

The First Sunday in Lent ~ Sunday, March 1, 2020
“Practising the Spiritual Disciplines ~ The Pursuit of Godliness”
1 Timothy 4:1-10

Lent is traditionally a time of spiritual _____, when we intentionally prepare to celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is all about _____ to God—a God who desires to be in relationship with us.

The spiritual disciplines, faithfully practised under the _____ of the Holy Spirit, can open the door to spiritual growth, _____ of faith, and transformation—drawing us closer to God and deeper into His love.

“Discipline without _____ is drudgery.” In order to get past this drudgery in our spiritual lives, we need to understand what we’ll _____.

“For those whom God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...” (Romans 8:29)

God’s eternal plan ensures that every believer will ultimately conform to _____.

“Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.” (1 John 3:2)

If we are _____ again; if we’re “in Christ,” this isn’t simply a vision of a possible future, this is our spiritual _____.

Although God will grant Christlikeness to us when Jesus returns, until then He intends for us to _____ towards it. We aren’t merely to wait for holiness to happen to us, we’re to _____ it.

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14)

It’s not our pursuit of holiness that qualifies us to see the Lord. Rather, we’re qualified to see the Lord *by the Lord*, not by the good things we do.

When the Holy Spirit _____ someone that person begins to prize and pursue _____.

“Have nothing to do with profane myths and old wives’ tales. Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” (1 Timothy 4:7)

We pursue holiness and become more like Christ by _____ ourselves. The benefits of this, according to Paul, are huge and far surpass this life, extending into _____.

Discipline = gymnasium =

We need to think of the spiritual disciplines as spiritual _____.

This is a _____ of God and not merely a suggestion. Just as holiness isn’t an option for those who claim to be the children of the Holy One, nor are the _____ of holiness. In fact, the expectation of _____ spiritually is implied in Jesus’ invitation to follow Him.

“If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24)

Jesus is the _____ of discipline for the purpose of godliness; and if we’re going to be like Him, we need to seek to live as He lived—insofar as _____ humans can. We can’t do what Jesus did as God, but we can seek to follow His human example of a how a person lives in _____ with the Father.

Spiritual disciplines are ways by which we can spiritually _____ ourselves in the path of God’s _____ and seek Him.

The Lord, by His Spirit, still travels down certain paths—paths that call the spiritual disciplines—and if we place ourselves on them and look for Jesus by faith, we will _____ Him. And, we’ll find Him willing to have _____ on us and to have communion with us; and we too, will be transformed by Him from one level of Christlikeness to another.

The classical spiritual disciplines are those practices found in Scripture that _____ spiritual growth among believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ. They’re the _____ of devotion and experiential Christianity that have been practised by the people of God since biblical times.

7 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

#1. The spiritual disciplines are both _____ and _____. Some disciplines are practised _____, such as solitude and silence; while others are practised in _____ with other believers, like worship. And of course, some disciplines can be _____.

Both the personal and interpersonal disciplines are a means of _____ and a

part of godliness, because the Bible not only teaches both, but shows that Jesus _____ both.

Although we may _____ towards one kind of spiritual discipline or another, depending on our _____, we experience God and grow in His grace through both—and we need a _____.

#2. The spiritual disciplines are _____ and not _____.
They're practices—things we _____—and not character qualities, graces, or _____ of the Christian life.

The goal of practising a given discipline isn't about doing, as much as _____. However, the biblical way to grow in being more like Jesus is through the rightly _____ doing of the spiritual disciplines

#3. The spiritual disciplines are _____.
This one is important, lest we leave ourselves open to calling anything we _____ doing a spiritual discipline. The problem with this is we _____ for ourselves what practices are best for our spiritual health and maturity, rather than accepting those that God has _____ in Scripture. Only those spiritual disciplines _____ in Scripture—disciplines practised by Jesus Himself—can make us more like Him. Only the spiritual disciplines found in Scripture are _____ for knowing and experiencing God and for growing in Christlikeness.

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

#4. The spiritual disciplines are practices _____ from the gospel, not _____ from it.

Rightly practised, the spiritual disciplines take us deeper into the _____ of Jesus and its glories, not away from it, as though we've moved on to more advanced levels of _____.

The spiritual disciplines are not only _____ in the gospel, they also keep us rooted in it.

#5. The spiritual disciplines are a _____ and not an _____ in themselves.
The purpose of practising the disciplines—is _____, which can be defined as both _____ to Christ and _____ to Christ. A conformity that's both inward and outward—to both the _____ of Christ and the _____ of Christ.

Without this purpose, the performance of any spiritual discipline—no matter how consistent or vigorous—is in _____. They become all about us and our _____, and not about becoming more like Jesus.

#6. The spiritual disciplines are tools for _____.
There's little _____ in practising the spiritual disciplines apart from the single _____ that unites them—transformation

From biblical times right up to the present, godly people have always been spiritually _____ people.

God sometimes uses _____ and the circumstances of our lives to change us. When He does this, the process works mainly from the _____ in. However, when he uses the spiritual disciplines to change us, He works from the _____ out. The spiritual disciplines also differ from the other methods of transformation, in that God gives us a greater measure of _____.

#7. The spiritual disciplines combine God's _____ and our _____.
On the one hand, we need to recognize that even the most iron-willed, self-discipline by itself will not make us more _____. Instead, it may make us more like the _____, who did all the right things on the outside, but whose _____ were far from God.

Growth in holiness doesn't come from _____ ourselves—it's _____ from God. On the other hand, that doesn't mean we don't have a _____ to play in the pursuit of godliness.

Paul illustrates how these two things—our _____ and the _____ of God—can occur _____ in a person in dwelled by the Holy Spirit.

“For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.” (Colossians 1:29)

Although Paul says that he himself is the one toiling, he also affirms that the _____ for that toil comes from Christ.

When it comes to the spiritual disciplines, the _____ and the _____ for them are produced within us by the _____ of God. However, we need to _____ them.