



LIVE GUILT FREE

BY BOUNDLESS LIMITS

WWW.LIVEGUILTFREE.ORG

ARE YOU SPIRITUALLY FIT?

By Richard Curren

Recently, at a business function, I ran into a man I had not seen in a year. The first thing I noticed was how much weight he had lost since I had last seen him. He told me he had lost over 100 pounds, was exercising regularly, and had changed his diet based on learning what was good for him to eat rather than what just tasted good when he was hungry. That was really an accomplishment, and I could tell he was proud of what he had done to transform his body. Really, he looked like a new man. What struck me most, however, was what he said. “Rick”, he said, “the problem was I never saw myself as the fat guy I had become. I was shocked when I saw pictures of myself taken over the holiday. I was disgusted at what I had become. I had no idea just how bad my health had declined. I was in complete denial!”

I think this is the perfect illustration of what sin is capable of doing in our lives. We can go on throughout our days picking up habits, neglecting our spiritual health, putting off our spiritual exercise (prayer, fellowship, praise, time in the Word) until one day we are shocked at the decline of our spiritual health. Often, this is when the Enemy attacks us. Much like physical health, spiritual health is a barometer of how we care for ourselves. Seldom do healthy guys have heart attacks. Similarly, it is much less likely for weakness and moral failure to occur in the spiritually healthy believer. Interestingly, it is often the same excuses that get you fat that will make you spiritually anemic. Let’s take a look at these excuses.

SPIRITUAL FAST FOOD

We live in a busy, busy, world. Cell phones, deadlines, mortgages, bosses, family commitments, Blackberries, e-mail, spreadsheets, reports, and meetings are the rulers of our day. Today, the average person is deluged with a flood of responsibilities and expectations. Now, with the weakened economy, we seem to work twice as hard for half the pay. It is here that we see our first excuse rise. I am so busy; I don’t have time for a proper “meal”. In the same way that harried soccer moms get dinner at the drive through, many Christians get their daily time with God on the fly. Seriously, that chain email with the scripture superimposed on the pretty PowerPoint slides, set to that sappy music, is not time in the Word. It’s entertainment, pure and simple. It is spiritual fast food. And it is not proper nutrition for your soul and spirit.

What God wants from you is more than a wink and a nod as you blast off to “more important things”. He wants a relationship with you. It’s like a marriage; the more time together, the stronger the bond. And like any relationship, you will learn a lot more about Him by spending that time with Him and making it a priority. God has plans for you and answers for the problems you face. He cares about the details of your life. Time in His presence is stopping, turning to Him in reverence, and listening to Him. It is here that you can give Him your stresses and worries. It is here that you get the “Peace of God” that your pastor speaks of every Sunday. Being a fitness nut, what I often tell people is “you are too busy NOT to exercise!” Exercise is what keeps you fit to stay busy and do what you must daily. It is the same with our relationship with the Lord. We are too busy NOT to have time with Him.

A PROPER DIAGNOSIS

Much like my formerly overweight business associate, we can find ourselves unaware of exactly how bad our condition has deteriorated until we see it in a different light. It is here that the Enemy can attack. Remember what the Bible says about our enemy:

“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

1 Peter 5:7-8

The Enemy will come after you when he seen that you are weak, and slowed with the fat of sin and weariness from being out of God’s presence. He does not fight fair. Like a lion on the African plains, he watches the herd. He looks for the slow, weakened one separate from the herd. That is the one he strikes. It has no fight and is an easy kill. The proper way to assess your spiritual health is to look at the condition of your heart. Do you make the time to be with God? Are you grateful for His blessings in your life? Are you doing His work and His will for your life? Do you even know His will for your life? If not, you have been eating too much fast food, and that’s not good.

THE RECOVERY PLAN

Here’s the good news. God is right there, waiting for you. Unlike a marriage, he is infinitely patient. He will wait for you right where you left Him. When you are ready for the real nourishment of a closer walk with Him, he will pick up right where you left off. This is because he built you to have a relationship with him. That is why we feel empty and dry when we neglect our relationship with the Lord.

“Therefore tell the people: This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Return to me,’ declares the LORD Almighty, ‘and I will return to you,’ says the LORD Almighty.”

Zachariah 1:3

“I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their heart.”

Jeremiah 24:7

In preparing this message, I was struck with how frequently God called for his people to return to him. My keyword search for the phrase return to me yielded over 4 pages of results! God really wants to be close to us and us to Him.

My advice is simple here. First, check your spirit with the Holy Spirit of God. He will give you a proper diagnosis of your spiritual health. Ask Him to reveal where you are in relation to your walk with Him. He will prompt you in your spirit with conviction in the areas that you need to improve. Then, much like physical exercise, start slow and small. Don’t try to spend two hours a day reading and praying right off. You WILL burn out. Rather, set aside a quiet 10-15 minutes to start with and then build upon that success over time. In no time you will come to a place were it is second nature and you would not give up that time for anything. It is like a bodybuilder is about his time in the gym. He knows to succeed he must put it as a priority or he will never reach his goal.

Remember this month as you grow and develop your walk with the Lord that He has no regard for a person. We are all equal in His sight. We gain His blessings and His favor through out time with Him and our dedication to His will and ways. Each day we should pause and ask ourselves where we are in our walk and how we are assured of growing with each day. Ultimately, your spiritual health, much like your physical health, lies within your hands. The choice is yours.



Richard Curren is the co-founder and President of Boundless Limits International and Live Guilt Free. Rick's passion is to speak and motivate others to live to their maximum potential physically, mentally, and spiritually. Through their events and publications, Rick and his wife Tanya are able to inspire others and show that each one has boundless potential to change our world. He is a former United States Army Officer. Rick serves on the Board of Directors for the So Help Me God Project as an Advisor and is a founding Board Member. With a passion for health and fitness, he is a Black Belt in Korean Olympic Tae Kwon Do, and serves as an Associate Instructor for Palmetto Martial Arts School.