

## *Dedication*

I dedicate this book to my mom, Arianne Dahlem. She has influenced my life in so many ways. As long as I can remember, my mom has said to me, "If anyone can do it Michelle, you can." So often, when I felt like giving up, I would hear her voice, encouraging me on.

My mom was always active. She would take me golfing, skiing, sledding, hiking and we'd play tennis together. At 65 she learned to windsurf and skied until she was 76. Now, at 92, she has several physical limitations, but whenever we are together she asks for a new exercise program!

My mom came to know the love and truth of Jesus in her late 70's. At 85 she was asked to be a deacon in her church. One reason she is able to finish well is because she has taken care of her body. My hope is to live as fully as she does until God brings me home.

I also dedicate this book to my husband, Jeff. He is truly the best person I know. If you looked up integrity in the dictionary, you would see his face!! There is no way I could do all that I do if it wasn't for his unconditional support. His desire to seek after God's truth inspires me to do the same. Thank you God for introducing me to Jeff!

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## ***Before you begin:***

I am so excited for you. I am excited that you've decided it's time for you to get healthy. Reignite will share with you a totally new approach to health. An approach that at times seems countercultural.

Have you ever used the wrong kind of marker on a white board? You go to erase what you wrote, but because you used the wrong marker, it won't wipe clean. You might be coming into this study with a bit of the wrong marker on you. You have preconceived notions as to what you need to do to reach your fitness goals. Words like diet, skinny, scale, size... have always been part of your fitness plan. It might not be easy, but I am going to try and wipe away these misconceptions and replace them with truth.

Reignite will guide you down the path to better health in a way you've never traveled.

We all come into this study at different places on our journey to better health. You might be satisfied with your physical fitness but long for peace and joy that you hope will come when you are spiritually healthier. Or you might feel your relationship with God is in a great place, but you know that you are not taking care of the body He gave you. You lack the stamina and strength needed to love and serve others.

Or you might be thinking, "I don't even know if I believe in God. I'm not concerned about being 'spiritually healthy', but I do know that my stress level is out of control and I need to do something about it." If that's you, I'm so glad we will be going through this 12 week study together. For the first 40 years of my life I didn't have faith. I didn't even think about God. I know what it feels like to think, "how can a God, if there even is one, help me in life? How can He possibly help me to reach my fitness goals?"

No matter where you are at physically and spiritually, I believe you will be changed. Please keep your heart and mind open to what God has to say to you. He has a plan for your life and He wants you to live life to the fullest. He wants your body to "glow with health"!

\*\*Super Important - I would highly recommend that you go to

**[www.faithfulworkouts.com](http://www.faithfulworkouts.com)**

Check out all our FREE faith, fitness and food resources. There are over 500 workout videos for all fitness levels, healthy recipes, helpful cooking shows, meal plans, inspirational messages, a supportive community and even more!

# Week 1

## *Spiritual Health*

### Re-Think Fitness

Perhaps this isn't your first attempt to make healthy, lasting changes. Sadly, it's been reported that approximately 95% of all exercise and diet plans fail. We spend billions of dollars trying to lose weight, yet our obesity rates continue to climb. Why is it so difficult to remain faithful to the changes we know we need to make? What has to change in order for you to succeed?

From my 35+ years in the fitness industry, I have found that most fitness programs make one huge mistake — they focus only on changing your behavior. Behavior modification alone doesn't work. Trying to change our behavior without adjusting our thoughts might work short-term, but we will soon fall back into our old ways. This is why so many people who lose weight end up putting it back on.

If we want to make a lasting change, it has to start with our thoughts. We need to understand what is really behind our unhealthy choices and what thoughts need to change so we can move towards a healthier lifestyle. What it really comes down to, is we have to go at this differently than we have in the past.

Over the upcoming weeks we will be giving you information on exercise and healthy eating, but even more importantly, we are going to challenge you to think differently. We are going to encourage you to think deeply about why you want to make healthy changes, what's kept you from succeeding in the past, and what has to happen for you to make lasting, healthy changes in the future.

I have seen thousands of people get trapped in the fitness frustration cycle. Perhaps this has happened to you. Each year, you make a passionate resolution on January 1st to lose weight. Then, you dive head first into the latest exercise and diet craze that promises you will lose all your unwanted weight in just a few weeks. When you turn the calendar to February 1st you might have lost a few pounds, but you're also losing your passion to lose weight. By March 1st, you've packed the pounds you lost back on and gained another five! You're not alone. Take heart! You don't have to become one of the millions entrapped by the fitness frustration cycle.

The Faithful Workouts strategy for making lasting, healthy changes will most likely be an entirely different approach from the other programs you've tried. We are going to help you to *think **and** act* differently. Success starts with changing the way you think!

Your thoughts matter. What you believe on the inside affects how you live. "As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart." (Proverbs 27:19) Another verse that

would support this premise is Proverbs 27:3, it states, “For as a man thinketh in his heart, so he is.” “The heart” doesn’t mean our physical, beating heart. It is referring to what we are on the inside. We must first get our hearts and our thoughts to change if we want to break free from our old, unhealthy ways. Our thoughts affect how we live, and our lives are a reflection of our thoughts.

How do you Re-Think Fitness? Romans 12:2 has the answer: “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you **think**. **Then** you will know what God wants you to **do**, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.”

WOW! When we allow God to come into our lives, He can help us change the way we think and then, reveal to us what we should do. The “world” is going to try and get you to think differently about your journey to better health. But the apostle Paul states in Romans 12:2, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

We need to pay attention to Paul’s words and avoid the fads of the fitness and diet world that urge you to “Get slim fast,” and so on. We need to listen to God’s voice. To make a lifestyle transformation, it starts by allowing God to change the way we think! This is super important, so please don’t read this too quickly. Consider memorizing and praying over Romans 12:2.

Over the next 12 weeks, Faithful Workouts is going to challenge you to change the way you think about Faith, Fitness and Food. Here are the thought changes we are hoping you will have:

### **Faith:**

Your desire will be to have Jesus at the center of all you do, including your fitness plan. You will be moving towards a lifestyle with your faith “Fully-Integrated” into all you do.

You will be confident that you can make healthy, lasting changes because you know God is on your side and is there to help you on this journey. You will understand why faith is such a critical component of your fitness journey.

### **Fitness:**

You will move from “have to” to “get to.” You will no longer dread exercise and wonder why you “have to” do it. You will realize that being healthy enough to exercise is a blessing, and one you shouldn’t take for granted. You will be thankful you “get to” exercise.

You will look at exercise as a way to get your body strong and prepared to take on any- thing that comes your way. You will know proper form for each exercise and will avoid exercise-induced injuries. You will be motivated to consistently exercise because you know all the physical and emotional benefits that come from a Total Body Workout.

## **Food:**

You will no longer search out the best “diet” to go on. You will no longer have guilt because you failed yet another diet. Your nutrition plan will be more about giving your body the fuel it needs and less about doing whatever it takes to fit into your jeans. You will choose the amazing foods God created over the unhealthy foods the big food companies create.

You will finally understand what a healthy nutrition plan really looks like. Your motivation will change from wanting to look a certain way to wanting to feel a certain way.

If we change our thinking and believe that, with God’s help, we can take control of our health and become dedicated to a fitness regime, we will be on our way to a healthy lifestyle.

My prayer is that you keep your mind and heart open to what God will reveal to you during this journey. Most likely your journey will not be a direct path. There will be some wrong turns, but if you stick with this plan and allow God to change the way you think, you will finally break free from your old habits!

Throughout this guide you will see questions at the end of each chapter. My tendency when I see hard questions in a book is to blow by them and move quickly onto to the next chapter. I encourage you NOT to do this. This is a workbook not a novel. Take your time and be thoughtful when answering the questions. Your breakthroughs will most likely come from discovering what's held you back in the past, what your deep motivation is, and learning to lean on God to help you through this process.

## **Questions**

What are some thoughts regarding your health that you know you need to change?

Do you believe that God can help you to make lasting, healthy changes? Why do you believe this?

## Physical Health

### Benefits of Exercise

Want to feel better, have more energy and perhaps even live longer? Look no further than good old-fashioned exercise. I am sure you've heard that "Exercise is so good for you!" a million times over, but take a moment to read through this list of benefits. I find that knowledge can motivate us to action. Any time you're having trouble mustering up the energy to work out, review the following facts to get you motivated and moving.

1. Exercise boosts your energy level: One of the main reasons I exercise is because I want to be physically ready to move when God calls me to take action. I know real joy comes from doing God's work, so I want to be in shape and have the energy to be used by Him in any way he sees fit. Physical activity delivers oxygen and nutrients to your tissues. In fact, regular physical activity helps your entire cardiovascular system work more efficiently. Big deal? You bet! When your heart and lungs work more efficiently you have more energy to do the things you enjoy.
2. Exercise improves attitude: Physical activity stimulates various brain chemicals that may leave you feeling happier and more relaxed than you were before you worked out. As I mentioned above, you will have more energy, which will help you take on activities with a better attitude. Regular physical activity can even help prevent depression. When you combine exercises with uplifting music and God's word, it's a winning combination!
3. Exercise helps fight disease: Worried about heart disease? Hoping to prevent osteoporosis? Physical activity might be the ticket. Regular physical activity can prevent (or manage) high blood pressure and lower your cholesterol, as well as help prevent type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and certain types of cancer. Heaven's going to be awesome, but the longer you live, the more time you have to tell people about God's amazing love for them.
4. Exercise helps you sleep better: Struggling to fall asleep? Or stay asleep? It might help if you boost your physical activity during the day. A good night's sleep has many health benefits. And you guessed it — physical activity is sometimes the key to better sleep. Regular physical activity will help you fall asleep faster and deepen your sleep. Try not to exercise too close to bedtime though, or you might be too energized to fall asleep.
5. Exercise is good for your brain: When you exercise, you send hormones rushing to your brain. Once there, they mix with a chemical called brain-derived neurotrophic factor, or BDNF, which plays a role in brain cell growth, mood regulation and learning. "BDNF is like fertilizer for the brain," says John J. Ratey, Ph.D., a clinical associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. "Without it, our brains can't take in new information or make new cells." If you want to keep your mind sharp, engage in cardiovascular activities.

6. *Exercise can add fun to your day:* Seriously, it can! Physical activity doesn't have to be drudgery. Try one of our PAZAZ videos (cardio dance) or take a dance class, check out a local climbing wall, play tennis, go for a walk, or choose a Faithful Workouts exercise video you've never done before and get moving. Find a physical activity you enjoy, and go for it. Your kids are watching everything you do, so let them see that exercise can be fun. Get your family to exercise with you. If you do a workout video together you will not only get in shape, but you will also connect with God, with each other and most likely have some good laughs too.
7. *Exercise helps you manage your weight:* Want to get to a healthy weight? Trade some couch time for walking or other physical activities. This one's a no-brainer. When you engage in physical activity, you burn calories. The more intense the activity, the more calories you burn — and the easier it is to keep your weight under control. When you burn off more calories than you take in, you lose weight. You don't always need to set aside major chunks of time for working out. Dedicated workouts are great, but the physical activity you accumulate throughout the day helps you burn calories, too.

## **Question**

Which of the benefits listed above most motivates you to exercise? Why?

## **Benefits of Healthy Eating**

I'm sure you have heard that eating healthy is important — but trying to figure out what a healthy diet looks like can be confusing. There are so many different theories, plans and diets available — how do you know which is the best for you?

Throughout this study, we will share with you the “how-to” of eating healthy — but let's first get you excited to make changes by listing a few of the benefits of properly fueling your body:

1. *Healthy eating helps you maintain a healthy weight*
2. *Healthy eating helps you fight off illness and diseases*
3. *Healthy eating increases your energy levels*
4. *Healthy eating can save you money (and time) in health care costs*
5. *Healthy eating can keep you more mentally alert*
6. *Healthy eating builds and strengthens your bones and tendons*



On the other hand, when we fill our bodies with foods loaded with sugar, chemicals or unhealthy fats...we can destroy our health. I love how Ann Wigmore, a holistic health pioneer, states, "The food you eat can be either the safest and most powerful form of medicine or the slowest form of poison."

You have a choice to make each day. Are you going to improve your health with what you eat or are you going to diminish your health?

Upcoming articles include:

Weight Loss Basics

Healthy vs Unhealthy Fats

Time-Saving Cooking Tips

Nutrition 101

Dangers Of Sugar

Knowledge is powerful. The more you can understand how food affects your body, the more motivated you will be to change.

"Let thy food be thy medicine and thy medicine your food." Hippocrates

## **Questions**

Which of the benefits of eating healthy most excites you? Why?

## Weekly Goals

Each week you will be asked to set goals. Your goals can be about faith, fitness or food (hopefully all 3). Write them down in the space provided.

When setting goals, make them action-oriented goals, not result-focused goals. By this, I mean make goals based on the actions you will take, not the results you want. An action goal would be, "I will exercise at least 3 times a week. Each workout will be at least 20 minutes." A result goal would be, "I will lose 1" in my thigh measurement."

I suggest this because here is what I have seen happen so often: someone sets a "result goal," they eat healthy and exercise, and yet they don't meet their goal. They then get discouraged and turn back to their old ways. When you eat healthy and exercise, you are improving your health but you might not instantly see the results you wanted. Stay focused on doing the next right thing and be patient with the results.

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down this week's workout schedule. If you want to reach your fitness goals you need to schedule your workouts. It is one of the most important appointments you will make.

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

*Journal about this week's victories and challenges:*

# Week 2

## *Spiritual Health*

### You are His Beloved

“When our deepest truth is that we are the Beloved and when our greatest joy and peace comes from fully claiming that truth, it follows that this has to become visible and tangible in the ways we eat and drink, talk and love, play and work.” Henri Nouwen

Everyone has the need to be loved. There is a hole in every heart that only God’s love can fill.

I know I have days where I don’t feel so lovable, but I still want to be loved. One thing I want you to get is this: **God loves you**. Even when you sin or in your darkest hours - He still loves you. The Bible tells you over and over that God loves you. We have probably all heard this verse before, but I want you to really let the words come into your heart: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

*Can you imagine this?*

Jesus died a painful death on the cross for YOU. He knew all that you would do and He gladly went to the cross for you. He died so you could be saved. He died so that you could truly live. That just blows me away – that’s an amazing kind of love. That’s God’s love.

God knew you would make mistakes (sin) that would separate you from Him, so He sent Jesus to die so you could be made perfect. God *is* perfect and Heaven is perfect, so for you to be with Him, you need to be made perfect — and that’s why Jesus came. In the song “Amazing Love” Chris Tomlin sings:

“Amazing love, how can it be? That you, my King, would die for me. Amazing love, I know it’s true. It’s my joy to honor you. In all I do, I honor you”

God wants you to feel His love right now. You don’t need to fix something about yourself before He will love you. Sometimes people say to me, “I’m not ready to come to your workouts. I have to get in shape first.” I tell them, “That’s not how it works. Just come, and I’ll help you.”

I know there are also people out there who think they need to fix themselves — they need to stop drinking, they need to be kinder, they need to stop eating so much, they need to start exercising, they need to give money to their church — before they can ask God to be in their lives. Well, just like you don’t need to be in shape before you can

begin the Faithful Workouts program, you don't need to fix yourself before God will love you.

In John 4:19 it says, "This is real love — not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins." He loved you *before* you loved Him.

Remember, God forgives all sins. He wants you to ask for forgiveness and to truly try to turn away from that sinful behavior. Your sin does not make you unlovable to God. God loves you so much that He promises to never leave you.

Some of the last words Jesus spoke to his disciples were, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." In another verse God promises, "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10) I don't know about you, but these verses sure make me feel loved and cared for!

One night, as I was driving alone in my car, I heard the song, "Come As You Are," by David Crowder. These lyrics drew me in.

Come out of sadness  
From wherever you've been  
Come broken hearted  
Let rescue begin  
Come find your mercy  
Oh sinner come kneel  
Earth has no sorrow  
That heaven can't heal  
So lay down your burdens  
Lay down your shame  
All who are broken  
Lift up your face  
Oh wanderer come home  
You're not too far  
So lay down your hurt  
Lay down your heart  
Come as you are  
There's hope for the hopeless  
And all those who've strayed  
Come sit at the table  
Come taste the grace  
There's rest for the weary  
Rest that endures  
Earth has no sorrow  
That heaven can't heal

Maybe there is something from your past that you think is so horrible that it makes you unworthy of His love and forgiveness. If you believe this, wouldn't it mean that Jesus' death on the cross wasn't enough? Jesus died for all our sins, and when we believe in Him, there is nothing from our past that can't be wiped clean.

I find great peace in knowing that God does not pick and choose which sins He forgives, and which sins He won't forgive. God doesn't look down and say, "I'll forgive you for gossiping about your neighbor, but sorry, I can't forgive you for lying to your boss." The bible tells us if you confess your sins, ask for forgiveness and try and turn away from the sinful behavior, you will be forgiven. I am beyond grateful for His forgiveness!!

Embrace this truth: He loves you as you are.

### **Questions**

If you struggle to believe that God loves you and has forgiven you for your past sins, what verses can you memorize to help you with this?

What un-confessed sins are still in your life, or sins you have confessed but are having a hard time turning away from? James 5:16 tells us, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed." If you feel God asking you to reach out for prayer for these sins, talk to someone and have them pray over you.

# Physical Health

## Safety First

It's so awesome that you have made the decision to exercise. Consistently exercising will make such a difference in your overall health. I am sure the last thing you want to do is injure yourself when exercising so please pay close attention to all that I cover in this section. Proper form, knowing how hard to work out, doing muscle balance exercises, and including a warm-up and cool-down are critical components of a safe, effective exercise plan and will greatly reduce your risk of injury.

### Importance of Proper Form When Exercising

There are several reasons why you should pay attention to form and technique when exercising. The most important and most obvious reason is that if you're not performing the exercise correctly, you risk the chance of hurting yourself, either immediately or in the long term. Another reason proper form is important is because you will not get the full benefit of the exercise if you are not using proper form.

I suggest that when you are exercising with Faithful Workouts' videos you pay close attention to body alignment and the verbal cues given regarding form.

Here are some general guidelines to help you to maintain proper form:

**Start Light:** When beginning a new exercise, either start with a light weight or don't use any weight. Go through the motions of the exercise slowly. This way, you'll learn how to perform the movement without straining to do the exercise. Once you understand the basic movement, you may continue the exercise using your desired weight.

When an exercise becomes difficult, there is a tendency to slip into poor form or recruit other muscle groups to assist the effort. If you feel you are having a hard time completing the exercise with proper form, switch to a lighter weight or take a break and march in place.

**Watch Yourself:** If possible, look into a mirror and watch how you perform a move. You may think you're doing one thing when you're actually doing something else. I know it can be odd to watch yourself in a mirror, but please give it a try. If you don't have a mirror and you are working out with a friend, help each other with your form.

**Positive and Negative Motion:** When performing an exercise you need to focus on both the positive and negative movements. For example, if you are doing a bicep curl, the positive movement is moving your hand closer to your shoulder, and the negative movement is bringing your hand back down. When exercising, many people forget about the negative. They exert all their effort on lifting the weight or exercise band up and then they just let their arms fall down. If you don't control the movement of the downward motion (negative), you are only getting half the benefits from the exercise.

**Breathing:** Don't forget to breathe! By holding your breath during exercise, you begin to deprive your body of valuable oxygen and you will experience muscle fatigue sooner. It is important to fill your lungs all the way up and then exhale completely. Typically, if you are lifting heavier weights you want to exhale on the exertion (positive motion). On a bicep curl, you would exhale as you lift your arms up and inhale as you take them down. This breathing technique only works on slower-moving exercises. Don't force yourself to breathe too quickly.

**Muscle Isolation:** Try to isolate the muscle or muscle group you are working. If you are doing a bicep curl, your brain needs to tell your bicep muscle to contract. Wikipedia explains it this way: "Muscle contraction is controlled by the central nervous system. Muscle contraction occurs as a result of conscious effort originating in the brain."

### **How Hard Should I Work Out?**

The #1 way to judge how hard you should work out is by listening to your body. If your muscles are getting tired and you are starting to lose proper form, it's time to slow down. If you start to feel lightheaded or nauseous it is definitely time to ease up.

When you are working out with others or doing a video, let them be an encouragement to you, but do not allow them to push you past your 100%. You want to give 100% of your capability, but you are the only one who knows what your 100% feels like.

If you are new to exercise, it might be difficult to evaluate your exertion level by listening to your body. It might be easier to use the Target Heart Rate Test. This approach requires that you measure your pulse periodically as you exercise. This formula will help you determine how hard you are working out. When exercising, you generally want to stay within 50%-85% of your maximum heart rate. This range is called your *target heart rate*.

Here is how the Target Heart Rate Test works:

220 minus your age = Maximum Heart Rate (MHR). So if you are 50 years old,  $220 - 50 = 170$ ; so your MHR is 170.

During exercise, your Target Heart Rate Zone should typically fall between 50% - 85% of your MHR.

