

Discipline...

June 2018



One of God's Most Powerful Tools

When I was eight years old, a traveling accordion company came through our small town. The owners, a husband and wife, came to our house and in the living room, talked to Dad for a long time about having me take accordion lessons. Dad managed to find the money to buy me an accordion and, with about twenty other kids from the community, I took weekly lessons.

One half hour a day . . . that was the required practice time. I worked hard to put in the time and learn the music. Dad got very cross when I skipped my practice time, so for the most part . . . I didn't.

When I graduated into middle school, I began playing the trombone in the school band. That also required one half hour of practice a day. Now I was up to one hour a day that I had to practice.

Then some of my pals decided we should start a rock and roll band, like the Beatles. They decided I should play bass guitar, so dad bought me a bass guitar and amplifier. Along the way I also learned six-string guitar and piano.

All of my musical instruments served me well, as when I became an adult, I began writing and selling commercial music, namely broadcast jingles and sales themes for corporations. Among my clients were Betty Crocker, Honda, and French's Mustard.

But there were other benefits to all of the practicing. When I reached college, my freshman English teacher informed us that students who played musical

instruments, on average, did better in their classes by a full letter grade.

Why? Did only smarter kids take music lessons? No, but the opposite was true. The discipline of daily practice of an instrument, carried through to higher discipline when it came to studying their school courses so they got higher grades on average than students who didn't take music lessons.

Discipline! Without it the Christian will not accomplish much in the kingdom. One can have talent running out of his ears, but if there is no discipline, he will not accomplish much.

What is discipline, exactly? Discipline is the practice of applying one's self to a skill in an organized, consistent manner. The bigger the challenge, the more one must apply himself.



So many people squander their abilities, letting them go to waste, because they have no discipline.

A high school class mate of mine was very intelligent but in high school he didn't come close to using his grey matter, because he "goofed around" a lot. When he started college, however, he discovered discipline and he achieved a 4.0 grade point average. "I had to discipline myself to sit at my desk and study for an hour without getting up, even to get a drink of water," he said. That was the key. That is the practice that raised him to a 4.0 grade point average. It was hour by hour. When he had completed an hour of study, he took a short break, then he did another hour, and so on.

Which brings us to the question, "Are we getting the most out of our talents and abilities for the kingdom of God?"

I once mentored a young pastor for a period of time. He came to the realization of how important discipline is. One day he said to me, "You're really not going to accomplish much without discipline." So he began to discipline himself. He started making lists.

One day, he reported to me that he had gotten through a list of 30 tasks that day. 30 tasks . . . that's a lot of work, quite an accomplishment, really.

I suppose discipline really kicked in for me in my adult life, when I started a practice of daily prayer. I found that trying to pray in a room didn't work very well for me. What I discovered was that I could pray best while walking or driving. I laid out a course close to my home that took an hour to walk. Every night I would walk my course and pray for an hour. Then, I started prayer driving, early in the morning, starting at five or six. I would drive the back roads slowly for an hour, then turn around and return the same way I came, so I would do a total of two hours of prayer every morning. I found that because of all the prayer I was doing, I began to accomplish much more in my daily life in a much shorter amount of time.



Presently, I must practice discipline fervently, in order to keep moving forward in the things God has given me to do. Because I am working on a second book, and I speak frequently, I must make a practice of continually putting new information into my brain. That means a heavy dose of reading on an on-going basis.

My former pastor of about 25 years had to preach twice a week to a congregation of about 2500. Every place he went, he was continually reading everything he could get his hands on. Each Wednesday morning, the elders and other men would meet for breakfast. The first thing Pastor Denyes would do when we got to the restaurant, was pick up a free paper, called Tidbits, and read it through. There was no point in trying to talk to him until he had read Tidbits.

Discipline is a must to anyone wanting to make their life count in this world. I know I seem to gravitate always back to prayer, but prayer is a great way to learn discipline. When new students report to the school at the International House of Prayer in Kansas City, one of the first things they must learn is the discipline of prayer. They are required to stay in a room for four hours . . . and just pray.

If you're not seeing the kind of results you want to see out of your life, consider discipline. Ask the Lord to show you how you can introduce discipline into your life. God is not short of creative ideas for you to learn discipline. Give it a try. You will find the effort of discipline will yield great changes in your life that can make a huge impact for the kingdom of God!



We were at
NEW LIFE
CHURCH
May 19th
and 20th

A special thank you to Pastor Jeff Bergman and the members of New Life Church in Oak Grove, Minnesota for asking us to come and minister to them.

WHAT IS NEXT ?

Sunday June 10th, 2018 - Bethlehem Lutheran Church @ 9:00 a.m.

**Waskish, Minnesota
George will bring the message.**

Sunday July 10th, 2018 - Big Bog Festival Ecumenical Church Service @ 9:00 a.m.

**located in Homestead Park
Waskish, Minnesota
We will be ministering with Music.**

In His Service,

*George and Lorraine
Halama*

George and Lorraine Halama

Visit our Web Site @ www.georgeandlorraine.com

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