Theme: Continue Acts 2:42

 What is the Spiritual Diet for the Believer?

July 5, 2020

# **MEMORY VERSES:**

# ***Matthew 4:4, Proverbs 3:1-2***

*“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”*

*“My son, forget not my law; But let thine heart keep my commandments: For length of days and long life shall they add to thee.”*

**KEY FACTS:**

* ***The Bible or the word of God, along with fasting and prayer, is the spiritual diet of the believer***. It is the water, milk, bread and meat of our spiritual lives.
* ***God expects growth***. Just as good food helps the physical body grow, ***I Peter 2:2*** tells us that God’s word is sincere ***milk*** that promotes spiritual growth and good health. Jesus says that He is the ***bread*** of life, and except we eat of his flesh and drink of his blood we have no life in us; His flesh is ***meat*** and his blood is ***drink.***  ***John 6:27, 35, 53-55***
* ***Food affects your mind.*** Having a healthy mind is essential for our spiritual growth ***Eph. 4:23***. Any mind that lacks God’s word and the Holy Spirit will be limited in its outlook, unstable to some degree, and focused on itself. Just as the natural man can look good on the outside yet have mental instabilities, the spiritual man may be very sharp in appearance, but deficient in the ability to cope with life in a godly manner because it cannot see things in a proper, righteous or unrighteous context. Reflect on the word with your mind. Think about and chew on God’s word. ***Romans 12:2, 15:6; Phil. 2:2; Col. 3:16***
* ***Food affects your heart.*** Like David, let us hide the word in our hearts ***Ps. 119:10-11.*** Having a Bible in our house is not going to bless our lives. (***II Tim. 2:15)*** The Bible must be in our hearts.  We mustcommit God’s word to memory. ***Heb. 13:9*** says it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meat…”

* ***Food affects your senses***.
* Receive the word with your ***ears*.** Commit to attending church services and listening to the preached word of God. ***Heb.10:25; Acts 2:42; Ro. 13:11***
* Read the Bible with your ***eyes*** and prayerfully study God’s word. ***II Tim. 2:15***
* Research the word with your ***hand***. When studying the word of God, keep a pencil in your hand and write down what God teaches. With your ***mouth***, talk about what you are discovering with other believers not only in the temple but also in small group environments ***Acts 20:20.*** David says, “O taste and see that the Lord is good.” ***Ps. 34:8***

**POINTS OF INTEREST:**

**Benefits of having the word of God as a regular Spiritual diet**.

* ***Length of days***. Your time spent giving, serving, loving (attending church services, being of service to the community, participating in Christian Education, taking part in Bible study) is recompensed in the lengthening of your days. When you take care of God’s business, He takes care of yours. ***Prov.3:1-2***  A spiritual diet increases the health of the body, mind, and spirit and adds years to your life.
* ***Good Health***. The more Bible you digest in your spiritual diet, the more strength you will have to fight off evil. Solomon says that a spiritual diet resulting in the fear of the Lord and a departure from evil positively affects the health to your navel and bone marrow. ***Prov. 3:8***
* ***Peace and Happiness***. Happy people are generally healthy people. They are not stressed, they are not depressed, and they recover from sickness faster than people who are unhappy. True happiness is dependent on a spiritual consumption of God’s word ***Prov. 3:13.*** Paul says in ***Romans 8:6***, “to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”
* ***Rest***. There is nothing like a good night’s sleep to keep you healthy. Some of our health problems stems from anxiety and stress. A good dose of Bible reading each day and doing what the Bible says settles you down and helps you sleep and rest. You need to add a spiritual diet of God’s word to your daily life and “when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.” ***Prov. 3:24***

**Reflections:** This week make it your objective to read the Bible daily, study it, pray it, and seek to understand it. In order to nourish and grow this divine life of God, we need to eat His word. The entire Bible is a living book, a feast full of food that will nourish and exercise our spirit.

Theme: Continue Acts 2:42

 How Does the Believer Prosper Spiritually?

July 12, 2020

**MEMORY VERSE: JOSHUA 1:8; III JOHN 2**

“*This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you shall make you way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*”

 “*Beloved I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.*”

**KEY FACTS:**

* God has created us with certain spiritual and personal needs that He alone must satisfy if we are going to have a spiritually prosperous life. God in His grace meets all our needs personally ***Ps. 107:9***. We sometimes look for solutions to our basic personal needs in the wrong way and the wrong places. Satan has led us to believe that we can get them met by physical beauty, intelligence, wealth, family heritage, position in life.
* To prosper spiritually a person must have an intimate, personal, right relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Once you establish the right relationship with God, you become the recipient of HIs favor, which includes receiving salvation (the new birth) and the advantage of living a blessed life. ***Ps. 34:17-19; Rom. 8:28***

* A spiritually prosperous person is secure in Christ and so significant in God’s kingdom that God makes provision for him/her. He/she is the recipient of God’s divine favor, His blessings, and His sustaining grace. ***Is. 41:10; Rom. 8:31-32***
* The Beatitudes (***Mat. 5:3-11***) are the key to spiritual prosperity in the believers’ life. By acting on these principles, you will experience the promised blessings of Christ. Spiritual prosperity is an independent joy, a mind-set that takes us through our pain, sorrow, loss, grief, tears and fears.

