

EXERCISE THYSELF UNTO GODLINESS 1 TIMOTHY 4

Text:

Introduction:

What is most important here, and the lesson that we must learn, is that Christians should put as much effort into the exercise unto godliness as these athletes did into the exercise of their bodies.

What is godliness?

- 1) It includes a reverence towards God
- 2) Loyalty to Him
- 3) Fear <respect> for Him
- 4) And an imitating of Him; to be like Christ is to be a Christian.

Godliness can be broken down this way:

- 1) Learning about Him; (Read the Word)

2) Learning to live according to His Will; (Note the principles from His Word)

3) Learning to be like Him. (Apply the principles in our daily walk)

How does a Christian exercise for godliness? This can be seen by studying the athlete.

1. THE ATHLETE EXERCISES HIS MUSCLES.

A. This is done by stressing and straining the muscle.

B. Working and building the muscle up over time.

C. The Christian exercises his faith:

1. This is done by constantly putting his faith in God.

2. This is done by trusting God for the things that we need...and relying upon Him completely...

3. Doing this builds and strengthens our faith, just as the athlete builds his muscles.

2. THE ATHLETE EXERCISES TO BUILD STRENGTH, ENDURANCE & POWER.

A. In the same way, the Christian must know that the only way that he can build his faith and have spiritual strength, endurance and power is to have his faith exercised.

B. Once again there should be an emphasis on time for the strength to build.

3. THE ATHLETE DISCIPLINES HIMSELF TO EXERCISE.

A. The Christian must also use discipline: to study, not just read the Bible.

B. He should be on just as rigid a training schedule as any world class athlete.

C. Bible study is one of the MAJOR keys to godliness.

D. We cannot expect to become godly w/o serious and constant Bible study.

4. THE ATHLETE CAREFULLY WATCHES HIS DIET.

- A. The Christian must watch what he takes into his mind.
- B. He must make sure that WHAT he puts into it will be profitable unto godliness.
- C. This also includes getting enough of the Word, not just info ABOUT the Word.

5. THE ATHLETE GETS THE REST HE NEEDS.

- A. Rest for a Christian takes the form of devotion and prayer.
- B. Communion with God revitalizes the soul
- C. The peace that passes all understanding is only received by those who get this rest.

Close:

For the athlete, the end result of his exercise makes him able to compete. The Christian who exercises, and lets his faith be exercised will be a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed." cf 2 Tim 2:15

The athlete can only use what he gains from exercise in THIS world, but the Christian doesn't live for what this world offers, but for what God promises in His Word.

"For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim 4:8)

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." (1 Tim 6:6-8)