, I heard of an old preacher, and some young fellow went up to him and said, Brother so-and-so, he said, do you find it hard to spend time in prayer some days? And he said, some days? He said, every day.

Boy, I guess I'm normal after all when I heard that. So, here a brother, you know, along in the Christian life, and it was still a matter of discipline for him to set apart time each day for prayer, and yet there's nothing that we can do, nothing you and I can ever do in the Christian life that's as important as prayer. I

thought that was kind of significant that Mr. Davies started off the conference last night by speaking about prayer.

The longer I live, the more I believe that the work of the Lord is done in prayer, and I really feel bad that coming to this late in life as I am, I'm just beginning to realize that we as Christians can influence the destiny, we can shape the course of history through prayer. Now, I know you won't even realize what I'm saying, but I believe that. I'm going to give you an illustration.

Maybe some of the men that are here today were here. We have a prayer meeting back there in San Leandro on the second Friday of every month, where we gather together and pray for foreign missions. You know, just a little group of nobodies.

We meet there in the fireside room, and get down on our knees, and we pray for foreign missions. Well, a few years ago, there was a president in the Chad Republic. His name was Humbleby, and he was a very wicked man.

He was persecuting the Christians, and Time magazine reported that one Christian was buried up to his neck in sand, and the ants finished him off, and another Christian was placed inside a drum, and they beat on the drum till he starved to death. And this is true. Time magazine.

Richard Sanders, one of our missionaries out there, wrote me, and he said, Brother, don't feel sorry for the Christians who've been killed. He said, feel sorry for the Christians who are still alive. Well, anyway, on this Friday night, we gather together for prayer for our monthly missionary prayer meeting, and first of all, we spent the first part of the evening in confession.

We confessed the sins of our nation. We confessed the sins of the church. We confessed our own sins, and when we got through, we had a sense of having touched the throne of grace, and then we started to zero in on the Chad Republic.

Well, what can 12, 15, 20 people do in San Leandro praying for the Chad Republic? But we did. We prayed for the Chad Republic. We prayed for the Christians there.

We prayed for the government there. We prayed for God to overrule in the affairs of men. Friday night.

That would be Saturday morning, because the prayer meeting was on into the morning. On Sunday morning, I was driving. The meeting turned on KCDS, the news station.

Military coup in the Chad Republic. Tumbled by, killed. A military general elevates their power.

Listen, it's been a different story for the church in the Chad ever since. The new government is friendly to the evangelical cause. Why? Well, if you want to know why, I think because Christians pray.

That's why. But it takes discipline. I tell you, that prayer meeting on Friday night isn't the most popular activity that goes on in the Bay Area.

You don't have to keep people away with baseball bats. But I believe that that group meeting that night shaped the course of history. I really believe it, and I believe that we'd lay hold of God in prayer.

We don't realize what can be done in prayer. You know, there's a Christian woman that used to go into the London airport. Heathrow airport.

She used to just go around and witness to people, and she had a little satchel of literature, and so she's going in, and she sees a stewardess sitting there. So she goes and sits by the stewardess and talks to her about the Lord, and the stewardess happened to be a prepared soul, and she talks to Christ as her savior. And then the stewardess said, look, I gotta go.

My flight's leaving. I gotta leave. And the woman reached in her bag, and she got a book out by Francis Schaeffer, and she said, well, here, take this along, and she said, you read it on your trip.

And she said, maybe you'll get a chance after you get all the food served and everything. So the girl got on the plane, the stewardess got on the plane, and she's flying along, and she gets all her work done, and she sits in the jump seat there at the back, and she's reading this book. And a man, one of the passengers, comes along.

In the meantime, the Christian worker's back in the airport crying to God to follow up that girl. You know, I mean, she couldn't do follow-up work. The girl's gone.

She's trusted Christ. The woman can pray. A man comes along, and he looks down, and he sees her reading, and he said, do you understand what you're reading? And she said, well, I've only been saved a few hours, and she said, I gotta admit, it's a little rough.

Well, he said, look, just let me help you. He said, my name is Francis Schaeffer. That happened.

That really happened. There a Christian worker back there in the London airport praying this. We have to discipline ourselves in prayer.

Don't think it's easy for everybody else, and hard for you. You have to beat your body and bring it into submission in order to develop a disciplined prayer life. But I tell you, hey, and I want to tell you, there are miracles going around in the spiritual world today, things happening that would never happen according to the laws of chance or probability, and they happen if we just pray.

