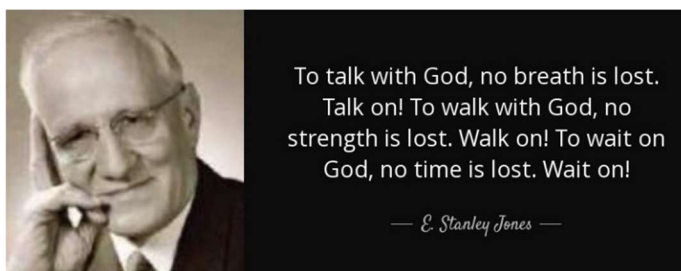


## Excerpt from The Way - Part 2 of 2

E. Stanley Jones

### ***Week 33 in The Way***

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## 8 DISCIPLINE YOUR COURAGE

[Josh. 1:6-9](#)

We continue into this week our emphasis of the Way as the way of discipline. There are some who would say that “salvation is by character.” We do not accept that. Salvation is by grace through faith – salvation is by Christ. It is a gift. But if it is a gift, it is also a growth, a growth in character. And character is developed through discipline.

That leads us to this step:

3. ***Discipline your courage.*** Every time you refuse to face up to life and its problems you weaken your character. Character needs courage to make it real character. If we have no courage, we are what Nietzsche called “moral cows in our plump comfortableness.” Present-day civilization is suffering from a lack of moral courage. So many people are in the inglorious business of keeping their heads stuck in. If you do that long enough there won’t be an idea left in that head when you do get it out. We are in the process of being standardized morally – and at a very low level. “Everybody does it,” is the new moral code to which we bow and which we obey. A woman was losing her husband’s affections over a lot of little things, among them his dislike for highly painted fingernails. When a counselor advised her to let this go for the sake of holding the family together, she replied in dismay: “But I couldn’t face society if I did – everybody does it.” She lost her husband because she had no courage to get out of step with an imperious but senseless custom.

Many of us lose our souls for lack of courage. We will not stand up and take it, so we crawl – become worms. If you are on the Way you must get used to the sign of your own blood. Paul speaks of four steps in development: “Knowing that trouble produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces

hope – a hope with never disappoints us.” (Rom. 5:3-5, Moffatt) Note the steps: (1) trouble leads to (2) endurance; endurance to (3) character; and character (4) to hope. Character is formed out of endurance which is formed out of trouble and character brings forth hope – the only hope that will never let us down, will not disappoint us.

*O Christ, I see that the trouble that comes from courage is strengthening my fiber, strengthening me, giving me hope, a hope that holds up. Then give me that gentle courage that will be disciplined to face life bravely and cheerfully. Amen.*

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AFFIRMATION FOR THE DAY: “The eternal is my light and aid; whom shall I fear? (Ps. 27:1, Moffatt)

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### **Josh. 1:6-9**

<sup>6</sup> be strong and courageous, for thou—thou dost cause this people to inherit the land which I have sworn to their fathers to give to them. <sup>7</sup> `Only, be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded thee; thou dost not turn aside from it right or left, so that thou dost act wisely in every *place* whither thou goest; <sup>8</sup> the book of this law doth not depart out of thy mouth, and thou hast meditated in it by day and by night, so that thou dost observe to do according to all that is written in it, for then thou dost cause thy way to prosper, and then thou dost act wisely. <sup>9</sup> `Have not I commanded thee? be strong and courageous; be not terrified nor affrighted, for with thee *is* Jehovah thy God in every *place* whither thou goest.'

## 9 DISCIPLINE YOUR BEGINNINGS

[Ps. 119:9-16](#)

We continue our meditation on discipline.

- 4 ***Discipline your beginnings.*** When Jesus spoke of the fire of discipline, He did so after mentioning three possible hindrances – hand, foot, eye. If any of these offends, that is, cuts across the purposes of your life, cut it off or pluck it out. We are to be disciplined at the place of the hand, the foot, the eye.

The hand is the thing that takes hold, the thing that grasps what we want. Don't take hold of a thing unless you want that thing to take hold of you. For your possessions often end in possessing you. Be careful of what you grasp. Grasp it only if you are willing that the thing shall grip you. That hand must be disciplined.

The foot approaches the thing desired. Don't walk toward a thing unless you are willing to take hold of the thing and have the thing take hold of you. Discipline your approaches to life. Many people think they can walk up to a thing and enjoy the anticipatory thrill of approach, but turn back this side of the deed. This is deadly, for it is destiny. You destine yourself to the deed when you decide to approach it.

