

Are You “All In?”

There is no alarm clock needed to awaken me in the morning. My body clock typically awakens me between 5-6 AM but it doesn't mean I am ready for action. I jump start the day with a cup of coffee while I try to wake up. Many times, however, I am still moving in “slow motion.” Several days a week my early morning routine is to swim at the YMCA as part of an effort to be healthy. As I sip my coffee and skim the morning paper my body and mind are working overtime, trying to talk me out of heading to the Y pool. It is easy to make all kinds of excuses to stay at home. Fortunately, there is a third element at play – the Spirit. The Spirit is the inner voice that nudges me to making the right choice. For many that voice is their unconscious desire to do what is right. For me, it is more than that. It is God's voice, guiding me toward fulfilling my commitment to Him. Its truth counteracts the lies my body and mind are sending me. If I focus on the Spirit I can ignore the lame excuses and head for the car and the YMCA pool. Moments later, standing on the deck of the pool, there is no turning back. As I slip into the water I am “all in” on the goal of being healthier. There is no half way once you are in the water. Three or four strokes down the pool my body has fully adjusted and is ready to complete the task. I just had to listen to the Spirit and move forward with purpose.



As Christians we often need the motivation to be consistent in our faith walk – daily prayer, reading the Bible and a time for reflection. There are days when we are fully inspired, perhaps because of external things happening in our lives. But, that is not every day. Some days are like the early mornings when I am looking for excuses to not exercise. The motivation to be consistent in my faith walk comes from within.

How consistent are you in your faith walk? Do you have to be “in the mood” or you skip precious time with God? Does your time with God depend on everything going well in your life? Oswald Chambers said: “If you say you will only be at your best for God, as during those exceptional times, you actually become an intolerable burden on Him. You will never do anything unless God keeps you consciously aware of His inspiration to you at all times. If you make a god out of your best moments, you will find God will fade out of your life, never to return until you are obedient to the work He has placed closest to you, and until you have learned not to be obsessed with those exceptional moments He has given you.”



The times when you feel unmotivated to spend time with the Lord are probably when you need Him the most. Not only are you without spiritual direction then but you might be lacking any direction at all. If you catch yourself in this kind of unmotivated funk, step up your game. Stop relying on being motivated only during the “best of times.” Know in your mind that consistently being in the Word and prayer are important for your daily faith walk. Just like at the pool, once you get started your enthusiasm will catch up to the effort you are making to move forward. You just have to get started.

God wants a relationship with you – a relationship that is genuine and comes from *your* heart. He has been waiting for you as a faith walk needs to be your choice. Commitment goes both ways and at all times. Remember all those stories in the Bible when people kept asking Jesus for more miracles. They were obsessed with God continuing to prove Himself rather than choosing a personal relationship with God of their own free will. “The proof that our relationship is right with God is that we do our best whether we feel inspired or not.” Then we are a blessing rather than a burden to God.

What is your level of commitment? For me, if I only exercise when I feel like it, my physical health will suffer. If I only exercise my faith when I am in the mood, my spiritual health will also be lacking. Listen to the Spirit within you. God is ready and waiting for you to develop a relationship at times of inspiration and other times, as well. I choose to desire a relationship with God. I am “all in.” How about you? Are you “all in?”

Prayer: Heavenly Father. Be patient with us as we seek to build a relationship with you that will sustain us in our faith walk during times of inspiration and in times when we need you the most. Amen.