

3: Spiritually Fit ▷ New Year, New You

What if people who spent time training their bodies spent the same amount of time training to grow in godliness? Today we discover some practical reasons & actions to get **spiritually fit**.

Last Sunday we talked about being Physically Fit - **It's Simple, I'm His Temple**. If you are a follower of Jesus, the Spirit of God lives...IN you! And remember, being Physically FIT is NOT about being PRIDEFUL, but about being USEFUL...**Your body for God's glory**.

Like those who get Physically FIT, it takes consistent training to get Spiritually FIT.

Catch the Context: Paul to Timothy in Ephesus. False gods & temples to those gods were prevalent. At least 2 expectations were attached to those temples: 1) abusing sex & 2) abusing food. When people trusted Jesus their former temple practices were to stop.

Some false teachers went overboard and taught that ONLY certain foods were acceptable and sexual abstinence was mandatory - even in marriage! Some even forbid people to marry.

1 Timothy 4:3–6 (NET)

³ They will prohibit marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴ For **every creation of God is good** and no food is to be rejected if it is **received with thanksgiving**. ⁵ For it is sanctified by God's word and by prayer. ⁶ By pointing out such things to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, having nourished yourself on the words of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.

✿ **Kent Hughes** "*We are to celebrate creation's goodness in Heaven and earth—the stars and flowers and vegetables and animals and seas and rivers and fish and forest and gender and marriage and sex and family and friends and food.*"¹

We can't dissect our soul & body. Our soul experiences what our body tastes, touches, smells, sees, & hears. What is going on in our souls is often expressed with our bodies.

1 Timothy 4:7–9 (NET)

⁷ But reject those myths fit only for the godless and gullible, and **train yourself for godliness**. ⁸ For "physical exercise has some value, but **godliness is valuable in every way**. It holds promise for the present life and for the life to come." ⁹ This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance.

Train is *gymnazō*, where we get *gymnasium*. So Paul compares being **Spiritually FIT** with being Physically FIT. Paul notes that *Physical exercise has some value*, but *godliness is valuable in every way* - with benefits in this life and the next. Of course, if you had to decide between one or the other, it's obvious that **Spiritual Training** is MOST IMPORTANT.

Getting Spiritually Fit will take much time & effort too.

¹ R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 102.

1 Timothy 4:10-11 (NET)

¹⁰ In fact this is why we **work hard and struggle**, because we have set our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of believers. ¹¹ **Command and teach these things.**

Work hard from Greek “to grow weary”. The word translated *struggle* is an athletic word from Greek root '*agon*' (where we get English word *agonize*) - an athlete straining to win.

This isn't just for Timothy, a young pastor. He was to **command and teach these things** to the Church he was serving! THEY were to **train for godliness** too!

Are YOU **training yourself for godliness**?

BIG TRUTH TRAINING FOR GODLINESS IS WORTH THE WORK

- Know the God who created you & forgave you!
- Know others who know Him!
- Enjoy life without the guilt from ungodly living.
- Impact others for the KINGdom.
- See Jesus face to face.

EAT RIGHT

If you want to get **Spiritually FIT**, you **MUST** Eat Right, every day. Further, we cut out some of what leads us away from being spiritually fit. What is that for YOU?

- **Feed for 10 minutes every day**, 1 chapter from a Gospel (144-10 minute segments) - YouVersion Bible from **LifeChurchTV** (It will read TO you!)
- **Don't substitute another for the Scriptures.** Use other material as a springboard into the Scripture. Read the chapter surrounding the verses.
- **Share what you are learning & questions you have.** Ask if you are interpreting correctly.

EXERCISE CONSISTENTLY

- **Put away sin & practice what you read.** View it as homework!

James 1:21-22 (NET)

²¹ So **put away all filth and evil excess** and humbly welcome the message implanted within you, which is able to save your souls. ²² But be sure you **live out the message** and do not merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves.

- **Pray throughout the day.** (eyes closed/open - in a quiet/loud place)

REST & RE-ENGAGE

Jesus seems to have kicked off His mornings in prayer in a quiet place and would also use some evenings to get away and pray in a quiet place (Mark 1:35; Matt. 14:23; Luke 5:13).

Mark 1:35 (NLT)

Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an **isolated place to pray.**

Of course, Jesus would re-engage rather than isolate Himself for a long period of time.

- **Go to bed on time to get up early & give Jesus first place.** No Facebook or email until AFTER you have spent time in Scripture & Prayer.