

## “The Joy of Discipline”

“Many golfers play the game casually, but true golfers TRAIN. Same thing with Christian men and spiritual discipline”-**Craig Groeschel, Sr. Pastor at Life.Church**

“Desires don’t determine who you become. Disciplines determine who you will become”-**Groeschel**

1. When you hear the word “discipline”, what’s the first thing that comes to mind?

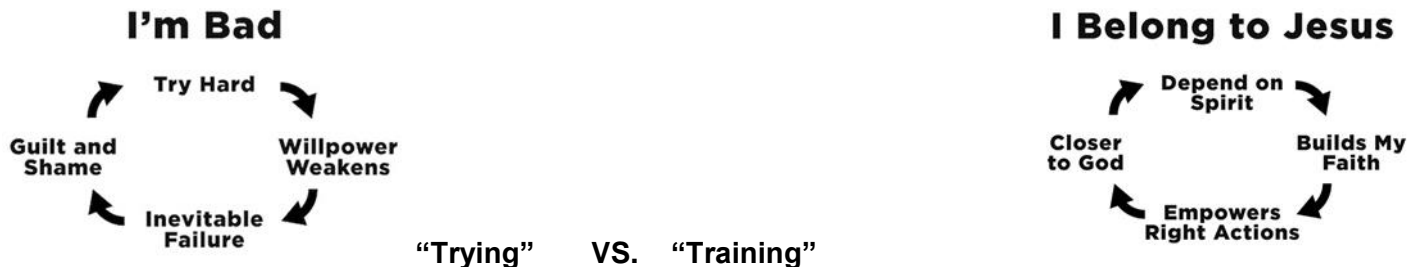
Groeschel defines “discipline” as “choosing what you want most over what you want now.” What do you think of his definition? Can you share examples of situations where you either did, or did not, follow this definition?

2. Would you consider yourself a disciplined person? What are some things that can distract you?
3. Think of someone you have viewed as a mentor, or someone you have respected greatly in the past. How do you think this person fared in the area of “discipline”, or self-control?
4. Jesus was disciplined, (Hebrews 12:1-3) but never seemed to be in a hurry. How can we do likewise in our busy culture? How can we guard against the danger to our self-discipline presented by “living the American dream”?
5. How do you think our view of “discipline” has changed over the years in the United States?

“When we find our identity in Jesus, His power enables us to overcome our wrongful desires. Our strength comes from Him. We are no longer relying on our own willpower, and “trying”, we have found our identity in Christ, and are now “training” by tapping into the power of the Holy Spirit within us”-Groeschel ( Read Galatians 5:16)

6. What does it mean to “find our identity in Jesus”? How do we put this into practice?

The following is an illustration that helps explain the difference Groeschel is talking about.



7. What do you think of these two different perspectives? Can you relate to each of them at different times in your life?
8. If we are to rely on the Holy Spirit in this area of discipline, what role do we play ourselves? Do we just sit back and “let the Lord do His work”?
  - a) We are, of course, saved by grace. We all know this, but what are the dangers of relying on this grace and living an undisciplined life? (Titus 2:11-14)

Jerry Bridges said the following in his book, *The Discipline of Grace*: “There is not one single instance in the New Testament teaching on holiness where we are taught to depend on the Holy Spirit without a corresponding exercise of discipline on our part”

9. What do you think of this quote as it relates to question #8?
10. How can we work hard (train) on being disciplined without becoming legalistic or boastful?

**Hebrews 12:11**—For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

**Romans 5:1-2**: “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we[a] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.”

**Titus 2:11-14**: “1 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

**Hebrews 12:1-3**: “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

**Galatians 5:22-23**: “22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control”

**Romans 7:14-25**: “14 So the trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good. The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. 15 I don’t really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don’t do it. Instead, I do what I hate. 16 But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. 17 So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. 18 And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can’t. 19 I want to do what is good, but I don’t. I don’t want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. 20 But if I do what I don’t want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. 21 I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. 22 I love God’s law with all my heart. 23 But there is another power[e] within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. 24 Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? 25 Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So, you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God’s law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.

**Galatians 5:16**: “16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”

**1 Timothy 4:7-10**: “7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives’ tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. 8 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. 9 This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. 10 That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.”