



Dgroup Discussion Guide for October 7, 2018 **Finishing Strong**

Scripture: Philippians 3:13-14

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

The Christian faith is not a sprint, it is a marathons. Along the way there are many challenges, along the way there are many temptations. We may start out great, but along the way there will be many who will fall out of the race. The question is – how do we finish strong?

What is a LEGACY?

It is something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor or from the past. The question is – what legacy do we leave behind?

Our time here in this world is only fleeting, so we must maximize the time that we have. But we have to maximize our time in the direction – in the direction of Jesus. How then do we spend the time given to us? Let us make it a point to talk about Jesus, to tell everyone about what He has done for us.

Many people today have religion, what they lack is a relationship with our Lord and Savior. Therefore it is part of our journey and task is to share God's love and grace to those who rely on religion alone for their salvation. Let us allow God to use us to become a vessel, a messenger of His message of love to all.

In Philippians 3: 13- 14, Paul himself tells us that we must continue to press on. To keep going with one goal in mind – the upward call of God. . . the mission that God has given us.

There is a secret though to pressing on: *The main one is that they've done work all their lives that, for them, wasn't work at all. Their work hasn't been an arduous task for them; it was always been their joy. It's serving God and serving others, and they've loved every minute of it. Mixed with that, is a continuing passion for what they're doing and the gifts God has given them.*

The secret is to find joy in the race. To find joy in the mission that God has given us. It is this joy that will press us to finish strong.

How do we finish strong?

The spiritual disciplines are there to guide us for the purpose of godliness.

The only road to Christian maturity and Godliness (Christlikeness and Holiness) passes through the practice of the Spiritual Disciplines. These personal and corporate disciplines promote Spiritual Growth and have been practiced by God's people since Biblical times. Jesus modeled them for us and expects us to pursue them. In doing so, we will taste the joy of Spiritual Disciplines lifestyles. – Donald S. Whitney

God commands us to be holy. Therefore godliness is the goal of the disciples, and when we remember this, spiritual disciplines become a delight instead of drudgery. 1 Peter 1:15-16 says ***but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior because it is written, "you shall be holy, for I am holy"***.

1. Bible reading

No spiritual discipline is more important than the intake of God's Word. That is why B.I.B.L.E. the Bible is our Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth. Luke 11:28 ***But he said, "on the contrary, blessed are those who hear the Word of God and observe it.*** There is no healthy Christian apart from the diet of God's Word.

2. Prayer

Prayer is a vital Spiritual Discipline, second only to the intake of God's Word. Even Jesus prayed (Luke 5:16). Colossians 4:2 ***devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with attitude of thanksgiving.*** 1 Thessalonians 5:17 further says ***Pray without ceasing.*** Sometimes we do not want to pray because we think that our prayers are not heard or answered. But Matthew 7:7-8 reassures us that prayers are answered. The only thing is, is that sometimes the answer is not the answer we are waiting for.

3. Worship

God expects us to worship Him, our Creator, in Spirit and according to the truth of Scripture. Psalm 95:6 says ***Come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.*** It is encouraged that we worship together as a community so that we encourage and sharpen each other. Hebrews 10:25 says ***not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and the more as you see the day drawing near.***

It is also important to know that worship should be done both publicly and privately. Even when we are alone, our mouths, our thoughts, our actions should be glorifying to God.

The more time we devote to truly worshipping Jesus, the more we become like Him.

4. Evangelism

Evangelism is a natural overflow of the Christian life, but is also a discipline. ALL Christians are expected to evangelize. After all this was a command given to all by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20. Matthew 5:16 says ***Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.***

At the end of the race, let us all look forward to receiving these words from our Lord and Savior " ***Well done, my good and faithful servant.*** (Matthew 25:23)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is your goal as a Christian? What kind of legacy do you want to leave behind?
2. Of the 4 Spiritual Disciplines, which one do you practice the most? Which one do you struggle with the most?
3. What is hindering you from practicing the Spiritual Disciplines?