

Spiritual Exercise

INTRODUCTION:

1. Read 1 Timothy 4:7-8.
 - a. Many of us realize the value of physical exercise.
 - b. It is profitable, but not nearly as much as spiritual exercise.
 - c. God certainly does not want us to completely neglect our bodies, but his main concern is that we get plenty of spiritual exercise.
2. Opposite: 2 Peter 2:14.
3. Here's the outline we want to follow in this lesson:
 - a. We'll look first at what's involved in spiritual exercise.
 - b. Then, we'll consider the goals of spiritual exercise.
 - c. And then, finally, we'll look at the kind of exercise routine we must have in order to reach these goals.

BODY:

- I. What is spiritual exercise?
 - A. The Key Elements: Study, Meditation, Application, Teaching, and Prayer.
 1. Discuss the relationship between these elements.
 2. Let's see if we can pick these out from the passage in 1 Timothy 4. Read vv. 6-16 and you'll find all the elements except prayer.
 3. On prayer, see 2:1, 8; 5:5; 2 Tim. 1:3.
- II. Goals of Spiritual Exercise
 - A. To build us up, to strengthen us.
 1. Read Acts 20:32; Ephesians 6:10-17.
 - B. To prevent injury.
 1. We are giving Satan a big advantage when we don't exercise.
 2. HOS 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.
 3. 1PE 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

C. To improve performance.

1. An exercised mind can...

- a. Withstand more temptation--just as Jesus in Matthew 4. The more we exercise, the better we are able to determine right and wrong. HEB 5:14 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.
- b. Recognize more false doctrine--EPH 4:14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive,
- c. Encourage more people, teach more people, just generally serve the Lord better.

D. Increase stamina.

1. Read Galatians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:58.
2. Illustration: Mile High Stadium, where the air gets real thin, testing players' stamina. Air for us will get pretty "thin," too.

III. Our Exercise Routine

A. Must be regular.

1. Have you noticed how many times we are told to do things continually, steadfastly, day and night, regularly, constantly, diligently, etc.?

B. Must be strenuous, demanding.

1. Read Hebrews 6:1-3.
2. Read Philippians 3:12-14.
3. Don't be "settlers" (Direct TV commercial—"We're settlers; we settle for things.")

C. Must be varied (develop all parts).

1. We cannot specialize in just a few topics and areas.
2. ACT 20:27 "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.
3. COL 4:12 Epaphras, who is {one} of you, a servant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God
4. EPH 6: 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may able to stand against the wiles of the devil.