So if your MHR is 170, your Target Heart Rate Zone would be between 85– 144 beats per minute.  $MHR, \text{ or } 170, \text{ times } .50 \text{ (50\%)} = 85$  and  $170 \text{ times } .85 \text{ (85\%)} = 144$

Most of your workout should be done in your Target Heart Rate Zone. You should only work out above 85% of your MHR for short periods of time. When you are exercising at more than 85% of your MHR, it is called anaerobic exercise. You do not want to stay at this rate longer than 2 minutes.

Typically, if you are just starting an exercise program, you should keep your Target Heart Rate closer to 50% of your MHR. As your fitness level improves, it is safe to bring your Target Heart Rate closer to 85% of your MHR. One of my favorite ways to workout is Interval Training. My heart rate will fluctuate quite a bit within my Target Heart Rate Range during this type of workout.



I suggest that when you first begin an exercise routine you take your heart rate several times during your workout. (It's best to take your pulse at your wrist and use your index and middle fingers. Take it for 15 seconds and multiply that number by 4 to get your beats per minute.) This will begin to help you get a feel for how hard you are working.

These numbers are estimates that provide an average value. Many people have higher or lower MHRs, sometimes by as much as 15 to 20 beats per minute. Your MHR is influenced by factors like your resting heart rate.

After you have been working out for a while, you will be able to feel how hard you are working just by listening to your body. This is called a Perceived Exertion Test.

Perceived exertion is a measurement used during exercise to determine the level of difficulty of your exercise routine. The measure of intensity is commonly called the RPE, or Rating of Perceived Exertion.

A simplified version of the rating scale is listed below:

1. No exertion
2. Very light exertion
3. Light exertion
4. Moderate exertion
5. Somewhat hard exertion
6. Hard exertion
7. Heavy exertion
8. Very hard exertion
9. Very heavy exertion
10. Extremely hard exertion
11. Maximum exertion

A great way to determine where you are on this scale is the "talk test." At 0 -1 on the perceived exertion scale, you can sing a song without a problem; at 4-5 you can say a sentence; at 6-8 it's difficult to say a short sentence; over 8 it's hard to say even a word.

If you feel you are always around a 2-3, you need to do something to make the workout more challenging. If you are continually around an 8 or higher, you should slow it down a bit. The best fat-burning workout brings you up and down the scale during the workout.

## **Muscle Balance**

What does "muscle balance" mean and why is it important?

I think the best way to explain it is by first describing "muscle **imb**alance." Put simply, muscle imbalance occurs when one muscle, or group of muscles, works harder than it should, while other muscles don't work hard enough. Muscle balance is an important component of injury prevention. When you exercise, you should think about how you can achieve muscle balance. The major muscle groups work in pairs and it's important that you work both sets of muscles. Your bicep and tricep muscles work together to

bend and straighten your arm. When the bicep contracts, the tricep stretches. If we only work to strengthen the bicep, we will have a muscle imbalance in our arm.

Often our daily routines cause muscle imbalance. In our day-to-day activities we use our biceps more than we do our triceps. Picking up groceries, carrying children...most of our lifting uses more bicep than tricep. As a result, we need to exercise the other half of the muscle pair in order to maintain muscle balance.

Injuries can occur when we focus too much on one muscle group. Our knees, for example, can be very sensitive. It is important to strengthen and stretch all leg muscles. The hamstrings (back side of the thigh), quadriceps (front side of thigh) and inner and outer thigh muscles work together to keep our knees in proper alignment. When muscle imbalances occur, you need to stretch the muscle that is stronger and tighter and strengthen the muscle that is weak.

You might be thinking, "How can I tell if I have a muscle imbalance?" For most people, pain will be the first symptom. If you do experience pain, you may want to see a physician or physical therapist.

One way to avoid muscle imbalance is to do a muscle check when you finish your workout. I start at my head and go down my body to be sure I worked all my major muscles.

The Faithful Workouts routines try to limit muscle imbalance. The workouts put emphasis on working opposing muscles to keep your body strong and healthy!

### **The Importance of Warming Up and Stretching**

All of our Faithful Workouts routines begin with a warm-up and light stretch and finish with a deeper stretch. Here's why:

#### **Warm-Up:**

When you begin your workout with light aerobic exercise it prepares the mind, muscles, and joints for more intensive physical exercise; raises the body temperature and warms up the muscles; and increases blood flow into the muscles, which brings oxygen to the muscles.

#### **Cool Down:**

Light stretches should be done after cardio or strength exercises. Much like we need to think about muscle balance when we strengthen our muscles, we also need to perform balanced stretching. This means you should always stretch the muscles on both sides of your body evenly. If you stretch out the back side of your leg, stretch out the front side too. Don't stretch one side more than the other.

Avoid over-stretching. Never stretch to the point of pain or discomfort. It is safe to feel slight tension or a pull on the muscle at the peak of a stretch, but it should not be painful.

Go slow! Always stretch slowly and evenly. Never bounce or jerk while stretching. This can cause injury as a muscle is pushed beyond its ability.

Don't forget to breathe! Flexibility exercises should be relaxing. Deep, easy breathing is important. It is best to deepen the stretch when you exhale.

Another benefit of the cool down is that it gets your mind in a great place for the rest of your day. Allow God to speak to you during your cool down!

### Weekly Goals

Write down your weekly goals

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down your workout plan for the coming week.

(Scheduling your workouts is one of the surest ways to help you meet your weekly goals)

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

## *Inspirational Story #1: April*

“I turned to food for comfort at a very young age to deal with my painful childhood. I learned a cycle of emotional overeating which became my normal. It was a destructive pit that deeply troubled me and consumed my thoughts. This way of life caught up with me in my mid 30's when my doctor told me, "It isn't a matter of 'if' you develop diabetes, but 'when'. Diabetes is on its way." I also had high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and high triglycerides. This was my wake up call. Many thoughts flooded my mind. I had 4 small children at home and I wasn't setting a good example for them. At almost 300 pounds, I was disgusted with how the miserable cycle of overeating had left me tired, empty, and out of shape. As a RN I had seen the devastation diabetes reeks on the body. But most of all, as a Christian I knew my bad habit was damaging my spiritual health as well as my physical one.

I began to diligently seek God in prayer and in His Word. It wasn't long after I found a series of Faithful Workouts programs on TV. I began doing Michelle's workouts by faith. I listened to her encouraging messages with an open heart and asked God to help me to change. I never gave up because the Christian music, Scriptures, and support from the online community kept me going. I didn't feel discouraged when I couldn't do an exercise move, because Michelle always demonstrated options for every physical level. She consistently encouraged me in every show to focus on what I could do and to be grateful that I could exercise! Many times God spoke to me during her shows and tears would stream down my face as I felt the Holy Spirit heal me inside and out! Miracles were truly taking place! God not only changed my heart toward eating and exercise, He set me free from a lifetime of seeking comfort in food! I learned to go to Him first and I gained victory over that vicious cycle of overeating.

March 2016 will be 3 years of Faithful Workouts. I can now say I LOVE to exercise and take care of God's temple! Not only have I lost over 60 pounds, 36 inches, and 4 dress sizes; but ALL of my labs and blood pressure are now completely normal! I have more energy and I have run five 5km races. I couldn't even run 3 miles without stopping in high school! I ran my fastest mile at 39!

I'm excited to continue on this journey of health knowing God will take me farther than I could ever imagine. Michelle's messages on Faith, Fitness, and Food continue to inspire, inform, and change me. I have confidence to do whatever God calls me to do. I have no doubt in my mind that Faithful Workouts is an answered prayer sent by God! Faithful Workouts has forever changed my life!”

April ~



*Journal about this week's victories and challenges:*

# Week 3

## Spiritual Health

### Are You Ready to Take on the 'Real' Challenge?

As we take on this challenge to improve our health, I think it's super important that we understand what the "challenge" is that we are actually taking on. Now this might be getting a bit deep for some of you, but please stay with me. I want to walk you through some verses of the Bible to help you understand the "challenge" and how you can beat it:

*"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." - John 10:10*

*"For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world." - Ephesians 6:12*

*"But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil." - 1 John 3:8*

*"You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty." - 1 Samuel 17:45*

*"Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit." Zechariah 4:6*

The first thing you need to be aware of is this: the devil wants to take you down. (John 10:10) I absolutely believe that one way he tries to get us is with our physical health. If he can get us to feel tired, weak, and guilty he knows it will be tougher for us to go spread God's love and truth.

He is thrilled when you don't take care of your body. He loves when you feel guilty about what you eat; his armies are happy as can be when you look in the mirror and hate what you see. His most powerful tool is "discouragement". Don't let him win this battle.

Our fight isn't with food and exercise, it's with the thoughts and decisions that keep us from making healthy choices.

But here's the Good News — we don't have to take on the devil, and the negative thoughts he wants us to believe, on our own. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 3:8) "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

When we feel defeated, when we start to believe the lies that tell us, "You'll never do this; you've tried before and failed. What makes you think things will be different this time?", or when we want to turn to food for comfort, we can call on God's power to help us. When David took on the giant Goliath, he didn't try and take him out on his own. He was completely aware of the fact that he wasn't equipped to win against

Goliath, but he absolutely believed that because of God's power working in him, he could conquer this giant. (1 Samuel 17:45)

That is the attitude we need to have when we start this journey: "On my own, it probably won't happen, but with God's help I can do this." So often, when we decide we want to lose weight and get fit, we think it is all about us having the power and might to make healthy decisions; but as soon as we realize that it can only happen when we allow God's Spirit to help us, we will succeed.

"The secret to victory is first to admit the futility of unaided human effort and then to trust God to save. His power works best through those who recognize their limitations. It is those who think they can do it on their own that are in the greatest danger."

This quote from the commentary of my Bible regarding 2 Chronicles really grabbed my attention. Although 2 Chronicles isn't about diet and exercise, this statement is critical in your journey towards better health because it reveals two things:

- 1) You can't do this on your own.
- 2) You need God's help.

Breaking free from the fitness frustration cycle starts with learning to tune into God's voice and to block out the voice of Satan.

Recently, I was listening to a sermon by John Leach and I heard this truth: "The difference between conviction and condemnation — Conviction is the Holy Spirit who is reminding you that's not who you really are. Condemnation is the devil coming into your life and telling you, 'I told you that's who you really are.' Condemnation can be an inroad where the enemy comes in. The minute you take that bait seeds of destruction are sowed into your soul."

When I first received a call from the National Religious Broadcasting TV station saying they wanted to air Faithful Workouts on their network, I heard this voice: "Oh, they must not know you are a nobody. Really?? You really think you can start an exercise program at the age of 47?" BUT instantly those negative thoughts were countered by these powerful words from God: "Don't you dare think this. You are my daughter and I created you. You were made for this." I had to take captive the condemnation the devil wanted me to believe and choose to be convicted by God's voice.

Has this ever happened to you? Have you ever heard negative thoughts and started to believe them? God's voice will never condemn you. He loves you and you are His child. He might lovingly correct you and convict you that you are not acting in a way that goes along with His plan for your life, but He will never ridicule you.

Satan, however, will use any tactic he can to get you to doubt yourself. On this journey to better health, you must learn to take captive these negative thoughts and not allow them to affect you.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 says: “The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

The strongholds referred to here are negative thoughts from satan that block us from knowing (growing closer to) God and doing His will. The trick to winning this battle of the mind is to instantly identify the thoughts that aren't good for you the minute they come to mind. Then, take them captive and make them obedient to Christ -- meaning: blow those negative thoughts away by going back to the truth of Christ and the truth of scripture.

In Galatians 5:16-17 it says, “So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires.”

When you believed Jesus died on the cross to forgive you for your sins, His Spirit came into your body. God's Spirit lives inside all believers. He is there so we can discern when satan's thoughts are slipping into our minds. We need to block out his voice so we can move towards life to the fullest.

If you want to beat the odds and live out your life with a body that is full of energy and strength, it starts by knowing you can't take on this challenge on your own. You need to allow God to walk alongside you, and guide you, on your journey to better health.

I finish with this quote from Kate Matott: “If you know the love of the Father, it is much easier to know the lies of the enemy.”

## **Questions**

In what ways do you believe, or not believe, that one of satan's primary strategies for holding you back from a full life is putting self-defeating thoughts into our minds?

Which of these thoughts are the most common ones that prevent you from staying diligently on God's path? Guilt. Shame. Fear. Laziness. Low self-esteem. Self-loathing. Cynicism. Indifference. What verse can you memorize to overcome the lie?



# Physical Health

## Nutrition 101

Eating healthy can be overwhelming. What should I eat? Which brand is best? What's the difference between simple and complex carbs, and which is better for me? Is fat making me fat, or is sugar the real problem? What portion size is right for me? The list of questions goes on and on. The reason so many throw in the towel when it comes to eating healthy is because it's too overwhelming. So much of what we read contradicts what we read in a different article. HELP!!

I'm sorry this is so confusing, and I hope to simplify it so you can confidently make decisions as to what you should or shouldn't eat. Let's call this "**Nutrition 101.**"

### #1: Eat What God Created

*Genesis 1:29*

*"Then God said, 'Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food.' "*

*Genesis 9:3*

*"Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.*

Healthy eating in its simplest form is this:

God Created You

God Created Food

Eat What God Created In Its Most Natural State

When God created the world, He had a plan. His plan was perfect. When He created us, He created food to fuel our bodies. If we want to give our bodies the nutrition they need to function optimally, we need to turn to His natural food source.

Really, this is where it all begins. The majority of the food we eat should be the simple, great-tasting foods God created, without any additives. Fruit, vegetables, nuts, eggs, beans, meat, chicken, fish...your body can best process the foods that your Creator made for you. These foods will offer the best fuel for your body.

When trying to decide if something that's packaged or prepared is healthy, look at the ingredient list. As you read through the list, can you picture in your mind what those foods are? Are they natural foods that God created? Unhealthy ingredients cannot produce a healthy food. Did you hear that? When looking at the packaging of food, look at the *ingredients* and forget about the rest of the information on the package.

I used to work for Nestle Foods, and I know the purpose of packaging is to get us to buy the food. "Healthy, Light, Low-Calorie, Low-Fat..." These words are placed on the package to encourage you to buy the item. Sometimes the item actually is healthy, but chances are it still isn't the best choice. Better choices don't have ingredient lists. You don't see an ingredient list attached to a fresh apple or to a bunch of carrots, because they don't need an ingredient list — they are whole, natural foods.

OK — did I get my first point across? Eat the foods God created!!

## **#2: Cut Back On Sugar**

"Sugar can act like poison in high doses — and the amount in our diets has gone beyond toxic," says Robert Lustig, M.D., a neuroendocrinologist at the University of California at San Francisco School of Medicine. Refined sugar causes inflammation in our bodies, and studies show that inflammation is the root cause of most of our life-threatening health issues. If you want to decrease your risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, and many other diseases, you need to reduce your sugar intake.

Before we go deeper into our discussion on sugar, I want to clarify something. I'm not talking about the sugar that is found naturally in fruits, vegetables or dairy, but about the refined, sugar that is added to foods. Our bodies know how to process natural sugars, but they struggle when we put refined sugar into them, especially in large quantities.

Our sugar consumption is out of control, and most of us don't even know it. You might think to yourself, "I don't eat a lot of sweets; I'm OK when it comes to sugar," but I bet the amount of sugar you are actually eating would shock you.

Over two-thirds of the refined sugar used in this country is added to processed foods. For instance, did you know that a tablespoon of ketchup contains a full teaspoon of sugar? Think about that: 1/3 of Ketchup is sugar. Foods like breads, soups, cereals, cured meats, hot dogs, lunch meat, salad dressings, spaghetti sauce, crackers, mayonnaise, peanut butter, pickles, frozen pizza, canned fruits and vegetables, tomato juice, and lots of other products all contain sugar. This doesn't even take into account the obvious sugary products, like candies, cakes, ice cream, cookies, doughnuts and soda.

"Sugar consumption is now an epidemic," says Mark Hyman, M.D. We are eating ourselves sick.

We were told from childhood on that sugar causes cavities, but that's just the start of the problems. When we take in large quantities of sugar, like most of us do, it wreaks havoc on all parts of our health. Diabetes, obesity, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, heart disease, liver failure...the list goes on and on.

Most of us know that sugar is bad for us, but why is it many of us still consume so much of it? It could be because we are addicted to the white stuff. Studies show that sugar is every bit as addictive as cocaine. We struggle to take it out of our diets because our bodies crave it. I don't know about you, but I don't want to be addicted to anything that's not good for me!

Please, cut back on sugar!

The American Heart Association and the World Health Organization agree that we should consume no more than 24 grams (6 teaspoons) of sugar each day. (Less is absolutely OK, but no more than this amount.)

The only way to know how much you are consuming is to keep track. It's important to know that 4 grams of sugar equals 1 teaspoon. So if something lists 12 grams of sugar it's the same as 3 teaspoons. Starting today, begin looking at how much sugar is in the food you are eating, write it down and challenge yourself to keep it under 24 grams.

If you are craving something sweet, grab a piece of fresh fruit or some carrot sticks. It's probably not going to be easy to cut back on sugar. You may experience fatigue and maybe even mental fuzziness. You will literally experience withdrawal symptoms, just like a drug addict does. Battle through it! Call on God to help you. Over time, your cravings will diminish and the natural energy in whole foods will surprise you with their ability to keep you focused and feeling great. I promise you, your body and mind will be thankful you did it!

### **#3: Never Say "Diet" Again**

How does it make you feel when you are about to start a diet? For most people, when they hear the word "diet" it stirs up feelings of deprivation and sadness. "Diet" also makes us think of a short-term, temporary eating plan that leads to weight loss.

What if, instead of going on another diet, you decided, "I am going to start eating healthier. I am going to start eating more of the foods God created. I am going to give my body the fuel it needs." Doesn't that sound much more exciting?

Your eating plan should be one that you can see yourself doing for the rest of your life. It's not a temporary fix; it's a lifestyle.

Not only does "dieting" create negative feelings, it's also not the best way to lose weight and keep it off. One of the biggest mistakes people make when they want to lose weight is going on a diet that has them cut their calorie intake way back. Starving your body can trigger a self-defense mechanism that has your body store fat to keep it functioning while it is not getting enough food. Also, when you drop your calorie intake way down it can slow down your metabolism, making it harder to maintain your weight over the long term.

Diets typically focus on weight loss, and weight loss doesn't necessarily mean better health. If I only put diet soda into my body, I may lose weight, but I will be moving away from better health. Healthy weight loss will take time. Forget about going on another diet, and just be thankful you can start eating healthier!!

## #4: Eat Breakfast

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. The word “breakfast” comes from the words “break” and “fast”. Most of us don’t eat all night, so when we wake up we have been fasting for about 10 hours. If we want to be ready to take on the new day, we need to break the fast and fuel our bodies so we have energy, better concentration and problem-solving abilities throughout the day.

Forty years of studies focusing on the effects of breakfast show that starting the day with breakfast benefits everyone — children, teens, and adults. “Eating breakfast is very important for the brain and the body first thing in the morning,” said Los Angeles registered dietitian Gail Frank, spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association. “Breakfast skippers often feel tired, restless or irritable in the morning.”

Not only does breakfast give you the energy you need, it also helps you to maintain a healthy weight. “Breakfast is also very important for weight loss and weight management,” Frank said. “It helps curb your hunger and prevent binge eating later in the day.” I love when I’m told that if I eat, it will help me to maintain my weight!!

Many people say “lack of time” is the reason they don’t eat breakfast. Here are some quick and healthy breakfast suggestions that take less than 4 minutes to prepare. Come on, I know you can spare 5 minutes in the morning.

- Apple or banana with almond butter
- Plain yogurt (Take a look at how much sugar is in your fruit yogurt — it will shock you. I encourage you to buy plain yogurt and add your own fresh fruit.)
- Breakfast smoothie (plain yogurt, frozen peaches, frozen 1/2 banana, coconut water and spinach — that’s one of my favorites, but we have several recipes in our online cookbook.)
- Eggs and black beans scrambled together. Top with salsa
- Sautéed spinach with a poached egg
- Lettuce wrap: Put a piece of leftover meat from the previous night’s dinner into the center of a romaine lettuce leaf and roll it up.

Don’t limit your breakfast choices to typical “breakfast foods.” Most American breakfast foods are full of sugar and white flour, which don’t provide our bodies with the fuel they need. When you eat healthy first thing in the morning, you have set the tone for the rest of your day.

## Questions

What most motivates you to reduce your sugar intake? What is something you can do starting today?

Are you convinced that “crash diets” are not the way to go? Be honest. If you are still tempted to follow a new quick weight loss diet, what can you do to change it to an eating plan you can do for the rest of your life?

List 3 quick, healthy breakfast ideas that you feel would work for you.

Please check the boxes below that best describe where you are at with your faith, fitness and food.

