



A SPIRITUAL WORKOUT

BIG IDEA: Spiritual health requires spiritual nourishment and exercise.

DATE: Wednesday, October 15 and Sunday, October 19, 2025

SCRIPTURE: 1 Timothy 4:6-16

OPENING QUESTION

What are some ways you care for your physical health? *What about your emotional health? And your spiritual health?*

SETTING THE STAGE

Paul instructs Timothy on the importance of exercising godliness – purposefully focusing on reading God’s Word, exhorting others to follow Christ, and studying godly doctrine. Paul tells his younger coworker in the faith that “spiritual workouts” will benefit Timothy as well as the people he has been called to lead.

STUDY THE BIBLE

1 Timothy 4:6-16 (NLT)

⁶ If you explain these things to the brothers and sisters, Timothy, you will be a worthy servant of Christ Jesus, one who is nourished by the message of faith and the good teaching you have followed. ⁷ Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives’ tales. Instead, train yourself to be godly. ⁸ “Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.”

⁹ This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it. ¹⁰ This is why we work hard and continue to struggle, for our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people and particularly of all believers. ¹¹ Teach these things and insist that everyone learn them. ¹² Don’t let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.

¹³ Until I get there, focus on reading the Scriptures to the church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecy spoken over you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Give your complete attention to these matters. Throw yourself into your tasks so that everyone will see your progress. ¹⁶ Keep a close watch on how you live and on your teaching. Stay true to what is right for the sake of your own salvation and the salvation of those who hear you.

DISCUSSION

READ: 1 Timothy 4:6-8

Paul desires Timothy to “be a good minister of Jesus Christ.” What does Paul say is necessary for him to do so he can effectively teach others?

Paul does not disparage physical training in this passage, but how does he say it compares to godliness?

READ: 1 TIMOTHY 4:9-12

Paul notes the saying he has quoted – “Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.” (verse 8) - is truthful and worthy of acceptance. What had Paul endured to lead people to godliness?

Timothy may have been in his late 30’s when Paul wrote this letter to him, which was still considered young for a teacher in first century Jewish culture. What did Paul say about this to Timothy?

How did Paul instruct Timothy to deal with the potentially awkward situation of leading a congregation of people who were older than him?

What makes godliness a difficult discipline? How does the commitment to *discipline yourself in godliness* fit into your priorities?

READ: 1 Timothy 4:13-16

In Paul’s day most people were illiterate, so a common practice was to have the letters read out loud in front of the congregation. Why do you think the reading of Scripture was at the top of Paul’s to-do list for Timothy?

How did the leaders of the early church affirm their support of Timothy before he left for Ephesus (verse 14)?

Paul was concerned for Timothy’s continued growth – not only for his protégé’s own sake, but also for the sake of those he was leading. For this purpose, in what ways does Paul exhort Timothy to exercise his gifts and look to his own spiritual health?

RESPONSE

In what areas do you need spiritual training in order to grow strong as a disciple of Jesus and be an example to others? Here are three things to add to your “workout” routine:

- ✓ Enlist the help of your very own personal trainer – the Holy Spirit!
- ✓ Consume a balanced diet of prayer, worship and Bible study.
- ✓ Exercise godliness in the way you live out your faith.

What would you add to this workout?