

Make Your Mark

7 - Commit To Life-Long Learning

Highly maturing Christians are those who commit themselves to a regimen of spiritual training for life and ministry in Christ. The philosopher Seneca put it this way, “*As long as you live, keep learning how to live.*” There are simply no shortcuts to maturity—and those who leave their mark on the world, are those who’ve developed the habit of life-long learning (1 Cor. 9:24-25).

Welcome

What do you do to keep in shape physically? How faithful are you in carrying out your plan?

Worship

Remind the group that your worship time this week will be a “worship potluck.” After beginning with a few songs of your own, ask members to share either a meaningful scripture, song or prayer. Intersperse a few appropriate comments or songs, as needed.

Word

1. Discuss the following statement and its implications for various areas in your life: “*Where there is no gardener, there is no garden.*”

Read 1 Timothy 4:6-16

2. *What does it mean “to train yourself to be godly?” Is this something that you give a lot of thought?*
3. *What other passages come to mind about things that keep us from learning from God’s Word and/or from God’s discipline in our lives?* [Here are a few to consider: Heb. 12:5-6; James 1:22-25; 2 Peter 1:5-1; Mark 4:13-20]
4. *Which of the obstacles mentioned do your struggle with the most? What is one thing you could change that would make this less an obstacle?*
5. Stephen Covey describes this habit in general terms of “sharpening the saw.” *What are one or two areas where you need to “sharpen the saw?”*

Works

Growth does not happen automatically. Transformation, both spiritually and physically, is a slow—but certain process. The value of any exercise program is dependent upon following a consistent routine over a long period of time. This would be an excellent opportunity to reaffirm the value of regular participation in the teaching ministry of the church—equipping and enrichment weekends, Sunday adult Bible classes, etc.

You might also want to use this as an opportunity to affirm the value of journaling. Journaling is not the same as keeping a diary—recording what you’ve done, but rather recording what you’ve learned. The value of any week is not limited to what you do in it; it’s also in what you learn from it and become as a result. Learn to ask yourself, “*What did I learn today?*” Scripture says, “*Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil*” (Hebrews 5:13-14).