This does not describe me at all ←→ This describes me very well  
 1                      2                      3                      4                      5

### Faith

1	2	3	4	5	I am clear about how I connect best with God (music, church services, online sermons, nature, solitude, fasting, community of believers, serving, reading..)
1	2	3	4	5	I am reading my bible more frequently
1	2	3	4	5	I am growing in my prayer life
1	2	3	4	5	I have people in my life who are encouraging me in my faith
1	2	3	4	5	I enjoy and seek out opportunities to serve others
1	2	3	4	5	I trust God in all areas of my life
1	2	3	4	5	I believe God hears my prayers and He can help me
1	2	3	4	5	I guard my heart and mind by what I listen to and watch
1	2	3	4	5	I spend time alone with God. It's a priority for me
1	2	3	4	5	I am becoming more like the person God created me to be
1	2	3	4	5	I am more aware of the sins in my life and am acknowledging them before God
1	2	3	4	5	I value God's opinion over the opinions of others
1	2	3	4	5	I choose obedience over comfort
1	2	3	4	5	I believe with God's help I can accomplish my goals
1	2	3	4	5	I believe my faith plays a role in my health
1	2	3	4	5	I am pleased with where I am in my faith journey

### Fitness

1	2	3	4	5	I make exercise a priority by scheduling it into my weekly routine
1	2	3	4	5	I believe if I consistently exercise I will be happier
1	2	3	4	5	I understand the connection between exercise and good health
1	2	3	4	5	I believe if I don't make exercise a priority it will negatively effect my health
1	2	3	4	5	I am highly motivated to exercise
1	2	3	4	5	My exercise routine is well rounded with cardio, strength, core, balance and flexibility
1	2	3	4	5	I push myself to give %100 during each workout
1	2	3	4	5	I am pleased with my current fitness level

Food					
1	2	3	4	5	I try and eat only fresh, whole foods - the ones God created
1	2	3	4	5	I drink at least 64 oz of water throughout the day
1	2	3	4	5	I keep my sugar intake to under 24 grams a day
1	2	3	4	5	I view food as fuel for my body
1	2	3	4	5	I do not turn to food for comfort
1	2	3	4	5	I make time to plan out my meals
1	2	3	4	5	I make time to cook healthy foods
1	2	3	4	5	I eat a well balanced diet
1	2	3	4	5	I look at the ingredients list before I buy packaged food
1	2	3	4	5	I have self-control when it comes to my eating
1	2	3	4	5	I am pleased with my current food choices

Which 3 statements do you feel will most improve your life if you could bring them to a 5? What can you do to start moving them in that direction?

### *Weekly Goals*

Write down your weekly goals.

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write Down Your Weekly Workout Plan. (don't leave until you fill this in)

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

*Journal about this week's victories and challenges:*



# Week 4

## *Spiritual Health*

### Know Your ABCs

I want you to succeed on your journey to better health. Really, I do. Even though I might not know you personally, I pray for you and hope you begin to make healthy, lasting changes. I want you to have the strength and energy needed for you to live life to the fullest!!

Because I want this for you, I want to share with you the “ABCs of Fitness” and why I believe they are critical to your success.

### "A"

#### ASK

God tells us throughout the Bible that we are to ask for His help. In John 16:24 we are told, “Ask, using my name, and you will receive, and you will have abundant joy.” In Matthew 7:7 God clearly tells us, “Ask and it will be given to you.”

Why is it that so many Christians don't ask for God's help in EVERY area of their lives, including healthy eating and exercise? Is it because we don't think He cares about how we eat or if we exercise?

The truth is, He cares about all parts of your life.

*"Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." 1 Peter 5:7*

Do you worry about your health? Do you care about your health? If so, God's waiting to help you—after all, He's the one who created you!

Please pause and take a moment to talk with God about your health. Share your fears with Him, especially if you think you will make the same mistakes you've made in the past or if you fear you will start out strong and then fall into old habits. Talk to Him like you would a close friend.

Don't hold back. Ask for His help; ask Him to give you the strength to stay faithful to this program and to change your heart's desires when it comes to eating and exercise. Ask Him to help you have a better attitude about food and fitness. Take a few minutes to sit quietly and talk with Him. Don't be afraid to ask Him for His help.

"B"

## BELIEVE

Do you truly believe God can help you? Do you believe the Holy Spirit, that lives in you once you believe in Jesus, will give you the strength and power to make these changes? Do you have the confidence that you will succeed this time? Do you believe Philippians 4:13 — “I can do all things through him who strengthens me?”

God is BIG. He created the Universe. He really can help you on this journey to better health. Believing you will succeed isn't prideful when you understand you can only do it because of God. This is really important to understand: Confidence is not based on your own abilities; rather, your confidence comes from believing God's Word and knowing He can transform you when you turn to Him.

"C"

## CHECK YOUR MOTIVES

God cares about all parts of your life. He will give you the strength to succeed, but there's a catch — your motives must be in line with His will.

“. . .the Lord examines their motives.” Proverbs 16:2

“. . .if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.” 1 John 5:14-15

What are your motives for wanting to get fit? Sometimes it's difficult to be in the world but not of it. The world's messages tell you to exercise and diet so that you will have a “great looking body” that will “impress others.” Do your motives line up with the world's message or with God's will? God doesn't care about outward appearances (1 Samuel 16:7), but He does want you to use your whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God. (Romans 6:13)

There's a story in the Bible about the importance of our motives. In 1 Chronicles 21, King David decides to take a census. There is nothing wrong with taking a census; in fact, in Numbers God ordered a census. The problem was, King David wanted a census done because of his pride. He wanted to show how powerful he was. God knew David's motives and sent punishment down from heaven.

So often, the things we do, even things God has given us, can become sinful when our motives do not line up with God's will. Exercising and eating healthy are not sinful, of course, but if pride and vanity are motivating us they can become sinful. God will not bless sinful behavior.

If you're focusing on making changes so you can look a certain way, you may have to do it under your own steam, without His power helping you. You are likely to stay trapped in the cycle of yo-yo dieting and failing at your fitness regimen.

God has a plan for your life. He wants you to have strength and energy. Please think about these ABCs and reach out to God. He will help you. Through Him, all things are possible!

### **Questions**

Which of the ABCs will be the most challenging for you — asking for His help, believing He can help you or keeping your motives in line with God's will?

In what other areas of your life do you feel you can use the ABCs?

# Physical Health

## Weight Loss Basics

Look at these staggering statistics from the World Health Organization's website:

- Worldwide obesity's more than doubled since 1980.
  - In 2014, more than 1.9 billion adults, 18 years and older, were overweight. Of these, over 600 million were obese.
  - 39% of adults aged 18 years and over were overweight in 2014, and 13% were obese.
  - Most of the world's population live in countries where overweight and obesity kills more people than underweight.
  - 42 million children under the age of 5 were overweight or obese in 2013.
- Obesity is preventable.**

For most of us, our excess weight is simply a byproduct of not using all the energy we put into our bodies. A "calorie," according to the Cambridge Dictionary, is "a unit used in measuring the amount of energy food provides when eaten and digested." When you take in calories, your body converts them into energy for it to use. When you take in more calories than your body uses, the extra energy is stored as fat. This fat storage will stay in your body until you take in fewer calories than you need.

Visualize an old fashioned scale. If we want to maintain our weight, we need to balance the calories/energy coming in with the calories/energy that are being used. If we want to lose weight, we need to use more calories/energy than we take in. If we want to gain weight, we need to take in more calories than we use.

One pound of weight is equal to 3,500 calories. So when you take in 3,500 calories above what your body needs, you will gain a pound. The reverse is also true: if you want to lose a pound, you need to use up 3,500 more calories than you take in. Although your body weight isn't necessarily a gauge of your overall health, we do know that it is important to maintain a healthy weight.

The mathematical equations behind weight loss seem fairly simple, but there's a twist. Losing weight doesn't always bring us closer to better health— and isn't better health what we are really striving for?

For weight loss to be healthy, we have to fuel our bodies with the healthy, natural foods that God created. We want to eat foods with a high nutrient-per-calorie ratio. This means choosing foods that are both high in nutrients and low in calories. 400 calories of chocolate cake and 400 calories of lean protein are not the same. It's important that you look at what's in the calories and not just at the number of calories.

Lowering your caloric intake is one way to lose weight. The other part of the equation is to increase the calories you are using. The number of calories we use during a day is determined by our physical activity and our metabolism.

The number of calories we burn while exercising varies from person to person. The size of the person, the intensity level, and how long you exercise are a few factors. I am often asked how many calories are burned during one of our workout videos, but the truth is I don't know. I can tell you that on average a 155 lb person who is exercising at a high intensity will burn about 500 calories during a 1 hour workout.

It's awesome that we burn through calories at a faster rate when exercising but what's even more exciting is that we can burn through calories at a faster rate 24/7 when we increase our metabolism. Mayo Clinic explains metabolism this way:

“Metabolism is the process by which your body converts what you eat and drink into energy. During this complex biochemical process, calories in food and beverages are combined with oxygen to release the energy your body needs to function.

Even when you're at rest, your body needs energy for all its 'hidden' functions, such as breathing, circulating blood, adjusting hormone levels, and growing and repairing cells.

The number of calories your body uses to carry out these basic functions is known as your basal metabolic rate — what you might call metabolism.”

Since our metabolism plays a large role in weight management, let's look at ways we can increase it and what we need to avoid.

**Strength Train:** The best way to jump-start your metabolism is to exercise. Strength training burns calories, but more importantly, it increases your lean muscle mass. By increasing your lean muscle mass, you will increase your metabolism, because muscle tissue uses more calories than fat tissue. You will not only burn more calories while you are exercising, but you will burn more calories all day and all night. Every pound of muscle uses about 6 calories to sustain itself, but a pound of fat only uses 2 calories.

As we age, we naturally lose muscle mass. When we lose muscle mass, our metabolism slows down, and that is why it is harder to maintain a healthy weight as we age. Strength training is the best way to minimize the muscle loss.

**Drink Water:** Another way to keep your metabolism elevated is to drink water. When your body is even slightly dehydrated it can cause your metabolism to slow down. One study revealed that women who drank 8 glasses of water per day burned more calories than those that drank only 4. It's also good for so many other parts of your body.

**Eat Breakfast:** Breakfast plays a role in your metabolism too. Your body has been deprived of food throughout the night; therefore your metabolism has slowed. If the cells do not receive sufficient nutrients, they will begin to function less efficiently on smaller amounts, and they will actually store more fat to use during these times of nutritional deprivation.

**Eat Small Amounts Often:** Eating six small meals a day will keep your body's fuel supply consistent and keep your metabolism revved up. Avoid eating late at night because your metabolism naturally slows down in the afternoon and evening. Instead, eat a hearty breakfast in the morning.

**Eat the Right Foods:** Choosing healthy foods, such as lean protein and vegetables, can actually increase your metabolism. It requires more energy from your body to digest protein than it does to digest fat. Increase your dietary fiber and limit sugary foods, alcohol, caffeine — and don't smoke.

## Spot Reduction

People often ask me questions like, “How can I lose my belly fat?” and “What exercises will make my thighs thinner?” The truth is, there is no way to lose fat in one certain spot of your body. Body fat has a mind of its own. It appears and disappears from wherever it wants to. I think that to better understand why this is, you need to learn a bit about fat distribution.

Remember, you need fat on your body. You need fat in your diet for your body to function properly. Everyone has adipose (fat) tissue all over their bodies. This tissue is made of adipocytes (fat cells), whose sole job is to store energy in the form of fat. Body fat distribution differs from person to person. There are generally two types of fat storage: *visceral* (surrounding organs), or *subcutaneous* (beneath the skin — about 80% of all body fat).

Many people compare subcutaneous fat to the layers of an onion. Rather than disappearing from a particular place, it comes off layer by layer from the whole body. For others, fat is lost from the most recent place it was gained.

Does this mean it's worthless to exercise? Absolutely not!!! Exercise burns calories, so it will speed the process of losing fat. But exercising vigorously on a specific body part ***will not take fat away from just that area***. You can tone the muscles in that area, but it won't have any effect on the fat.

This is important to know because too often, people will focus their exercise efforts on one area, which can produce muscle imbalance. By exercising your entire body with a mixture of cardio and strength training and eating healthy, you are doing the best you can to get your body to a healthy place!

## Weekly Goals

Write down your weekly goals.

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down your weekly workout plan. (Try and increase your number of workouts)

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

### *Inspirational Story #2: Julie*

There was a time when I thought I was too busy to exercise. I knew I was carrying extra pounds I did not need but I figured my gene pool was to blame for this. If asked, I may have told you I was content with myself but, truthfully, I was settling for a lesser version of my health and fitness than God ever intended for me.

That all changed, the very first time I heard Michelle speak. It was such a different message—exercise so you can live life to the fullest and have the strength and energy to do it. Although I knew she was so authentic and was correct in all that she encouraged me to do, I implemented the changes ever so slowly. First, I had to make exercise a priority again. Then, I gave up sugar and added a ton of vegetables (I was trying new foods for the first time in my life at age 45). Every workout took me progressively toward increasing my strength and endurance. With every workout, she provided tips on eating or drinking water or recipe ideas. But the greatest part was the message she presented. It was not just her message, it seemed to come straight from God. The messages challenged me and encouraged me, made me laugh and, occasionally, made me cry.

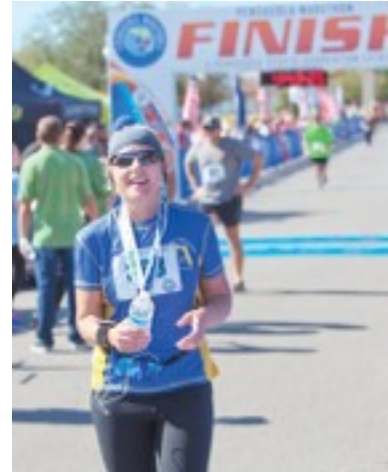
Faithful Workouts does not compartmentalize life—we need all three: fitness plus food plus faith!

Since becoming a “regular” with Faithful Workouts, I have achieved (with God’s help) things I never dreamed possible: 2 full marathons, 4 half marathons and a tough bicycle race that was 120 miles long and climbed 10,000 feet. But the best thing that Faithful Workouts enabled me to do was to take a high-need, 21 year old girl with Cerebral Palsy to a week long Christian camp. I could never have performed all the assisted activities and transfers without the strength, endurance and encouragement that Faithful Workouts has provided me for the last six years!

The message of Faithful Workouts is a one-of-a-kind!

The goal is not about making you look ready for the beach but it’s about getting you ready for a level of health and fitness that allows you to do things you never even dreamed you could do.

Julie ~



*Journal this week’s victories and challenges:*



# Week 5

## *Spiritual Health*

### Counterfeit gods

“You shall have no other gods before me.” (Exodus 20:3)

The first commandment God gave us in Exodus was to have no other gods. When you first heard this commandment you probably thought, “No problem with this commandment; it’s not like I am making a gold calf and worshipping it.” But let me ask it this way — is there anything in your life that you put before your relationship with God?

Are there days when I think I don’t have time to read my Bible or pray because I’m too busy? Sadly, it happens. Are there days that go by when I’ve been so focused on something that I completely forget to talk to God and ask for His guidance? Sadly, this happens too.

Do you ever turn to something or someone other than God when you need comfort? Do you turn to other things or people for joy? I am not saying we shouldn’t have people or things in our lives that help comfort us or bring us joy, but God wants to be the One you turn to first. He knows He is the only way you will receive peace and joy that can’t be taken away.

Tim Keller, in his sermon called “Counterfeit Gods,” puts it this way: “A counterfeit god -- or an idol -- is anything more fundamental than God to your happiness, meaning of life and identity. An idol is anything you rest your heart in more than God or love more than God. Idols are not necessarily bad things, but they are things you look to to give you what only God can give you.” This puts a different spin on the idea of worshipping other gods.

In Deuteronomy 4:24 we are told that God is a jealous God. This verse can easily be misunderstood if you don’t really understand who God is. I remember hearing years back that Oprah said that this verse was one of the reasons she turned away from Christianity. She didn’t want to connect with a “jealous” God. I believe this verse in Deuteronomy and our commandment to have no other gods has nothing to do with God building himself up, but rather has everything to do with us. His jealousy is really all about His love for us.

God doesn’t want us to turn to other things over Him and He is jealous for all of our love because of His amazing love for us. He knows our path to peace, purpose and lasting joy can only be found when He is our everything; when we put Him alone on the throne.

Too often, we put the god of food in front of God. We want to be comforted so we turn to food instead of God. I have to say, I don't like the term "comfort food," and I have to think it saddens God when we turn to food for comfort instead of Him. I picture our loving Father in heaven, holding out His arms to us, saying, "Come to me all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. I alone can give you the comfort you need right now. Snuggle into my arms and tell me what's troubling you. I created food to give your body the energy it needs. I never created it to comfort you. I am your Comforter."

When was the last time you ate something that brought you lasting comfort and peace? When was the last time you ate a hot fudge sundae and it took away all your worries and sadness? It doesn't work. Food will never be able to do what God alone can do. Please stay here a moment and let this sink in.

As I was reading an awesome book called "gods at war" by Kyle Edelman, I came across this poem:

*Jesus My Portion*

*The god of food promised us a feast but we came up empty.*

*He invited us to consume, until it consumed our lives.*

*We tasted everything, until nothing had taste anymore.*

*And so finally we came to Jesus. We discovered that he offers the one true feast.*

*He fills our every need.*

*Every hunger ultimately leads back to him.*

*Jesus frees us from an abusive, dysfunctional relationship with food because he is our portion and in him we discover what we were searching for all along.*

*If we seek our joy and meaning in food, then the source of our joy always disappears and always must be found again — a consumable god.*

*It is different with Jesus.*

*Nothing tastes better than the joy and satisfaction of knowing Christ.*

*Nothing nourishes the soul as he does.*

*Nothing feeds and strengthens and renews us like the time we spend with him each day.*

If this poem touches your heart, like it did mine, print it out. Put it on your fridge, on your mirror or next to your pillow. Let it remind you of God's open arms, ready to pull you in and give you what you need.

## Physical Health

### Time-Saving Tips

Probably the #1 reason people give for not eating healthy or exercising is “lack of time.” If you struggle to find time to eat healthy and exercise, keep reading!!

There are quite a few “Time-Saving Tips” I could share, but I want to focus on one top time-saving tip for cooking and one for exercising.

#### **Time-Saving Tip for Cooking: Repurpose Food**

Probably not what you were expecting me to say, but let me explain what I mean by this. When I cook something, I typically have several ways I will prepare it over the next few days.

Let me show you what this looks like:

#### **Day 1**

##### Dinner:

Grilled chicken, steamed broccoli, sautéed red peppers & onions, quinoa

#### **Day 2**

##### Breakfast:

Poached egg on top of diced broccoli & quinoa

##### Lunch:

Cold quinoa salad with diced chicken, cucumbers & red peppers, dressed with balsamic dressing

##### Dinner:

Enchiladas stuffed with chicken, peppers and onions, salad dressed with cucumbers and balsamic vinaigrette

Here is how you can cook these meals in no time. On day 1, make enough chicken for dinner on day 1. Also for the quinoa salad and enchiladas on day 2. Steam extra broccoli and dice it up into small pieces for breakfast on day 2. Dice extra red peppers (but don't cook them) for the quinoa salad. At dinner, make extra quinoa for breakfast and lunch on day 2. Sauté enough peppers and onions for dinner on day 1 and for the enchiladas on day 2. When you slice cucumbers for the quinoa salad, cut extra for your dinner salad that night. Make balsamic dressing for lunch and dinner. Head over to the food tab at [www.faithfulworkouts.com](http://www.faithfulworkouts.com) and check out our other meal plans.

Do you see how this works? Here is another example:

### **Day 1**

#### Dinner:

Pork tenderloin, baked apples, roasted potatoes, and sautéed zucchini

### **Day 2**

#### Breakfast:

Pumpkin pancakes topped with baked apples

#### Lunch:

Pork lettuce wrap and potato salad (use leftover roasted potatoes)

#### Dinner:

Pork, zucchini, and onion fried rice

To cook and eat this way takes planning, but if you invest some time into the planning you will save so much time in the cooking, AND you won't be tempted to stop for some fast food.

So often, we get into a rut when it comes to cooking. Think outside the box, plan out a few days' meals and get creative in how you repurpose the food you cook.

If you need to pack a lunch, it's great to make extra meat and vegetables for dinner and then make a big salad topped with the extra meat and veggies from the night before. People who know me well make fun of me because I'm always talking about how I used my leftovers to make other meals. I often cut up my leftover meat and vegetables from dinner and scramble them with an egg or put a poached egg on top of them.

You can do this! If you just put in a little time and effort, you will discover that you do have time to eat healthy!!

### **Time Saving Tip for Exercise: Multi-Muscle Exercises**

We know that cardio, strength, core, balance, and flexibility exercises need to be included in our weekly exercise plan, but when we're short on time it's hard to choose what to focus on. When I'm short on time and I want to try to give my body all it needs, I turn to multi-muscle exercises. Multi-muscle exercises are defined as "any exercise that engages two or more different joints to fully stimulate entire muscle groups and multiple muscles."

You know the old saying, “Too much of a good thing can be bad”. This can be the case with multi-tasking, so I want to caution you as I write this. There are times when I get joy out of getting lots of things done efficiently. There’s a sort of “productivity buzz” I get. But if we overdo multi-tasking it can cause stress and anxiety and our effectiveness actually decreases.

I consider multi-muscle exercises to be the “good” kind of multi-tasking. As the name suggests, multi-muscle exercises utilize multiple muscle groups at the same time (such a creative name).

