

2: *Physically Fit* ▷ *New Year, New You*

This body is the tool God has given us to experience life & impact others, so how we eat, exercise, & rest matters. In fact, when we are physically drained we aren't likely to be spiritually focused. Today we discover principles & practices that will help us be physically fit & honor God with our bodies.

Last week we introduced the **New Year, New You series**. We discussed 4 areas that we must get **FIT: Physically, Spiritually, Financially, & Relationally**. We discovered that...

BEING FIT HONORS GOD & BLESSES PEOPLE.

When we're undisciplined in one of these areas, it often impacts our discipline in the others. When we are physically drained we aren't likely to be spiritually focused. When we're not Spiritually FIT, we are more likely to make poor Financial & Relational decisions.

Don't 'change the channel' in the the areas you need to *improve*. It's time to stop running from problems; turn to face them. Stop saying "I'll get to it someday."

SOME DAY starts TO-DAY.

An encouraging word: Don't get Discouraged. If you aren't FIT physically, spiritually, financially, or relationally, just remember that you didn't get here in a day, and you won't be transformed in 1 day.

You can fret over what *SHOULD BE* or you can move toward what *CAN BE*.

Physically Fit

The Church rarely teaches on this subject, probably because 1) many leaders aren't leading in this area OR 2) people are likely to get their feelings hurt.

* If you are limited by your age or health, you might be unable to do much exercise. DO what you CAN do. Many are only physically limited due to laziness, & it's time for that to change.

Catch the Context: 1 Corinthians 6

This passage primarily confronts sexual sins inside the Corinthian Church. Christians are to run from sexual sin (sexual intimacy outside of the marriage covenant) rather than participate in it. Sexual sin causes deeper damage to a person than any other sin. But there is a bigger reason to live in purity than just to sidestep personal guilt.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 (NLT)

¹⁸ Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. ¹⁹ Don't you realize that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit**, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰ for God bought you with a high price. So you must **honor God with your body**.

The Corinthian culture had many ornate and beautiful temples. It was OBVIOUS which god or goddess this represented because of his/her many images, both inside and out, that dom-

inated the temple.¹ There were at least 12 temples in ancient Corinth to different deities. Entering the temple of Apollo or Aphrodite, there was no question WHO this temple was built to honor.

So too, those who follow Jesus house the Presence of the Holy Spirit of the only true God! Because of this, for followers of Jesus **the holiest place on the planet...**is inside of YOU!

If you have surrendered your life to Jesus, you have surrendered your BODY to Jesus. This is NOT your body to do with as you please. It is HIS BODY and you are to use THIS to honor HIM!

Why should we care about being Physically FIT?

BIG TRUTH IT'S SIMPLE, I'M HIS TEMPLE.

Today, we will discuss 3 ways to HONOR GOD with our bodies:

1) Eat 2) Exercise 3) Rest & Re-engage

EAT

There is not much specific Scripture regarding “gluttony” or obesity. The average person during biblical times didn’t eat *LIKE* we eat or *WHAT* we eat. Because of this, overeating wasn’t a problem for the average person, but only for the wealthy. Our culture is very different.

In biblical times, daily meat was not the norm. **Fruits, vegetables, and breads** comprised the daily diet. Eating meat was a rare treat.

There was a concern about WHAT the Corinthian Christians ate. Some of the food they bought in the market was excess food that had been offered to false gods of the Corinthian temples. But rather than feel guilty for eating it, Paul commands the Corinthians...

1 Corinthians 10:30–31 (NLT)

³⁰ If I can thank God for the food and enjoy it, why should I be condemned for eating it?

³¹ So whether you **eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.**

Have you ever thought about that before? Sure we should glorify God with what comes OUT of our mouths, but did you know we should even honor God with what goes INTO our mouths?

What we eat shouldn’t HINDER us but should HELP us to honor God.

IT'S SIMPLE, I'M HIS TEMPLE.

¹ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians : A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 475.

EXERCISE

Most people in biblical culture were hunters, farmers, and fishermen who had to be physically active just to survive. Even the religious leaders (Pharisees) were trained and expected to work outside the synagogues. (Paul was a tent-maker.) Most people were active. In contrast, many people in our culture are not physically active.

Exercise relieves stress and stimulates the mind. Exercise builds strength & endurance, and allows us to be of physical service to others in need.

Excellent Examples:

- **Paul was active**, walking hundreds of miles to take the message of Jesus to others. He used illustrations from boxing, running, and wrestling to make his point. Do you think he took care of his body? What if he didn't? His ministry would have been limited.
- **Jesus was active**, likely a carpenter by trade, traveling throughout Galilee, Judea, & Samaria to minister to others. He often led His disciples up mountains. There is no doubt that Jesus is our greatest example of one who honored God the Father with His body.
- **Donald McCullough**: “By God’s design, our physical and spiritual lives cannot be separated; what happens to the one affects the other.”²

Both And, Not Either Or

1 Corinthians 9:25–27 (NLT)

All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.²⁶ So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadow-boxing.²⁷ **I discipline my body like an athlete**, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.

Paul disciplined His body to honor & obey God.

Why should YOU make the time and take the effort to exercise? Why should you take the time & effort to read, to make wise decisions, to run from sexual sin, to use pure & truthful language? We’re living for an *eternal prize*, not an earthly prize. And...

IT'S SIMPLE, I'M HIS TEMPLE.

REST & RE-ENGAGE

Most of us are way too busy to make time to REST. Being physically tired leads to lack of production and lack of patience. Further, you are more productive when you're rested.

This is one of the reasons why God gave mankind a Sabbath day's rest. Upon Jesus' burial...

Luke 23:56 (ESV)

Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath **they rested according to the commandment.**

² Maxie D. Dunnam, Gordon MacDonald and Donald W. McCullough, *Mastering Personal Growth, Mastering ministry* (Sisters, Or.: Multnomah; Christianity Today, 1992), 120.

Jesus is our ultimate example. He consistently taught His disciples to **rest & refuel**.

Mark 6:31 (NLT)

Then Jesus said, “Let’s go off by ourselves to **a quiet place and rest** awhile.” He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn’t even have time to eat.

They had important eternal WORK to do...**BUT** they **HAD** to make time to rest. So too, after we **REST**, we will be ready to **RE-ENGAGE** with clear minds and full hearts.



Parents & Grandparents: Set the pace for the race. If you over-eat, your kids will over-eat. If you eat junk foods, your children will quickly follow your lead. If you’re lazy...you get the idea. In the same way, if you eat healthy, make time to exercise, & value rest, your children will too. Let’s model what we expect them to do.

Teenagers & Children: Develop these habits now - eat good, exercise consistently, & rest.

EAT better and EAT less.

- Limit fried foods, sodas, white breads, & starches
- Eat out less, grill low-fat meats more
- Eat healthy snack between meals (fruit)
- Drink lots of water
- Ditch the daily desserts

EXERCISE consistently

- Walk/Run for 30 minutes 3 times a week.
- Don’t use exercise as an excuse to eat more.
- Exercise is about being USEFUL (not prideful).
- Exercise with someone or listen to good teaching.

REST well

- Stop scheduling yourself to death!
- Turn off your technology. It’ll be there after rest.
- Take a nap on purpose!
- Go to bed & rest longer.

Getting FIT is NOT a one-time payment, a lifelong membership; a daily decision. Unforeseen circumstances will interrupt the best plans. So be ready, be steady, and don’t push your plans back to ‘some day’. **Let SOMEDAY start TO-DAY.**

Why should I make the time and give the effort to become **Physically FIT?**

IT’S SIMPLE, I’M HIS TEMPLE.