I had a wonderful illustration of it last year. I had a 68 Ford, and it was beginning to die the death. One night, I was out in the middle of nowhere, and it just conked out, and I had to be towed 20 miles, and you know what that does to a Scotsman, to be towed 20 miles.

And so, I began to cry to the Lord. Lord, you know I need transportation. I don't want it for myself.

If I could do without a car, I'd do without a car, but I need it for the work of God. I started to pray. I prayed, and prayed, and prayed, and prayed eight months, and the Christians in Bethany, where I go, they raised a little money for me to buy a car, and I wasn't buying a car.

They said, where's your car? And I said, I haven't got it yet. And they said, why don't you go down to the lot and buy one? Well, I said, it doesn't take divine light to go down to the lot and buy a car. I said, I want to see a miracle.

I want a miracle car when it comes. And they said, you better go down to the lot and buy a car. Well, my colleague there used to work for a pharmaceutical company, and when their salesman meets a new car, they can buy the old car at a stomp.

And so, he called the company, and they said, yeah, they said, we might be able to get something for you. But then, after a few months, they said, oh, it's all changed. We don't do that anymore.

They said, forget it. At the end of eight months, when all hope had gone, we were sitting at lunch one day, and the telephone rang, and Gene went to the phone, and they said, look, there's a car in Salt Lake City. They said, if you want it, go and pick it up.

It was a 1973 Chevy Impala. I paid \$481. It's worth \$2,000, but I prayed eight months for it.

See, I could have gone down to the lot and bought a car, but I wanted to see God in it, and he's willing to do this. If we'll just discipline ourselves, and don't give up. Sometimes you pray, and God answers the prayer right then.

Sometimes you wait eight months, and sometimes 18 months. Discipline prayer life. Don't be discouraged.

Go on. Discipline in Bible study. Discipline in Bible study.

Some people study the Bible. Some don't. Why? Oh, you say, because some people are scholars, and some are not.

I don't believe God gave us the Bible for scholars only. I think God gave the Bible for the common people, for the herd. I do, and I don't believe that God ever intended that you have to know Hebrew and Greek to learn to know the Bible.

I don't. The Bible's a wonderful book. My father came over from Scotland.

I don't think he ever went beyond eight grades of school, but I want to tell you, when he died, he was an educated man, because he went to the true university, the Bible, and he used to come home from work at night, and he'd study the Word of God by the hour, by the hour, and he could minister the Word. He could preach the gospel. I think that's it.

That's it, but he disciplined himself to do it. He disciplined himself to do it, and today, the big thing, I think one of the hardest disciplines today is to go over and turn off the TV in order to study the Bible. I tell you, that's really something.

Really something, because the TV, you know, I mean, it's so gripping. It brings the world into your living room, and seems the Bible seems so dull and drab by comparison, doesn't it? It's often time that it isn't, but I want to tell you, if we just get into the Word of God, we're studying the book of eternity. The late night show won't be too important 100 years from today, will it? Ah, but the Word of God will.

What I'm doing with the Word of God today is really going to be important 100 years from today. Discipline yourself in your Bible study. Discipline yourself in the use of time.

Oh, the time we waste. Terrific, isn't it? We have to discipline ourselves in the use of time. Redeeming the time because the days are evil.

I think one of the greatest tests of my devotedness to Christ is what I do with my spare time. You say, what do you do with your spare time? Well, in my case, I write. People say to me, when did you write those books? I say, in my spare time, and that's the truth.

That's the truth. There are certain things I have to do every day. I have to get ready for that class in the Old Testament every day.

I have meetings on Thursday night. I have meetings on Sunday. I have to get ready for they take top priorities.

There are household duties and all the rest I have to do. Whenever I get through with all of those things, I have writing projects. I go at it all the time, and I just discipline myself to do it, and I don't do very much.

I wrote a little article coming down on the plane between San Francisco and Denver yesterday. Just sat there, and it took me two hours to write a page and a half. It wasn't very much, but if you do that for 30 days, it mounts up, and I learned long ago that a big job is made up of many little jobs.

Little things in life like this have been a help to me. A big job is made up of many little jobs, and I can't do a big job at once, but I can do a little one, and over a year, all those little ones mount up to be a big one. It's as easy as that, and so what I'm trying to tell you is when you go to the Word of God, don't fight off more than you can chew.