In our daily lives, we move in ways that require us to use multiple muscles together. Walking up the stairs while carrying groceries or laundry is an example of this. When we work out with multi-muscle moves, we are training our muscles to work together.

A great example of this type of exercise is a back-step lunge with a bicep curl. You are using your large leg muscles and your glutes while doing the lunge, and you are also using your bicep muscle to perform the curl. When you are doing this type of move, you are also required to engage your core muscles to keep your body in proper alignment. When you are using that many muscles at once, your heart will pump harder to get enough blood to all the muscles, which means you are also getting a cardio workout. Think about that: upper body, lower body, core and cardio all during one exercise!

Other moves that are “multi-muscle” are any of the moves we do in a bent-over position. When we bend forward at our hips, our lower back and core muscles are required to work to safely keep us in this position. Once in the bent-over position, we can work other muscles like our rhomboids (upper back) or triceps (backside of arm) . These exercises are classic multi-muscle moves.

When you work out using a step you are obviously using your leg muscles when you step up and down. If you add a shoulder raise while stepping, it becomes a multi-muscle move. Again, you will feel your heart rate elevate because of the number of muscles you are engaging.

It is important to pay close attention to your form during the multi-muscle moves. If you are new to exercise, I don’t recommend multi-muscle exercises. It is important that you feel confident in the form of a single exercise before you do it at the same time as another exercise. If you do not feel confident doing a back-step lunge on it’s own, do not try adding a bicep curl to the movement.

It is also important to pay attention to your core muscles during multi-muscle moves. For instance, when doing bent-over tricep extensions, it’s easy to focus on your triceps and forget to keep your core tight. If you don’t draw in the core muscles, you risk injury to your lower back.

When you combine a variety of multi-muscle exercises in your workout, you can get an amazing workout in only 15 minutes. When doing multi-muscle exercises, enjoy the moment and know you are getting the most from your workout.

**Question**

What other time-saving tips can you incorporate into your exercise and nutrition plan?

*Weekly Goals*

Write down your weekly goals.

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

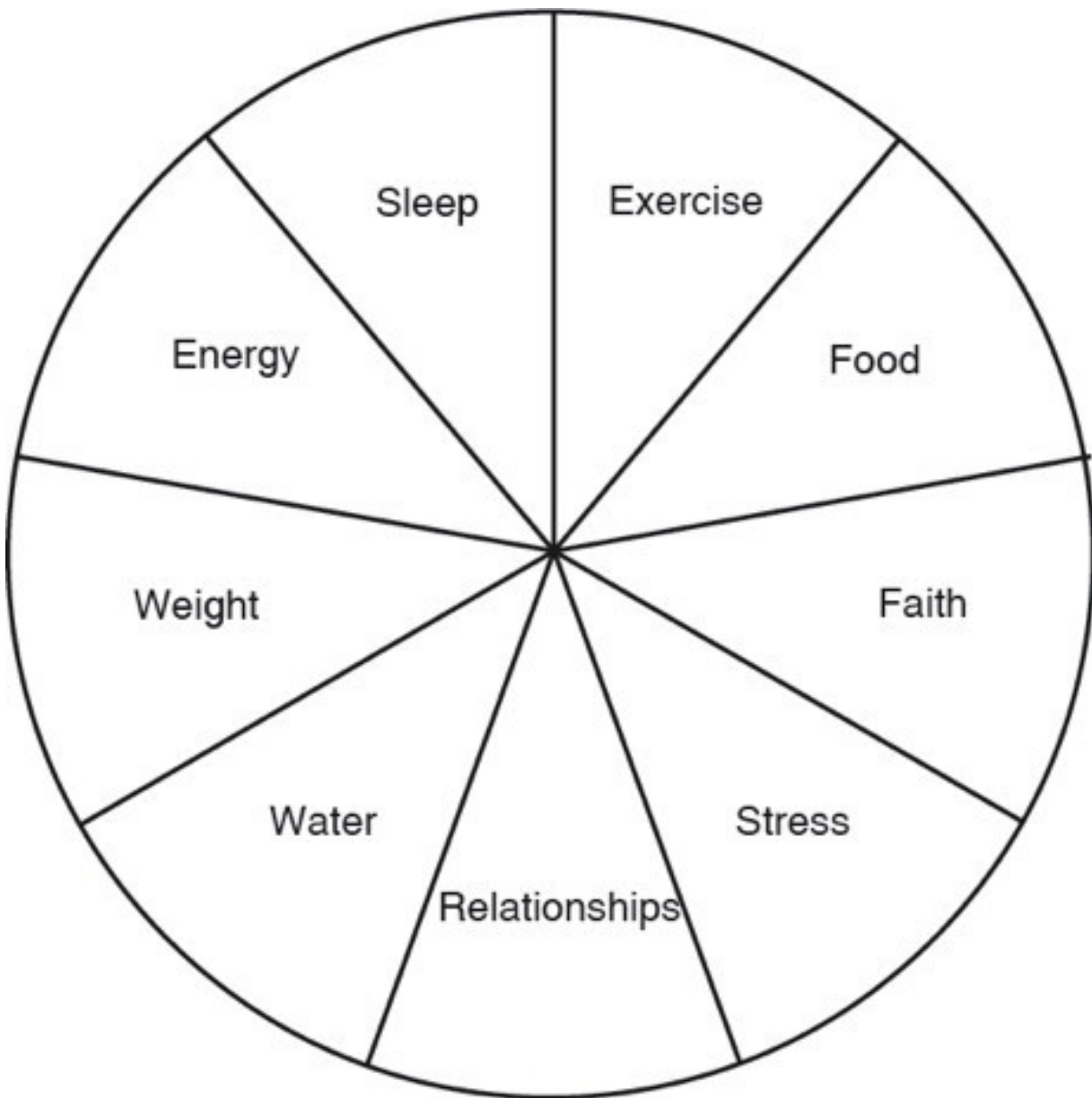
Write down your weekly workout plan. (give 100% to each workout you do)

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

## Health Assessment

There are many different areas of our life that influence our health. Often, when one is out of whack it effects the others. Think of the last time you had a bad night sleep. Wasn't it tough to find the energy you needed. Didn't it effect how you interacted with others. It's important when we want to move towards better health that we think about ALL of these areas.

Take a moment to shade in the pie pieces. The more area you shade in for each piece, the more satisfied you are with that area. If you shade in all the pie piece int means you couldn't be better with that part of your life. If you don't shade in any of the piece it means this is a huge struggle for you.



*Questions regarding your health assessment:*

1. If you could change only one area tomorrow, which would it be, and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Which area seems too overwhelming to change? What are three things you can do to start increasing your satisfaction with this area of your life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What area, do you believe, will have the most negative long term effect on your health if you don't make changes to it? Write down what these negative effects are.

*Journal this week's victories and challenges:*



# Week 6

## Spiritual Health

### Don't Look at the Waves

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is found in Matthew 14: 24-31:

*“Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. About three o’clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, “It’s a ghost!”*

*But Jesus spoke to them at once. “Don’t be afraid,” he said. “Take courage. I am here!”*

*Then Peter called to him, “Lord, if it’s really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.”*

*“Yes, come,” Jesus said.*

*So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. “Save me, Lord!” he shouted.*

*Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. “You have so little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?”*

I think we can discover so many truths about our journey to better health through these passages. You are probably thinking, “What??? What does this have to do with my health journey?”

Here is what I believe about this story from Matthew:

1. When we are struggling to exercise and eat healthy, Jesus is saying, “Don’t be afraid. Take courage. I am here.” He cares about everything you do and He wants you to talk to Him about all the things that worry you. He promises to be with us always. It’s our choice: Do we want to put our trust in Him and step out of the boat, or do we want to stay in the boat and live in fear? It might seem easier to stay in the boat, but joy comes in trusting and “walking on water.” Are you ready to trust God and ask for His help on your health journey?
2. When Peter finds the faith to get out of the boat, he walks on water! But what happens as he is walking? He takes his eyes off Jesus and he looks at the waves. He fears the waves are too much and he starts to sink. Do you ever do

this? Do you ever take your eyes off of Jesus and instead focus on everything that is happening around you? What wave are you looking at? What is causing you to take your eyes off Jesus? What is causing you to fear that you won't be able to make the lasting, healthy changes you know you so badly need?

Is it the scale that isn't moving like you want it to? Is it someone in your life who says, "Why even try to lose weight? You know you haven't kept with it in the past." Or is it your own thoughts of doubt: "I'll never do this, so why even try?"

You must remember: "Nothing is impossible with God." (Luke 1:37) Turn your eyes away from your challenges and keep your eyes glued on Jesus, and you will succeed.

3. When we mess up and start to sink, all we need to do is extend our hand and allow Jesus to pick us up. Too often, if we skip a workout or eat something we know we shouldn't, we immediately think, "Oh, here I go again; I'll never be able to do this." Don't do that to yourself. Having a bad day is just that — a bad day. When you eat something you shouldn't or you skip a workout, don't fall into thinking "Here I go again." You can always start fresh the next morning. Don't concern yourself with yesterday.

We all make mistakes, and when we do, we just need to cry out, "Save me Lord!" like Peter did when he started to sink. Jesus will be there, ready to extend His hand and help you. I love this quote: "Failure is not the falling down, it's the staying down." (Mary Pickford)

4. The last part of this story really touches me because I think this is so true for many of us — we doubt whether Jesus can really help. We ask for His help, but there is something deep within us that doesn't fully understand the true power of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. I mean, think about it: God's Spirit is in you — of course He can help!! Cast all doubts away, and have complete confidence in Jesus' power.

Zechariah 4:6 has become my go-to verse when I doubt whether I am capable: "Not by might, nor by power but by my Spirit."

This verse reminds me that I am not capable on my own. I don't have the power or strength to do the plans God has prepared for me, but with His Spirit, I'm unstoppable!!

## Questions:

What waves are you looking at that are causing you to take your eyes off Jesus? What is causing you to fear that you won't be able to make the lasting, healthy changes you know you so badly need?

If you are willing to be vulnerable, discuss this with someone close to you or with your group. Ask what they think your wave is and, with love, let them know what you see as their wave.

One night, my son Quinn and I were talking about these verses. We talked about how much we love this story and how there is so much to learn from it. I asked him if he wanted to talk about what he thought my wave was, and then what I thought his wave was. He was willing to dig into this. What he said to me took my breath away. He said, "Mom, when it comes to Faithful Workouts, don't worry about the money. Don't let the money be your wave — just keep doing what God is asking you to do and it will all be OK." (Is he not the cutest thing ever?) I will never forget his words, and I believe God was speaking to me through Quinn.

## *Physical Health*

### *The Importance of Drinking Water*

One of the simplest and least expensive ways to improve your overall health is to drink water. Your body is made up of about 70% water, which plays a vital role in nearly every bodily process. Water is essential for proper digestion and circulation, numerous chemical reactions, nutrient absorption, waste elimination and flexibility of the blood vessels. It regulates your body's temperature and benefits the skin by acting as an internal moisturizer, keeping the skin moist, supple and clear, as well as preventing premature aging due to toxic buildup.

Imagine: water does all this AND it doesn't add any calories to your body! There is no substitute for water in providing your body with what it needs for optimal cellular function.

I remember a famous actress saying once, “I drink plenty of water, it just has ground up coffee in it.” NOT!! Most people think coffee or soft drinks count as sufficient hydration, so it is not surprising that an estimated 75% of North Americans are chronically dehydrated and fail to drink the suggested eight glasses of water per day. Not good, considering water is the second most important nutrient for your body (next to oxygen).

The question of “How much is enough?” is not that simple to answer, because it varies from person to person and depends on things like your activity level, the weather, and your size. However, a good general rule is to drink 64 ounces of water a day. I have also heard that you should drink at least half your body weight in ounces of water. So if you weigh 140 pounds, drink 70 ounces of water. Again, this amount may vary when you factor in other variables.

Please realize that drinking too much water can also be harmful. Drinking too much can make your kidneys work overtime to filter excess water out of your blood/ circulatory system. Forcing your body to accept too much water within a short period of time can actually be deadly (in extreme circumstances). Try to space out your water consumption throughout your day.

Some people feel thirsty often, so they drink plenty of water. Others can go all day without feeling thirsty. Thirst can be a reliable indicator, but it isn't always. If you don't feel thirsty, you need to monitor your water intake to make sure you're drinking enough.

Another indicator as to whether you are drinking enough water is the color of your urine. Clear urine indicates that you are well hydrated, while dark yellow urine indicates that you need more water in your system. Remember that some chemicals/medications (like synthetic vitamins) and heavily pigmented foods (like redbeets) can add substantial color to your urine.

When you are ill, eating or drinking anything can be the farthest thing from your mind. Yet it's vital to maintain a good level of hydration to help the immune system fight off infection and assist in eliminating the by-products of any illness. Dehydration weakens your body's overall immune system and leads to chemical, nutritional and pH imbalances, which can eventually cause sickness and premature aging.

If you get bored of drinking plain water, here's a list of fun ways to flavor your water naturally:

Strawberry & Cucumber

Pineapple, Mint & Ginger

Cantaloupe

Orange & Raspberry

Watermelon & Mint

If you still need extra encouragement, know that people often think they are hungry when it is actually hydration their bodies are craving. Instead of reaching for something to eat, try drinking a glass of water first. Also, when we are dehydrated it can slowdown our metabolism, making it easier to put on weight.

Now go fill up a glass of water and start drinking! I find that if I carry a water bottle with me throughout the day, I drink more water.

### **Questions:**

If you struggle to drink enough water throughout the day, what are some things you can do to encourage yourself to drink more?

### **My Water Story**

*In August 2009, my family was in England enjoying a home exchange. My husband had just returned to a meeting in the US and I was going to spend the last week in England with my three children, who were 14, 13 and 11.*

*I woke up one morning feeling off. I was nauseous and a bit weak. I just didn't feel good. Well, over the next five days I deteriorated. I went to the doctor, who had no answers. Another doctor came to the house – still no answers. My husband was wondering if he needed to fly back. My mom wanted to get on a plane and help. My kids didn't know what to do.*

*By day five I was scared. I really couldn't do anything. I hadn't eaten anything. I wish I could fully explain what I was going through but it's hard to put into words. The best way I can describe it is that it felt like every cell in my body was dying. I felt like I was dying.*

*I was taken to the hospital, severely dehydrated. They still had no answers, but they gave me lots of IV fluids. I flew home. I needed a wheelchair to get on and off the plane. I could no longer walk. The flight home brought some of the most challenging hours of my life.*

*As soon as I was wheeled off the plane and saw my husband I broke down crying. I screamed, "Just get me to the hospital, just get me to the hospital." We went straight*

*to the hospital – they loaded me with IV fluids again and ran even more tests, but no answers. We went back home for a day, and then back to the hospital, where at last, they found an answer. We finally had a diagnosis. I had contracted a parasite (cryptosporidium) from the drinking water in England. I know – who goes to England and gets a water parasite?*

*By this time, my digestive system was in bad shape, and my liver results weren't great either. For 13 days I didn't eat, and then for 10 days I was on an extremely restricted diet. Not a healthy way to lose weight!*

*So often, when I am talking to someone about a challenge in their life, they say, "You can't understand what I am going through because you haven't walked in my shoes." And they're right, I probably can't really relate, but I have walked in the shoes of someone who is suffering from a parasite. I have felt the incredible misery of this disease. I would have died of dehydration if I hadn't had access to medical care. My kids would have watched me die.*

*It makes my heart absolutely break for the moms who watch their children die from a parasite from drinking dirty water and they can't do anything to help them.*

*I believe God allowed me to go through this so I could share it with you. I know this because one morning, when I was lying in bed asking "WHY??", I heard the word "inform." I knew God wanted me to share what I had been through.*

*It is easy to take clean drinking water for granted because we can have a glass whenever we want one. All we have to do is go to a sink, turn on the faucet and drink as much as we want. The truth is, most of the world isn't so fortunate. The United Nations Development Program, in its annual Human Development report, states that 1.1 billion people do not have access to safe drinking water. The most heartbreaking news is that 5,000 children die **each day** because of a lack of access to safe drinking water. That means 5,000 parents watch their children die from a preventable cause.*

*I encourage you to pray and ask God if He wants you to support a water ministry. There are great ministries whose goal is to allow everyone a clean glass of water. They bring them physical water, but offer them living water too.*

*I really mean this: I am thankful I went through this experience if it moves you to action. Like I said, I have walked in their shoes and I felt their pain.*

## Weekly Goals

Write down your weekly goals

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down your weekly workout plan. (be thankful you are healthy enough to exercise)

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

## *Inspirational Story #3: Sharon*

Faithful Workouts was the spark that changed my life. I started doing Faithful Workouts primarily for the exercise. I liked the music, loved Michelle, and found the workouts to be tough and to have a lot of variety.

But that little spark... that constant message about Jesus loving us and wanting us to be healthy so we can better serve him... turned into a flame! By doing Faithful Workouts several times a week, I found myself thinking about God 7 days a week not just on Sundays. I found myself to be more calm and peaceful and patient with people because we're all just trying to make our way and to be loved and accepted. The music that Michelle plays just saturates my heart each time I do the workouts and I realize that I'm almost praying while exercising because I'm listening to - and sometimes singing along with - lyrics that are right out of scripture.

I am more fit and healthy as a result of Faithful Workouts. Not just the workouts but the recipes and tips have helped me to make yummy but easy meals that just happen to be healthy as well. I also find myself listening to K-Love or the Message on in the radio instead of news or pop music.

So what started as a little spark has really grown to a flame that encompasses my whole life. I'm reading the bible more now, not because I'm "supposed to" but because I'm curious! I want to learn as much as I can about the way God wants us to live and how he sent his Son as the example of that life. I hear Christian songs through Faithful Workouts and I go look up the lyrics because I want to truly understand the message. I think about what I eat and make an educated decision - is this fuel for my body or junk for my body?

Michelle really has a way of simplifying things... whether it's boiling down a message in the bible to simple terms, making cooking easy by having limited ingredients and minimal effort, or showing simple options in the workouts, I feel like anyone can just come as they are and Michelle meets them where they are... which is not easy to do over videos or TV but somehow she manages to do just that.

I'm grateful for Faithful Workouts and have plans to keep on going well into my 50s, 60s, 70s and beyond!  
Sharon ~



*Journal this week's victories and challenges:*



# Week 7

## *Spiritual Health*

### God is Good, Especially During Our Challenges

On August 23, 2013 I took a ride in an ambulance with my oldest son, Neal, in the back . I couldn't believe what was happening: my son had taken pills.

During the year prior to this night, I could feel that Neal was under spiritual warfare. I know Satan wants to take down all believers, and especially those whom he knows will make a huge impact for the Kingdom, but I had never felt warfare more tangibly than I did in my own son.

About a year and a half before August 23rd, Neal had started to go public with his faith in Jesus. He was posting scripture on Facebook and wanting to start a Bible study at school. Neal has tons of charisma and Satan knew that if Neal really got on fire for God he could have a huge impact. So Satan wouldn't leave him alone.

When other things in Neal's life started to fall apart, he became weak and started to believe the lies he was hearing from Satan. Neal had been diagnosed with an autoimmune disease a few months earlier, he was also told he needed major shoulder surgery in June (which meant no sports for a long time). Because of the surgery, he had to quit a job he loved. He was also having some girl issues at the time, and, on top of all that, got 2 speeding tickets, which cost him quite a bit of money. But even with all this going on, the life he presented to the world through his social media and even to his close friends and family made it look like he had it all together. No one, not even his dad or I, knew how much it was affecting him.

Neal didn't know what to do with all these feelings, and so one night, August 23rd, he took Ambien (my husband had them in his office for when he traveled internationally). He didn't want to lie in bed thinking about all these things; he just wanted to forget it all. Thankfully, soon after he took the pills we found out about it.

Worst moment of my life!! Yet, I was OK.

I just remember shouting out to God, "Please God, save him!" We didn't know how much he had taken and immediately called 911. Thankfully, Neal had only taken 3 Ambien and not the whole bottle. It wasn't enough to cause damage to his body. He slept it off in the hospital without the need of medical help. As he lay there sleeping, I stared at him in shock. It broke my heart to know that my son, whom I loved soooo much, had been so unhappy.

From the hospital he was transferred to the psych ward at a local hospital. I can't explain what it was like to visit him there. He couldn't wear shoes because of the danger of shoe laces; they ripped the ribbon out of the Bible I gave him; he couldn't be alone with his guitar because of the strings. It was so surreal.

After 4 days in the hospital, he came home and I remember thinking, "Now what??? Do we just return to life as normal?" I was so thankful that he had transferred to a Christian school just a few weeks before. We met with Neal's counselor, who was awesome and immediately prayed for Neal and opened up about some of his own family challenges so Neal wouldn't think he was judging him.

We also found a Christian therapist. This wonderful older man loved Neal, truly loved Neal, and helped him so much. Neal learned to forgive himself for things in his past and, most importantly, learned how loved he was by God. He took all the head knowledge he had about God and realized he was uniquely and personally loved just as he was.

Since then, we have seen Romans 8:28 lived out. "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them."

