

Short & Sweet: Grow Up



Short and Sweet Nourishment for the Soul

41 "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:41-42

On the wall in one of the bedrooms in our house, is a series of hash marks. They start at about 3 feet high and continue to about six feet. Each hash mark contains a name and a date. These cryptic marks chronicle the growth of our two sons. The passage of time measured in feet and inches. How proud my sons were to see their growth from year to year. Physical growth is good, healthy, and normal. More important than physical growth, is spiritual growth. How can we **grow up** spiritually? With a good dose of Acts 2:42.

Spiritual Growth

Acts 2:42 lists four things the early church did to **grow up** in their faith:

1. continuous study of doctrine
2. fellowship

3. breaking of bread

4. prayers

Let's take a quick look at each of the four items above.

1. " ... continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine ..."

To us, this means Bible study. In order to **grow up**, we need to continually feed our souls with the truth of God's Word.

Action Point:

1. What can you do today to put more of God's Word in your heart?
2. Is anything growing in your heart (bitterness, jealousy, sketchy habits) taking up space needed for God's Word?

2. Fellowship

The Greek word for *fellowship* means: 1) a gathering of like-minded Christians who encourage and teach each other, and 2) the works (sharing the gospel, helping the needy) of a group of like-minded people.

Action Point:

1. Which type of fellowship do you need to grow your faith, teaching and encouragement or good works?
2. Using your answer to point one, what will you do to start growing in fellowship?

3. Breaking of bread (a.k.a. communion)

Communion is a beautiful portrayal of the message of the Gospel; Christ sacrificing His life, giving His body, pouring out His blood, for you and for me. At the Last Supper, when Jesus implemented communion, Jesus asked His disciples to "*Do this in remembrance of Me.*" What does Jesus want us to remember? His sacrifice. True life is not about living for

self. It's about doing the will of God and sacrificing our lives for the sake of others.

Action Point:

1. What can you sacrifice today to help someone else **grow up** in Christ ... time ... Starbucks ... a plate of cookies ... a personal note of encouragement?
2. Name a certain area of life or character quality you need to improve. How can you more closely follow God's will in this area?

4. Pray

The Greek word for *prayers* is *proseuch*, which simply means *prayer addressed to God, to pray fervently*. Blue Letter Bible adds the emphasis is not on the *contents of the prayer, but its aim and its end*. Don't worry about impressing God with big intricate words, He knows your heart.

Action Points:

1. Grow up and take a step of faith: I will lay aside my will and ask God to work His will concerning

_____.

1. Thank God for how He will work His will for point 1..

Life is sweet! Grow up!

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Faith & Fit: Week 4, Lesson 2



We are so glad you have joined us for Week 4, Lesson 2 Take Your Time of our journey to greater spiritual and physical health. Listed below is your Faith & Fit work for today. Please click on the links or the play buttons to access each resource. Remember to leave a comment about your experience at the Speak Your Mind section at the bottom of the page. In Christ, we can grow stronger. Let's do it!

Everyday Faith Teaching Video:



Everyday Faith Bible Study

Please click on the link below to access Faith & Fit Scripture Reading!

[Week 4, Lesson 2 Bible Study](#)



Everyday Fit Physical Challenge:

Week 4, Lesson 2

This week we continue to focus on walking. You can choose to walk indoors or outdoors. Weather permitting, my preference is to be outdoors enjoying the fresh air and sunshine (get that Vitamin D!). We will also give you options to supplement with some other types of exercise in Extra Fit for those who would like to.

For those of you who prefer to walk indoors, you can use a treadmill, or I would recommend Leslie Sansone's Walking DVDs. Her DVDs are available for purchase in stores like Target and Walmart, on her website, for live streaming on Walk TV , and some for free on her site when you sign up (free) for her Walk Social Club.

One fun way to track your walking is to use a **pedometer** and aim for a certain number of steps per day. The American Heart Association recommends 10,000 steps each day. We will work up to that. Ten thousand steps is approximately 5 miles, but that is based on an average stride being 2.5 feet. Your total may differ from that based on the length of your stride.

Pedometers can be found in just about any sports or discount store and range in price from about \$10 to \$125 for more elaborate ones with additional features. I use a Fitbit to track my steps each day. It also tracks flights of stairs climbed, calories burned, miles walked, hours slept, and the

time. It also allows me to set a silent, vibrating alarm. It syncs with an website, which includes many more features.

Basic Walking Guidelines

Begin your walk with a warm up. This basically means start walking slowly for a few minutes, giving your body time to warm up. Save any stretching for the end of your walk, as you should not stretch cold muscles. If you have body parts that are very tense and need to be stretched before your main walk, do your warm-up first and then stretch them. You should also still follow your walk with a stretch at the end.

The Walking Site has some wonderful stretches for walkers, and here is a link to their [stretching page](#).

As you are walking, walk tall, pull in your stomach and tighten your bottom.

When you have finished your exercise for the day, be sure to let the Faith and Fit group know by posting on our Facebook page. Great job!

Beginner Level Exercise:

For Lesson 2, we are going to set the goal of walking 1.5 miles or the rough equivalent of 3000 steps. If you wear a pedometer all day long, this is in addition to the total that is already showing on your pedometer. So, when it is time to log your walk, check your pedometer and note how many steps/miles you have already walked that day. Add 3000 steps or 1.5 miles to that total and begin walking. When you get to that total you may stop. If you are fairly fit and would rather choose the goal of two miles, then aim for 4000 steps on your pedometer or another 2 miles on the total.