The eye looks at the thing which you may approach and then may grasp and possess. Watch what you see. You first see, then seek. For seeing creates desire and desire creates emotion, and in the battle between the emotion and the will, the emotion almost always wins. Jesus put His finger on the necessity of the disciplined eye in these words: "Anyone who even looks with lust at a woman has committed adultery with her in the heart." (Matt. 5:28, Moffatt) The look leads to adultery in the heart, and adultery in the heart leads to adultery in the act, so quench adultery at the place of the look. Those who think they can indulge at the place of seeing and can pull back at the place of seeking, are putting their feet on a slippery bank. Discipline the beginnings and the ends will take care of themselves. In temptation,

flight is better than fight. To avert the eye is easier than to avert the destiny that comes from approach to and handling of the desired thing.

Discipline the beginnings. The ends are in the beginnings.

*O Christ, how wonderfully true Thou art to life. Thou dost lay it bare before our eyes. Through Thine eyes we see, really see. Help us to see and to seek what Thou didst see and seek. Then we shall be safe. Amen.*

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AFFIRMATION FOR THE DAY: “When I think my foot is slipping, thy goodness, O Eternal, holds me up.” (Ps. 94:18, Moffatt)

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**Ps. 119:9-16**

<sup>9</sup> *Beth.* With what doth a young man purify his path? To observe—according to Thy word.

<sup>10</sup> With all my heart I have sought Thee, Let me not err from Thy commands.

<sup>11</sup> In my heart I have hid Thy saying, That I sin not before Thee.

<sup>12</sup> Blessed *art* Thou, O Jehovah, teach me Thy statutes.

<sup>13</sup> With my lips I have recounted All the judgments of Thy mouth. <sup>14</sup> In the way of Thy testimonies I have joyed, As over all wealth. <sup>15</sup> In Thy precepts I meditate, And I behold attentively Thy paths. <sup>16</sup> In Thy statutes I delight myself, I do not forget Thy word.

## 10 DISCIPLINE YOUR PERSISTENCE

[Phil 3:16; Heb. 12:1-6](#)

We look at another place of discipline:

5. ***Discipline yourself at the place of carrying through.*** A great many good but ineffective people discipline their beginnings. They take up good things, but they don't carry through. Their lives are strewn with the wreckage of good beginnings and poor endings.

Don't take up everything that comes along. Save yourself for the best. "Beware of sacrificing your burnt offerings at any sacred spot you see." (Deut. 12:13, Moffatt) Save yourself to sacrifice your life offering on the Alter of the Worth-while. Louis Untermeyer prays:

"From compromise and things half-done,

Keep me, with stern and stubborn pride."

"You might not swerve to the right or to the left, but always follow the straight road of life which the Eternal your God has laid down for you, that you may live." (Deut. 5:32-33, Moffatt) Get guidance from god, know your call, and then stay by it till you hear the recall. That doesn't mean that you may not have to retrace steps, change tasks, and callings – you may have to. But it does mean that once you know your call and your task, stay by it with the persistence of a puppy with a root. In a long-distance race the little man who finished last *finished*, though he was several laps behind, and the winner was already across the tape. Instead of dropping out as the rest had done when they say they were beaten, he kept doggedly on. The crowd laughed at first, then applauded, and he got an ovation at the close.

"I am staying on ... I have wide opportunities here ..., and there are many to thwart me." (I Cor. 16:9, Moffatt) Many of us would have said: "I am quitting ... I have wide opportunities here, but there are too many things against me."

“The Lord said: ‘Well, where is the trusty, thoughtful steward whom the lord and master will set over his establishment?’ (Luke 12:42, Moffatt) Note two things: “trusty” and “thoughtful” – honesty and intelligence. Honesty without intelligence, or intelligence without honesty are both inadequate. But the “trusty” means not only honesty, but that he can be trusted to go through to completion.