What Satan meant for harm, God used to move Neal to become the man He created him to be. Through this low point in Neal's life, he learned that although he knew all about God and the Bible, he didn't really **know** Him. He finally allowed (and welcomed) God into all parts of his life and felt the love God had for him.

Neal started to speak out about this at his school. With the help of his youth group leaders, he created a video that was shown to hundreds of kids in his youth group. Several parents have told my husband and me about the impact Neal has had on their own children. They told us how Neal had reached out to their children and changed the direction they were heading. Neal could feel their pain. He'd been there, and was able to share his story.

I used to wonder if, I would still trust God when hard things came my way. I learned through this experience that God truly is my Rock. My husband and I leaned into God and never doubted that He was at work, even in this challenge. I learned to trust that God loved my son more than I did. I came to understand how helpless I am at changing situations and how hugely powerful He is.

If you and your family are followers of Jesus, it doesn't mean you have to pretend that you are all perfect. Years before all this happened, when I was still fairly new in my faith, I remember thinking, "I really hope that as a family we don't mess up in a big way because so many people know we are Christians and I would hate to ruin God's reputation." In some quiet time as I was talking to God about this, I heard Him say, "Michelle, thanks for your concern; but I've got my reputation and it isn't wrapped up in your family behaving perfectly."

After Neal and I talked on TV about what had happened, I heard from several others who had gone through a similar situation, but felt they needed to hide it from their Christian friends and Church. They realized that sharing their story would allow people to pray for them and give them Godly advice.

When going through challenges, know that God is right there by you. His Word promises this over and over. Isaiah 43:2 says, "When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you." I LOVE that the last words Jesus says as He is taken up to Heaven are these: "And be sure of this: I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20).

It brings me such peace to know that nothing "surprises" God about my life. He knows all that has happened and all that will happen. He knows when trials will hit and He is ready to give me the love and support I need to get through it.

Trust that God is at work even when you can't see it. This poem says it so beautifully:

### Life is but a Weaving (The Tapestry Poem)

By: Corrie ten Boom

My life is but a weaving  
Between my God and me.  
I cannot choose the colors  
He weaveth steadily.

Of'times He weaveth sorrow;  
And I in foolish pride  
Forget He sees the upper  
And I the underside.  
Not 'til the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly  
Will God unroll the canvas  
And reveal the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful  
In the weaver's skillful hand  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned  
He knows, He loves, He cares;  
Nothing this truth can dim.  
He gives the very best to those  
Who leave the choice to Him.

Until you get to heaven, you might not understand why you had to go through something, but like Neal says in a video he made for our church's youth group, "It's a workout for your religion. You go through all this pain and you come out stronger."

Neal just received a Masters in Divinity and is passionate about helping the least of these. What Satan meant for harm, God used to bring Neal closer to Him!

God is good — all the time!

Here are some additional verses you can cling to when you go through trials:

James 1:2-4

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Joshua 1:9

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go. "

John 16:33

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

**Questions:**

Have you had challenges in your past that God has redeemed for good? Write them down so you can remember them when you face new trials.

Is there something going on in your life that you realize you aren't trusting God with? What can you do to allow God to bring you peace?

# Physical Health

## Osteoporosis and Alzheimer's Disease

As I age, it is sad to hear about the health challenges of my parents, and my friends' parents. Alzheimer's disease and osteoporosis come up often as diseases that are affecting so many of our aging parents. I am committed to doing what I can to try and prevent my loved ones from having to go through either of these diseases with me. I know there are no guarantees. I can do everything listed but still suffer from these, but I say to my kids that I am doing all I can do. Are you doing all you can to reduce the risk of your loved ones having to see you suffer from osteoporosis or Alzheimer's?

### **Osteoporosis**

Osteoporosis is a bone disease that is characterized by progressive loss of bone density and thinning of bone tissue, causing bones to break easily. Over 10 million people in the United States already have osteoporosis, and millions more have lost some bone mass and are likely to develop osteoporosis in the future. More than 80% of those affected are women.

Because osteoporosis causes our bones to thin, it is easier for them to fracture. Osteoporosis leads to over 1.5 million fractures each year in the United States. A recent study reported that those who suffer a fracture because of osteoporosis are at increased risk of dying for 5 to 10 years following the fracture.

Obviously, osteoporosis is a major problem. The good news is there are things you can do to prevent it.

### **Exercise**

One of the best ways to prevent osteoporosis is exercise. Studies have shown that the risk of osteoporosis is lower for people who are active, especially for those who do cardiovascular exercise with impact and strength exercises. Jogging, vigorous hiking or walking, stair-climbing, step aerobics, dancing, racquet sports, and other activities that involve impact are great for building bone strength. When we do high-impact movements, the jarring of the feet hitting the ground tells our bodies to build up our bones. We do need to be careful, however, because we don't want our impact exercises to be so intense that we cause an injury.

Strength training is also important for our overall health, but it is especially helpful in preventing osteoporosis. When we use weights, exercise bands, water or our own body weight as resistance, it is considered a strength-training exercise. Twenty minutes of strength exercises benefits not only your bones, but improves heart health, muscle strength, coordination, and balance.

If you already have osteoporosis, it is still important to exercise. You should speak to your doctor to learn what types of exercises you can safely do to preserve and strengthen your bones. Exercise alone can't completely prevent or cure osteoporosis, but it sure can help!

## **Diet**

If you want to decrease the risk of osteoporosis, eating foods high in calcium, vitamin D and magnesium are the most important dietary changes to make. Next, limit your alcohol. If you drink more than two alcoholic drinks per day you could be increasing your risk of osteoporosis. Smoking can also rob you of bone mass!

Calcium, magnesium, and vitamin D all work together to ensure our bones stay strong. If we lack any of these three, we increase our risk of osteoporosis.

## **Calcium**

Calcium is a mineral that builds bones and keeps them strong. In most people, bones continue to grow stronger until about the age of 30. As we age, our bones can become weaker. When our bones are weaker they are less dense. Bone density or bone mass is determined by the amount of calcium and phosphorus that a specific bone contains.

Foods high in calcium are important for bone growth. On average, we need about 1000mg of calcium per day before age 50 and 1200 mg after age 50.

Calcium is found in a variety of foods. Some foods have naturally-occurring calcium in them, while others have calcium added. When calcium is added to a food it is called calcium "fortified." If you do not get enough calcium from your diet, you can get calcium from a supplement. Speak with your doctor before taking supplements to see what is right for you.

Here's a list of foods that are rich in calcium. Amounts of calcium per serving may vary depending on the name brand of the product.

Milk: 1 cup = 296 mg

Yogurt: 1 cup = 300-415 mg

Cottage Cheese: 1 cup = 120 mg

Cheddar Cheese: 1 ounce = 212 mg

Turnip Greens: 1 cup = 250 mg

Kale: 1 cup = 180 mg

Broccoli: 1 cup = 100 mg

Sardines with bones: 3 ounces = 275 mg

Tofu (processed with calcium sulfate) 3 ounces = 225 mg

It is important to keep track of your calcium intake. If you don't get enough calcium each day through your diet or supplements, your body will be deficient of this mineral. Then your body will break down the bones to replenish itself and bone strength will decrease.

## **Vitamin D**

Calcium absorption is critical to bone mass, but vitamin D is needed for our small intestine to absorb calcium. If we take in calcium but we don't have vitamin D, our bodies won't absorb it. If we don't absorb calcium, our bones can't use it.

We can get vitamin D from sun exposure, food and supplements. Vitamin D is naturally made under the surface of your skin when your skin is in direct sunlight. The tricky thing with exposure to the sun, though, is that you need to be in direct sunlight, without sunscreen, during the midday for about 15-40 minutes each day (studies show that time needed for sufficient vitamin D production can vary according to skin pigmentation). Ideally, you need to have your legs, arms and face in direct sunlight (no clothes covering) for the vitamin D to be produced. Because of the risk of skin cancer, we need to be careful when doing this.

You can also get vitamin D from the food you eat. It is difficult to get enough vitamin D from food because few foods contain vitamin D naturally.

Foods with Vitamin D include:

- Egg Yolks

- Some fish, including herring, sardines with bones, halibut, catfish

- Cod liver oil (yum yum!)

- Liver

Some common foods have vitamin D added (milk, certain cereals). These are called "fortified" foods. Almost all of the vitamin D in the American diet comes from fortified foods.

If you are unable to get enough sunlight or do not get enough vitamin D in your diet, you may want to take a vitamin D and a vitamin K supplement. Again, consult your doctor before taking supplements.

## **Magnesium**

Magnesium is needed to get the calcium where it needs to go. Without enough magnesium, calcium can collect in the soft tissues and cause a type of arthritis. Magnesium actually puts the calcium where it is needed – in your bones. It also takes it out of the soft tissues, which can help prevent arthritis. Obviously, magnesium is important to the health of your bones.

Foods that are high in magnesium include:

Bran (rice, wheat and oat)

Seeds (pumpkin, flax, sesame, sunflower)

Nuts (Brazilian, almonds, cashews, pine)

Soybeans

I want to clarify how these three work together to be sure you understand the importance of getting enough of each of them.

**Calcium:** Builds strong bones

**Vitamin D:** Allows the body to absorb the calcium

**Magnesium:** Takes the calcium that is absorbed and tells it where to go

### **Alzheimer's Disease**

As painful as it can be to watch someone you love suffer from osteoporosis, I think it would be even more painful to watch someone you love come to the end of their life because of Alzheimer's.

"Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder that is characterized by a steady decline in cognitive, behavioral and physical abilities severe enough to interfere with everyday life. Symptoms vary from person to person, but all people with Alzheimer's disease have problems with memory loss, disorientation and thinking ability. Individuals with Alzheimer's disease may have trouble finding the right words to use, recognizing family and friends, and may become frustrated, irritable, and agitated. As the disease progresses, physical problems may include loss of strength and balance, and diminishing bladder and bowel control. As more and more of the brain is affected, basic life functions, like swallowing and breathing, become irreversibly damaged, resulting eventually in death". (Department of Health Services Website)

The Alzheimer's Association says, "A small percentage of people with Alzheimer's disease (less than 1 percent) have an early-onset type associated with genetic mutations. Individuals who have these genetic mutations are guaranteed to develop the disease." There is nothing we can do to prevent this type of Alzheimer's.

The larger percentage of people affected by Alzheimers do not have the generic mutation and should do all that can to reduce the risk of getting it.

Three of the most important lifestyle choices we can make to reduce the risk of Alzheimer's (and most life-threatening diseases) include:

1. Reduce stress
2. Exercise consistently
3. Eat a healthy diet



At Faithful Workouts we refer to these as *faith, fitness and food*.

**Faith:** If you want to decrease your risk of Alzheimer's, you need to reduce your stress levels. Our emotions drastically affect our physical health. The more we learn about the adverse effects of stress, the more motivated we should be to make lifestyle changes. If you want peace instead of stress, I've found — and the Bible makes it clear — that the way is through Jesus. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27)

**Fitness:** The Alzheimer's Research & Prevention Foundation states that regular physical exercise (150 minutes per week, which includes cardio and strength exercises) can reduce your risk of developing Alzheimer's disease by up to 50 percent. Please don't read this too quickly. If you choose to exercise, you can decrease your risk of Alzheimers by 50%!!! Come on, if that doesn't motivate you to get moving, what will??? Also, exercise can slow the progression of the disease for those who have already started to develop cognitive problems.

**Food:** Inflammation within our bodies and insulin resistance have been discovered to injure neurons and interfere with communication between brain cells. Alzheimer's is sometimes described as "diabetes of the brain." A diet that reduces inflammation and keeps our insulin levels from spiking may help keep our brains healthy. This means keeping sugary foods from your diet. (Have you ever heard me say this before?!!!) Fatty fish, olive oil, dark berries, beans, vegetables...all the foods we know are good for us can also keep us free from Alzheimers.

### **Questions:**

Reducing stress, exercising consistently and eating healthy are also listed as ways to prevent heart disease, cancer, stroke and so many other diseases. Knowing this, what is **really** keeping you from making daily lifestyle choices that will improve your health? Dig deep, don't just say what most people say ("not enough time").

*Weekly Goals:*

Write down your goals

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down your weekly workout plan. (try a new type of workout this week)

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

*Journal this week's victories and challenges:*

# Week 8

## Spiritual Health

### Joy Always

People often interchange the words “joy” and “happiness,” but they are actually quite different. Happiness is based on our circumstances. Things, situations and people can make us happy or unhappy.

Joy, on the other hand, is more lasting. I like how Rick Warren describes it: “Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be alright, and the determined choice to praise God in every situation.”

Joy is not based on warm fuzzy feelings of happiness. It’s a much more settled and consistent feeling. Joy is not affected by what is outside us; it comes from our hearts.

“The Apostle Paul had a strong and steady underlying consistency to his life. Consequently, he could let his external life change without internal distress because he was rooted and grounded in God.” (from *My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers)

The “strong and steady underlying consistency” mentioned above is referring to Paul’s relationship with God. He was so filled with God’s Spirit that the outside world couldn’t take away his peace and joy.

Imagine if you could live like that. Imagine being peaceful through it all. Imagine feeling joy through it all. Imagine that, even when life around you is falling apart, you still have joy. This only happens when we fully trust God. Only when we know how much He loves us, and only when we believe He is with us, can we have peace and joy, even when everything around us seems to be tumbling down.

I know this is possible because it just happened to me.

My mom was scheduled for major back surgery. She was 84 years old, so, of course, there were some risks involved with the surgery. This was my mom’s fourth back surgery, and I had been there with her for the first three. I felt I needed to be there. I knew how her body responded after surgery. I knew what to tell the nurses. I planned on being there; my ticket to Florida was already bought.

As I was getting ready to leave for my mom’s surgery, my son, Neal, was having issues with his health. He had been diagnosed with ulcerative colitis a year prior, but something was going really wrong. He hadn’t been able to keep food inside of him for a few weeks and it was getting worse.

The day before I was to fly out for my mom's surgery, I was concerned that Neal was going to be admitted into the hospital. I felt I couldn't leave to be with my mom because my son needed me.

Before I continue, I need to back up about seven years to my mom's first back surgery. About three weeks before her surgery, during my prayer time, I mentioned to God how cool it would be if my mom's favorite verse was emailed out by K-Love as their verse for the day on the day of her surgery (I receive a daily verse from K-Love radio station). I wasn't saying this to test God. Honestly, I really didn't know why I even mentioned this to Him.

I woke up the morning of her surgery, not even thinking about my prayer weeks earlier, but God had obviously remembered it. I checked my email that morning before we headed to the hospital, and what do you think came in? Yep, K-Love's verse that day was my mom's favorite, Psalm 118:24: "This is the day the LORD has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it."

When I saw the verse, I remembered my prayer weeks earlier and I had this overwhelming feeling of God's presence. I knew He was so close. I ran into my mom's room, saying, "He's got this. He's with us!!"

During her eight-hour surgery I was at peace. Of course, I wanted my mom to live, but I felt so certain of God's presence that I was OK if He chose to bring her home to Him that day. My mom's surgery didn't heal her back the way we had hoped, but we never doubted that God was there, comforting us through it all.

So now, back to my mom's recent surgery. I so wanted to be there and felt it was critical that I be there to make sure everything was done properly. My sister Nicole also wanted to be there but couldn't get there until a few days after her surgery. As my mom was wheeled into surgery, she met the two nurses who would be with her in the operating room. Their names? Michelle and Nicole.

When I was told this amazing news, I had, once again, this amazing feeling of peace. God was with her. I thought it was so important for me to be there, but God reminded me that, much more importantly, He was there. While my mom was being operated on I took Neal to the hospital for more tests, to another doctor's appointment and then back to the hospital.

It was so crazy; I wasn't worried about any of it. I'm serious — it wasn't just that I wasn't worried; I was actually filled with JOY. I couldn't believe that God, who sits on His throne, overseeing the whole world, was so personally involved in my life. He knew that when I heard the names of the nurses I would be flooded with the feeling of His presence. He loves me so much that He wanted me to have peace and even joy.

This same God loves you too!! He wants to bring you peace and joy in all situations. When we think about how huge God is and all He does to care for us, doesn't it seem silly to turn to food or other things for comfort, peace and joy?

Like Paul, we can have a strong and steady underlying consistency to our lives. Our external lives can change without affecting our internal peace because we are rooted and grounded in God.

We know stress is bad for our physical health. Peace is the antidote to stress. Even if we do the greatest exercise routines daily and eat the cleanest, healthiest food, we can still be unhealthy if we allow the outside world to cause us to be stressed. Only when we consistently connect with God, wanting to know Him more and more, will we be able to experience peace and joy always.

Stress and worry are the biggest joy-stealers. If we want to minimize stress and worry, we need to trust God. If we want to trust God, we need to come to know Him better. Many of us worry because it gives us the illusion of control. We need to think of all that could go wrong and make sure none of it happens. If something does happen we need to be prepared to fix it. This rationale shows a lack of trust in God. It shows we doubt that He is capable of handling it, so we think we need to take control.

I am one who has to consistently work to let go of control. I am a “get-it-done” type of person. Only through realizing that I actually have very little control, and by learning to trust God, have I been able to relinquish worry.

A sermon I heard years ago also helped me see how useless my worry was, and it freed me up to experience joy always (well, almost always). My pastor said that 75% of the things we worry about never happen, and 75% of the things we worry about are completely out of our control. (I might be slightly off on the % amounts.) I remember that as his sermon continued, I became determined to work at giving ALL my worries to Him. (1 Peter 5:7)

I love this Mark Twain quote.

*“I’ve had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened.”*

I’m not saying I sit and do nothing when life gets challenging, but my hope is to move only where I feel He is directing me. I try to do my part and trust God with the rest.

If worry is zapping the joy out of your life, please memorize these verses from the book of Luke: “Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? And if worry can't accomplish a little thing like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things?” (Luke 12:25-26)

A great book on joy is, *The Joy Model: A Step by Step Guide to Peace, Purpose and Balance*. The book gives you practical steps to build into your daily routine so you can experience Joy Always! (my husband, Jeff Spadafora, is the author of this great book that was released through Thomas Nelson Publishers)

## Questions

How would you define joy? Happiness? Peace?

Do you believe Philippians 4:4 is possible? “Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!” What can you do to experience joy more consistently?

What can you do now to minimize your stress and worries?

## *Physical Health*

### Entertaining and Evangelism

One of my favorite ways to spend an evening is sharing a meal with family and friends. So many of my greatest conversations have been over a meal in my home, or in someone else's. When you are in a home it seems more intimate and personal. You feel more freedom to talk about the real issues, the things that really matter.

I am so thankful that I love to cook and that it doesn't stress me out. I know that is not the case for a lot of you. I hear my friends talk about the anxiety they feel when having people over. If you are one that stresses about entertaining, here is my first piece of advice – it doesn't have to be perfect. You don't have to have a perfectly set table, a gourmet menu plan, and a spotless house — really, you don't.

Maybe this will help: When you go to someone's home and everything isn't perfect, how does it make you feel? For me, I am so glad they didn't feel like everything needed

to be perfect in order to have me over. It also reminds me that my home, my meal and everything else doesn't have to be perfect either.

Another way to make entertaining more enjoyable is to enlist the help of others. If you still have children at home (who are old enough to help), ask them to pitch in. They can set the table or help you do some of the dicing and chopping. I find that cooking together can be a great time to catch up with my kids. It's also a great hands-on way to teach them about health and nutrition.

My husband is a big help when we have people over. He's not one to plan the menu, but he always helps out. He's great on the grill, so my menu often includes something done on the grill. This spreads the workload out and frees up my oven. Guys seem to love to hang out around the grill, so I'm actually helping him connect with others! Another way my husband helps is by lighting candles or adjusting the lights to set the mood.

I also almost always ask people to bring a dish. I ask someone to do an appetizer, salad or dessert. I even let them help clean up the dishes! (Love to cook, hate to clean.) When I go to someone else's home, I offer to bring something to ease their load.

Another way to make entertaining less stressful is to choose a menu that includes dishes that are simple to prepare. I usually pick one or two things that are a bit more involved and exciting and keep the rest simple. Here is one of my favorite meals to prepare:

*Appetizer:* Fresh vegetables with hummus, cheese platter with grapes, sliced apple and pears (basic, but everyone loves it, especially with unique cheeses. Squeeze some lemon juice on the apples and pears if you don't want them to brown.)

*Vegetable:* Roasted asparagus: Preheat oven to 375°, cut off bottom ¼ of asparagus stems and discard. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt; cook for about 20 minutes.

*Side:* Rice with lime and cilantro (I have a rice cooker, which makes cooking rice so simple): Just cook your favorite rice, and after it is cooked, stir in some fresh lime juice and chopped cilantro.

*Entrée:* Grilled chicken with red pepper sauce: My husband grills the meat and I make the sauce in advance. The recipe for this sauce is in our online cookbook.

*Dessert:* Dark chocolate: Quite often I don't serve dessert, but if I really want to shock my friends I serve some dark chocolate. It's fun to get some good quality dark chocolate (I love it with dried cherries or orange peel), break it into SMALL squares, put it on a fancy platter and pass it around.

