

This Fitness Program Helps Pastors Take Back Their Health

As a pastor, my schedule is crazy. Along with constant stress of being on call 24/7, throw in the family time, funerals and administrative tasks that come along with running a church, and life can zip past you really quickly.

Because of the hustle and bustle, it can become easy to let your health take second place.

Passing by all of the fast food chains after work, it's easier to run through the drive-thru and grab something quick than it is to prepare healthy food at home. Fried and processed food had become my best friend. The greasier, the better.

As far as exercise goes, the only running I did was in between all the appointments on my calendar. As far as those appointments were concerned, they were loaded with food as well. After all, I was always taught that leaders never eat alone.

Before I knew it, my health was spiraling out of control. I was literally eating my emotions. Whether I was happy or sad, food was my drug of choice.

After I went to my family doctor for a routine checkup, I got a rude awakening—I had markers that indicated I was headed to a life riddled with heart disease and diabetes. My family doctor, who is also a Spirit-filled pastor, said something to me that resonated in my spirit.

I still hear it every day. He said, "Brad, most Christians take better care of their automobiles than they do their bodies."

It was then that the Holy Spirit began to convict me about my lifestyle habits. I knew that I didn't want to be an overweight preacher. After all, how can I preach week after week about self-control when I couldn't even control my fork? If God has only given us one physical body to use as a vehicle to do His work, then we must steward it well.

At 250 pounds, I began my journey. One of my closest friends, Michael "The Spark" Sparkman, began writing my workouts and tailoring a meal plan for me. As a competing body builder, he learned the skills to work on any physique. With six-nights-a-week workout sessions and extremely altering my diet, I met my goal.

In seven months, I dropped down to 195 lbs.

After running more tests with our family doctor, those dangerous ranges went back to normal. Not only did I regain my health, but it also affected many other people. Our church got a healthier pastor, my wife got a healthier husband, and my children got a healthier father. Now, one of my desires is to help other Christians and ministers regain control of their health so that they can better serve Christ.

Through a mutual relationship. God put me in contact with Ricky Van Pay, who is an Assemblies of God missionary to athletes. As a way to help ministers regain control of their lives, Ricky launched .

Fit Pastors is a movement that utilizes personal coaching and technology to work with the busy schedule of ministers so that they can further God's Kingdom in their lives. When a person signs up for the Fit Pastors program, their money can be credited as missions giving because they are supporting a ministry in the process.

Through the use of Google Hangout, ministers can meet with their coaches on a weekly basis and receive group instruction, prayer, and a challenge. Along with that comes the personal

aspect. Each member has access to their coach along with others who vary in areas of expertise. One life at a time, is taking back health for the gospel.

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