*O Christ, I know you want to use me. But I cannot be used unless I am trusty and thoughtful. Help me to be trusted to go through – clear to the end with unwavering persistence. Amen*

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**AFFIRMATION FOR THE DAY:** “Never will he let you slip; he wo guards you never sleeps.” (Ps. 121:3, Moffatt)

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### **Phil. 3:16, Heb. 12:1-6**

**Phil 3:** <sup>16</sup> Only, we must let our steps be guided by such truth as we have attained. (Moffatt)

**Heb. 12:** <sup>1</sup> Therefore, with all this host of witnesses encircling us, we must strip off every handicap, strip off sin with its clinging folds, to run our appointed course steadily, <sup>2</sup> our eyes fixed upon Jesus as the pioneer and the perfection of faith — upon Jesus who, in order to reach his own appointed joy, steadily endured the cross, thinking nothing of its shame, and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Compare him who steadily endured all that hostility from sinful men, so as to keep your own hearts from fainting and failing. <sup>4</sup> You have not had to shed blood yet in the struggle against sin. <sup>5</sup> And have you forgotten the word of appeal that reasons with you as sons? — My son, never make light of the Lord's discipline, never faint under his reproofs; <sup>6</sup> for the Lord disciplines the man he loves, and scourges every son he receives. (Moffatt)

## 11 DISCIPLINE YOUR TIME

[1 Thess. 5:14; Eph. 5:15-18](#)

We look further at discipline:

6. ***Discipline your time.*** If, in discussing the last point of disciplining yourself to carry through to completion tasks taken up, your rationalization is, “Well, I haven’t the time,” then the answer must be: Discipline your time. If you actually haven’t time for it, then you ought not to do it; it isn’t your task. You must exercise the duty of refusing to do the good. You must not take too much on your plate with a lot of leftovers.

But perhaps the real difficulty is that you don’t use to best advantage the time you have. Your time is undisciplined. You carry on conversations long after they have run out of intelligence, for most conversations run out of intelligence in half an hour! You do not tackle your tasks decisively and get them done and out of the way. You daydream instead of think; you dawdle instead of do. You waste hours of time at games which are supposed to be recreation, but which wreck time and you.

Time is distilled opportunity. Don’t waste it, for in doing so you lay waste yourself. Every wasted moment is so much wasted man, that man you. Budget your time. Plan your work and work your plan.

Don’t always be running to try to keep up with your tasks, keep them in hand, anticipate them. A sign says: “Don’t write – wire.” I’d like to reverse it: “Don’t wire – write.” For that means that you have looked ahead, have seen the thing coming, have met it ahead of time instead of waiting till the last minute and then fussily wiring, feverishly telephoning long distance. That kind of person is upset and upsetting. He demands that people atone for his procrastinations by answering his feverish requests with feverish response.

The Man who influenced the world most was the Man with the leisured heart.



A little boy, late for school, asked God to help him to be there on time. He ran, stumbled, and breathlessly said, “God, I asked you to help me, but don’t push me.” Don’t let your jobs push you; you stumble if you do. Discipline your time.

*O Christ, when I look at Thee I see that Thou was never in a hurry, never ran, but always had time for the pressing necessities of the day. Give me that disciplined, poised life with time always for the thing that matters. For I would be a disciplined person. Amen*

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AFFIRMATION FOR THE DAY: “He that believeth (in Him) shall not make haste.” (Isa. 28:16)

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### **1 Thess. 5:14; Eph. 5:15-18**

1 Thess. 5: <sup>14</sup> We beseech you, brothers, keep a check upon loafers, encourage the faint-hearted, sustain weak souls, never lose your temper with anyone

Eph. 5: <sup>15</sup> Be strictly careful then about the life you lead; act like sensible men, not like thoughtless; <sup>16</sup> make the very most of your time, for these are evil days. <sup>17</sup> So do not be senseless, but understand what is the Lord's will; <sup>18</sup> and do not get drunk with wine — that means profligacy — but be filled with the Spirit

## 12 DISCIPLINE YOURSELF TO “WHAT IS”

[II Cor. 1:4-6; 2:14; 4:15-18](#)

We look at another place of discipline:

7. *Discipline yourself to “What is.”* There are many who are uselessly beathing themselves upon the bars of life, beating their wings out, because they cannot fly. “If I were only there or anywhere but here, I’d be all right.” They dream of what they would do if they were not here.

But we’ve always got to live on what is. The children of Israel lived on manna in the wilderness as they journeyed to the Promised Land. Manna means, “What is.” They didn’t know what it was, so they called it “What is.” They lived on “What is.” You and I must live on “What is,” no matter if we hope to live on “What will be.” The children of Israel got tired of manna, but it sustained them till they got to the Promised Land. You and I may get tired of “What is,” but we must learn to live by it till we get to our Promised Land.