A lot of people, they come to a conference like this, and they get all effed up, you know, and they're going to go back, and they're going to do a chapter a day. It'd probably be too much. It'd probably be too much.

You'd probably get discouraged. Do five verses a day and get something out of it, and study with a question mark for your brain. Ask yourself, what does this mean? I don't understand what this means.

Go to commentary. Ask people, what does this mean? You know, you'll start to grow, grow, grow, and then obey what the Lord shows you in the Word. I think that's the greatest thing that'll help in studying the Bible is if you go to the Bible and say, if it says it in the Bible, I'm going to do it.

I don't care whether anybody else in Colorado Springs is doing it. I'm going to do it. I'll guarantee you, you'll grow like wildfire.

Really well, that's the attitude that counts. Obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge. Discipline.

Discipline in our sex life. I want to tell you young people today, the devil is really waging a war. He's out there with his big gun, and he's shooting at the Christians, and I hate to tell you this, but he's being awfully successful, and most of his success is coming in the area of morals.

And if I could say one thing to you that you'll carry away from this meeting today is keep yourself pure, and I don't care what rotten garbage the world is dishing up, and I don't care what you're being barraged with day by day, and I don't care how many people are living together without the formality of marriage. Doesn't make a bit of difference to me. God's word is true, and God has set certain principles at work in this universe, and you can't violate them without reaching the results of it.

You say, I can get away with it. You can't get away with it. You can't get away with it, and I'll tell you, God has put this instinct in us, and the instinct itself is good.

It's good, but I want to tell you something very simply this morning. In sex, in marriage, you find fulfillment. Sex out of marriage will destroy you.

Just as easy as that. Just as easy as that. And, I just beg of you young people, don't fool around, and don't go according to what the world is saying.

Go according to the word of God is saying, and flee fornication. I'm not going to dwell on that, but it needs to be said, because it's number one problem today. Number one problem.

Okay, discipline in your thought life. This is terribly important. Terribly important.

Discipline in your thought life. You and I can control what we think. The mind is a wonderful thing, isn't it? It has tremendous capacities for good, and tremendous capacities for evil.

I often think of this. I think of, um, I think of Handel sitting down and writing the score for the Messiah, you know. He said, I saw heaven opened.

I just forget how he said it. He said, when he got all through, he said, I saw heaven opened, and I saw the eternal God, something like that. Marvelous, right? I wouldn't be surprised if we had that oratorio in heaven, the Messiah.

But I think of the capacities of the human mind for evil, too. I think of how I, with my mind, can wander down back alleys of sin, and live a life of, um, evil, corrupt fantasies, you know. It's amazing.

You can travel anywhere in the world you want. You can pick your own companionship, you know, with your mind. You can enjoy, enjoy forbidden, pleasurable experiences and all the rest.

You say, nobody knows. Don't, don't forget there's somebody you know. And, if I keep up that kind of a thought life, eventually I'm going to do the things that I'm enjoying.

If you think about a thing long enough, sooner or later you're going to do it. And, if I can control my thought life, and I can, if I can control my thought life, I can control my practical life, too, because it all starts in the mind. All sin starts in the mind.

Sometimes we think that sin comes about a bat and hits us over the head. You know, there's nothing we can do about it. Just don't, don't believe it.

It started long before that. Started up here. And, if I can control a fountain, I can control the stream that flows from the fountain.

See, that's where I'm having all my trouble, is in my thought life. I have an evil, corrupt thought life. Yeah, well, I think everybody does it one time or another, but there is victory.

God can give victory in this area. You say, how? The minute I, the minute some of these forbidden, evil thoughts come to my mind, I can turn them out. I can say, no, that's sin, and I judge it in the presence of God as sin, and I can turn to what is holy and pure and righteous.

And, really, in a way, that's the secret. If I could condense the secret of the Christian life, it's in controlling the thought life and being occupied with the Lord Jesus. It says that in 2 Corinthians chapter 3, 18.

It says, But we all with unveiled faith, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are chained into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. And, that says that the more you're occupied with Christ, the more you think about him, the more the Spirit of God will make you like him. Well, that's a condensed version, but that's what it says.

We all with unveiled faith. Unveiled faith means there's nothing between my faith and the Lord. How do I do that? Well, by confessing sin.

