

61. Dare to Discipline



We don't take to discipline naturally. We'd rather give free reign to our whim and nature. To be a virtuoso violinist and perform "effort sly" on stage, massive hidden hours of playing tedious scales and practise precede the limelight performance. An athlete wins a race; it's all over in such a short period of time. Behind that incredible performance is countless hours of training, gym work and controlled diet. A dancer delights us with their performance and grace. Again, it's more than sheer talent, mere DNA expressing itself. The craft is honed; there are bloody ballet shoes, and strained practises that mark the preceding years.

David put in lots of battles as leader of a small guerrilla band living out of hardship, before he commanded a vast army from a comfortable king's tent.

To achieve great things in God, you will have to pay the price of long hours of prayer, Bible study, menial service, and a consistent practise of spiritual *disciplines*. *The Celebration of Discipline: A Path to Spiritual Growth* by R J Foster remains a bestseller in the area despite its curious title. We convey the impression to our students that discipline is punishment, and not something to "celebrate" for who but a masochist enjoys sanctions?

The word *disciple* contains the root concept of one who follows the discipline of the Master. It is powerful to share with your students the spiritual disciplines you follow, so that teaching in this vital area is personalised and modelled. Discipline gives focus and concentrates energy; dissipation scatters and erodes effectiveness and attainment. The media advertising attacks restraint and discipline, urging spontaneous selfishness and immediate self gratification. You stand against this force with your daily flesh and blood witness of a much nobler alternative.

Blessed is the person you discipline, O LORD, the one you teach from your law;
Psalms 94:12

For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life, **Psalms 6:23**

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

Hebrews 12:1

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. **2 Timothy 1:7**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3724f98vkI>

Richard Foster on video on disciplines, 3 parts

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpn3H_qb59w

Richard Foster on paths of devotion