

THE FOLLOW UP

*Be sure to get these **FOUR** devos and the Quiet Time Challenge done*



*...anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!
~ 2 Corinthians 5:17*

DEVO #1— Time to Get Naked!

READ: 1 Timothy 4:7-13; Hebrews 4:12,13

The end of 1 Timothy 4:7 states, *discipline [or train] yourself to be godly*. Now, the word for *discipline* is the Greek word *gumnazio*—which literally means *exercise naked*. Yes, you read that right. The word *gum* means *exercise* while the Greek word *nazio* means *naked*.

Well, that sounds a bit crazy, doesn't it? Is Paul telling Timothy to grow in his relationship with God by jogging in the buff? I think not! In Bible times, the Greeks would exercise in the nude. They prided themselves on their bodies and wanted to make sure every inch was sculpted. So when Paul talks about "exercising naked" for godliness, he is talking about stripping it ALL away and going to work on EVERYTHING. For it is only when EVERYTHING is worked on that we can become spiritually mature and effective.

1. What does the Word of God do according to Hebrews 4:12-13?
2. Do you regularly read the Scriptures so that God can work on every part of you through His Word?
3. When people are out of shape, they often wear bulky clothes to hide the fact from others and themselves. With that in mind, have you been guilty of trying to cover over your spiritual issues?
4. Take some time today to stand in front of God's mirror and allow Him to look at every part of you.

PRAYER

- ~Thank Christ for dying on the cross so that you could be in a relationship with the God of the universe
- ~Confess to God, if necessary, putting on bulky spiritual clothing to cover up spiritual flabbiness and immaturity
- ~Ask God to point out any part of your life this is not as it should be

ADDITIONAL NOTE SPACE

POSSIBLE ACTION STEPS

- ◆ Be sure to *gumnazio* with the Lord. Set aside time to sit quietly with Him
- ◆ Ask others how they think you are doing with your words, actions, attitudes, choices, etc.
- ◆ Continue to pray for those on your card
- ◆ Pray about what impact you could make in your school, in your peer group, neighborhood, etc.

QUIET TIME CHALLENGE

NOTE:

The *Quiet Time Challenge* is NOT a devotional in itself. It is designed for you to do separately apart from your daily devotional time.

HOW IT WORKS:

Find a quiet place with no distractions. Make this between just you and God. Clear your mind then read the Bible verse(s). After doing so, work through the questions. At the end, spend five to ten minutes in "listening mode." Just ask God to speak to you and then be quiet and seek to hear His voice.

PART 1 — READ: 2 Corinthians 5:15,17

PART 2 — QUESTIONS

Explain these verses in your own words:

Are you moving from the old to the new, or are you trying to keep the old while just adding Jesus?

PART 3 — LISTEN

Ask God to examine your heart and reveal any weak and sinful areas that you have. Then seek to hear His voice speak to your soul. (Feel free to jot down anything you hear.)

DEVO #2 — Don't Get Dressed Yet!

READ: Hebrews 5:11-6:3; Hebrews 12:1-13

Yesterday, we looked at that crazy Greek word *gymnazio*—which literally means *exercise naked*. We said that, in Bible times, the Greeks would exercise in the nude. They prided themselves and their bodies and wanted to make sure every inch was sculpted. So, when Paul talks about "exercising naked" for godliness, he is talking about stripping it ALL away and going to work on EVERYTHING. For it is only when EVERYTHING is worked on that we can become spiritually mature and effective.

I bring this up again today because that same word *gymnazio* is used in Hebrews 5 and Hebrews 12. In chapter 5, the author of Hebrews tells his readers that they are NOT mature because they have not done *gymnazio*. And in verse 12:11, he states that there is a peaceful harvest of right living for those who have gone through *gymnazio* with the Lord.

1. Why is the author of Hebrews frustrated with his readers in chapter 5?
2. Have you allowed God to look over every inch of you and point out all that needs work? If not, why not?
3. Why do you think many people don't want to *gymnazio* with the Lord?
4. What are some of the many benefits that come through *gymnazio* with the Lord?

PRAYER

- ~Thank God for desiring to see you become more and more like Christ
- ~Confess to God, if necessary, refusing to *gymnazio* with Him
- ~Ask God to point out areas in your life that you have turned a blind eye to
- ~Ask God to show you where you need work
- ~Ask God to begin working on the deep places of your life

DEVO #3 — Confrontation Leads to Transformation

READ: Nehemiah 1; Isaiah 59:12-15

It is easy to blame, excuse, and/or try to hide sin. The first couple, Adam and Eve, did it, and many have followed in their footsteps. However, there is a better way: Confrontation. Now, when I say "confrontation," I am not referring to confronting everyone else in their sin. No, I am talking about confronting our own sin and allowing God to deal with it. We need to stand in front of God's mirror and *gumnazio* with Him.

After our lives have been closely examined, we need to resist the urge to excuse, blame, and hide. Instead, we need to turn to God and simply say, "God, I see that I _____ (fill in the sin). This needs to be dealt with. Please begin!" There can be no transformation until this process takes place.

1. How does Nehemiah deal with the news he received in Nehemiah 1:6 and 7?
2. After God confronts Isaiah with Israel's sin, how does he respond in Isaiah 59:12-15?
3. How do you usually respond when God, or others, confront you about sin in your life?
4. Are you willing to start dealing today with any issues that may have been long buried deep down in your soul?
5. What might be holding you back?

PRAYER

- ~Thank God for working in your heart and in your life
- ~Confess to God, if necessary, refusing to let the Lord deal with the sin in your life
- ~Ask God to humble you and to teach you
- ~Ask God to work on your sins, flaws, and issues

DEVO #4 — Take the Exam

READ: Romans 12:1,2; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

It may seem hard and painful to examine yourself and confront what is wrong in your life, but without that you cannot be transformed. God has a great plan for your life and desires to mold you into something amazing and wonderful. But to do that, the things that are wrong need to be worked on.

This week, I encourage you to take off the bulky sweat-shirts (and the other things that you hide behind) and begin examining yourself. This week, resist the urge to blame or excuse, instead boldly confront what's wrong in your heart, mind, life, and family. This week, let God start the transformation process. He wants to make you into something incredible and wondrous, but it will take work...sometimes difficult and agonizing work. Everything in you may want to scream, "NO!" but let Him do this work.

1. In 1 Corinthians 6:9 and 10, what are some of the things that Paul lists there?
2. At the beginning of verse 11, Paul says, "That used to be you!" But what happened in their lives according to the rest of the verse?
3. What do you think your life would be like if you were much more spiritually mature?
4. What, if anything, is holding you back from letting God do His work in and through you?

PRAYER

- ~Thank Christ for dying on the cross, so that you could be in a relationship with the God of the universe
- ~Confess to God, if necessary, putting on bulky spiritual clothing to cover up spiritual flabbiness and immaturity
- ~Ask God to point out any part of your life this is not as it should be