Experienced Level: Today make it your goal to walk for 60 minutes. Walk at a pace you are comfortable with and that your are able to carry on a conversation. By the end of your walk you should be sweaty and tired but not exhausted. As always,

check with your doctor before beginning any physical workout to be sure you are up for the challenge!

For an extra challenge try jogging today! If you have never jogged before set your goal to walk a half mile and then jog for a half mile. If you are an experienced jogger run your usual route and up it by a half mile! you can do it! Please join Coach Dan for Day Four Lower Body Focus!

Rainy Day? Too hot? No worries! click on the link below for a great indoor workout with Leslie Sansone!



[Five Fast Miles!](#)



Everyday Fit Food Challenge:

Take Your Time

Today we are going to further explore **the importance of families regularly eating meals together**. It's so important for healthy relationships for families to interact with each other over shared meals. This website has some wonderful

information on why it is important as well as lots of suggestions and resources on how to implement it with kids of all ages: [The FamilyDinnerProject.Org](http://TheFamilyDinnerProject.Org). Be sure to check out this site.

I'd also like to share a quick, nutritious main meal recipe for those busy days when there just isn't much time to fix a meal. I was inspired to try this from the precooked chickens that you can pick up at most grocery stores these days. This recipe couldn't be simpler.

Slow-cooker Chicken

1 whole free-range chicken

Olive oil

herbs and spices (I like garlic, rosemary, and thyme)

sea salt

1/4 cup water

Remove the neck and gizzards from the inside of the chicken if they are stuffed inside. Place the chicken (breast side up) in the slow cooker. Rub 1 or 2 tbsp. of olive oil around the outside of the chicken and sprinkle with 1 tsp rosemary and 1 tsp thyme and sea salt to taste. Mince 1-2 cloves of garlic and rub that on the outside of the chicken. Pour the water around the edges of the cooker and cover. Cook on low for 8 hours or high for 4-5 hours. This makes a tender, juicy chicken.

This recipe is easy to customize. Instead of olive oil, use honey to coat the chicken and sprinkle with lemon pepper, garlic, and sea salt. Or try using just barbeque sauce for a tangy chicken. You can also add some whole red potatoes to the pot and they will cook right along with the chicken. Enjoy!



Extra Faith:

Need a little extra spiritual challenge added to your day? Take advantage of the following resources!

Today we are going to explore how to fast safely with a guide by CRU. Fasting is a discipline that has been used for thousands of years by Christians. The idea is to replace food with prayer; fasting is often used by people who need a spiritual or health breakthrough in their lives. If you have medical issues or are on medication, be sure to check with your doctor before attempting a fast. Keep in mind you can ease into fasting by trying the following fasts:

- Fasting for just one meal a day
- Fasting from desserts
- Fasting from social media, TV, etc.

If you have any tips on fasting, please share below or on our Facebook page.



Extra Fit

Need an extra challenge? Get your abs in shape with Team Beachbody Coach and Founder of Team Let's Go Fitness at Dan

Vukmirovich. Dan's videos are short, effective and productive!
Let's go!

Let us know how you're doing in this challenge. Be sure to post your comments, thoughts, recipes, prayer requests, and fitness tips on our [Facebook page!](#)

Prayer of Examen

As 2011 has kicked off, **I've been evaluating my life and what I want to do for this year.** I'd already been thinking about this for a few days when I was in church on January 2. My pastor Dave Rodriguez introduced a type of praying that was perfect for the mindset I was in. It's called the Prayer of Examen. Richard Foster has a chapter on this type of prayer in his book *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*.

Basically, the **Prayer of Examen** is an inward spiritual practice, where we analyze what is going on inside of ourselves. It has two components:

1. **The first is where we examine how God was working in or through us throughout our day and how we responded to Him, and**
2. **We examine our conscience to see where we need to be cleansed, purified and healed. See Psalm 26:2,3.**

An important thing to remember, however, is to do this *with* God. Prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit to reveal things to you. God can help us to see the truth, but also He will do it in a

loving way.



So, as I was in church, Pastor Rod suggested we all go through the Prayer of Examen in the context of looking over the past year of 2010. Here are the questions he suggested we answer.

1. **Looking over the past year, for what am I most grateful or thankful?**
2. **When or where in the past year were you cooperating most fully with God's action in your life?**
3. **When were you resisting?**
4. **Beginning today, how do you want to live your life differently?**

Take some time to prayerfully answer these questions. What do you want 2011 to look like for you?

While my church did this in the context of one year, many people pray the Prayer of Examen on a daily basis. You can ask yourself these same questions using the last 24 hours as your context. Here are some ways it may help you to do this on a daily basis, or at least semi-regularly.

Perhaps you **take a walk** every evening; you could answer these questions as you're walking. Or maybe you like to journal, and you can **journal your answers**. Perhaps you want to **mentally run through the prayer** as you're lying in bed at night.

Whatever way you decide, incorporating the Prayer of Examen into your life may help you to grow spiritually as you invite

the Lord to help you analyze your heart.

Pray on!

Just

Resource



[Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home](#)

By Richard Foster / HarperOne