9 Essentials For Effective Spiritual Exercise

Jesse LaRue · 1 Timothy 4:7–8

INTRODUCTION

- It's easy to lose good habits. It's easy to get into bad habits. It takes a great amount of resolve to do what is good for us.
- Train or exercise yourself for godliness. For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way.
- We as Americans spend too much time worrying about our physical appearance, and not nearly enough time worrying about our spiritual appearance before God.

1 Four Areas of Exercise: Mind, Emotions, Conscience, Will

Romans 12:2; Isaiah 64:8; Luke 22:39–42

- Intellectual training is vital to spiritual growth.
- We have to be the master of our emotions, our feelings, and not the other way around.
- God gave us a moral governor called the conscience.
- It's very clear that our conscience can be wrong. And so it must be trained by the Word of God to know, to discern between good and evil.
- Our will must be conformed to his will. We are to be clay in the potter's hand.
- We need to submit to the Father just like Christ did. Christ is our ultimate example of humility.

2 Four Ways: Word, Prayer, Worship, Meditation

2 Timothy 3:16–17; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Philippians 4:8

- God's word is the most effective for spiritually shaping our lives.
- All scripture was breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and training in righteousness.
- Prayer brings us into communion with God. It is an exercise of humility, trust, dependence, and reverence.
- A failure to worship is a failure to recognize that God is more important than me. It's a failure of priorities.
- The exercise and reflection on divine matters causes our spiritual muscles to develop and grow stronger.

3 Make Spiritual Exercise a Habit

- We must be regular, consistent, persistent. The only way to make running a habit is if you set a schedule and you stick to it, and it becomes a habit.

- We can’t just do it on Sunday and Wednesday. We can’t just do it when our kids or our parents are around or when our elders or teachers are around. It has to be every day.
- Don’t get out of the habit of spiritual exercise like I have with my physical exercise.

THE CHALLENGE

So how are your exercise habits? And what are they forming? Are they forming in you a creature who is more like Christ?

MY NOTES