

Family TableTalk

Conversation 78

Did You Workout Today?

read

1 Timothy 4:6-16

think

Paul's two New Testament letters to Timothy are spiritual love letters. As the older spiritual father to his younger son in the faith Timothy, Paul pours out his heart in love with guidance and direction for what it means to follow Jesus, and then to lead others to do the same. In today's passage, Paul doesn't make suggestions. Rather, he issues commands. I have always loved reading these letters by putting myself in the place of young Timothy in order to learn from an older and wiser man who wants nothing more than for me to learn the secret to becoming who I was made by God to be, while growing in my relationship with Him.

In this passage, Paul can't stress enough the need to diligently engage in spiritual training so that we might become strong in the things that matter most in life, specifically toward the goal of "godliness." In this passage, we can find several action words that describe the practice of spiritual workouts, telling us that these exercises are characterized by toiling, striving, persisting, and practicing.

These are the same kinds of things that we do when we engage in physical training and workouts. We make and take the time necessary to exercise so that we might build our muscles and become stronger. In his letter to Timothy, Paul even says that "bodily training is of some value." But he reminds Timothy – and all of us – that there is a greater value to our spiritual workouts. Why? Because while physical training may serve us well as it leads to physical health in this life, spiritual training holds "value in every way," both for this life *and* the life to come.

apply

- What kind of workouts do we value the most in today's world: physical or spiritual? Why is that?
- What "exercises" are essential to an effective spiritual workout?
- What are the biggest barriers we face when it comes to engaging in daily spiritual workouts? How can we overcome those barriers? Is there value in having spiritual workout partners who hold us accountable?

pray

Loving Father, we are grateful that you have called us into a relationship with you through faith in your Son, Jesus Christ. We confess that all too often our days are filled with so much activity and distraction that we fail to engage in the spiritual exercises that draw us closer to you. Give us a desire to devote ourselves to building our spiritual muscles so that godliness might mark our lives. Amen.

by Walt Mueller

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