

# SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

for ordinary people like us

## STEWARDSHIP

RECOGNIZING THAT NOTHING WE HAVE REALLY BELONGS TO US. EVERYTHING WE OWN BELONGS TO GOD. WE ARE SIMPLY THE STEWARDS (MANAGERS) OF HIS MONEY, HIS GIFTS, HIS OPPORTUNITIES, AND HIS STUFF.

**“The practice of stewardship will reveal what is in our heart. Stewardship shines its light into our entitlement mentality and on our need to impress others with what we have.”**

- Adele Ahlberg Calhoun in *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*

**Plan a time this week to reflect on and journal your response to these questions:**

1. What was the last time I went without so that I could give to someone or something else?
2. What are my current addictions? (shopping, technology, TV, others?) How are these addictions affecting my use of God’s resources?
3. What percentage of my income am I giving to God (not the dollar amount, but the percentage of income)? How can I downsize my living in order to increase this percentage?
4. When I stand before Christ one day, what do I want to hear Him say about my stewardship (management) of all He gave me? What do I need to do now to hear those words then?

# FAMILY MATTERS

Four More Simple Ways to Improve Your Marriage

Adapted from “8 Ridiculously Simple Ways to Improve Your Marriage”  
by Drs. Les & Leslie Parrott

There isn’t a pill you can take to magically transform your bad or mediocre marriage into a good one. It takes incremental, intentional steps toward one another over time to gradually build marital harmony.

### Improving Your Marriage, One Step at a Time

Last week’s column introduced four simple steps you can take to improve your marriage. Today’s column shares four more. If you missed last week’s installment, you can view it online on the Marriage & Family page of the FCF website, under “for the family.”

1. **Say “You look beautiful/handsome.”** This is especially important for men to remember, as wives want few things more than to be beautiful for their husbands. Ladies, this is important for you as well. He may not act like he cares how he looks, but letting him know that you find him attractive as he walks out the door for the day will do wonders for his outlook.
2. **Put the phone down.** You may be perfectly able to multi-task, carrying on a conversation with your spouse while texting or surfing social media. However, the message your body language is sending is that whatever’s on your phone is more important than the person in front of you.
3. **Pursue your mate sexually.** Life can be crazy—long hours at work, juggling kids’ schedules. You may be drifting apart emotionally and sexually disinterested. But without sex, your spouse is simply a best friend or roommate. For wives it is simple; initiate love making. Few things bring greater joy to a man. For men, it’s a bit more nuanced. You will need to flirt with her and warm her up during the day by sending her messages letting her know how you feel.
4. **Be the first to apologize.** Nobody likes conflict, but everyone has it. If you’re wrong, apologize...quickly. Do not try to defend or justify your actions; doing so offsets the sincerity of your apology. If your spouse apologizes to you, be generous in your forgiveness.

**Weekend to Remember 2018: Early Bird Special Ends This Week!**

February 16 – 18, 2018, Hershey, PA.

It may seem like a long way off, but the Early Bird Special ends July 15<sup>th</sup>.  
For only \$150, you get:

Conference admission for two, AND...  
Dinner buffet at FCF’s exclusive Welcome Room  
on Friday before the conference.

Register today online at [FCFchurch.com](http://FCFchurch.com). Click on “Registrations.”  
**This is a \$425 value!** Lodging and meals beyond Friday evening not included.

**Need marriage help?** Call 301-620-2255 or email [BillR@FCFchurch.com](mailto:BillR@FCFchurch.com).

# SPIRITUAL TRAINING GUIDE

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE ISN'T ABOUT TRYING.  
**IT'S ABOUT TRAINING.**

Sunday, July 9, 2017

# WHY DO I CARE ABOUT MONEY?

Luke 16: 1-13 (page 1182)

## WHY DO I?

Proverbs (11:28) Those who trust in their wealth are headed for great disappointment.... (18:11) The rich think their wealth is their sturdy fortress; they imagine it to be an invincible wall of security. (Voice)

Luke 12 (15) Then he said to them, “Watch out and guard yourself from all types of greed, because one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” (NET)

Ecclesiastes 5 (10) As the saying goes: Those who love money will never be satisfied with money, and those who love riches will never be happy with what they have. This, too, is fleeting. (Voice)

## WHY DOES GOD?

2 Corinthians (8:7) But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. (9:7) Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (NIV)

2 Corinthians 9 (8) And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (11) You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. (NIV)

Matthew 6 (19) “Do not accumulate for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. (20) But accumulate for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. (21) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (NET)

# MESSAGE NOTES

# DAILY BIBLE READING



Written to encourage Roman Christians and prove beyond a doubt that Jesus is the Messiah, Mark presents a rapid succession of vivid pictures of Jesus in action – His true identity revealed by what He does, not necessarily by what He says. It is Jesus on the move.

<b>Monday:</b>	Mark 7
<b>Tuesday:</b>	Mark 8
<b>Wednesday:</b>	Mark 9
<b>Thursday:</b>	Mark 10
<b>Friday:</b>	Mark 11
<b>Saturday:</b>	Mark 12

AS YOU READ A CHAPTER EACH DAY, LOOK FOR ONE THING THAT JESUS SAID OR DID THAT JUMPED OUT AT YOU IN SOME WAY.