

Prepare or Pretend

Ready:

“Do not waste time...Instead, train yourself to be godly.” -- 1 Timothy 4:7

Set

Over the past decade, the Navy SEALs rose to fame in the public eye thanks to major motion pictures that detailed their epic heroism. Yet, it wasn't the impressive action scenes that allured most—it was the revelation of their preparation intensity. These elite warriors hold fast to an original saying: “When under pressure, you don't rise to the occasion, you sink to the level of your training.” As competitors, the same is true. When the referee blows the opening whistle – and the pressure of competition is on—we sink to the level of our athletic training. Sure, we'd like to believe that we can “flip the switch” and perform better when the bright lights turn on, yet any serious competitor knows that isn't true. We default to the degree of our preparation.

Jesus provides a scouting report for our time here on earth: “You will face many trials and sorrows” (John 16:33). You know it's true. Disappointment is all-around – death, divorce, division, and discouragement. When setbacks become reality—and the pressure of life is on—we sink to the level of our spiritual training. The same is true when confronted with temptation. We wish to believe that instantaneous strength will be mustered when tempted, yet experience shows that if we don't prepare, we just pretend to be ready.

The second part of Jesus' scouting report provides life: “But take heart, because I have overcome the world.” Today, Jesus offers to prepare you for whatever you face, whenever you may face it. He can strengthen your heart and heal your wounds. He can solidify your trust and embolden your convictions. It's your invitation to accept. That way, when you're under pressure and sink to the level of your spiritual training, you can be confident that you can navigate whatever you face because the Wonderful Counselor trained you and the Mighty Warrior is beside you.

Are you preparing or pretending?

Go

- Are you seeking the Lord every day, allowing normal circumstances to serve as the training ground for strengthening your faith?
- How serious are you when you train?

Workout

1 Corinthians 10:12-13; 2 Timothy 4:2

Overtime

“Lord, train me. Use the everyday, normal circumstances to prepare me for trials. Remind me of Your presence today. Amen.”

Bible Reference:

1 Timothy 4:7

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

2 Timothy 4:2



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