I was reading an article the other day about the T.V. show *The Biggest Loser*. It stated that 13 out of 14 of the people they interviewed, from the show, *after six years*, have regained nearly all or more of the weight they lost! Danny Cahill, in season 8 of the show, lost more than anyone – 239 lbs. – going from 430 lbs. to 191 lbs. He has now regained a lot of it back. The reason for gaining the weight back is, after losing the weight the contestants had to deal with a radically slower metabolism. A professor of medicine at the University of Washington said, “*As long as you are below your initial weight your body is going to try to get you back.*” Dr. Michael Schwartz The article basically recommended *a change in lifestyle*, as a solution to regaining weight after losing it. (NYTimes.com).

As I read the article I was reminded of the ongoing *spiritual struggle* with our flesh – *how sin is always trying to get us back*! In our text, Jesus prescribes a holy *two-fold* regimen, which promotes “*spiritual fitness*” in the life of the believer. The context of this teaching follows the Lord’s encounter with the woman at the well. She has rushed into town to invite all who would come, to “*Come, see a Man...*” (v.29). In the meantime, His disciples returning after purchasing food in the city, wondered why Jesus was *even* speaking to a Samaritan woman *(v.31-34)*.

Jesus seizes this opportunity, as their divine personal fitness coach to school them in regard to *spiritual fitness*: **Divine Diet.** *(v.32-34)*. The Greek word for **Food** – *brosis; bosko* – to pasture, to graze. David declared: *(Psalm 23:1, 2a)* “*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures...*” God’s children are *never* in “want” (lack). Jesus stays close to His Father’s “*food source,*” pasture of abundance! *(Psalm 65:11)* You crown the year with Your goodness, And Your paths drip with abundance. **Note:** The Lord’s physical need was *not* met, yet His spirit was *overflowing* with the goodness of His Father! In the same
manner, despite our material and physical lack, in Christ, there is no lack of overflowing spiritual peace, joy, and strength! Jesus measured His joy not by what He possessed, but by who possessed Him! (Luke 12:15) "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

The key to our joy is to stay in the Father’s “pasture!” A steady diet of being in His will! (v.34). A spiritually impoverished believer is one who has wandered from the Father’s pasture. His “pasture” (will) must be our pleasure, our delight! If it is not our delight, we are not eating right! (Psalm 37:4) Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

To delight is not a matter of knowing, but doing – the second aspect of this “divine regimen.” Divine Work. God has revealed His will (word), that we might do it, rather than become word aficionados! Knowing His will, and not doing it, is equivalent to eating without any exercise. David declared: (Psalm 40:8) “I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.” Paul exhorted Timothy: “physical exercise profits a little, but godly exercise profits in all things.” 1 Timothy 4:6-8.

When we think about the work of God, our minds immediately go into task mode; however, consider the Lord’s response in (ttt) John 6:28, 29. Believe – pisteuo; to have faith – in, upon, with respect to a person or thing; entrust, rely upon. Obedience to His will starts with respect and reliance upon Christ! From a Roman prison Paul writes to Timothy, (2 Timothy 1:12) For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. Despite His circumstances, the apostle was still “grazing” on Jesus, in the Father’s pasture! Persuaded: literally - to convince, to assent (agree) to authority, to rely.
The problem with many believers today is we are not “persuaded,” in agreement with God’s authority! Thus, we wander, from church to church, or from worldly pasture to worldly pasture, eating “loco weed” – resulting in a “second-class” relationship of compromise. Grazing on self-pity, unforgiveness, the past; marinating in our own “juices” of self-worship! When all the time, Jesus has purchased you a “first-class” ticket!

Article May 3, 2016: “Walking past first class fuels passengers air rage...passengers were 3.8 times more likely to have an incident of air rage if they were on a plane that had a first-class section...walking past the comfortably reclining one-percenters ...makes us feel inferior... feelings of inadequacy can have serious consequences.” (Foxnews.com). If we keep walking past “first-class,” the pasture of our God, we will end up in the “no-class” section of life!

(1 Corinthians 3:21) Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours. It’s time to be seated in obedience in “first-class,” to return to the Shepherd of your soul, the pasture of His abundance! Your “ticket” has already been “paid!” But many will still foolishly keep walking, pass “first-class.” (Isaiah 28:12) To whom He said, "This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest," And, "This is the refreshing"; Yet they would not hear.

Notice: in doing the Father’s will there is a “harvest!” Why does Jesus say, “Lift up your eyes?” Because the church is often distracted from the real work of God. Far too often we are busy looking down, comparing our feet to that of others in the church, judging and “devouring” one another, while the world slips into hell! (Galatians 5:14-15) For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! Show me a church without a heart for evangelism, “souls,” and I’ll show you “spiritual cannibalism.” However, where believers are engaged in the Father’s work, fruitfulness, rather than fighting, abounds!
(v.36) We serve (work), but the results are in God’s hand. (v.37, 38). (1 Corinthians 3:7-8) So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor. It wasn’t the Samaritan woman’s words that produced converts from the city, but the words of Jesus! (v.39-42) – John 6:44, 45.

APPLICATION: 1) His will is our food. Talent, programs, charisma, cannot sustain us. 2) The harvest is now! (Luke 10:2b) “The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” Far too many “house servants,” and not enough “field hands!” May we humble ourselves as did Isaiah and dare to pray, (Isaiah 6:8b) Here am I! Send me!”

CONCLUSION: What is your spiritual diet and exercise regimen? God calls us to be “The Biggest Loser,” that we might live! (Matthew 16:25-27) For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.