

GATM: How to Train Your Dragon -- Train Yourself

1 Timothy 4

***Movie Trailer**

This movie, How to Train Your Dragon, is about a young man who takes a stand against what the world he lives in has taught him.

Through his training and learning he discovers the truth and teaches his family and community about a new way of life.

***Themes**

Fear of the unknown

Resilience & Overcoming challenges

Encouragement

Teamwork

Training

Training is a major theme in this movie.

I've recently been doing some of my own training . . Potty Training! *No, not for myself.*



You would think that after 4 kids, the potty-training process would be easier, but it most definitely is not. It takes a **lot** of repetition and reminders and rewards—positive reinforcement like sticker charts and M&Ms and cheering.

It also comes with a **lot** of tears and setbacks and throwing away of poopy underwear.

But through it all it's important to keep going and not give up.

Because the goal is for each kid to be done with diapers, to use the toilet, and even sleep through the night without any accidents. And so we persist and eventually we celebrate!

That's what I get to do.

***Sermon title slide**

Many of you are nodding along and thinking, “Oh yeah, I remember those potty-training days, or I’m in the middle of them right now.”

A lot of you might be thinking, “I’ve never experienced that, or I don’t have to worry about that yet.”

So let’s talk about some training that almost all of us have experienced – training for your job.

No matter what type of job you have, you require some form of training.

And there is a huge spectrum of the time and type of training that is required depending on your job.

From schooling to workshops to physical training or even just shadowing another employee.

How many of you have had any type of training for a job?

One of my first jobs was at a college bookstore. I had to be trained on how to use the cash register, how to organize the textbooks and help students find them, and even which way to put the hangers on the rack when stocking sweatshirts – because it must look neat and organized if you want people to buy things.

And if I had a question about how to do something, I would ask my coworkers, or my boss, to make sure I was getting the job done right.

Why is all the training needed for our jobs? What is the goal?

Ultimately it's to work well your job,

- whether that's doing something you're passionate about,
- or trying to get a promotion,
- or just needing a job to pay the bills.

But that's not our only goal in life. It's not just to go to work every day.

If you're here today, or even watching online, it's either because you're a Christian or you want to know what it means to be a Christian.

So, what are we training for? What is our goal as Christians?

***Scripture**

Ephesians 5:1-2 (NLT)

1 Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. 2 Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.

So our goal is to follow Jesus Christ, to become more and more like Him, transformed into His image.

So that when people see me and you, they don't just see us, they see the power of the Holy Spirit in us.

***Scripture**

2 Corinthians 3:16-18 (NLT)

16 But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

So how can we train to reach this goal?

We're going deeper into scripture to find out.

But before we do that, let's pray!

PRAY

Someone who had to go through a lot of training in the Bible was a young man named **Timothy**.

Timothy became a follower of Jesus . . first, through the example of his mom and grandma. Then, he became a church leader and pastor, learning from **Paul – the ultimate trainer**.

Paul wrote almost half of the books in the New Testament. All of them were letters of training and encouragement to churches and leaders.

We're going to read scripture in one of those books today, 1 Timothy 4 – his first letter to Timothy.

Let's begin with verses 6-10.

1 Timothy 4:6-10 (NLT)

6If you explain these things to the brothers and sisters, Timothy, you will be a worthy servant of Christ Jesus, one who is nourished by the message of faith and the good teaching you have followed. 7Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Instead, train yourself to be godly.

8"Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come." 9This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it. 10This is why we work hard and continue to struggle, for our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people and particularly of all believers.

Look at verse 7 & 8 again.

7. . . **train** yourself to be godly.

8"Physical **training** is good, but **training** for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come."

Physical training requires discipline and exercise and repetition. And these are all good things.

But Paul is saying here that training for godliness is much better.

Just like potty-training, and on-the-job training, we need Godly training.

***We need Godly training.**

My older daughter recently completed a different type of training -- driver's training.

She finished all 30 hours of online courses to prepare for driving.

In fact, she is taking her written test at the DMV this Friday. PRAY for us!

When you're getting ready for the test, you have to rely on the CA Driver's Handbook -- the training manual. So that you know what the speed limit is in a neighborhood, what to do at a Yield sign, when to use your turn signal.

All with the goal of eventually getting a driver's license and driving a car -- independence!

We've already established that our goal as Christians is to become more like Jesus.

And we need Godly training.

So isn't it awesome that we have a training manual?

Our training manual for life is the Word of God!

In Paul's 2 letter to Timothy in verses 3:16-17, he says:

***Scripture**

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

16All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and **training** in righteousness, 17so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

And isn't that what a training manual does?