I was off-loaded in Trinidad on my journey back from South America, off-loaded by two local passengers. I was a “through” passenger. It meant my missing important mass meetings in Miami, long planned. The priority officer agreed that I had had a “raw deal.” But these words came to me as clear as crystal: “Lord, I do not ask for special treatment; I ask for power to take any treatment that may come, and use it.” Peace settled within me. That sentence itself has lingered like a benediction within me ever since. I lived by it during that waiting period, lived by “What is,” and have lived by it in many a situation since. To get that sentence was worth the delay. You can rescue out of every unjust, impossible situation something that makes that situation not confining, but contributing. You can live on “What is.” And the manna will feed you, sustain you till you get to God’s better thing – to God’s Promised Land.

A letter carrier at fifty had a stroke which impaired one arm and made one leg drag helplessly. His letter-carrying days were done. Not so. He still distributes letters, all of them of good cheer. He sits in front of his house, waves a cheery greeting to everybody who goes by – the center of the city’s good cheer. He is living on “What is” and is helping a city to do the same.

*O Christ, I thank Thee that Thou didst live on the manna of the silent years of obscurity in Nazareth – and live on it gloriously. Help me to live on what comes, good, bad, indifferent. Then I shall live. Amen.*

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**AFFIRMATION FOR THE DAY: If I don’t get what I like, then I shall like what I get.**

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**II Cor. 1:4-6; 2:14; 4:15-18**

II Cor. 1: <sup>4</sup> who comforts me in all my distress, so that I am able to comfort people who are in any distress by the comfort with which I myself am comforted by God. <sup>5</sup> For as the sufferings of Christ are abundant in my case, so my comfort is also abundant through Christ. <sup>6</sup> If I am in distress, it is in the interests of your comfort and salvation; if I am comforted, it is in the interests of your comfort, which is effective as it nerves you to endure the same sufferings as I suffer myself.

II Cor. 2: <sup>14</sup> Wherever I go, thank God, he makes my life a constant pageant of triumph in Christ, diffusing the perfume of his knowledge everywhere by me.

II Cor. 4: <sup>15</sup> It is all in your interests, so that the more grace abounds, the more thanksgiving may rise and redound to the glory of God. <sup>16</sup> Hence I never lose heart; though my outward man decays, my inner man is renewed day after day. <sup>17</sup> The slight trouble of the passing hour results in a solid glory past all comparison, <sup>18</sup> for those of us whose eyes are on the unseen, not on the seen; for the seen is transient, the unseen eternal.

## 13 DISCIPLINE YOUR TONGUE

[Jas. 3:1-12](#)

We must look at a discipline that is needed by all:

8. *Discipline your tongue.* The expression of a thing deepens the impression, so a word uttered becomes a word made flesh – in us. We become the incarnation of what we express. Jesus said: “By they words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” This always sounded superficial until I saw that you become what you say. If you tell a lie, you become a lie. The deepest punishment of a lie is – the liar. He has to live with a man he cannot trust. That is an uneasy hell. There are therefore no “white lies,” for they leave a black mark – on the soul. “Isn’t a lie ever justifiable?” No, absolutely, no. Evil means produce evil ends always. Let it be said of you as was said of Sara Teasdale: “Her later lyrics grew more and more straight-forward, more dependent on an inner authority and less upon clever manipulation of facts.”

Discipline your tongue not only to the truth but to the relevant truth. Discipline yourself to concise, straightforward speech. A speaker introduced by a very flower, verbose chairman rose and said, “The adjective is the enemy of the noun.” It is. Sometimes it is the speaker himself who weakens his nouns by his adjectives. A speaker sat down sadly after a wordy discourse and remarked: “I couldn’t have said less, unless I had said more.” He had preached his own funeral. Discipline your tongue to the relevant, to speech that is straightforward, that says what it means and means what it says.

Discipline your tongue to the loving. When in doubt, say the most loving thing and you will not be wrong. I sked the Western Union clerk if I could put the word “love” into a tourate telegram, telling of arrival, without de-tourating it. She replied: “Yes, for if ‘love’ weren’t allowed to be put into tourate telegrams, it might cause trouble in homes.” If we don’t put “love” into everything we say, it may cause trouble anywhere. Paul says: “this is how I write. ‘The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.’” (II Thess. 3:18 Moffatt) Is that how we write and speak: “grace ....all”?