Entertaining doesn't have to be stressful. Much more important than a perfect meal and clean house is being able to sit and fully engage in the conversation. Your dinner guests will most likely be more moved by the conversation than by the menu. Let them know you care about them and are interested in what they have to say.



A few years back, my husband and I started something called “Cabernet and Conversation.” Before the guests arrive, my husband and I pray over some questions we can ask during dinner. Of course, we love to see people engaging in personal conversations when they first arrive, but when we have everyone sit for dinner, we get everyone’s attention and we share with them 2 different questions. We let them know they don’t have to answer, but if they want, they can share their thoughts on one of the questions. We typically have anywhere from 4-8 couples over so we suggest that everyone limit their answers to no more than 5 minutes.

Our hope is to come up with questions that people, no matter where they are in their faith walk, can participate in. Here are some questions we’ve asked in the past.

- What is the most significant thing that happened in your life in the last 3 months?
- What’s the best thing about your life right now?
- If money wasn’t an issue what would you do with your days?
- Name one great joy and one great sorrow you’ve experienced lately?
- How do you think you are uniquely gifted, and how can you (or have you) use that gift to help others?
- What makes you come alive?
- What is something you want to do more of, or less of, in your daily life?
- What’s the biggest challenge you are facing that you need some help with?
- If you had unlimited resources what would you most want to do with them?

When we invite people over, we make a point of looking outside our close Christian community. Our hope is to get a great mix of people: some who have already decided to follow Jesus, others who are still searching for truth and sometimes those who have different beliefs than we do.

I am always moved by our conversations and am so excited to see God at work around our dining room table.

I remember one night when we had a wonderful couple at our table who did not believe the Bible was truth. As we took turns answering the questions, our stories showed them the joy we had because of our faith. They could hear how God helped us through challenges. As the conversation was drawing to a close, the man said, “Even though I don’t share your same beliefs, I really wish I could have what you have.” He didn’t come to accept Jesus that night, but he was moved to tears while I prayed for him. I don’t think they had ever been part of a conversation that shared how God changes lives.

So, invite someone over to share a meal. Ask meaningful questions. Remember, your house and your meal don't need to be perfect. The more relaxed and engaged you are, the more enjoyable the evening will be!

## Weekly Goals

Write down your weekly goals.

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down your weekly workout plan. (scheduling your workouts is one of the surest ways to help you meet your weekly goals.)

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

## *Inspirational Story #4: Eileen*

In 2010 a friend invited me to do Faithful Workouts with her. At first, the faith piece seemed a bit weird as I didn't understand how physical health tied into faith. As time went on, my life became more balanced with exercising, eating well, spending quality workout time with friends, listening to good Christian music and Michelle's messages are just so inspiring. It started becoming the favorite hour of each day and I wouldn't even think of missing a workout. I liked feeling energized both physically and spiritually.

My family noticed the positive changes in me. Today, I am thrilled to say that my marriage, parenting and whole life has changed. It's also having a positive ripple effect on my family....and it's so amazing to witness.

Thank you Faithful Workouts for modeling what a balanced Christian life is all about.

Eileen~



*Journal this week's victories and challenges:*

## Week 9

### *Spiritual Health*

#### Biblical Principles Can Save Your Life

If you have been around church for a while, or if you've heard John 3:16, you know that when we believe what the Bible teaches, we will have eternal life. When we die we will live forever in Heaven, but did you know that the principles taught in the Bible are also associated with a longer life (and a much better life!!) here on Earth? When we follow what the Bible says, we improve our physical health and increase our life expectancy.

Let's look at two Biblical principles to show how this works

#### Forgiveness:

The Bible has many verses that talk about forgiveness. In Matthew 6:14-15 God tells us, "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

The command to forgive ourselves and others not only affects our relationship with God, it also greatly affects our health. Listen to the findings of a Mayo Clinic study:

When we remove or reduce unforgiveness we have:

- Less anxiety & stress
- Lower blood pressure
- Fewer symptoms of depression
- Lower risk of alcohol and substance abuse

Other studies add headaches, muscle stiffness, stomach pain, increased risk of heart disease, cancer and stroke to the list of health problems we may experience when we harbor unforgiveness. We damage both our relationship with God and our physical health when we refuse to forgive others.

What keeps us from forgiving others? Often, we refuse to forgive because we think someone doesn't deserve it, or that they should be punished.

"Unforgiveness is like drinking poison and hoping the other person dies."

(Margaret Stunt)

Many of us don't struggle to forgive others — our challenge is forgiving ourselves. There are things in my past that I regret. For years, I went to God and asked for His forgiveness about the same regrets, until one day I heard His kind voice say to me, “OK, Michelle, we’ve talked enough about these. I have already forgiven you for those things. You need to move on. Let’s talk about what’s going on now.”

God reminded me that He had forgiven me a long time ago, but I hadn't yet forgiven myself. It was so freeing to walk away from the past. Do I still regret those things? Yes — but I no longer have shame or feel I am not forgiven for them. I have talked to quite a few women who feel God can't forgive them because they had an abortion. They feel their sin is too great. I try to comfort them with the truth of God's Word:

EPHESIANS 1:7

“He is so rich in kindness that he purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son, and our sins are forgiven.”

1 JOHN 1:9

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

If you want to grow closer to God and improve your health, it’s time to forgive others and yourself. Joyce Meyer wrote a great article called, “The Poison of Unforgiveness.” I agree with her words on how to work towards forgiveness. She writes:

“One time I asked the Lord why so many people want to forgive but aren't successful doing it. And He said, ‘Because they aren't obeying what I tell them to do in My Word.’ As I searched the Word, I found the following instructions:

1. **Decide** – You will never forgive if you wait until you feel like it. Choose to obey God and steadfastly resist the devil in his attempts to poison you with bitter thoughts. Make a quality decision to forgive, and God will heal your wounded emotions in due time. (Matthew 6:12-14)

2. **Depend** – You cannot forgive without the power of the Holy Spirit. It's too hard to do on your own. If you are truly willing, God will enable you, but you must humble yourself and cry out to Him for help. In John 20:22-23 Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, “*Receive the Holy Spirit!*” His next instruction was about forgiving people. Ask God to breathe the Holy Spirit on you so you can forgive those who've hurt you.

3. **Obey** - The Word tells us several things we’re to do concerning our enemies.

a. Pray for your enemies and those who abuse and misuse you. Pray for their happiness and welfare. (Luke 6:27-28) As you pray, God can give them revelation that will bring them out of deception. They may not even be aware they hurt you, or maybe they're aware but are so self-centered that they don't care. Either way, they need revelation.

b. ...*Bless and do not curse them* (Romans 12:14). In the Greek, *to bless* means "to speak well of" and *to curse* means "to speak evil of." You can't walk in forgiveness *and* be a gossip. You must stop repeating the offense. You can't get over it if you continue to talk about it."

Forgive and be set free!!

### Peace:

Peace — isn't that something we all want? Wouldn't it be awesome to be at peace even when things around you seem to be falling apart? Peace is something we should desire not only because of the emotional and spiritual benefits, but also because of how it affects our physical health.

If we are striving for improved health, we need to learn how to replace stress with peace. When I use the word "stress," I am not talking about short-term stress. When a deer jumps in front of your car on a dark night, stress helps you to react quickly. This type of short-term stress does not damage your health. When I use the word "stress", I am referring to the definition the National Institute of Health uses: "Stress is defined as a process in which environmental demands strain an organism's adaptive capacity resulting in both psychological demands as well as biological changes that could place at risk for illness." Stress and peace are opposing forces.

Most fitness plans never address the adverse effects of stress. Some studies state that as many as 75% of all doctor visits are related to stress. You will never reach optimal health if you experience long-lasting stress.

Some of the main side effects of stress include:

Suppressed immune system

Increased risk of viral infections

Increased risk of diabetes

Increased risk of heart disease

Increased risk of cancer

Increased risk of stroke

Increased risk of Alzheimer's disease

Because you are reading this, I know you want to improve your health; so you must find a way to reduce your stress. I have found that the more I trust God, the more I am able to replace stress with peace. Hear me when I say that I haven't perfected this, but I have noticed a huge change in how I respond to situations that should be stressful.

My hope is to trust my Heavenly Father so much that I can get to a place of complete trust that leads to peace in all situations.

I know the only way any of us can trust like that is to draw closer and closer to God. When we fully grasp that God loves us, that He's in control and that He has a plan for our lives, we will feel more at peace.

Let's look at some verses that walk us through trust and peace, and ultimately, good health. I think these scriptures clearly show us how Biblical principles affect our physical health.

1. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not only your own understanding." (Proverbs 3:5)

We are told throughout scripture we should trust God.

2. "Those who know your name trust in you, for you, O LORD, do not abandon those who search for you." (Psalms 9:10)

In order to trust God, we need to know Him. The words "to know" in this verse don't just mean that you've heard the name "God" before. They mean you have a deep understanding of Him. You've experienced Him. The verse goes on to tell us to "search" for Him. To trust Him completely, we need to always be searching to know more of Him. It is a continual process.

3. "You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you." (Isaiah 26:3) If we want peace, we are told, it comes from trusting God.

4. "A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body." (Proverbs 14:30) The more doctors learn about health, the truer this verse becomes. Stress is now called the "deadly emotion." A healthy body has a peaceful heart.

I just love these verses and I challenge you to memorize them. When you feel stress coming on, you can recall God's Word and allow it to return you to peace.

I was shocked when I read that one of the top causes of chronic stress is concern about our weight. We worry, we feel guilty and we allow our weight to get in the way of our happiness. Worry and anxiety can actually cause us to gain weight. If you stress over your weight, you are only adding to the problem. Instead, turn to God and consistently use the tools we have provided you with, and you will move towards a healthier weight.

## Questions:

What is causing you stress at this time? What can you do to replace stress with peace? Choose a new Bible verse to memorize so that when you feel stress coming on, you can turn to this verse for peace.

Are you harboring unforgiveness towards anyone? Go to God with this and ask Him to help you release this. (Remember though, Matthew 18:35 says we need to forgive “from our heart.” We can’t just throw out the words — we need to mean them.)

What is there from your past that you feel God has not forgiven you for, or that you haven’t forgiven yourself for? What should you do about it?

## *Physical Health*

### Total Body Workout

“There are so many different types of workouts; how do I know what’s best for me?” This is a question I am often asked. The truth is, the best type of workout is the one you will actually do!! It’s important that you find a workout you enjoy, but you also want to make sure you are getting maximum benefits from your workout.

Your exercise plan should include these 5 components:

1. Cardiovascular: Elevated heart and breathing rate



2. Strength: Using the resistance of weights, exercise bands, water or body weight during muscular contraction
3. Core: Exercises that target abdominal and back muscles
4. Balance: Train and strengthen small muscles to prevent falling
5. Flexibility: Movements that take muscles through full range of motion

You do not have to do all 5 each time you work out, but ideally you should do each of these at least 3 times a week. If you love to walk, and you walk at a fast enough pace that you increase your breathing and heart rate, it's considered a cardiovascular workout. Walking at a fast pace is great, but it does not include any of the other 4 components; so you still need to work them into your weekly plan.

Here is a sample of a weekly plan:

Day 1: Walk for 25 minutes and do 8 minutes of balance exercises

Day 2: Faithful Workouts Exercise Video\*\*

Day 3: Walk for 20 minutes and do 10 minutes of upper body, core & exercises

Day 4: Faithful Workouts Exercise Video\*\*

Day 5: Bike ride for 25 minutes and do core exercises and stretching for 10 minutes

\*\*We have over 500 Free workouts at [www.faithfulworkouts.com](http://www.faithfulworkouts.com) to choose from. It's best to mix up the type of workout you do from our video library.

## Overcoming Exercise Obstacles

I've been in the fitness industry since 1984, so I've heard all the reasons for not exercising. I completely believe God wants us to care for our bodies, so I want to help you overcome some of the barriers that might be preventing you from exercising.

No Time: This is probably the #1 reason I hear. It's true; most of us have so much going on in our lives that it can be challenging to fit exercise into our schedules. The first thing I would recommend is to schedule your workouts before it gets filled with all your other activities. Write them in your calendar. The great thing about our online videos is you can do them any time, and you don't have to schedule extra time to drive to a gym. Some of our videos are as short as 10 minutes. Even the busiest of people can find 10 minutes.

On those days that you don't have a scheduled workout, make the most of every opportunity to get a minute of exercise. Park in the furthest parking spot and fast-walk to the entrance. If you have household chores or yard work to do, make it a workout by moving at a quick pace. Get up a few minutes early and do some pushups before jumping in the shower. There are so many small ways to squeeze exercise in.

I often hear from parents, especially from single parents, that they have so little time with their children they don't want to take away from their kid-time to exercise. How about asking your kids to exercise with you? You can also tell them, "I really want to hear about your day, so let's talk while I exercise, or let's go on a walk together." Another option: they ride their bikes while you jog or fast-walk.

If you work in an office, encourage your co-workers to bring their exercise clothes to work and instead of going out to lunch, bring a sack lunch and do a workout at the office. You can go for a fast walk; or maybe there's a space in the office where you can do a Faithful Workouts video. Just think: it could also be a way for you to share your faith with them, too.

If you do make the time to exercise, even though it takes away minutes from your day, you will most likely get more done. Research shows that 30 minutes of exercise yields 1.5 hours of more productivity. You will have more energy, you will be sick less often and you'll sleep better, so you will actually get more done. I love how Edward Stanley states it, "Those who think they have not time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness."

*It's boring, it's not fun, I don't like it:* OK, I just have to say this: Doesn't that all sound a bit self-centered? Life isn't about just doing what you "like." I know that might sound harsh, but please hear my heart - we need to realize that we need to do things not just because we want to, but because they are the right things to do.

I know this isn't easy, and Paul's words in Romans 7:18-19 allow me to see that even he struggled with doing what was right. "I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway."

When you feel like you just don't want to exercise, take a moment to remember all the reasons you DO want to exercise. You know you want to have health, energy and strength. You know God calls us to love and serve others, and if we're sick or weak, it makes it hard to do that. When you take care of your health, you will be a better mom, wife, friend and co-worker. When you think of it that way, I hope you realize exercise isn't just about you. With that said, my hope is that you can find a form of exercise you like and consider fun. There are many different ways to get your body moving.

Here are a few suggestions on ways to make exercising more fun:

1. Listen to upbeat, inspiring Christian music and dance
2. Take your dog for a walk
3. Walk with a friend or family member (don't forget to walk fast and hard so you get your heart and breathing rate elevated)
4. Exercise with friends (join a group)
5. Do a PAZAZ video. Similar to Zumba, yet with Christian music and appropriate moves. Come on — now that's fun!!
6. Play a sport

*Don't need to, I'm not overweight:* Some people aren't motivated to exercise and eat healthy because they don't need to lose weight. You might be one of those people who can eat whatever you want, not exercise and still stay at your desired weight. Or you might be the type who doesn't like to exercise so you cut your caloric intake way back to maintain your weight.

### Hear me when I say this:

Being at your desired weight doesn't mean you are healthy. Did you get this? Just because you *have* a good shape doesn't mean you are *in* good shape. If I drank nothing but Diet Coke, I might lose weight — but I would actually be moving away from better health, not towards it. You could actually be hurting your health if you lose weight in an unhealthy way.

Giving your body the proper vitamins and nutrients and exercising all your muscles is important for everyone — those who need to lose weight and those that who don't.

*I'm injured:* My neighbor broke his leg and was in a cast from toe to hip. He thought this was going to be a solid reason not to exercise. Guess again!! I told him it did not buy him a pass to skip workouts. He came to class and rode the exercise bike for cardio by strapping in one foot and setting the other foot on a chair. He was able to do most upper body exercises and some core workouts in a chair. Another lady said she had bad knees and couldn't work out. I challenged her to come and give it a try. We found plenty of exercises she could do.

The key when you are injured is to forget about the exercises you *can't* do and focus on all you *can* do. When I had shoulder surgery, I was convicted to have my legs be at their strongest by the time my shoulder healed. Injuries can be a bit depressing, and if we quit exercising when we are injured it only adds fuel to the fire. Exercise increases blood flow, which can speed healing, gives us more energy and can put us in a better mood.

The next time you sprain, twist, cut or break something, don't give yourself a get-out-of-workout ticket — get up and do the exercises you *can* do!!

There are obviously some injuries and illnesses that require us to take a break. I don't believe in pushing past the pain or ignoring the pain, but I do believe you need to search out what you can do given your situation.

*I'm too tired:* When you come home from a full day it may seem like you just don't have the energy to work out — but guess what?? Exercise is just what you need to get the energy you need to finish your day. I know there are some mornings where you just want to stay in bed a bit longer, but if you can use some discipline and push your tired body out of bed, you will feel so much better. I bet you've never regretted a workout!!

For many people, the biggest challenge is getting started. If you're not in the mood, try playing your favorite pump-up song and get your workout clothes on. Then tell yourself you just have to go for 5 minutes. If you are still dreading it after 5 minutes, you can stop. I guarantee that the majority of the time, once you start moving you will get more energy and complete your full workout.

Another thing to try is to schedule your workouts for a time of day when you typically feel less tired. If you're a morning person, try to arrange your exercise in the morning. If you wake up feeling like you have lead in your veins, plan your workouts for later in the day.

*I'm too heavy and out of shape:* It makes me sad when I hear people use these reasons for not exercising, because if they continue with this thought process they will never get active. Don't get down on yourself. The only way to get in shape is to start. If you are a bit self-conscious, the great thing about our program is you can exercise right in your own home!

I love this quote from Mitzi from the TV program Extreme Weight Loss: "Don't let fear stop you. Don't let excuses stop you. Don't let YOU stop you."

Pace yourself when you first begin. You don't want to overdo and push it so hard that you feel lightheaded or nauseous. Also, set realistic goals. You will be encouraged when you see yourself hitting the goals you set.

I promise if you stay faithful to your workouts you will see results. You will notice yourself being able to workout longer and harder. You will get stronger!!

### **Questions:**

If you struggle to make exercise part of your routine, what's the real reason? Not the excuse, but the *real reason* you aren't consistently exercising. What are you going to do about it?

Which part of the Total Body Workout do you enjoy most? Why? (cardio, strength, core, balance or flexibility)

### *Weekly Goals*

Write down your weekly goals.

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down your weekly workout plan.

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

*Journal this week's victories and challenges:*

# Week 10

## *Spiritual Health*

### People Pleasing

This topic is something I am super passionate about, because I have seen how trying to please others keeps so many people from really living. I have many struggles when it comes to living like Jesus, but God has truly set me free from worrying about what people think of me. Most nights when I put my head on my pillow, I don't think about how people felt about what I did, but I do hope and pray that I lived the way God had planned for me.

I find some of the most life-changing verses are:

Galatians 1:10: "Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant."

Proverbs 29:25: "The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe."

1 Thessalonians 2:4: "Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts."

In his book, "The Life You've Always Wanted," John Ortberg calls those who live for the approval of man "approval addicts." He explains how you can know if you suffer from this very common condition:

"If we find ourselves often getting hurt by what others say about us, by people expressing other than glowing opinions about us, we probably have it. If we habitually compare ourselves with other people, if we find ourselves getting competitive in the most ordinary situations, we probably have it. If we live with a nagging sense that we aren't important enough or special enough or we get envious of another's success, we probably have it. If we keep trying to impress important people, we probably have it. If we are worried that someone might think ill of us should he or she find out we are an approval addict, we probably have it."

John goes on to quote Henri Nouwen, who helps put this problem into perspective: "At issue here is the question: 'To whom do I belong? To God or to the world?' Many of my daily preoccupations suggest that I belong more to the world than to God. A little criticism makes me angry, and a little rejection makes me depressed. A little praise raises my spirits and a little success excites me. Often I am like a small boat on the ocean, completely at the mercy of its waves."

There are many problems with being an approval addict.

1. You will never win. Everyone has their own opinions, and often the opinions don't match up. One person will say you are too pushy with your faith, while another says you need to be bolder. Some will say you work too hard, while others think you need to push a bit harder. Some will say you exercise too much while others say you don't exercise enough. Trying to gain approval from everyone will lead you on a no-win journey.
2. Joy, peace and contentment elude you. You probably have moments of happiness, but the "joy always" that you read about in the Bible can't be found. When others praise you, you may be at peace but it doesn't last. When you hear that someone else is receiving praise that you felt you deserved, the contentment you felt is pulled away. Because you can't make everyone happy, you will always struggle with lasting joy, peace and contentment.
3. Constant, simmering fear is always near. Most approval addictions are caused by fear. We fear what others think of us and we allow that fear to drive our behavior. When we behave a certain way we are looking around to see how others react. Will they approve of what I did? What if they don't? This fear keeps us from really living. The only way to break free from this fear is to fully trust God and to turn to Him alone for direction and approval.
4. We can't be "zealous" if we seek man's approval. So, I just have to share this with you. I am writing this as I sit on a plane with my 19 year-old son, Neal, next to me. I just leaned over and asked him to read what I'm writing and tell me what else he thought I needed to include. After reading this, he immediately thumbed through the book he was reading, found a certain page and said, "You need to dig deeper into the 'pleasing God' part of this. It's called being zealous." He handed me the book and as I read, I knew this was what I needed to share with you. The word "zealous" often gets a bad rap, but when it comes to God, we should be "zealous." Here is what I read in his book.