That takes the veil away from the faith. But, when I confess and forsake sin, that's the unveiled faith. We all with unveiled faith, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.

What's the glass? The mirror of the Word of God. What do I do? I go to the Word of God, and I study the Lord Jesus there. I find the Lord Jesus, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.

I change into the same image. What does that mean? We become like Christ. From glory to glory.

What does that mean? From one stage of glory to the other. It's a process. Who does that? Even by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Spirit of God transforms us. I heard years ago of a man who went into a Buddha temple, and he sat there with his legs crossed and his arms crossed, you know, a kimbo, and he sat, he would sit there by the day and gaze on the green Buddha. And, you know, they said that after a while he actually became to look like the Buddha.

Now, I don't know that's true with the Buddha, but I know it's true with Jesus. I know the more I march it by with Jesus, the more you become like him. And, I know that when these forbidden stray thoughts come to my mind, I can expel them.

I control what I think, and I can immediately think about the Lord Jesus. But, I have found this. I can't think about Jesus and think about sin at the same time, can you? I can't think about both at the same time.

So, I make the choice, and I'm the one who decides. Now, the world will not help you in this. TV will not help you in this.

And, I'm going to say something, you probably won't agree with it, but I really believe if you young people are going to make history for God, if you're going to make your life count for God, you've got to discipline your life with regard to TV, because you don't realize how we're being brainwashed through that thing, and the worldly attitudes, and the worldly ways of thinking, and the sensuality that comes over that. Boy, I'll tell you, it's not a friend to grace. Not a friend to grace.

I don't doubt there are things on the TV that are good to see the news, and things like that, and some special events, but when you get all the dirty, suggestive jokes, you know, polluting your mind, that's what it is. It's really mind pollution. Everybody's worried about air pollution, and water pollution, and ground pollution, and nobody says a word about mind pollution, and the worst pollution of all, really.

You can live through smog, but you can't live through that filth, and not be defiled by it. You can live through smog, but you can't live through that filth, and not be defiled by it. So, I would urge you young people, break with the herd, break with the herd, and learn to discipline yourself with regard to the boob tube.

If you could take an ax to it, that would be very good, but it might not be yours, so be careful. It might be somebody else's. Well, so many areas that we should discipline ourselves.

I think I've got a whole long list of them here, but I just want to read something to you, and then I'm going to open it for questions, and no holds barred. Feel free to ask questions, either about this or anything else

that's bothering you. This is a quotation from Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones.

He has a book called *Spiritual Depression*, and he says this. He says, I defy you to read the life of any saint that has ever adorned the life of the church without seeing at once that the greatest characteristic in the life of that saint was discipline and order. Invariably, it's the universal characteristic of all the outstanding men and women of God, discipline and order.

Read about Henry Martin, David Brainerd, Jonathan Edwards, the brothers Wesley and Whitfield. Read their journals. It does not matter what branch of the church they belong to, they have all disciplined their lives and have insisted upon the need for this, and obviously it's something that's thoroughly scriptural and absolutely essential, and it really is.

Once again, I say people discipline themselves every day. Some are on a Weight Watchers diet. They discipline themselves with regard to the food they eat.

If you can discipline yourself that way, you can discipline yourself in the spiritual realm as well, and if you do, your life will be effective, and you'll live a better life, too, a happier life, and you'll really count for God. Okay, any questions now that any of you would like to ask? And do feel free, because remember, if you have the question that 13 people around you have the same question, but they just don't dare ask it, so you ask it. Okay, who'll be first? Very good.

The point has been made that the motive why we discipline ourselves is important, and that the motive should be not to make ourselves pious, but to please Him, and that's what Paul says. He said, wherefore we make it our ambition that we might be well-pleasing unto Him. Another motive I have to confess in my life, in this whole area, is I want my life to count.

I don't want to waste my life. I want it to count, and I know that it's necessary if my life is going to count for the Lord. Well, thank you for that.

That's good. Anybody else, questions or comments, anything you'd like to add? Don't be afraid. No question is too simple.

Some are too difficult. All right, I see somebody's hands. Okay, I can't hear you.

Yes, on anything. I always remind young people of the old Chinese proverb, he who asks a question is a fool for a moment. He who asks no question is a fool forever.

