

Speaking to the soul



Godly training

“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.” 1 Timothy 4:8

There is a great deal of emphasis on physical fitness in our society, which is a good thing. Gym membership is higher than it has ever been, but just because people are members of a gym, it doesn't mean they ever attend! One survey in the USA revealed that 67 per cent of people didn't make any use of their gym membership, and suggested that gyms

build their business models on the assumption of huge non-attendance.

If you are into keeping fit, that's great. Our bodies are a gift from God, and it's important that we look after them. Paul acknowledged that physical training has some value, but it is vastly outshone by godliness, which he saw as being valuable for all things, bringing blessing both for this life and the one to come.

If godly training is so important, we need to know what it looks like. Paul would have seen it as a combination of good teaching, worship, fellowship and service. He was very anxious about all the nonsense that was being taught by his opponents with their “godless ideas and old wives’ tales” (1 Timothy 4:7). Timothy needed to have a firm grip on the good news, but he also needed to work hard within the church to encourage sincere and joyful worship. That must have been a challenge within a church that was developing quickly and in which there were clearly many tensions. Day by day, Timothy needed to allow the Holy Spirit to guide him in his ministry and to enable him to serve effectively. While studying is important, godly training is always on-the-job.

QUESTION

What would you say are the most important parts of godly training?

PRAYER

Loving Father, thank you that you want me to be fully trained to serve you well. Help me to learn from you today. Amen

Photo - Co Antrim lighthouse

