

10 Reasons Christ Followers Should Take Care of Themselves Physically

I confess that I don't always take care of myself as I should. I have to work hard to maintain a healthy weight, keep my blood pressure down and other things that are healthy for you.

As a Christian, though, I see this issue as more a spiritual one than a physical one. Here are 10 reasons believers need to take care of themselves:

1. We are created in God's image. The Bible is quite clear here—we are made in the image of the Creator. That image was marred in the fall of Adam and Eve, but not destroyed. That fact alone should give us reason to take care of ourselves.

2. This body is the only one we have. This point might sound silly, but sometimes we live as if we have bodies to spare. When this one is worn out, we don't have a replacement until the day of resurrection.

3. Poor discipline is a bad witness. It's hard to tell people to be disciplined in their Bible study, prayer life and giving when they can look at us and see we are undisciplined in exercise and eating. A lack of effort in one area of life is often indicative of problems in other areas.

4. Bad health is costly. Eventually, the costs of poor health add up. Medical bills pile up. Insurance costs increase. Moreover, bad health makes us less productive at work. Others are forced then to carry some of our load.

5. Our families deserve better. Frankly, it's unloving not to take care of ourselves. Our families worry about us when we struggle to climb steps or find clothes to fit. Our love for

them ought to motivate us to do better.

6. Being out of shape might indicate idolatry. Those words might be difficult to hear, but they're necessary ones. If we cannot push away from food in order to take care of our bodies, we must ask if something other than God has become our god.

7. Better health equals more energy to do God's work. God's work is not easy. Those of us in ministry know that the burdens are sometimes heavy. The hours are often long. Being out of shape makes the work only that much more difficult.

8. Proper care requires rest, and it's biblical to get rest. God expects us to take time off, focus on Him, and enjoy His blessings. In fact, *not* taking time to rest can be self-centered (that is, we think we must be doing everything). I struggle here, but I'm learning.

9. We might be called to the mission field. Many missions organizations will not consider sending someone who is out of shape. The work is often rigorous, and the stresses of cross-cultural living are only compounded by poor health.

10. Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. This truth is difficult to comprehend, but God really does live within us (1 Cor. 6:19). He who created us and dwells in us expects us to be wise stewards of the body He gave us.

Maybe you want to make a commitment to take better care of yourself. If so, tell us how we can pray for you.

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