



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

A-MAZE-IN Life Series, Lesson 7

Lesson Title: Food & Exercise – What Will You Choose?

Take Home Point: Let God guide your choices in food and exercise.

Warm-Up:

I enjoy eating food very, very much. I love the various flavors and aromas of foods, whether served mixed or individually. I really like to prepare foods, too, especially baked goods. As a result of my fondness for things gastronomic, it is easy for me to consume food well past the point of having enough to eat. On the other side, I also like certain types of exercise. I like to walk, ride a bicycle, roller blade, and lift weights. Sometimes. But not as much as I like to eat. When I was a teenager, that combination didn't create any problem. That is no longer true. I am thankful for the way God made me, but it's up to me to take care of myself as best I can. So I no longer eat as much as I'd like (most of the time!). And I try to exercise more than I feel like doing it. I owe that to the one who created me and gave me life.

Read: 1 Corinthians 6:12-14, 19-20; Romans 8:12; Proverbs 21:19-21

Observation (What happened?):

To whom does our body belong? Why?

According to the proverb, what does the foolish glutton do?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What did Paul mean by "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food?"

How does proper food and exercise honor God with our body?

Insight:

Our tendency is to think the imbalance of eating and exercising is a problem unique to first world countries that have an abundance of food and a sedentary lifestyle. If that were so, why would Paul have written the 1st century Corinthians the words he did? Because choices and habits in eating and exercising are not just cultural, they are part of our sinful nature. In fact, an opposite imbalance may occur in these areas, when one deliberately under-eats or over-exercises as a form of body self-worship. In Galatians 5:22-24, Paul includes self-control as a fruit of the Spirit. Then he adds, *"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires."* Unless afflicted by a disease, we all have a strong desire to satisfy our appetite. It requires self-control powered by God's Spirit to keep that desire in check. For most of us, sufficient exercise also requires discipline, which is another form of self-control in God's power. The key is to look to God for the perspective and strength to make good choices.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What life habits do you need to change in the areas of eating and exercise?

Fast for a meal or a day or some period of time during this week. Spend the time in prayer that you normally would spend eating.

Kingdom Quest Year 2 – Lesson 7