- **Teaches** and **equips** us for what we need to learn and do.

Now with our driver's training manual, once we pass the test and receive our license, we rarely refer back to the actual manual.

We know how to drive now.

We've got the rules of the road all up here. **Point to head.*

So, then why do I see drivers being pulled over by the police every day?

I've been pulled over a few times and even received a few tickets in my past.

That's because we need to be reminded, rebuked, corrected.

Because our minds are not reliable enough to remember all of the laws.

And if we can't even remember everything from the driver's manual, how are we supposed to remember everything in the Bible?

We're not supposed to just "remember" it **up here*.

We need continual reminding and training.

The Bible is something that we need EVERY SINGLE DAY!

Because it's more than just a training manual.

It is our Daily Bread. The nourishment we need for our soul.

Earlier we read in 1 Timothy 4:6

***Scripture**

6. . . you will be a worthy servant of Christ Jesus, one who is **nourished** by the message of faith and the good teaching you have followed.

And if that's not enough, let's read what Jesus himself said.

***Scripture**

Matthew 4:4 (NLT)

4But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say,

'People do not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

And what's even more amazing about this verse, is that Jesus is quoting Scripture.

Which means, that even Jesus, the Son of God, is being daily nourished by His Word.

He's quoting:

***Scripture**

Deuteronomy 8:3 (NLT)

3Yes, he humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna, a food previously unknown to you and your ancestors. He did it to teach you that people do not live by bread alone; rather, we live by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

We need food for our physical health. For our bodies to continue living on this earth.

We need the Word of God for our spiritual health.
For our souls to continue living for eternity with our Father who loves us and desires for us, His children, to be with Him forever.

***We need Daily Bread**

I know that we are all at different levels in our spiritual walk with Jesus.

So if you don't know Jesus, or you are new to the faith, I don't want you to feel overwhelmed by the idea of daily time in the Word.

What I want all of us to do, is consider where we're at right now, and ask God to just help us see what the next step is in our nourishment.

- For some of you, that might mean receiving a Bible.

And if you need one, please come and talk to me or one of our pastors after service and we can help you.

- Some of you might want a more focused devotional book to help guide you through different scriptures.

We currently have a devotional booklet going through some of the Psalms right now. These are free, and you can take them too. Or we can also help you find other devotionals.

- And then some of you have a lot of Biblical knowledge already, but God reveals more to us through His Word, even if we've read the same verses a hundred times.

Because our training doesn't stop. Our goal is to become like Jesus, who is perfect.

We will never be perfect, but we can continue to learn and grow more like Him every day.

Let's continue our final piece of training for today in 1 Timothy 4:11-16

***Scripture**

1 Timothy 4:11-13 (NLT)

11 Teach these things and insist that everyone learn them. 12 Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity. 13 Until I get there, focus on reading the Scriptures to the church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them.

1 Timothy 4:14-16 (NLT)

14 Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecy spoken over you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you. 15 Give your complete attention to these matters. Throw yourself into your tasks so that everyone will see your progress. 16 Keep a close watch on how you live and on your teaching. Stay true to what is right for the sake of your own salvation and the salvation of those who hear you.

Training is not just for our benefit—it's for other people too.

We are to be an example in what we say and the way we live.

To encourage each other.

And to use the spiritual gifts that God has given us to build up the body of believers.

***Scripture**

Ephesians 4:15-16 (NLT)

15 Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. 16 He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

I have one more story about training.



My son is a baseball player and that also takes a lot of training and discipline.

He has baseball practice multiple days a week, 1-on-1 coaching with his dad, and games on the weekends.

Some of his training is just to develop his own skills. But then he uses these skills on a team.

His teammates all support each other and help each other reach their goal, which is ultimately to win the game.

The church is a body of believers, helping to support each other and grow together.

And here at Covenant Grove we also have teams.

***Teams slide**

Our ministry teams help all of us to use our spiritual gifts to serve in God's Kingdom, and to encourage to each other to continue our spiritual training so that we will reach our goal of becoming more like Jesus Christ.

If you are not on a Team yet, I encourage you to talk with us to find out more about the teams we have and also to ask God how He is calling you to use your gifts.

***What next steps is God calling you to take in your spiritual training?**

Right now, I'd like you to close your eyes.

Spend a moment with God, asking Him what next steps He's calling you to take in your spiritual training?

PRAY

Benediction

1 John 2:5-6 (NLT)

5. . . those who obey God's word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him. 6Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.