

SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

Int.

1. Aim: To show the importance of spiritual training and its value.
2. 1 Tim. 4:7-8 "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."
 - a. Exercise = from the word which we get our word gymnasium [Gymnazo]
 - b. Physical training is recognized as profitable for the physical man
 - i. Healthier and happier - spend much money & time for exercise
 - ii. The Bible recognizes this and makes no statement against exercise
 - c. But the emphasis is on spiritual exercise - showing the contrast to the value and importance of training for the soul
 - i. The world places all the importance on bodily exercise
 - ii. But the Christian knows that the soul is more valuable than the body -
Matt. 16:26 "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
 - iii. What profit is a strong body if we have a sickly, dwarfed soul?
 - iv. A Christian knows that bodily exercise has some profit but is not as important as spiritual exercise
3. This spiritual exercise is called "Godliness"
4. Spiritual exercise conditions us for the exhausting journey to heaven.
 - a. Would you attempt to climb a mountain without the proper conditioning?
 - b. Yet how many Christians are attempting to achieve the higher elevation of heaven without any spiritual exercise?
5. Let us see the need and value of spiritual Exercise.

Discussion**I. HOW DO WE GET THE EXERCISE ?**

- A. It is by using our spiritual senses - being "godly"
1. By practicing real religion - Jas. 1:21-27
 - a. Jas. 1:22 - be a doer of word
 - b. Doer of the work
 - c. Controls his tongue - or it is vain
 - d. Visit fatherless and widows
 - e. Keep unspotted from world
 2. We pray, we worship, we help others, we live a pure clean life - Mt. 25:31-46
 3. We use the abilities that are given to us - Jas. 4:17
- B. It involves the Bible
1. Heb. 5:12-14
 2. Babes are contrasted to those of full age
 3. A babe is unskillful in the word of righteousness
 4. II Tim. 2:15 - we must study
 5. Eph. 4:11-16 - grow and mature - not easily turned away from truth
 6. II Pet. 3:18
 7. Godliness includes teaching others the truth
 - a. Spiritual exercise requires we put the Christians' active verbs to work:
 - b. Matt. 28:18-20
 - c. The active verbs are "go" "teach" "baptize" and "teach" again.

C. Disciplines - Heb. 12:11 ESV "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

1. Discipline at the moment is painful but the results are desirable
2. God is greater than our earthly father

II. RESULTS OF THE EXERCISE

A. We need the training spiritually to grow strong and mature

1. Heb. 5:13,14 - to discern good and evil "For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."
2. Babies grow into maturity
 - a. A child will put dangerous things into his mouth or will walk out into a busy road to get a toy or to play.
 - b. They have not matured to the point of discerning.

B. Spiritually we must grow and be strengthened! - 1 Cor. 16:13 "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong."

1. Babes in Christ do not see danger in false doctrines
2. They do not see danger in sin
3. But as they grow and mature then they are able to discern between good and evil
4. 1 Thes. 5:21,22 - prove all things - abstain from all appearance of evil

5. Heb. 5:13,14 - discern means to examine, scrutinize, discriminate, and judge. If it is evil reject it, but if it is good then accept it.
6. The Christian who has properly exercised himself can make the right decisions about what to do.
7. Not tossed to and fro - Eph. 4:14 "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"

III. VALUE OF GODLINESS

A. In this life

1. It is of value to a nation

- a. Prov. 13:34 godliness and righteousness exalt a nation
 - (1) A godly nation will have more people living a moral life
 - (2) Ungodly nations have many problems of people treating others in a very bad way
- b. Deut. 26:16-19 - To have a godly nation, we must have godly homes with individuals who are godly.

2. It is of value to other people

- a. If people live godly, their influence will lead others to God
- b. Matt. 5:14-16 "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
- c. Husbands could be converted by the manner of life of the wives - 1 Pet. 3:1,2

3. It is of value to one's self

a. Before obeying the gospel a sinner is:

(1) Separated from God - Isa. 59:1,2 "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

(2) Without Hope - Eph. 2:12

(3) And Dead in Sin - Eph. 2:1

b. After obeying the gospel we are forgiven of all our sins.

c. We then have access to God -

(1) 1 Pet. 3:12 "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

(2) 1 John. 2:1 "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"

d. We have freedom from worry

e. We know that God is watching over us -

(1) Rm. 8:28

(2) Ps. 37:25 "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

(3) Heb. 13:5 "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

B. Value in life to come

1. The godly will lay hold on life indeed - 1 Tim. 6:19 "Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."
2. The godly will live forever with God in heaven
 - a. Heaven is where God is - Matt. 6:9
 - b. Heaven is prepared for the godly - Jn.14:1-3 Rev. 21:2
 - c. Heaven is a permanent home of the soul - Mt. 25:46 - 1 Thes. 4:16,17
 - d. Heaven is a place where there will be no more suffering - Rev. 21:4
 - e. Heaven is a place where ungodly people will not be found - Rev. 21:27 "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Conclusion

1. Spiritual exercise is valuable - It is more important than physical exercise
2. Because it has promise of life here and hereafter
3. Many people when they begin physical exercise keep a chart of their progress to measure their growth and improvement.
 - a. They evaluate themselves.
 - b. Why not keep a chart of your spiritual growth? Evaluate your progress. "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? --unless indeed you are disqualified." (2 Cor. 13:5). NKJV

4. Will you start exercising?
 - a. Obey
 - b. Grow
 - c. and mature as a child of God
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Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday evening May 17, 2009
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