

# SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

## The Benefit of Spiritual Disciplines // Hebrews 12:11

**THE POINT:** Growth in Christ occurs when we practice spiritual disciplines.

**OVERVIEW:** People will discipline themselves to cut back their spending and save if there is something they especially want or need. An athlete will practice incredible discipline and train hard if he wants to make the Olympic team. In both cases, there is a benefit—a reward—that awaits them. It can be tempting just to coast through life, but believers who practice spiritual disciplines discover a great benefit for their efforts: godliness.

**DIRECTIONS:** As you begin your event, consider using the following engage options before starting the message.

### Atmosphere

Decorate the room with workout equipment. Say, **“If we want to get in better shape, we discipline our bodies by working out. If we want to grow in our relationship with God, we practice spiritual disciplines.”**

### TEACH (Make your notes below)

- **THE POINT:** Growth in Christ occurs when we practice spiritual disciplines.

➤ **1. DISCIPLINE ISN'T NECESSARILY ENJOYABLE**

Hebrews 12:11a

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➤ **2. TWO KINDS OF DISCIPLINE**

Hebrews 12:11b

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➤ **3. DISCIPLINE PRODUCES RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Hebrews 12:11c

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### Media

Search the Internet for “How Great Athletes Teach Us about Spiritual Discipline.” Play the video as you begin the session. Say, **“Athletes are able to perform the ways they do because of tedious practice and discipline. If we want to grow in our obedience to Christ, we must practice spiritual disciplines on a daily basis.”**

### PREPARE (Sermon outline)

We grow to be like Jesus when we devote ourselves to intense training as well as when God, as our good Father, disciplines us.

- **A.** Discipline refers to intense training with the expectation that it will yield desired abilities or character traits.
- B.** Discipline means putting off unhealthy (but often comfortable) behaviors.
- C.** Discipline is hard work and is often uncomfortable or painful.
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- **A.** Self discipline—we are called to discipline ourselves.
- B.** A Father's discipline—where we are undisciplined, our Father will discipline us.
- C.** Where we fail to discipline ourselves, God will discipline His children.
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- **A.** We are called to be like Jesus—to be righteous.
- B.** When we are disciplined, our lives will be fruitful.
- C.** One fruit is peace, both internal and peace with God.

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**DIRECTIONS:** Use the following outline as a guide for a message based on the passages from this session of Bible Studies for Life: Students. Additionally, use the suggested illustrations and activities to customize your midweek event.

### INTRO

- ▶ What comes to mind when you think about discipline?
- ▶ How can discipline be a good thing?
- ▶ What happens when someone is undisciplined?

### HEBREWS 12:11a

- ▶ What are some disciplines you currently practice?
- ▶ What unhealthy behaviors do you need to put off?
- ▶ How can you achieve some of the spiritual traits you desire through discipline?

### HEBREWS 12:11b

- ▶ What are some examples of self-discipline?
- ▶ When have you experienced God's discipline?
- ▶ Why is it necessary for God to discipline His children?

### HEBREWS 12:11c

- ▶ What does it mean to have a fruitful life?
- ▶ How does discipline lead to righteousness?
- ▶ How can we have peace with God?

### LIVE IT OUT

- ▶ **Discuss:** Ask students to briefly discuss ideas that may have challenged them during the session.
- ▶ **Ask:** What are some spiritual disciplines you need to prioritize?
- ▶ **Pray:** Ask God to shape students into the likeness of Christ as they practice self discipline.