The Disciplines You Establish Today Will Determine Your Success For Tomorrow.

Bishop Dr. Pamela. A Smith

I remember my intermediate and high school classmates who excelled in their studies. Some of us were very gifted and others had to work much harder to obtain good grades. Nevertheless they were rewarded for their efforts, when it was time for testing.

Some students did not need to put forth much effort to memorize information, so that they could easily recite the dates and facts of the lessons, without considerable stress. The rest of us thought that was something to be admired and we wished we could do the same.

Because of their giftedness, they chose to wait until “the eleventh hour” to begin to study or they would spend only a small amount of time to memorize the information to prepare for an exam. The rest of their time was freed up to do the other things that they desired, like relaxation and recreation with friends, while the rest of us were “working hard to understand the concepts of the lesson.”

However, in my adult years I found out that many of those seemly gifted students were not as gifted as I thought. They just had an ability to use their short-term memory to past exams, but they did not put forth effort to obtain comprehensive knowledge of the subject. At least, not in the manner that produced future success. **THEY LACKED SELF-DISCIPLINE!**

They did not develop their ability or have power to dedicate hours or even days reflecting on (or studying) the information that was to help them develop a mastery of the subject, to use its guiding principles throughout their life.

I remember, one of my high school classmates and I entered the same college in the same year. We both took many of the same high school classes and she attained various scholastic recognitions. Yet, she began to struggle in college and almost failed the first year, because she lacked the discipline it took to succeed in an academic environment that encouraged learning through the discovery process. She was perplexed and did not understand why she was struggling. Her struggle was because she was not compelled at an early age to press to get
anything. Everything came easy for her or was handed to her. Now she needed to find out how to succeed in a different learning environment.

Are you prepared for academic success?

None of you are new to biblical instruction. Each one of you are required to attend Bible Study, Sunday school, and other training opportunities several times per week, since you became members of your local congregations. If you have been faithful to those studies, you are prepared for the advanced leadership training.

Although our 2014 - 2015 Leadership Development Institute students are comprised of a group of individuals from various social backgrounds and academic experiences, most of you have arrived at this learning environment motivated with the desire to succeed in the coursework. Yet a few have arrived here with no expectations at all; they believe that God will make up the difference in what they are lacking or will not do; these are not disciplined and have yet to acquire those skills. In other words, they do not believe that they will need to discipline themselves to attain academic success in the church work, in secular employment, or in their communities. Proverbs 1:5 states that “A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:”

Some of you believe that prayer will do what you refuse to do. Others believe that their advanced age excuses them from having to try. Still others are like my high school friend; they don’t think they need to establish priorities or manage their time to do what is necessary to master the preaching and teaching that God chose them to do.

Therefore, they have chosen to take the lower road that will not lead to success. That is a deserted road.
They are following all the wrong road signs.

Well... Ready or not, here we are!

School is in session, Starting November 4, 2014! So let’s start by helping one another to obtain what they missed along the way.

Since each one of you have been groomed in the Holy Scriptures, let us review the biblical doctrine on self-discipline, also called the doctrine of self-control.
Continue to read the following…

The Forerunner Commentary records the following:

Self-mastery ("soberly" in NKJV) is self-government or self-control, which is the foundation of a strong godly life, growth, and producing fruit. If a person cannot govern himself, if he cannot master his passions, he will certainly not have a good relationship with his fellowman or God. His life will likely be marked by major excesses. [or excuses for not reaching the mark.]

Paul says that I press toward the mark of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus. When you entered the leadership program, you began to press toward the mark…….

The biblical writers use this word in various ways: to behave in an orderly manner, to be sober, serious, sane, sound-minded, discreet, self-disciplined, prudent, and
moderate. In context of a person controlling himself, Paul writes, "For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith" (Romans 12:3; see Titus 2:6; 1 Peter 4:7).

A person who has self-mastery is even-handed, and his passions (or excuses) are under control. He makes proper use of his drives and desires, and his manner of life is not one of extremes. A person reflecting this quality will be making steady progress in growing into the perfectly balanced character of Jesus Christ.

In the following article entitled “Eating: How Good It Is! John W. Ritenbaugh exhorts his readers from 1 Timothy 1:6-7:

Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

When Paul admonishes us to "stir up the gift" in us, he is really telling us to discipline ourselves to put what we say we believe into action. He speaks most specifically about the gift of the Holy Spirit, but the intent of his admonition includes all of the truths we have received as a result of God giving us His Spirit.

Because of grace, the elect are responsible to God to act in agreement with these truths. To act contrary to them is to quench the Spirit. Resisting the truth stifles and smothers good results; it inhibits growth into God's image. Proverbs 25:28 says, "Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls." Such a person is defenseless against destructive forces that pressure him to submit. To do the right requires discipline, the self-control to act in agreement with truth, because virtually everything in life - including Satan, the world's enticements, and
our appetites - works against our fervent submission to God. Thus, Paul charges us to exercise the control to stir up the gift.

Self-Discipline Quotes

[http://www.essentiallifeskills.net/self-disciplinequotes.html](http://www.essentiallifeskills.net/self-disciplinequotes.html)

In reading the lives of great men, I found that the first victory they won was over themselves... self-discipline with all of them came first.

*Harry S. Truman*

The ability to make yourself do what you should do, when you should do it, whether you feel like it or not.

*Elllbert Hubbard*

We all have dreams. But in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort.

*Jesse Owens*

The happiness of a man in this life does not consist in the absence but in the mastery of his passions.

*Alfred Lord Tennyson*

Govern thyself then you will be able to govern the world.

*Anonymous*

Self-discipline begins with the mastery of your thoughts. If you don't control
what you think, you can't control what you do.

When the fight begins within himself, a man's worth something.

*Robert Browning*

Let me . . . ; remind you that it is only by working with an energy which is almost superhuman and which looks to uninterested spectators like insanity that we can accomplish anything worth the achievement. Work is the keystone of a perfect life. Work and trust in God.

*Woodrow Wilson*

Nothing is more harmful to the service, than the neglect of discipline; for that discipline, more than numbers, gives one army superiority over another.

*George Washington*

If we don't discipline ourselves, the world will do it for us.

*William Feather*

**The Scriptures Also Teach About Discipline.**

The following are just a few…

**1 Corinthians 9:24-27**

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: more. But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.
**Ephesians 4:23-24**

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

**Philippians 3:12-14**

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

**2 Timothy 1:7**

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

**Hebrews 12:1**

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

**Psalms 119:9-11**

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.
2 Corinthians 10:5
Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

Romans 12:2
And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 14:20-21
But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

1 Corinthians 9:25
And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

1 Corinthians 9:24
Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

Philippians 3:14
I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:13
I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.