

Spiritual Habits in Place

July 9, 2017

1 Timothy 4:6-11

If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. ⁷ But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. ⁸ For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. ⁹ This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. ¹⁰ For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. ¹¹ These things command and teach.

1 Timothy 4:6-11

Spiritual growth will require regular **exercise** (habits), meaning somethings will take a backseat or second place.

I have heard and related many times the story about a concert violinist who was asked how she became such an accomplished violinist. Her response, "Planned neglect. There were many things that used to demand my time. When I went to my room after breakfast, I made my bed, straightened the room, dusted, and did whatever seemed necessary. When I finished my work, I turned to my violin practice. This system prevented me from accomplishing what I should on the violin. So I reversed things. I deliberately neglect everything else until my practice period was complete. And that program of planned neglect is the secret of my success." **(Our Daily Bread)**

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; ¹⁸ but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 3:17-18

All Believers (Christ followers) need **spiritual exercise/habits** in their life:

1) To know and **walk** with God.

If my relationship with Jesus has not grown or influenced my life since I trusted in Him, I am either a malnourished Believer or not a Believer at all.

This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

1 John 1:5-7

Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴ He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. ⁶ He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

1 John 2:3-6

2) In the **best** of times.

We have a tendency (sin nature) to neglect or push God to the side when things are going well and all is right in our world.

God is not a genie in a bottle, but our Lord and Savior.

3) In the **worst** of times (and to get me ready for what's coming).

Regularly sitting at Jesus' feet enables you to remain on your feet, regardless of what comes (Lk. 10:39). ~ **Richard Blackaby**

... *In this world you will face trouble...*

John 16:33

The Christian life is not a **diet** consistency, but a **lifestyle** one.

Dieting does not work in the spiritual world (quick hits). We are not talking about a temporary change or fix, but a lifestyle/habit change.

Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.

1 John 2:24-25

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. ²⁵ And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. ²⁶ Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. ²⁷ But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³ For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Hebrews 5:12-14

What can you and I do in regards to spiritual exercise (growth)?

- God's Word (devotions, reading a Psalms and Proverbs a day).
- Meditate on God's Word (write out a scripture verse and seek to memorize it).
- Pray daily and often (make a prayer list and pray through it regularly).
- Commit to connect weekly with God's Church.

Resources:

- Devotions (back table).
- Praying the Bible by Donald Whitney.
- Reading the Bible for All Its Worth by Duvall and Hays.
- Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster



Prayer Focus:

- Do I know the Lord?
- Am I spiritually "exercising"?
- What specific things do I need to put in place to grow day by day?