**POINTS OF INTEREST:**

***How to become Spiritually Prosperous***

1. ***Be Faithful***: faithful—loyal, constant, steadfast, strong assurance, full of faith, dedicated
* The number one way to prosper spiritually is to be faithful or loyal and constant in performance of your duties to God and His word regardless of circumstances, obstacles or peoples. ***Prov. 28:20; Josh. 1:7***
* When you take courage to stand in the face of problems and hang on to the word until things change, you give God something to work with. A faithful servant is in a position to be blessed and promoted. ***Matt 25:21***
1. ***Have Expectancy:*** expectancy—anticipation, looking for something good or exciting
* When you are under pressure hang on to the fact that God is your source.
* Make a habit of saying, “Lord you are my source and I expect a miracle today.” Start living in a state of expectancy.
* When you are expecting something from God, you will not quit. ***Prov. 18:21; Ps. 1:2-3; Hab. 2:3***
1. ***Be Diligent:*** diligence—careful and persistent work or effort
* Diligence is another key to prosperity. It means steady application to business of any kind, in this case, constant effort in the work of the Lord ***I Cor. 15:58***.
* Diligence will cause you to increase (***Prov. 10:4***) so give your best and God will promote you ***Prov.12:24. 22:29.***

**REFLECTIONS:**

God desires to see you prosper as your soul prospers. Your soul will prosper when you go after God and His word with every fiber of your being ***III John 2.*** Physical prosperity is important but soul prosperity is unimaginably superior. It is superior for the simple fact that you prosper not only in this world but also in the world to come ***Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30***.

*Physical prosperity* is profit “in” this world and you only get to use it here. You cannot take it with you. *Spiritual* prosperity is the profit “in” this world and you “take” it with you at your death.

Let us focus this week on seeking spiritual prosperity over physically prosperity for “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? ” *Matt. 16:26; Mark 8:36; Luke 9*

 Spiritual Exercises to Increase Spiritual Fitness

July19, 2020

# **MEMORY VERSE:**

# ***1 Tim. 4:8***

# “*For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”*

# **KEY FACTS:**

God wants us to strip off excess weight and all things that get in the way of us becoming whole or spiritually fit. This is part of our sanctification ***Heb. 12:1.*** Just as working out physically is beneficial to the natural man, so is working out spiritually beneficial to the spirit man. It is necessary if we are to grow spiritually healthy and fit.

**POINTS OF INTEREST:**

**What does it mean to be Spiritually Fit?**

* To be led by the spirit and not the flesh, because we are strong in the spirit ***Rom. 8:14***
* To follow Christ ways, His truth and His life ***I Peter 2:21***
* To be a risk taker; go out and become a fisher of men ***Mark 1:17***
* To have consistent fellowship with Christ ***I John 1:3,7***
* To have a readiness to work for the Lord ***Luke 10:2***
* To stand firm in our spiritual identify ***I Cor. 16:13; Gal.5:1***
* To seek purity and be aware of the God who lives in us ***I John 3:3***
* To be fascinated with the name of Jesus ***Ps. 44:8***

**Five exercises can we do to increase Spiritual Fitness?**

1. Get moving with some *Spiritual* *Sprints* by **exercising your faith**. “For we walk by faith and not by sight” ***II Cor. 5:7***. Vibrant faith does not come to those who wait complacently, expecting God to turn up the flame but to those who jump start their faith by becoming a doer of the word and not a hearer only ***James 2:18, 20, 26.*** A Christian community is important because we are mutually encouraged by each other’s faith ***Romans 1:12***. Our faith increases when we are around other believers, sharing the words of our testimonies and worshipping together.
2. Do some *Spiritual Lunges* to warm up your muscles and promote your functional movement by “**stirring up the gift of God which is in you**.” Exercise your daily prayer, intense knowledge of the scripture, evangelism, and generous giving ***II Tim 1:6.*** Pray for a larger comfort zone. If your entire world consists of people just like you, chances are your focus is more on feeling safe than spreading the gospel. Our light can only “shine before others” if we interact with people who are different than we are. One way to overcome our fear and become spiritually fit is to step out in faith, pray for courage, and use your God given gifts.

1. Try some *Spiritual* *Deadlifts* to balance your spiritual mentality by **renewing your mind**. Paul encourages us that through the renewing of our minds we are transformed and able to prove the perfect will of God. ***Romans 12:2*** Christ can transform even the worst thing into good. Our job is to pick ourselves up after we fail and ask for renewed strength to follow Christ. ***Prov. 24:16***
2. Use *Spiritual Resistance Crunches* to strengthen the core of your body by **resisting the devil** and turning setbacks into renewed determination***.*** James says if you will resist the devil, he will flee from you ***James 4:7.*** The Apostle Paul encourages us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. ***Phil. 2:1***
3. Do some *Spiritual Burpees* to increase your cardiovascular endurance by **hiding the word in your heart** that you might not sin against God ***Ps. 119:11.*** Know who you are in Christ, know your identity. Once you accept Him in your heart, you become a born again child of God ***Gal. 3:26***. You are His beloved, His masterpiece, and He even knows the number of hairs on your head ***Luke 12:7***. Therefore, we want to “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.” ***Eph. 4:1***

**REFLECTIONS:**

This week let us work on increasing our spiritual fitness by practicing the spiritual exercises in our lesson today:

* Exercise your faith
* Stir up the gift in you
* Renew your mind
* Resist the devil
* Hide the word of God in your heart.

If you do these exercises daily, you will see your spiritual man increase and grow stronger.