*"Zeal in Christianity is a **burning desire to please God**, to do His will, and to advance His glory in the world in every possible way. A zealous person in Christianity is preeminently a person of one thing. They only see one thing, they care for one thing, they live for one thing, they are swallowed up in one thing; and that one thing is to **please God**. Whether they live, or whether they die, whether they are healthy, or whether they are sick, whether they are rich, or whether they are poor or whether they please man, or whether they give offense or whether they are thought wise, or whether they are thought foolish or whether they are accused, or whether they are praised or whether they get honor, or whether they get shame-for all this the zealous person cares nothing at all." (Practical Religion, J. C. Ryle)*

I know some of you might be thinking, "Well that's a bit extreme." But is it? Is it extreme to turn to God for direction and approval over man? The word "Christian" means someone who is a follower of Christ. If you are a Christian, then you are to look at the way Jesus lived and try and follow His lead. Jesus was not concerned with what

others thought of Him. He definitely wasn't concerned with trying to please the Pharisees. He knew His purpose was to please God. In John 6:38 Jesus says, "For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who sent me, not to do my own will." Then, in John 8:29 we hear, "The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."

When you break free from approval addiction and truly value God's opinions over man's, your life may take a drastic turn. I want to go back to what I read in the book Neal shared with me because I love how J. C. Ryle explains the benefits of being a zealous Christian. Remember that the word "zeal" means a burning desire to please God. Ryle explains:

***"Zeal is good for the soul of a Christian.***

*It is certain that God never gave men and women a commandment which was not in their interest to obey. He never gave a teaching to His believing people which His people will not find it their highest happiness to follow after. This is true of all the instructions about the Christian character. Perhaps it is preeminently true in the case of zeal.*

*We all know that exercise is good for health, and that regular exercise of our muscles and limbs promotes our bodily comfort, and increases bodily strength. No one has so much enjoyment of Christ as those who are always zealous for His glory, watchful over their own walk, sensitive to their own consciences, full of concern about the souls of others, and always watching, working, laboring, and striving to expand the knowledge of Jesus Christ on earth. They honor God, and therefore God honors them.*

*No one has such joy and peace in believing-no one has such tangible contentment in their Christianity-no one has so much of heaven on earth-no one sees and feels so much of the compassion of the Gospel as those who are zealous, serious, devoted Christians.*

***Zeal is good for the Church.***

*Nothing is so effective in keeping true Christianity alive as the yeast of zealous Christians scattered throughout the Church. Like salt, they prevent the whole body from falling into a state of decay. There is a sense in which it may be said that zeal is contagious. Nothing is more useful to those who profess to be Christians than to see a real live Christian, a thoroughly zealous man of God. It may be a sad truth that one sinner destroys many good people; but it is also a blessed truth that one zealous Christian can do a lot of good. Yes: one single zealous man in a town, one zealous man in a congregation, one zealous man in a society, one zealous man in a family, may be a great blessing. Truly there is a deep mine of truth in those words of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians: "Your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action." (2 Corinthians 9:2).*



## ***Zeal is good for the world.***

*But, just as zeal is good for the Church and for individuals, so zeal is also good for the world.*

*Where would the Missionary work be if it were not for zeal? Where would our evangelistic outreach program be without zeal? Without zeal who would be willing to go and root out sin and ignorance, and find the dark places of the earth, and recover poor lost souls? Where would all these glorious instruments for good be if it were not for Christian zeal? Zeal called many of these institutions into being, and zeal keeps them at work when they have begun. Zeal gathers a few despised men, and makes them the nucleus of many a powerful ministry.*

*Zeal does not stand meditating over difficulties, but simply says, "Here are some souls that are perishing, and we will do something." Zeal does not shrink back because the enemy is standing in the way: it looks over their heads. Zeal does not wait for reinforcements and delay until good works are fashionable: it goes forward like one who is deserted, and trusts that others will follow eventually. Yes, the world knows very little what a debt it owes to Christian zeal.*

*There is little danger of there ever being too much zeal for the glory of God.*

*Depend on it, the Church seldom needs a bridle, but often needs a spur. It seldom needs to be restrained; it often needs to be urged on.*

*I ask you, then, with all love, Where is your zeal in Christianity? It is not that you don't know what it is to be zealous. You have zeal, but it is all misapplied. Surely it is good to labor for rewards that are temporal, but it is a thousand times better to labor for those that are eternal."*

As J. C. Ryle concludes his powerful article, he shares how our desire to please others keeps us from living a zealous Christian life.

*"Do not fear the reproach of men. If you are only zealous when you receive praise for it- if the wheels of your zeal must be oiled by the world's commendation, your zeal will be short-lived. Do not care for the praise or the frown of man. There is only one thing worth caring for, and that is the praise of God."*

I've often heard people say that we actually do need to be concerned about what people think of us. I would disagree. I think we are called to care deeply for people, but we do not need to care what they think of us.

God asks us to love others, but loving others doesn't mean we seek their approval or live to please them. The best way for me to love others is by obeying God's Word and living with a zealous faith. Scriptures tell us to forgive, serve, share, pray for our

enemies and give to those in need. We shouldn't do these things so others will approve of our actions; we should do these things because this is what God asks of us. We need to get to such a place of trust that we know that if we live solely for God, our lives will be so much more blessed.

### **Questions:**

What scares you about becoming a zealous Christian?

If you believe you are an approval addict, what can you do to move away from the need to please man and move towards the desire to please God?

## *Physical Health*

### **The Fat Dilemma**

It's true that many people are eating more fat than they need to, as well as eating too much of the wrong type of fat. However, your body does need fat to function properly. In fact, about 30% of the calories you take in should come from fat.

#### **What does fat do for your body?**

- Fat is needed so your body can absorb the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K.
- Fat helps food stay in your stomach longer, giving a greater sense of satisfaction and preventing hunger soon after meals. Diets too low in fat (less than 20-25%) may trigger cravings.
- Fat provides back-up energy if blood sugar supplies run out (after 4-6 hours without food).

- Fat provides insulation under the skin to protect your body from the cold and the heat.
- Fat protects your organs and bones from shock and provides support for your organs.
- Fat surrounds and insulates nerve fibers that help transmit nerve impulses.
- Fat is part of every cell membrane and helps transport nutrients across those membranes.
- Fat is a building block needed for everything from hormones to immune function.
- Fat is needed to prevent essential fatty acid deficiency.

We harm our bodies when we don't eat enough fat, but we also harm our bodies when we eat too much of the wrong kind of fat.

## Fat is not the enemy - added sugar is.

It seems like information is always changing when it comes to fat.

“Don't eat fat. Always get low-fat products. Avoid saturated fats. Fats are making us fat. Fats aren't making us fat....” How do we know what's truth, and how do we determine what we should and shouldn't eat?

From all my research, I feel the first thing we need to do is learn the difference between the three main types of fat.

### Types of Fat:

There are three main types of dietary fats: saturated, unsaturated and trans fats.

**Saturated fats** are usually solid at room temperature. They're found in animal-based foods such as red meat, poultry and full-fat dairy. Coconut and palm oil are also high in saturated fat.

**Unsaturated fats** are typically soft or liquid at room temperature.

Fish and certain vegetables are high in unsaturated fats. There are two types of unsaturated fats: monounsaturated fats (olive, peanut and canola oils; avocados; almonds, pecans, pumpkin and sesame seeds; etc.) and polyunsaturated fats (fish and seafood; sunflower, safflower, corn, soybean and flaxseed oils; walnuts and flaxseeds).

Finally, there are **trans fats**. Industrially-produced trans fats are the worst type of fat. Trans fats are made from adding hydrogen to vegetable oil. This process, called hydrogenation, makes a liquid oil into a solid. If you see **partially hydrogenated vegetable oils**, **shortening** or **margarine** listed in the ingredients of any food, think twice before eating it because it contains trans fat.

Thankfully, the government has put restrictions on the use of trans fat, but we still need to use caution when shopping. A product can list 0 grams trans fat and actually still have trans fat in it. This happens because food manufacturers are allowed to list “0 grams” on the label if the product contains less than 0.5 grams per serving. Although 0.5 grams might sound harmless, you may actually be increasing your risk of heart disease when you eat these products.

Some manufacturers have made their servings sizes so small that when we sit and eat packaged crackers, cookies or other products that have partially hydrogenated oil in them, we could actually be ingesting more than 0.5 grams of trans fat. A couple handfuls of crackers, a few boxed cookies and you could take in 2 grams of trans fat. If you consistently eat these products, you are putting your health at risk.

Trans fats are typically found in frozen pizzas, pies, margarine, crackers, boxed cookies, ready-made frosting, coffee creamers, some fried foods and other snacks (such as microwave popcorn).

Here is my recommendation when it comes to fat.

Trans fat: **Avoid**

Saturated fat: **Somewhat Limit**

Unsaturated fat: **Enjoy!!** (Unsaturated fats are the healthiest of the fats, but they are high in calories so if you are watching your weight you’ll need to be mindful of your fat intake)

Let me show you what this looks like in your day-to-day eating.

Margarine (trans fat): **Avoid**

Butter (saturated fat): **Somewhat Limit**

Olive Oil (unsaturated fat): **Enjoy**

Pizza with trans fat: **Avoid**

Hamburger: **Somewhat Limit**

Salmon: **Enjoy**

You’ve probably heard a lot of talk about coconut oil. Even though it is a saturated fat, it is said to be a healthy fat. I know this may seem contradictory, but studies point to coconut oil’s many health benefits. It adds a great taste to a variety of foods. When I’m making a stir fry, I love to use coconut oil to give the dish a somewhat Asian flavor (it’s especially great with Thai recipes). It does have 120 calories per tablespoon though, so don’t over indulge.

One last point: don't think that something is healthy just because it claims to be "low-fat." In the 1980's we were told to limit our fat intake, so the grocery store shelves were loaded with "low-fat" foods. Food manufactures knew they needed their low-fat products to taste good, so many of them replaced the fat with sugar and other fillers. This actually made the products more unhealthy.

When deciding if you should buy something, remember to look at the ingredients list. Unhealthy ingredients can not produce a healthy food, even if the packaging claims it's healthy.

If you want to eat healthy, you need to continue to educate yourself on what a healthy diet really looks like. There's so much information out there and I know it can be a bit overwhelming. Let's take a minute to review some of what you've learned over the last few weeks.

1. God created you. God created food. Eat what God created in its most natural state.
2. Cut back on sugar. Limit your added sugar to less than 24 grams (6 teaspoons).
3. Drink water to stay hydrated.
4. Don't go on any more diets
5. Eat a healthy breakfast.
6. Eat mainly unsaturated fats, limit your saturated fats and completely avoid trans fats.

**Questions:**

Given what you've learned about fats, which foods do you need to take out of your diet or greatly limit, and which foods should you eat more of?

## Weekly Goals

Write down your weekly goals.

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down your weekly workout plan.

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

## *Inspirational Story #5: Christine*

I honestly believe that God used Faithful Workouts as one of the turning points in my walk with Him.

For years I struggled with body image issues, obsessing over the latest exercise and diet craze and putting all my efforts into achieving a certain "look". Naturally, this left me feeling empty and I cried out to the Lord many times regarding this issue, but always went back to my old ways. Around the time I sought the Lord again regarding this matter, I heard about Faithful Workouts and decided to give it a try.

It was through the awesome workouts with encouraging music and scripture, the workbooks which helped me stay focused on God in relation to my life, health and fitness, the simple yet delicious recipes and encouraging scriptural text messages, that my focus began to change from trying to attain a certain jean size to getting fit to serve Him. It is truly a freedom I can't ever remember having or even fully express, and I owe it all to Michelle's faithfulness in allowing God to use her to reach people who need Him!

Fitness was an idol in my life and now that it has been removed as such and put in proper perspective, my prayer life and scripture have come alive to me like never before. It has really impacted my walk with God and I can't fully express my thankfulness. Now, exercise is a tool to keep me healthy to serve God and that's the way it should be!



Christine

*Journal this week's victories and challenges:*

# Week 11

## *Spiritual Health*

### Fit to Serve

“I knew you before I formed you in your mother’s womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations.” **Jeremiah 1:5**

“For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” **Ephesians 2:10**

What grabs me about these verses is that even before I was born, God had a plan for my life. He had a purpose for creating me. Every day that I am here on earth, I have a unique purpose — and so do you. How cool is that?!

Rick Warren’s book, “The Purpose Driven Life,” sold over 30 million copies. Discovering our life purpose is obviously something we are all passionate about. We want our lives to matter. When we believe in Jesus, and we choose to be His disciples, then we have to look to the Bible for help in discovering what we were created to do.

How has God uniquely gifted you? What are the “good works” He has planned in advance for you to do? The answers to these questions will vary from person to person, but the answer to the question, “What is my life purpose?” should be the same for all believers.

Our purpose is to glorify God. God created us for His own glory. In the book of Isaiah, God says that we are those “whom I created for my glory.” (Isaiah 43:7) In 1 Corinthians 10:31 we are told, “whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” You might be thinking that it sounds a bit selfish or egotistical of God to create us for His glory, but His motives are all rooted in His love for us. “In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him.” — C.S. Lewis

How we each live out this purpose will look differently from one person to the next. One night, when I was sitting with a wonderful lady, she told me about the joy she receives from her quilting ministry. I shared with her about Faithful Workouts. The funny thing was, I am almost certain that we were both thinking the same thing: “I am so glad God gifted me for my ministry and not hers.” It is my happy place to lead workouts while talking about Jesus, and I would be so out of place in a quilting ministry. My friend loves to sit quietly with other women and listen to their stories and share Jesus with them. She would be miserable leading workouts.

In 1 Corinthians 12 we are encouraged to be content and thankful for our uniqueness. We shouldn’t compare our gifts to others and we shouldn’t think our gifts aren’t as important as another person’s. Verses 15-20 explain that we are all an important part



of the body of Christ. “Now if the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.”

Right now, take a moment to thank God for the unique way He created you. If you struggle with comparing yourself to others, ask God to help you to break free from this. Spend a moment talking to God about how you can best use your life as a way to give Him glory. I’m telling you from experience that NOTHING beats the feeling of knowing you played a role in God’s production.

I love what Paul says in Romans 6:13: “So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.” One of the main reasons I take care of my body is so that I can be physically fit to respond when I hear God asking me to move. I was 47 when God opened the doors for Faithful Workouts to go on TV. I can’t tell you how thrilled I was that I was healthy enough to walk into what God had planned for me. I LOVE (let me reiterate: LOVE!!!) being part of Faithful Workouts. I know this is where God wants me at this time and I’m so thankful that my body was healthy enough to accept His offer.

### Here Am I, Send Me

There are many reasons why we should take care of our bodies, but I hope that the top reason on your list is so that you are fit to serve in whatever way God calls you to. Please know that God has “good works” planned for you, and you need to do what you can (exercise, eat healthy, eliminate stress) so that when God calls you to go, you can respond with, “Here am I, send me.” (Isaiah 6:8)

### Questions

If you do not do anything to improve your health, in what ways could it limit how you could serve?

Often people struggle to figure out their Ephesians 2:10 calling (the good works God has planned out in advance for you). Here are some questions that may help you gain clarity.

What makes you mad, glad or sad?

What makes you come alive? What makes your heart smile?

What breaks your heart? What news stories bring you to tears? What issues do you really care about?

One way to stay motivated to take care of your body is to get excited about how you can love and serve others.

## *Physical Health*

### *Healthy Eating on a Shoestring*

I often hear, “It’s just too expensive to eat healthy.” I get this. Choosing to increase your food budget might require you to make concessions in other areas of your life. If you struggle with the rising costs of foods, is there an area of your spending where you can make cuts so that you can allocate more to your food budget?

Many of us have limited time and have to cut things out of our schedules so that we can exercise and cook healthy foods. It’s much the same with our finances — we may have to cut some things out so we can afford to buy healthy food. I’m sure your health is very important to you. You know that what you eat affects your health. Are you willing to cut out some of the extras— cable TV, a night out at the movies, a new outfit — so you can give your body the proper fuel it so badly needs?

In 1988 I started my own business. I made almost no money those first years, but because I valued my health, I did allocate more money to my groceries. If you also value your health it’s important that you do the best you can to bring nutrient dense foods into your home.

## TIPS FOR EATING HEALTHY ON A SHOESTRING

1. **When it's on sale — stock up.** This is great for canned goods. If organic beans are on sale, I will buy enough to last me a few months. When chicken is on a great sale I buy a bunch, slow cook it in my crock pot, and then shred or dice it and freeze it. Not only does this save money, it also saves time because I can pull out some frozen chicken in the morning and make a quick meal from it that evening. Certain produce can also be frozen. If bananas or berries are on sale, I bag them and put them into the freezer so I can use them to make smoothies.
2. **Plan around the sales.** It's so easy to look up your local grocery store sales flyer online, so before you make your menu plan for the week, see what healthy food they have on sale. If they have a great deal on broccoli, plan on making steamed broccoli for a meal, and then use the leftovers in a stir fry or in a soup. If it's salmon that's on sale, think about doing a grilled salmon and follow it up the next day with salmon tacos. I often go to the store with just the word "vegetables" on my grocery list and wait to see what is on sale before I finalize my menu plans.
3. **Don't forget to check the "reduced for quick sale" section.** Most grocery stores now have an area for discounted produce, meats or dairy. I always check these areas. Often, they are discounted because the store ordered too much of something or because the foods are close to their expiration dates. Most foods can be eaten several days and even up to a week after their expiration dates. I often buy bananas from this section and use them for banana bread or freeze them for smoothies. If you see a great deal on meat that is close to expiring you can bring it home, cook it up and freeze it for future meals.
4. **Don't buy ready-made meals.** I know how valuable your time is and how tempting it is to buy ready-made meals, but if you are trying to eat healthy and cut costs, give them up. Not only do they come with a premium price tag, they usually aren't as healthy as a meal made from scratch. Sugar and preservatives are added to most ready-made meals, neither of which are very good for you. Bagged salads might save you time, but they take a chunk out of your budget and they don't last as long in your fridge. Canned soup is convenient, but if you take about 30 minutes you can make a big batch yourself. It will save you money and you can freeze some for a quick meal on a busy day. I never thought I'd be one to make my own bread, but I can make an organic loaf of bread for just over \$1.00, compared to the \$5.00 it costs to buy it in the store. I usually make about 8 loaves at a time and freeze them.
5. **Buy frozen vegetables and fruit.** My first choice is always fresh produce, but I also love that my local store carries frozen organic vegetables and fruit for a great price. It's so easy to pull out just what I need. Not only is it quick, but I don't have

to throw anything away because it's gone bad. I use the frozen fruit in smoothies. Sometimes I thaw the fruit and then mix the fruit and the juice that is released from the berries into plain yogurt. You can also heat up the fruit and use it as a sauce over french toast or put it inside a crepe. I also freeze my fresh fruit if it is close to being too ripe. Berries, watermelon, bananas, pears, peaches...you name it, I'll freeze it. Same with veggies — I will cook them, let them cool and then freeze them for soups or stir-fries.

6. **Use your leftovers.** It's hard to know just how much to cook. If your home is anything like mine, plans change. I might be expecting all my kids to be there for dinner, and then something comes up and it's just my husband and me. I understand that plans change, but I get really bummed out if I have to throw away food. I have learned to get creative in how I use my leftovers.
7. **Make your own deli meat.** I have been shocked by the rising costs of deli meats. \$8-\$11 a pound! I was in a store last night and for organic deli meats, the prices were between \$12-\$24 a pound!! I am also shocked by the sodium levels and all the additives in the meats. If you have kids, you probably make daily sandwiches for school lunches. Here's a way to shave \$20 off your food budget and eat healthier: Buy all-natural chicken/turkey breasts or a beef/pork roast, cook them and slice them for sandwich meat.
8. **This is the most important one - Don't spend money on food that offers little or no nutritional value.** When deciding what foods you can afford to put in your cart, consider how many vitamins and nutrients you are getting for the money. Ramen noodle soup might be very affordable, but if it offers no nutritional value, don't put it in your cart. Soda not only has ZERO nutritional value, it can actually cost you more money down the road in health care costs.

My hope is that you will begin to incorporate these money-saving tips into your weekly shopping, and that you will notice you are able to eat healthier without spending much more!

**Questions:**

Go through your typical weekly menu plan. How can you implement these tips to help you save money? What items should be eliminated from your typical grocery list?

This week, write out a menu plan and grocery list. When you go to the store, stick with the list.

*Weekly Goals*

Write down your weekly goals.

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down your weekly workout plan.

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

*Journal this week's victories and challenges:*

# Week 12

## Spiritual Health

### Fully Integrated

There seems to be a lot of buzz about living a “balanced life,” but is it a *balanced* life or a **centered life** that we are actually looking for? Of course, we do not want to live in such a way that we are all about work or all about our health, but the problem with the idea of a balanced life is that it leads me to picture a pie with different pieces representing the parts of my life. Each piece is separate and distinct. Many think that as long as each piece has a good percentage of their time, then all is good.

