**Physical Training Is of Some Value**

**The Word**

Read together 1 Timothy 4:1-10

**The Big Idea**

Scripture gives us a rightly ordered relationship with our physical health. Pursuing our health is valuable especially in as much as it promotes and facilitates our spiritual health.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. There is so much that can be said on the topic of physical health and fitness. As you consider Sunday’s message, what was a genuinely new idea for you? And/or what wasn’t said on Sunday that you think needs to be said in regards to our physical health?

2. Take a moment to make a prayerful assessment of the “why” behind your pursuit of physical health and fitness. What are the actual motivations that drive you? Be as honest as you can.

3. How specifically has your personal experience with “physical training” informed or enhanced your experience of “godly training?”

4. What’s one specific change you want to make to your approach to physical health based on Sunday’s message and this conversation?

**Sermon Outline**

I. Introduction

 A. We all have a unique relationship with our bodies and our physical health

B. We live in a very unique place in America (a culture of health obsession in the midst of a country with a health crisis)

C. The Apostle Paul helps us rightly order our relationship with our physical health

1. God created us to have rightly-ordered attachments

2. But ever since the fall, we’ve had disordered attachments (we hold too tightly to some things and not tightly enough to other things)

3. Physical health and fitness is an area where many people have disordered attachments on multiple sides of the issue.

D. Let’s consider the “why” behind our pursuit of health and be honest about our motivations.

E. The Apostle Paul gives us many positive reasons and motivations for pursuing our physical health, and we will look at three.

II. Pursuing health as a way to worship Jesus

A. The positive

1. Read v. 3-4.

2. We can pursue exercise/fitness from a worshipful place of prayer and thanksgiving as a way of consecrating our physical training

3. What would it look like to pursue your health as an act of worship and thanksgiving? Thanking God for your muscles, heart, health, food, etc.

4. “I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. And when I run I feel his pleasure.” – Eric Liddell

 5. “The glory of God is a human being fully alive!”: - St. Irenaeus

B. The Disclaimer

1. We can also engage our lack of health as an act of worship

2. Many have disability, disease, chronic conditions

3. Paul’s thorn in the flesh in 2 Cor 12:7-10 that brought him to a place of even deeper faith, dependence, and intimacy with Jesus.

4. 2 Cor 4:6-9: We are jars of clay, and sometimes the glory of the gospel shines through even more powerfully in our weakness rather than our strengths.

5. So we can learn to worship God in our physical strengths AND weaknesses

III. Pursuing health as a way to become more like Jesus in character

A. The Positive

1. Physical training can actually become a means to godly training as it teaches me lessons that apply so well to the spiritual life

2. Consider the character qualities developed through physical training that can be applied to spiritual life: discipline, delayed gratification, saying no to my impulses, perseverance, consistency, patience, growing through challenge/adversity

3. 1 Cor 9:25-27: Paul talks about beating his body and making it his slave. He has learned to get his body’s impulses and desires under control so that he can live by conviction and principle rather than the whims of his desires. He has trained his body for a spiritual good.

B. The Disclaimer

1. Pursuing physical health doesn’t necessarily make us more like Jesus.

2. In fact, rather than lead to godliness, it can be driven by vanity, insecurity, comparison, and self-glorification

3. We live in a culture that tells us our bodies need to look a certain way for us to be successful, happy, and legitimate

4. There is a junior higher inside of every one of us that just wants to fit in and is constantly comparing ourselves to those around us, and the fitness craze can tap into those dynamics.

 5. As Jesus followers we need to experience freedom from the pull of the culture

6. We can accept the bodies God gave us and we can age gracefully without resorting to all the measures our culture deems necessary.

IV. Pursuing health as a way to love like Jesus

A. 1 Timothy 1:5: The goal of our instruction is love

B. 1 Cor 13:1-3 : If I can do all these amazing things but have not love, I am nothing

 C. Is your pursuit of health turning you into a more loving person?

 D. How can you let the goal of love shape your health and fitness priorities?

E. Consider how the goal of love can shape what you prioritize in your health, when you pursue your health, how much you pursue your health.