

The Rec-Connection

Physical exercise has some value, but spiritual exercise is much more important, for it promises a reward in both this life and the next. 1Timothy 4:8

Step 2

February 2006

Step 1 was your New Year's resolution (or LACK of one for you frequent readers!) Now here we are in February and where do you stand? How much weight have you lost? How's that quiet time coming? Any extra money socked away yet? Tough, I know. I still find myself driving the boat at times, but it always seems to happen subconsciously. I never know I'm trying to be the boss until it's too late.

About this time of year is when most people give up. And it's never a fist-pounding resolution "today I quit." It's always a subtle leaking away of resolve. Rarely does adversity show its face in grand ways. It's always disguised as a cupcake, your favorite TV show, a fancy car, or some other tempting fixation. So the issue remains, how do we stay strong in the face of so many temptations? I've said it before and I'll say it again. Jesus is the model of our faith. "What Would Jesus Do" is not only a catchy commercial slogan, but it's also the truth. You and I are constantly faced with tough decisions and adversity, so let's look at how Jesus responded to those same circumstances.

First and foremost, *Jesus never backed down.* He met adversity, temptation, and fear head on. And so should we. Whatever it is you resolve to do in 2006, you're only going to make progress if you meet it face-to-face.

In examining the methods of Christ we notice that he never tolerated enablers, those who would bring him down and weaken his resolve. In Matthew 16:23 Jesus responds to Peter's disapproving remarks with "Get behind me, Satan!" He then proceeds to tell him that he is a stumbling block. Peter was one of Jesus' closest friends! Think about your own life. Who is preventing you from your goals? I'm willing to bet you'll be surprised by who you find.

He took action. In the 6th chapter of Mark we find Jesus providing food for a large crowd. He didn't pray for them, or expect someone else to provide for them. He took action. Throughout the Bible, anytime Jesus saw a need, he acted on it.

He was courageous: Jesus knew the job he was here to do. Dying on a cross is not an attractive option for anyone. He was afraid, just like you and I are afraid, and yet he did what he was called to do. In the Garden of Gethsemane he prayed "Lord take this cup from me" but still knew that "thy will be done." (Mark 14:36) He completed his calling regardless of his fear.

And finally, *He rose above it.* Jesus never made his temptation disappear. He did not call down Angels to help or make his troubles go away. In Matthew 14:29 when Jesus walks on the water it's interesting to note that he did not calm the waves as we know he could do (Matthew 8:26). No, he rose above them. And he made Peter do the same. Your temptations and fears will always be there, you are required to rise above them.

So to wrap it all up, you can change your life if you want to. Just like most people, you've set a goal, and you want to reach that goal, but life happens. What do you do then? You must face it head on, make that fist-pounding decision to do something about it, and then do it. The war is won in small battles, not major advances. Luke 9:23 says that we "must pick up our cross daily." Fight those battles one at a time, and one day at a time. String enough small victories together and you'll be amazed how fast you get somewhere.

Chris Jones

Director of Recreational Ministries

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March 13 - May 1

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