*O Christ, nothing but gracious words proceeded out of Thy mouth.  
Discipline my tongue to the truthful, to the relevant, and to the loving.  
For my words will condemn me to be what they are. Then help me.  
Amen*

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AFFIRMATION FOR THE DAY: “Set a watch upon my mouth, O thou Eternal, guard thou the door of my lips; may I have no mind to evil.” (Ps. 141:3, Moffatt)

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### **Jas. 3:1-12**

<sup>1</sup> My brothers, do not swell the ranks of the teachers; remember, we teachers will be judged with special strictness. <sup>2</sup> We all make many a slip, but whoever avoids slips of speech is a perfect man; he can bridle the whole of the body as well as the tongue. <sup>3</sup> We put bridles into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, and so, you see, we can move the whole of their bodies. <sup>4</sup> Look at ships too; for all their size and speed under stiff winds, they are turned by a tiny rudder wherever the mind of the steersman chooses. <sup>5</sup> So the tongue is a small member of the body, but it can boast of great exploits. What a forest is set ablaze by a little spark of fire! <sup>6</sup> And the tongue is a fire, the tongue proves a very world of mischief among our members, staining the whole of the body and setting fire to the round circle of existence with a flame fed by hell. <sup>7</sup> For while every kind of beast and bird, of creeping animals and creatures marine, is tameable and has been tamed by mankind, <sup>8</sup> no man can tame the tongue — plague of disorder that it is, full of deadly venom! <sup>9</sup> With the tongue we bless the Lord and Father, and with the tongue we curse men made in God's likeness; <sup>10</sup> blessing and cursing stream from the same lips! My brothers, this ought not to be. <sup>11</sup> Does a fountain pour out fresh water and brackish from the same hole? <sup>12</sup> Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives? Or a vine, figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

## 14 DISCIPLINE YOUR DISCIPLINES

[Acts 20:28-35](#)

Today we sum up our meditations on discipline. Discipline is not something imposed on a reluctant human nature by an arbitrary God. True, it is said, “Let us hear his voice out of heaven, for discipline.” (Deut. 4:36, Moffatt) But the “voice out of heaven” is exactly the same as the voice out of our needs. For the voice out of heaven only voices what we need, but often cannot voice. God’s voice and our needs are one. Our choosing of disciplines is the choosing of the laws and demands of our beings. If this is true, then we must:

9. *Discipline our disciplines.* We must not allow them to become too obvious, too much a living by rule of thumb, too stilted. A person who is obviously trying to be disciplined is not rhythmical and winsome. The disciplines must be buried in the subconscious where they work naturally as a part of you. In the beginning you may have to impose them until they take root within you. But the end is to make them artesian instead of artificial. The disciplines must be as hidden as the art of the violinist who obeys rules, but seems not to be obeying anything except the creative urge within him. The rules have become a regularity, the laws have become a liberty.

Jesus said to His disciples, “Take heed to yourselves” just after He had said: “That will turn out an opportunity for you to bear witness.” \*(Luke 21:32-4, 13 Moffatt) The connection was obvious: Keep yourselves spiritually fit and ready, so that when you are suddenly brought by circumstances before an opportunity for witnessing you may not be nonplused. Your disciplines will then function as spontaneous habit. For the disciplines have become *you*.

The end of the discipline is not merely to make you, but to make you a Christlike you. “If he (the disciple) is perfectly trained, he will be like his teacher.” (Luke 6:40, Moffatt) the end of the discipline is to make you “perfectly trained” so that you may be like your Master. You are being disciplined into Christlikeness.

*O Christ, I thank Thee that Thy disciplined heart didst sing its song of freedom, give me the song of freedom through discipline. Bring every desire into captivity to the obedience of Thy will. Then I too shall sing the song of freedom. Amen.*

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**AFFIRMATION FOR THE DAY:** “The Eternal your God disciplines you as a man disciplines his son.” (Deut. 8:5, Moffatt)

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### **Acts 20:28-35**

<sup>28</sup> Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock of which the holy Spirit has appointed you guardians; shepherd the church of the Lord which he has purchased with his own blood. <sup>29</sup> I know that when I am gone, fierce wolves will get in among you, and they will not spare the flock; yes. <sup>30</sup> and men of your own number will arise with perversions of the truth to draw the disciples after them. <sup>31</sup> So be on the alert, remember how for three whole years I never ceased night and day to watch over each one of you with tears. <sup>32</sup> And now I entrust you to God and the word of his grace; he is able to upbuild you and give you your inheritance among all the consecrated. <sup>33</sup> Silver, gold, or apparel I never coveted; <sup>34</sup> you know yourselves how these hands of mine provided everything for my own needs and for my companions. <sup>35</sup> I showed you how this was the way to work hard and succour the needy, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, who said, 'To give is happier than to get.'"