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Men's Leadership Ministries

LANDMINES
WALKING WISELY IN EVIL DAYS



Landmines Session Eight

“Distractions that Erode Spiritual Discipline”

The thing about Landmines and Trip-wires is that they are hidden. That’s why you must be careful how you walk – Ephesians 5:15-16

If you’re a follower of Christ you’re a Disciple of Christ.

Colossians 1:28 – We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

The goal of the Christian life is to go from immaturity to maturity. That involves a massive amount of change.

- It takes discipline. To be a follower of Christ is to be a disciple, one who is disciplined
- The Lord wants us to see the value of discipline so that we will seek it ourselves.
- In discipline there is freedom.
- It costs something, but it yields tremendous results.

We are hit with so many distractions that they have interrupted and distorted our ability to concentrate.

How many times do you get “pinged” each day? Emails? News?

Spiritual Health = 1.) Diet, 2.) Cardio, 3.) Exercise or Strength Training

1.) Diet = Scripture

Matthew 4:4 – But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”

- Deuteronomy 32:47a – For it is not an idle word for you; indeed it is your life.
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
- It is your food, nutrition, manna

George Barna – Millennials revere the word, but they don’t read the word.

Steve Farrar – Men revere the word, but they don’t read the word. It is dangerous.

Christian men have anorexia-nervosa. We starve ourselves. It is very subtle

- Ephesians 6:10-11 – Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.
 - If you're not in scripture, you can't grow.
 - The only offensive weapon we have in the Christian life is the Bible.
 - It is all about scripture and the benefit of scripture
- Psalm 119:9 – How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word.
- Psalm 119:11 – Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.

The enemy wants to keep us malnourished. In order to fight against that we must exercise spiritual disciplines.

2.) Cardio = Meditation

- Joshua 1:6-8 – Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.
- Romans 12:2 – And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
 - As I read scripture it changes my thinking. It changes my perspective. Instead of man's perspective, I have God's perspective.
 - There are no shortcuts. If you are going to grow and be a wise man. You must have a consistent intake of scripture.
 - Plan a time. You set, the Lord will be there.
 - Plan a place. What's good for you? Shut the door of you office at noon?
 - Make a list. Things you're praying about. Leave room for when God answers.
- Psalm 1:1 – How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
 - The internet, newspapers, and news channels are this verse. How do you counter that?

- Psalm 1:2-3 – But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.
- Isaiah 61:3c –...So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.

Reading Scripture vs. Meditation

- Biblical meditation is chewing on it, absorbing it.
 - You take “just a pinch” and just keep it in there.
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- Psalm 46:10a – Be still, and know that I am God!
- “The reason we come away so cold from reading the Word is because we do not warm ourselves at the fire of meditation.” – Thomas Watson*
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- Lamentations 3:21-23 – This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. The Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.
 - I go back 24 hours and I give God thanks for the mercies that he’s given me. I want to make sure I’m giving him thanks.
 - At night I have certain “go to verses”, “core verses”.
 - Psalm 34:3 – Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and feed on His faithfulness.
 - If I’m having trouble sleeping, I dwell on God’s faithfulness, how he’s never failed me.
 - Psalm 46:1 – God is our refuge and strength, He is abundantly available for help in tight places.
 - You start quoting scripture, you’ll be out. The enemy doesn’t want you quoting scripture.
 - Psalm 119:98 – O how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever mine. I have more insight than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation.
 - Psalm 119:100-101 – I understand more than the aged, because I have observed Your precepts. I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Your word.
 - The more you ponder scripture, the more you know. You can resist.

3.) Exercise or Strength Training = Prayer

"I have so much work to do that if I don't get four hours to pray I can't get it done." – Martin Luther

- That puts me under a load of guilt. God used some people remarkably, but most of us are not called to do that.
- We are to talk to our Father.
- There's more power in prayer than we realize.
- James 5:17-18 – Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.
 - That's called power
- James 5:16b – The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.
 - If you're burdened by something, pray. That's the Spirit of God that's burdening you.
- A professor in Seminary talked about prayer. He received a bound leather book when they got married. They pray every day, put a line in the middle of a page. The prayer is on the left, the answer is on the right. He said that they now have 11 filled volumes filled with answered prayer.

"I strongly suspect that if we saw all the difference even the tiniest of our prayers to God make, and all the people those little prayers were destined to affect, and all the consequences of those effects down through the centuries, we would be so paralyzed with awe at the power of prayer that we would be unable to get up off our knees for the rest of our lives." – Peter Kreeft

- Nothing builds faith like answered prayer.
- You just keep praying. If God says no. He'll redirect your desires. If God delays, and you're still burdened, you keep praying and trusting in his timing.

Prayer: Father, we're all learning. We can't spend hours, but we can spend some time. Please let us breathe a prayer. Help us to find the time to be with you, and to meditate. Thank you Father, in Jesus' name, Amen.