



TAKING CARE OF YOUR TEMPLE

Dr. Jerry Pipes

You are a special person of great worth, created in the very image of God for His special plan and purpose. I love what Zig Ziglar says about you, “You were born to win, engineered for success and are endowed with seeds of greatness.”¹ God’s Word, the Bible, puts it this way, “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?”² What an amazing truth, your body is the place where the God of the universe dwells through His Holy Spirit. That means you have a huge opportunity and responsibility to take care of your temple, physically, mentally, emotionally socially and spiritually. Reaching your potential will in large part, depend on how well you take care of what God has entrusted to you...your body. Read God’s warning for those who don’t do this, “If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is Holy and that temple you are.”³ Sounds serious doesn’t it? It is, so here is a plan for successfully taking care of your temple.

Physical—developing and maintaining a healthy body

This requires a healthy diet in addition to physical exercise three or four times a week for thirty minutes each time. While the physical benefits are good, the greatest benefits are emotional, which results in the reduction of stress and an enhanced self-esteem. A good physical workout should include:

- Endurance—aerobic exercises, getting your heart rate up and keeping it up for twenty minutes, three to four times per week through biking, swimming, walking or jogging.
- Flexibility—stretching before and after aerobic exercise.
- Strength—toning through calisthenics or weights.

Before dieting and beginning an exercise regimen, see your doctor for a physical to make sure there are no health issues that would make the above suggestions dangerous for you. Also, ask your doctor to help you determine a healthy weight that is right for you. We live in a society that glorifies idealistic (too thin) body images. Setting an unrealistic weight goal will result in frustration, failure and possibly an eating disorder.

Mental/Emotional—developing a personal growth plan

If you want to change your behavior in any way, you must start by changing the way you think. The Bible says, “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.”⁴ The problem is most people stop learning and growing after their formal education ends. There are two primary reasons for this; laziness and television. In most homes, the television is on forty to forty-five hours each week. It imperceptibly shapes your values and is addictive. If you don’t think so, just try to do without it for thirty days. Ask yourself this question: How do I use this powerful medium to serve my values, accomplish my purpose and help me grow to my maximum potential? After you deal with the television issue, develop and implement a personal growth plan. This is one of the most important decisions you will ever make! Just think, except for the books you read, the places you go, experiences you have, the close friendships you develop, you will be the same person in thirty years that you are today.

The following are suggestions to consider in developing a personal growth plan:

- Read great books. If you choose not to read you are no better off than one who can’t read. It’s like choosing a self-imposed illiteracy. If you have not been reading, begin with a goal of a book a month. An occasional novel is fine, but read great biographies and self-help books as well.
- Listen to great talks, audiobooks, and pod casts while in the car and during your workouts.
- Attend great conferences.
- Make the most of your education.
- Engage in problem solving and planning.
- Laugh every day. Look for the humor in life.

Social—developing a positive environment

People you spend a lot of time with have a huge impact on your life. Give me fifteen minutes with your closest friends and I will be able to tell much about where your heart really is. Those with whom we spend the bulk of our time have more to do with the way we think, feel, act and react than almost any other factor. Ask yourself often: Does my environment serve my purpose and values? Do the people I spend time with and the places I go help or hinder me in being what I dream to be?

Spiritual—developing the leadership of your life

It is not enough to have a relationship with Christ; you must spend time developing that relationship. Paul said it this way, “We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.”⁵ Paul identified the goal of our growth in this vital relationship as, “The measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”⁶ As you develop your relationship with Christ you will be developing your character, core values, and making critical decisions concerning your purpose and worldview. Here are a few suggestions to consider:

- Start every day alone with God in prayer and in His Word, the Bible.
- Personalize God’s Word by: Reading it every day, taking good notes when you hear it taught, studying it every week, memorizing a verse a week, and meditating on it always.
- Develop a powerful prayer life.
- Surround yourself with a great supporting cast of friends who will help you accomplish your dreams.
- Ask God for daily opportunities to share your faith in Christ with others.
- Develop a personal mission statement—decide what you want to accomplish in life.
- Develop goals from your mission statement and strategies to reach them.

Dear God, I praise You that You alone are God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. Thank you for making me one of a kind. Help me to have a soft heart for you and to be sensitive to Your leadership so I can accomplish Your plan and purpose for today.

(Endnotes)

- 1 Zigar, Zig, Speech, Get Motivated Seminar, Atlanta, GA November 1, 2010
- 2 I Corinthians 3:16 RSV
- 3 I Corinthians 3:17 RSV
- 4 Ephesians 4:13 RSV
- 5 Ephesians 4:13 RSV
- 6 Ephesians 4:13 RSV