

# Life Group Participant Guide

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For the week of January 8, 2017

## Quick Review

Mark presented three ways to become spiritually fit. Which one excites you the most? Why?

- 1) Listening to God through the Bible.
- 2) Talking with God through prayer.
- 3) Finding what works best for your spiritual growth.

## My Story

1. 2016 is in the bag. What was one of your favorite memories or blessings?
2. What is your biggest hurdle to becoming spiritually fit in 2017?

## Digging Deeper

1. Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10 and answer the following questions.
  - What does it mean to be “nourished by the message of faith and the good teaching you have followed?”
  - Daily we should be studying and reflecting on God’s word. Paul adds the words “good teaching” or as the NASB puts it, “sound doctrine.” Not only should we be studying God’s word, but we should embrace what it teaches. We should resist to abandon or change the difficult or controversial passages. As 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. <sup>17</sup> God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.” God’s word is the guidebook for our lives. It would be near impossible to live biblically without knowing what the Bible says.
  - Why would Paul advise against arguing over godless ideas?
  - Paul recognizes our time and attention is precious. We should focus and retain the truth, which helps us in our pursuit of godliness.
  - Why does Paul encourage believers to train for godliness more than physical training? What are some of the present benefits? What are some of the eternal benefits?
  - Paul must have known people might push back on this advice (v. 9). Do you feel some resistance for a focus on training in godliness?
  - What motivates Paul’s hard work and striving (v. 10)? How can this motivate you?
  - The word Paul use for hard work literally means “to work to the point of weariness and exhaustion.” Paul was giving all he had toward the mission of God

(reaching the lost). Paul was saved in hope (Romans 8:24) and he now lives in that same hope. Paul was convinced that heaven and hell were real. He was also convinced that God is a gracious and saving God. Salvation comes from faith in Christ alone. The reality of eternity motivated Paul to work to the point of exhaustion. Eternity should motivate us to share the good news without fear and without shame (Romans 1:16-17).

2. Read Colossians 3:1-8.

- What phrases or ideas stand out to you?
- What is the connection between Paul's words in 1 Timothy 4:6-10 and these verses?
- Paul always had eternity in mind. He knew that as a citizen of heaven. Therefore he was an ambassador here on earth. His training and lifestyle would be a reflection of his heavenly citizenship. His thinking was on that which was true, right and lovely (Philippians 4:8). The result was a godly life.
- Why does a heavenly mindset aid us in godly living?
- Paul lists various sinful activities (v. 5). What would be the positive alternatives possible through our new life in Christ? How do these tie to a heavenly focus?
- If the group is struggling to answer, ask the question "For example, what is the opposite of greed?" An answer might be generosity.

**Taking it Home**

1. What is one habit in your life you will change so you can train for spiritual fitness?
2. Who can you ask to help you in your pursuit of spiritual fitness?
3. This week memorize 1 Timothy 4:8. "Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come."