To live with joy, peace and purpose, we don’t necessarily need all of our pie pieces to be the correct size; we need to live with our faith at the center of all we do. Imagine a bike wheel, with God at the center and all the spokes that come out of the center representing what we do throughout our day. All that we do is attached to God. I love the song, “Do Everything,” by Steven Curtis Chapman, because it reminds me that everything I do should be about giving God glory.

Even the reason we take care of our bodies should be about giving God glory. Romans 6:13, tells us to “use your whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God.” When God is at the center, exercising and eating healthy becomes a tool to give Him glory. I don’t know about you, but that motivates me a lot more than just trying to look good.

Now, hear me: I am not saying it’s wrong to have a healthy-looking body that others admire, but when people ask how you lost the weight, you should give God the glory. “I’ve tried so many times in the past to make healthy changes, and failed; but this time it was different. I asked God to help me because I wanted my body healthy so that I would have the strength to do whatever God asked me to do. He gave me the motivation, and I know I couldn’t have done this without His help!!”

Wouldn’t that shock some people? Who knows — it might be just what they needed to hear to begin to allow God into their hearts.

One night, I was sound asleep, and I woke up with the words “Fully Integrated” loud and clear in my mind. I lay there, wanting to go back to sleep, but the closer I came to sleep, the louder the words became. God finally got my attention, and I knew I was not to forget these words, and that there was a lesson for me in them. As I lay there asking God, “What’s up with ‘fully integrated?’”, I remembered that I had gone to sleep that night with a bit of sadness because so many Christians seem to be missing out on joy and peace, and are instead filled with anxiety and worry. It became clear that God was telling me the solution to this problem. He wants us to live a life with our faith “fully integrated” in all we do.

I love how Henri Nouwen so perfectly explains this in his book, *The Road to Daybreak*:  
*“I am growing in the awareness that God wants my whole life, not just part of it. It is not enough to give just so much time and attention to God and keep the rest for myself. It is not enough to pray often and deeply then move from there to my own projects.*

*As I try to understand why I am still so restless, anxious and tense, it occurs to me that I have not yet given everything to God. I especially see this in my greed for time. I am very concerned to have enough hours to develop my ideas, finish my projects, fulfill my desires. Thus, my life is in fact divided into two parts, a part for God in a part for myself. Thus divided, my life cannot be peaceful.*

*I realize that God's love is a jealous love. God wants not just part of me, but all of me. Only when I surrender myself completely to God's parental love can I expect to be free from endless distractions, ready to hear the voice of love, and able to recognize my own unique call.*

*It's going to be a very long road. Every time I pray I feel the struggle. It is the struggle of letting God be the God of my whole being. It is the struggle to trust that true freedom lies hidden in total surrender to God's love.”*

Today, as I read this again, I have the same reaction — “Wow, this is it!!”

This is what I want people to get. This is what I know I need. This is what God meant when He put the words “Fully Integrated” into my head. This is what will allow people to experience positive, lasting change. This is what will move people from being frustrated believers to joyful followers. When you put Jesus at the center of all you do, you will not only experience joy and peace, you will also GLOW. People will see something different in you and want what you have. Let the words from Proverbs 3 (message version) sink into your heart:

Trust God from the bottom of your heart;  
don't try to figure out everything on your own.  
Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go;  
he's the one who will keep you on track.

Don't assume that you know it all.  
Run to God! Run from evil!  
Your body will glow with health,  
your very bones will vibrate with life!  
(Proverbs 3:5-8 Message)



If you want to GLOW with Health, it begins by living a fully-integrated life. When we do this, we will glow and that light will draw others in. When we allow God into every nook and cranny of our lives, we will be changed, we will be blessed and we will live in such a way that others will want what we have.

But, the question is, are you ready to go “All In?”

You might be saying, “I think I’m ready, but what does it really look like to live with Jesus at the center of all I do?”

When you wake up, before you roll out of bed, let God know you are ready to serve Him: “Here am I, send me.” Allow your hands to be His tools and your mouth to be His megaphone. You spend time alone with God and you ask Him to fill you up with His love so it oozes out on others throughout your day. You don’t let what people think of you hold you back. Your daily tasks become opportunities to serve Christ. A trip to the grocery store becomes an opportunity to share God’s love with the cashier. A high school football game is more about the conversation in the stands than the score. This way of living can make even the most mundane tasks meaningful.

I was talking about this with a friend of mine, and she told me how she loves to fold her laundry because she takes the opportunity to pray for whoever’s clothes she is folding. OK, I am not there yet — I’d be happy if I never folded another pair of socks! —but I love how she does this!!

I am one who is moved by music. Years ago, as I sat in church, I heard the story behind the lyrics of the song “Take My Life.” The story brought tears to my eyes. It was written in the 1800s by Frances Ridley Havergal. She moved into a house with 10 others, and she quickly realized that some of her temporary housemates didn’t believe in Jesus, and the others knew of Him but were far from joyful followers. During her 5-day visit, she was able to share her faith with all of them, and all 10 came to know and experience God’s love. She was so thankful for what God had done that she couldn’t sleep and wrote these lyrics during her last night there.

### *Take My Life*

Take my life and let it be consecrated to Thee  
Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise  
Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love  
Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee  
Take my voice and let me sing always, only for my King  
Take my lips and let them be filled with messages from Thee  
Take my silver and my gold, not a might would I withhold  
Take my intellect and use every power as You choose  
Here am I, all of me, take my life, it's all for Thee  
Take my will and make it Thine, it shall be no longer mine  
Take my heart, it is Thine own, it shall be Thy royal throne  
Take my love, my Lord I pour at Your feet, it's treasure store  
Take myself and I will be ever, only, all for Thee  
Here am I, all of me, take my life, it's all for Thee

My hope is that we can learn to live like this. Imagine what would happen to our world if all Believers made the decision to live a life with our faith fully integrated into all we did.

**Questions:**

What area of your life are you still holding back from God? What's keeping you from opening this door of your life and inviting Him in?

What is most appealing — and what is most frightening — when it comes to living All In?

## Physical Health

### Top 10 Healthy Changes

- 1. ReThink Fitness:** Lasting change begins inside our hearts. Proverbs 4:23 tells us that our hearts set the course of our lives. If you want to make lasting, healthy changes, you have to begin by changing the way you think (your heart). Our desire to change has to be motivated by our desire to steward our bodies. We know the importance of stewarding our time, talents and treasure; but we often forget we are called to take care of our temples. Exercise and eating healthy shouldn't be all about looking a certain way, it should be about getting your body fit and ready to respond to anything God calls you to do.
- 2. Eat Fresh:** Fresh, whole foods are always better than packaged goods. Eat fresh organic fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, dairy, wild-caught fish and grass-fed, hormone-free meat and chicken. God created you. God created food. Eat the foods God created in their most natural state.
- 3. Don't Fall for Marketing Ploys:** The main purpose of food packaging is to get you to buy the product. (I know, I worked for Nestle Foods in the '80s.) Labels like "Lite," "All Natural," "Low-fat," and "Fewer Calories" are stamped all over the packages to make you believe you will get healthier if you eat the product. Don't fall for this. When looking at the package, the first and most important place to start is the ingredients list. Unhealthy ingredients can't make a healthy product. If you don't recognize what most of the ingredients are, don't buy it. Only purchase packaged foods that have healthy ingredients. Better yet, eat fresh, whole foods.
- 4. Total Body Workouts:** If you include Total Body Workouts in your weekly routine you will greatly reduce your risk of injury. Total Body Workouts include cardio, strength, core, balance and flexibility exercises. A safe, effective exercise routine should include all of these components.
- 5. Cut Out Added Sugar:** The #1 reason that over 65% of Americans are overweight is because of added sugar. I'm not talking about the sugar that is found naturally in fruit, vegetables and dairy; I'm talking about added sugar. Sugar turns into fat faster than anything else we eat. Sugar is in 80% of the packaged foods in the store. I know this is a tough one to give up. The reason so many struggle to give it up is because we are addicted. We truly crave it. BUT you can limit your added sugar to under 24 grams (4 grams = 1 tsp)
- 6. Consistency:** Too often, we start out over zealous and decide to make huge changes overnight. We exercise for an hour 7 days a week and eliminate all sugar, carbs and dairy. A few weeks into it, we begin to feel deprived and

depressed, so we throw in the towel and go back to our old ways. When we commit to exercising, we work out so intensely that we can't move for days. We know we don't want to be that sore ever again so we quit working out. When designing an exercise and nutrition plan, make sure it is something you can see yourself doing long term. Start with attainable goals, and over time, continue to challenge yourself to make additional changes.

7. **Drink Water:** About 70% of our body is water, so when we are dehydrated, our body can't function properly. We should drink approximately 50% of our body weight in ounces of water per day. If you weigh 180 pounds, you should drink around 90 oz. of water. If you exercise, you should add 12 oz for every 30 minutes of exercise.
8. **Trust God:** Stress is now called the "deadly emotion" because it is believed to be the underlying cause of many of our illnesses. It's estimated that about 70% of all doctor visits could be prevented if we reduced our stress levels. We need to replace stress with peace if we want to reach optimal health. Proverbs 14:30: "A relaxed attitude lengthens life." We can only experience peace in all situations when we trust God. When we fully understand that He is in control and that His ways are always better than ours, we can be at peace no matter what is going on around us.
9. **Forgive:** Our ability to forgive ourselves and others greatly affects our health. When we remove or reduce unforgiveness we have: healthier relationships, greater spiritual and psychological well-being, less anxiety, stress and hostility, lower blood pressure, fewer symptoms of depression and a lower risk of alcohol and substance abuse. Who do you need to forgive?
10. **"You Need a Plan".** If you don't want to give into temptations, "You Need a Plan." We recommend starting with a plan that involves the ABCs'. ASK God to help you. BELIEVE He can help you. CHECK your motives and be sure yours line up with God's. After the ABCs then put together a plan that incorporates the daily activities you know are needed to help you reach your goals. Where we go in life is determined by our daily choices.

### **Questions:**

Which of these 10 healthy changes are you most excited to get started with ? What can you do starting today?

Which of these steps will be most challenging for you to carry out in your day to day living?  
What steps can you take to help you overcome these obstacles?

### *Weekly Goals*

Write down your weekly goals.

Faith:

Fitness:

Food:

Write down your weekly workout plan. (truly, the best way to stay consistent with exercise is to schedule them in your calendar)

Day	Time	Workout
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

## *Inspirational Story #6: Nancy*

A few years ago I was talking with a friend and she suggested I check out Faithful Workouts. The invitation sparked my interest and it came at just the right time in my life. I was on a path of self destruction by working 10-12 hours a days, 7 days a week in a very stressful job, not eating well, not getting any exercise. This was my life with no room for anything else. My relationship with my husband and kids was suffering. I was in need of some changes in my life and my introduction to Faithful Workouts was exactly what I needed. (It is funny how God orchestrates exactly what you need at just the right time.)

My perspective on exercise changed that day.

Wow, what a concept, God + Exercise = True, Everlasting Health! No gimmicks!

Ever since my introduction to Faithful Workouts I have discovered the truth about WHY I want to take care of myself, which I believe is the key to REAL change. I realized after a short time, there was something very different about the approach Faithful Workouts took to fitness. It wasn't a new fad diet or weight loss program but a platform of encouragement to get to know God and WHY HE created me, what HIS plans are for my life. It was no longer about my agenda of wanting to stay looking fit and trim for my own visual satisfaction.

It really wasn't until I surrendered all areas of my life, which included my health and fitness regime, did I learn God wants ALL of me and wants to be fully integrated into every aspect of my life. I looked at my relationship with God and turned my focus on Him. Once I surrendered my thoughts to HIM, the heavy burden of "I have to go exercise, diet, look good" became "I am so thankful I am healthy enough to exercise and have healthy food choices". Turning my focus on God gave me the hope and the very personalized fitness program HE has planned for me. Today HE is my personal trainer along with the helpful tools Faithful Workouts provides. I listen to Him and the truth He speaks in his written word, not the lies that this world would have me believe. His word provides the most powerful, transformational health manual ever published.



Nancy~

*Journal this week's victories and challenges:*

## Closing Thoughts

As we close our study together, I wanted to share one last thing with you that I hope will impact you like it did me.

I sat down to read my Bible the other day, and before I began to read, I asked God to reveal something new to me - WOW, did He do that!

I was drawn to the book of Haggai. I thought, "This seems like a somewhat random book, but let's see what You have for me God". I have a study bible and it lists a "key verse" for the book you are about to read. My eyes were immediately drawn to this, "Why are you living in luxurious houses while my house lies in ruins?" (Haggai 1:4)

The book of Haggai is in the old testament, so when this verse says "my house" it is referring to the Temple. So the key verse really asks, "why are you living in luxurious homes while "my Temple" lies in ruins? The people knew they were called to rebuild the temple but they were busy doing other things and they weren't making rebuilding the Temple a priority.

This is where my lightbulb moment happened. Jesus promised that after He was resurrected, He would send His Spirit into our bodies. God's home is now in the physical body of all believers. Now let's go back to this key verse "Why do you live in luxurious houses when your body (God's home) lies in ruins?" This really grabbed my attention.

We are busy doing so many things - making money, traveling, buying new toys, improving our homes, taking care of our family, yet we ignore taking care of our body.

As I continued to read through Haggai, I was moved again by this verse, "So the LORD sparked their enthusiasm.... and they began their work on the house of the LORD (Haggai 1:14) If you need inspiration to take better care of your body, it comes from God, He sparks our enthusiasm. But this verse also shows that we have work to do when it comes to taking care of our body. Yes, it's important that we pray and ask for God's inspiration and help, but we also have work to do to get God's house in shape.

For us to stay committed to working on our health, it takes self-control. Again, God's word is clear about how we gain self-control. God gives us self-control (2 Tim. 1:7) and self control is one of the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:23). If we want to make lasting, healthy changes we need to draw closer to God so we can have the self-control and discipline needed to stay on course.

The number one reason given for not exercising and eating healthy is lack of time. Again, the commentary for the book of Haggai addresses this when it says, "Our problem is not the volume of demands or lack of scheduling skills, but values - what is



truly important to us. Haggai's message to the people sought to get their priorities straight, help them to quit worrying, and motivate them to rebuild the Temple. Like them, we often place a higher priority on our personal comfort than on God's work and true worship. But God is pleased and promises strength and guidance when we give him first place in our life."

When we change our motivation for exercising and eating healthy from looking a certain way or hitting a number on a scale to taking care of God's earthly home, it should inspire you to make taking care of your body a priority.

I pray this study has motivated you to move away from unhealthy habits for the rest of your life. I pray you make lasting, healthy changes because you want to honor God with your body. I have tried to break this process down into somewhat easy to follow steps, but I know it can still appear to be overwhelming.

You might feel a bit of fear. Fear because you don't want to lose the excitement you feel right now. Fear because you don't want to lose the hopeful feeling you are experiencing. You really can be hopeful because with God's help you can break free from your old, unhealthy habits.

Moving towards better health is a process. I know when I look back I can see the little consistent steps I took to move me down this path to better health. It starts with one obedient choice after another. "Like a brick, each obedient act is small in itself, but in time the acts will pile up, and a huge wall of strong character will be built - a great defense against temptation." (commentary 1 Samuel 31:13)

Of course, our body is about more than just our physical health. Our mind, body and spirit are so interconnected, that if one is unhealthy it aff the rest. Make your spiritual health an even great priority than your physical health (1 Tim 4:8). Please keep drawing closer to God because He is the one who can change the way we think (Romans 12:2), He is the one who gives us self-control (2 Peter 1:6), He is the One who can give you strength when you are weary (Isaiah 40:29), He is the one who comforts you when we are troubled (2 Corinthians 1:4), He is the one who loves you so much (John 3:16) and wants to help you with all your worries and cares (1 Peter 5:7).

"With God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26)

## Appendix: Scripture References

### **Week 1**

“As water reflects the face, so one’s life reflects the heart.” (Proverbs 27:19)

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. *Then* you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.” (Romans 12:2)

### **Week 2**

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

“This is real love — not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.” (John 4:19)

“I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” (Matthew 28:20)

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)

### **Week 3**

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” - (John 10:10)

“For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world.” - (Ephesians 6:12)

“But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil.” - (1 John 3:8)

"You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty." - (1 Samuel 17:45)

“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit.” (Zechariah 4:6)

“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4)

Life Application Study Bible Commentary 2 Chronicles 14:11: “The secret to victory is first to admit the futility of unaided human effort and then to trust God to save. His power works best through those who recognize their limitations. It is those who think they can do it on their own that are in the greatest danger.”

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)

“So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires.” (Galatians 5:16-17)

“If you know the love of the Father, it is much easier to know the lies of the enemy.”  
Quote from Kate Matott.

“Then God said, ‘Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food.’ ” (Genesis 1:29)

“Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.” (Genesis 9:3)

#### **Week 4**

“Ask, using my name, and you will receive, and you will have abundant joy.” (John 16:24)

“Ask and it will be given to you.” ( Matthew 7:7)

“Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.” (1 Peter 5:7)

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me?” ( Philippians 4:13)

“ . . .the Lord examines their motives.” (Proverbs 16:2)

“ . . .if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that if he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.” (1 John 5:14-15)

“..man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7)

“..And use your whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God.” (Romans 6:13)

#### **Week 5**

“You shall have no other gods before me.” (Exodus 20:3)

“For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.” (Deuteronomy 4:24)

“Come to me all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

## **Week 6**

“Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. About three o’clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, “It’s a ghost!”

But Jesus spoke to them at once. “Don’t be afraid,” he said. “Take courage. I am here!”

Then Peter called to him, “Lord, if it’s really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.”

“Yes, come,” Jesus said.

So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. “Save me, Lord!” he shouted.

Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. “You have so little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?” ( Matthew 14-23)

“Nothing is impossible with God.” (Luke 1:37)

Quote: “Failure is not the falling down, it’s the staying down.” (Mary Pickford)

“Not by might, nor by power but by my Spirit.” (Zechariah 4:6)

## **Week 7**

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” ( Roman 8:28)

“When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you.”( Isaiah 43:2)

“And be sure of this: I am with you always.” (Matthew 28:20)

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” (James 1:2-4 )

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9)

“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”(John16:33)

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14:27)

### **Week 8**

“This is the day the LORD has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:24)

“Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.” (1 Peter 5:7) Quote:

“I've had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened.” Mark Twain

“Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? And if worry can't accomplish a little thing like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things?” (Luke 12:25-26)

“Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4)

### **Week 9**

“For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” ( Matthew 6:14-15)

Quote: “Unforgiveness is like drinking poison and hoping the other person dies.”  
Margret Stunt)

“He is so rich in kindness that he purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son, and our sins are forgiven. ( Ephesians 1:7)

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

“and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.] ‘If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you.’ (Matthew 6:12-14)

“And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.” (John 20: 22-23)

“But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. (Luke 6:27-28)

“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.” (Romans 12:14)

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.” (Proverbs 3:5)

“Those who know your name trust in you, for you, O LORD, do not abandon those who search for you.” (Psalms 9:10)

“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.” (Matthew 18:35)

### **Week 10**

“Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant.” (Galatians 1:10)

“The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.” (Proverbs 29:25)

“Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts.” (1 Thessalonians 2:4)

“For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who sent me, not to do my own will.” (John 6:38)

“The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.” John 8:29

“Your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.” (2 Corinthians 9:2)

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:30-31)

### **Week 11**

“I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations.” (Jeremiah 1:5)

“For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:10)

“whom I created for my glory.” (Isaiah 43:7)

“whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Quote: “In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him.” C.S. Lewis

“Now if the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of

smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.” (1 Corinthians 15-20)

“So use your whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God.” (Romans 6:13)

“Here am I, send me.” (Isaiah 6:8)

## **Week 12**

“use your whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God.” (Romans 6:13)

“Good friend, don’t forget all I’ve taught you; take to heart my commands. They’ll help you live a long, long time, a long life lived full and well. Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don’t try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he’s the one who will keep you on track. Don’t assume that you will know it all. Run to God! Run from evil! Your body will glow with health.” (Proverbs 3 - message version)

## **Additional Verses**

I’ve listed some additional verses that will help you to better understand God and His love for you, and help you when you are facing temptations or feeling discouraged. Really, all of God’s Words are helpful so I recommend reading the entire bible.

“For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things” (Psalm 107:9)

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express” (Romans 8:26)

“But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weakness, so that Christ power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ sake, I delight in weakness, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.” (2 Corinthians 4:16)

“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” ( 2 Corinthians 10:5)

“My food” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work” (John 4:34)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control” (Galatians 5:22-23)

“Then he said to them all: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23)

“So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature” (Galatians 5:16)

“Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted” (Hebrews 2:18)

“Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags.” (Proverbs 23: 20-21)

“Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:14)

“Do not be discouraged” He says, In encouragement you’ll find His strength, His promise to with you on the journey “wherever you go” ( Joshua 1:9)

“Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure.” (Psalm 16:5)

“My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (Psalm 73:26)

“People may be pure in their own eyes, but the LORD examines their motives.” (Proverbs 16:2)