

Day 1 -- READ Zechariah 8:5 and I Timothy 4:8.

Since sports in America engages more people, families, and communities in a shared experience than any institution, religion or cultural activity, it's safe to say all of us are in some way, shape or form, affected by sport. **Do you generally have a positive or negative view of sports? What has influenced that view, personal experience (positive or negative), media coverage, community participation?** In the weekend message, Mark Hull said that sport is the most dominating cultural force in America.

In what ways do you see evidence of that within our nation? How is that evidenced regionally or locally? How has your own life been shaped or influenced by the American culture of sport? How has it shaped our point of view regarding issues like masculinity and femininity? Honesty and integrity? Aggression and violence? Entertainment and community?

CONSIDER the ways sport (or play) intersects your world this week.

What do you see? What message do you hear?

...men who understood the times and knew what Israel should do...

1 Chronicles 12:32

Day 2 -- READ Ephesians 5:1-2, I Corinthians 12:31b, Ephesians 4:1-2.

Our culture is saturated with sport. **How does that reconcile with our faith as followers of Christ? What's the God-ordained role and purpose of sport or play?** God created in us the desire to express ourselves through play. Joy and fun are the intrinsic reward of play. Play is meant for the pleasure of the activity. Sport finds its rightful place in the circle of play.

What do you play? Can you enjoy simply playing? When was the last time you participated in a sport or some type of play just for fun? What did that feel like?

READ the following two statements. **Which most accurately depicts your view and behavior toward competition?**

- Competition's proper place is to add spice to sport
- Competition is the purpose of sport and play

Which statement represents our culture's view of competition?

Which statement best represents God's view of competition?

Competition can add excitement to our play, but it also has the capability to usurp its role and become the purpose. When this happens, sport is no longer in the circle of play.

What's the most important aspect of sport or play to you? Winning? Defeating someone else? Having fun? Achieving a feat of some kind? Can you have fun if you aren't defeating someone else? Can you have fun if you're losing? What role has competition taken in your sport or play? Is it possible that winning is too important to you?

PRAY: God, You've created in me a desire for play and fun. Help me to nurture that under Your care. Teach me to take pleasure and receive joy from the activities of sport/play. Open my eyes to see if I've allowed competition to become the purpose. Help me return it to its proper role.

Day 3 -- READ Romans 12:1-2.

REFER to the Three Circle illustration on the weekend message outline.

We're constantly forming our body, mind, and spirit. **Are we doing so intentionally or by default?** Unless it's intentional, we'll be formed by the culture surrounding us by default.

In what ways are you intentional about the formation of your body?

When was the last time you had a physical? Do you take good care of your body?

Is your body well prepared to execute the things God calls you to do?

THINK about how you view your body. **Do you view your physical body with contempt? Do you give undue glorification to your body and physical condition or appearance? Do you view your body with apathy and passivity? – “It's completely unimportant.”**

THINK about how much time you spend in front of a mirror... too much?

Too little? Our body is the house in which we live and the vehicle in which we navigate this world. **Do you have a healthy God-influenced view of your body or has your view been formed by culture?**

CONSIDER how you can intentionally form your body this week. **Is there a view you need to reject? Is there a discipline you need to add to your life?**

Day 4 -- READ 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 and Philippians 2:5.

CONSIDER how we intentionally form our minds and spirits.

INVITE God to be present in your thoughts as you consider these things.

Are you intentional about the formation of your mind? Do you have a plan to nurture your mind to expand your knowledge and understanding? Where do you seek knowledge and understanding? Do you guard your mind? What process do you have in place to fill your mind with Godly wisdom and understanding? Are you still learning new things? Do you read books? When was the last time you engaged in conversation with someone from a different culture, race, occupation, generation, or religion in order to learn something new?

We've been given the mind of Christ.

Is yours being formed intentionally or by default?

What about your spirit? Is your spirit focused and influenced by Jesus and His teachings? Do you value the things God values? What delights and gives joy to your life? What does it mean to have the mind of Christ?

Do you think and care about the things that matter to Him?

Day 5 BODY - MIND - SPIRIT

The majority of us are somewhat intentional in one area, possibly two, but very few are intentional in all three. If you're physically fit, you're probably intentional in the formation of your body but may tend to neglect one of the other areas. If you thrive on info and knowledge, or work in a mentally challenging atmosphere, you're most likely intentional about the formation of your mind and perhaps body and spirit are secondary. Maybe you're intentional about your spiritual formation – but your body and mind are on a course determined by fast food and cliff notes.

READ Luke 2:52. **What would it look like to be intentional about formation of the body, mind, AND spirit? How can you integrate the three as you work, play, worship, and become more like our Rabbi? What might that look like if we were to think, feel, and act like Jesus?** **READ** Isaiah 40:30-31.

May 14/15, 2011