I'd rather be a fool for a moment, wouldn't you? Anybody else? If you don't ask any, I'll feel you know all the answers. Okay, right here. The question is asked, how do you, in a disciplined life, how do you keep discipline from being the end? How do you keep from being bogged down and just getting into a rut and not doing anything different? Well, that really doesn't necessarily mean that.

Like, for instance, the discipline of your time doesn't mean that you do the same thing every day. It just means that you don't waste time, that you make the days count for the Lord. It means that at the beginning of every day, you get down on your knees and you have a time with the Lord and turn your life over to the Lord for that day and ask him to lead and direct you that day.

And then what comes into your life, you take that as being the will of God, the opportunities he gives you in that. But it doesn't mean that the days are all going to be gray or black or white. God will take care of the

different colors of the day.

And once again, it comes back to your motive. As already was said, the discipline isn't the end in itself. The discipline is that your life will be effective and that the Lord Jesus will be honored and glorified by it.

Anybody else? Yes. Now, well, the verse that has helped me in that regard is in Isaiah chapter 50 and verse 4, and this is the Lord Jesus speaking, and he's speaking prophetically of the life that he would live on earth. When you read it, think of Jesus as a man here on earth, and it says in Isaiah chapter 50, verse 4, "...the Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

He wakeneth morning by morning," here it is, "...he wakeneth mine ear to hear," as the learned are, as the disciple. The word there is as the disciple. And that means that Jesus, as a man here on earth, went before God the Father every day, and he said, in effect, Father, I rededicate my life to you.

I want to have no will of my own. I want you to direct me this day. My ear is opened.

You've wakened my ear this morning to hear your direction for this day. And then he went forth in the power of the Spirit of God that day, and the gears meshed. His life was radioactive with the Holy Spirit, and every day found its proper portion in his life.

That's the secret. Anybody else? Yes, Gary. Q. What would be some practical things you would be able to develop? A. Practical helps to develop discipline in the areas of worship and thanksgiving.

Well, one thing is this, and it's not just on Saturday, but I try to save my Saturday night for quietness. I don't usually try to book things on Saturday night, and I like to spend Saturday night with my Bible and with my hymn book. And I tell you, those hymn books are really something else again.

And the longer I use them, the more I really appreciate them. And that inspires worship in me. I read, Lamb of God, when we behold thee, lowly in a manger laid, wandering as a homeless stranger in the world, thy hands at name.

How can you read that without being filled with worship for the Lord? When we see thee as a victim nailed to the accursed tree, for our sin and folly stricken, all our judgment borne by thee, Lord we own with hearts adoring, thou hast washed us by thy blood. Glory, glory everlasting be to thee, thou Lamb of God. Memorize some of those hymns from the hymn book, and spend time quietly with the Lord.

I think worship is one of the weakest areas of my life, I have to admit that. But I think that we can discipline ourselves, and by the use of the hymn book and the Bible and spending time in the presence of the Lord, we'll stir our hearts to worship. Anybody else? Time for one more.

Well, to be very honest with you, what you're saying is true. How can you avoid being hypocritical with your friends? Let me tell you something. There's a difference between what I am and what I want people to think I am.

Paul Tournier, in one of his books, calls it the difference between the person and the personality. You know, like at home, I might be a bear to live with, and yet when I'm out with my peers, I could have a TV personality, you know, everything's rosy in Marlborough country, this type of thing. Well, let's be honest, as every one of us, we have that problem.

We really have that problem. The Lord Jesus is the only one who ever lived whose person and personality were exactly the same. When you met him, you met him exactly the way he was.

And what you and I have to do is reduce the difference, reduce the chasm between our person and our personality, what we really are and what we want people to think we are. We have to reduce that thing, and that means just walking in the light, means walking in the light and bringing sin to the surface whenever it comes in, confessing our hypocrisy and putting it away. Well, I see that the hand on the clock has come around, so can we just look to the Lord in closing prayers? Father, we thank you for this time together.

We thank you for the wonderful work of grace you've done in so many lives here this morning. We thank you for the miracle of salvation that we who should be in hell today are saved by the grace of God. We pray for any here today who might still be in the valley of decision, maybe pondering these things, maybe looking at the Christian life and wondering if the cost is too great.

Father, we pray that any such might think of the cost of not trusting Christ, of an eternity in hell without the Savior. We just pray that your work in this conference, through your word, we pray that our hearts might be open and receptive, that we might receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls. We ask it in the Savior's name, amen.

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