

A Good Servant; 1 Timothy 4:6-10

- I. Training
 - a. Training is a required part of any task
 - b. Training can be academic – an Associates, Baccalaureate, Masters, and Doctorate
 - c. Training can be Vocational and even on the job
 - d. A crypto-linguist (in the USAF) goes through about two years of training – the Security Forces Academy is only about 6 weeks – Transportation (specifically driving) is all on the job training
 - e. Some jobs even have continual training
 - f. The USAF used to have ‘just in time’ training for those who were deploying to the Middle East
 - g. We spend many years of our lives training for our careers – and it is important that we do that
 - h. God wants us to train in His word as well
- II. Words of The Faith
 - a. 1 Timothy 4:6 (ESV); If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.
 - b. We are supposed to be able to discern God’s will – Romans 12:1-3
 - c. Hebrews 5:11–14 (ESV); ¹¹ About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. ¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³ for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.
 - d. Only by training do we move on from milk to solid food – from the basic principles of Christianity (unskilled) to the things that are harder to understand, to the meat
 - e. Here we are trained in discernment – we become skilled
 - f. Do you notice how? – by constant practice
 - g. We have to eat several times a day to keep up our strength and alertness
 - h. We have to be constantly learning and growing in the Word of God
 - i. Hebrews 6:1 (ESV); Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,
 - j. We have to study the “words of the faith”
- III. Godliness Training
 - a. 1 Timothy 4:7–8 (ESV); ⁷ Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; ⁸ for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.
 - b. Practice makes perfect
 - i. We use this idea in all of our sports

- ii. We spend hours in the gym for weightlifting
- iii. We spend hours on the field and behind the projector for games like football
- iv. We had a phrase in the military, “practice like it’s real” – we intended for muscle memory to take over when we could no longer think straight
- v. Still, when this life is over, all that practice for sports or battle won’t make much difference
- vi. We can reach the highest peak of our career and in the end, it has no bearing on our eternal lives
- vii. The only training that has any meaning for our eternal lives is ‘Godliness Training’
- viii. Now, we are cautioned to do everything as if we are working for the Lord
- ix. Colossians 3:23 (ESV); Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,
 - x. That is part of the ‘constant practice’ the writer of Hebrews is talking about
- c. These are what I call perishable skills – skills that we forget from lack of use
 - i. This is why we practice – so that when we are faced with a situation we know what to do
 - ii. This is why we study – so that when we are faced with a dilemma or tragedy we know what God says about it (suffering, persecution, etc.)
 - iii. We don’t want to forget what God says or what He wants us to do
 - iv. 2 Peter 1:5–9 (ESV); ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. ⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.
- d. To forget that we have been cleansed would be to lose hope

IV. Our hope

- a. 1 Timothy 4:9–10 (ESV); ⁹ The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. ¹⁰ For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.
- b. We ‘toil and strive’ because God has given us hope – in His Son, Jesus who is the savior of all people
- c. I often got through combat training because I looked to the end
 - i. I didn’t forget what I was doing – I just looked to the end
 - ii. My first combat training, Air Base Ground Defense, was in 1984 and lasted 6 weeks
 - iii. My second combat school, Air Base Defense Level 2, was in 2000 and also lasted 6 weeks
 - iv. I had attended many other combat training exercises or courses
 - v. I always looked to, and kept my eye on, the graduation date
 - vi. I thought to myself, I can do anything for 6 weeks

- d. We need to keep our eye on the end while working tirelessly, toiling and striving, here in this world (even though we are residents of another)
- e. We cannot lose hope just because things are hard for us here
- f. Galatians 6:7–9 (ESV); ⁷ Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. ⁹ And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

V. Eternity

- a. Eternity is waiting for us
- b. It is our task to be a 'good servant of Jesus Christ'
- c. Training ourselves in the Words of Faith
- d. Practicing our Righteousness
- e. Sharing our hope in Jesus