

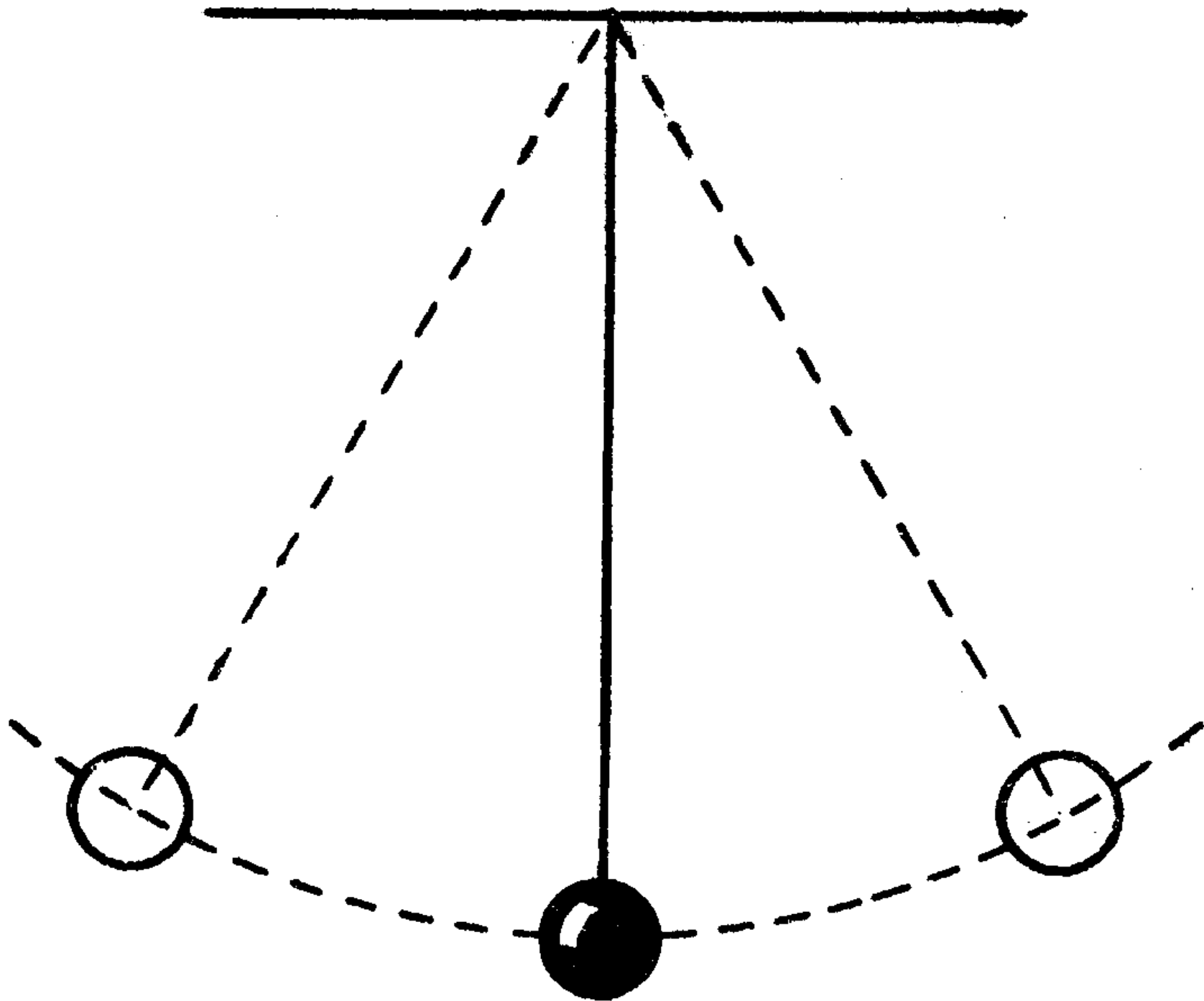


# Closing the Gap:

*Where am I?  
Where do I want to be?*

**Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.**

**Colossians 2:20-23**





**What is the role of spiritual disciplines or training?**

**Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.**

1 Cor. 9:24-27

**Discipline for its own sake is  
worthless.**

**Discipline for the sake of growth in  
Christlikeness is essential.**



**When a means to an end becomes  
the end itself...the means itself can  
become unhealthy.**



**What is the end?**

***"To glorify God and to enjoy him  
forever."***





**Training is not earning...it is a  
pathway to enjoying.**

**Training is not effort to deserve God's  
love...it is effort to experience it and  
express it more deeply.**



**"Grace is not opposed to effort but to earning...earning is attitude, effort is action."**

Willard



**We must not see training as earning  
or as a way to impress others...this is  
completely wrong.**



**A season of conversational  
relationship with God.**

**Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!” Jesus replied, “Let us go somewhere else — to the nearby villages — so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.” So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons. A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.” Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.**

**Mark 1:35-42**

**The secret things belong to the LORD  
our God, but the things revealed  
belong to us and to our children  
forever, that we may follow all the  
words of this law.**

**Deut. 29:29**

# Why Pray?



- 1. Because God is in control.**
- 2. Because Jesus prayed.**
- 3. Because we can.**

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