

The Formula

My father loved butter. It was the one luxury that he allowed himself. I grew up at the time when margarine became popular. We were told it was better than butter; had fewer calories, less fat, and was cheaper. The whole family switched over, except my father. We all grew to prefer the margarine and couldn't stand the smell of butter melting in the frying pan. We tried to get my father to switch, telling him of all the advantages of margarine that we had learned from the scientific experts, but he stubbornly stayed with the butter.

There is a formula to follow for optimum physical health: eat right, exercise daily, and drink plenty of water. That formula no longer works as well as it used to. Because the formula is wrong? No! Because man is always trying to improve on God's creation, and messes it up. The formula still works. It's the items within the formula that can no longer be trusted because of man's interference. We were told margarine was good for us, and now they're saying, "Ooops!" Now they've found that margarine is very high in trans fatty acids, it triples the risk of heart disease, increases bad cholesterol, increases cancer risk by five fold, decreases immune response, and is one molecule away from being plastic. Would you melt a Frisbee and spread it on your toast?

But it's not just margarine. Most of our food supply has changed. We've depleted the soil so what is grown no longer has the natural nutrients, and they have to be artificially added. And we add artificial coloring, and flavoring, and preservatives, and vitamins to make it better. It's not as good as the original. We no longer know what it means to eat right.

Exercise used to be a part of our work, and it occurred outside. Now, with our sedentary lifestyle, we have to artificially create our exercise conditions. Part of its success was that it was done outside, and fresh air was an important part of it. Now it's done mostly indoors on machines. It's still exercise, but it's not as effective as the original.

Drink plenty of water? What kind of water? We've polluted our water supply. Now we have to filter it, and add chemicals to it to make it safe to drink. So do we switch to bottled water? It's been found that some bottled water is no better than tap water. In fact, some bottled water is nothing more than tap water. And the containers can actually leech chemicals into that bottled water, especially if you re-use the bottles, making it unsafe to drink. Ooops! So do we give up on the formula? No! The formula still works. It's just that things in the

physical realm get messed up. We need to go back to the natural, the original, the way God intended it to be.

This formula also works in the spiritual realm: Eat right, exercise daily, and drink plenty of water.

John 6:35 "Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.'"

John 6:47-51 "I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." That's Eating Right!

1Timothy 4:7-12 "Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather train your self to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance (and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe." Exercise your faith. Speak the word and build your hope, your promise.

John 7:38 "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." Living water...not purified.

John 4:13-14 "Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'" A never-ending supply in uncontaminated containers. It works in the spiritual because man has no control over the spiritual. It is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

In 1981, Dodie Osteen, Joel Osteen's mother, was diagnosed with terminal liver cancer. There was nothing more they could do for her, so they sent her home to die. They gave her just a few weeks. But Dodie didn't accept that prognosis. She decided to use the formula. She began to eat right, feeding from God's word three times a day with snacks in between. She exercised daily, believing that word and hiding it in her heart, building her faith and hope; becoming stronger.

And she drank plenty of water from that supply that was welling up inside of her; living water that brought life to her body and soul. As a result, now, twenty-eight years later, Dodie Osteen can still be seen on a Sunday morning, sitting in the front seat of her son's church.

It's been said that everyone we encounter every day, is fighting some kind of battle, experiencing some kind of warfare. That means that everyone here today is facing some kind of struggle. I urge you to use the formula. Whether it's physical or spiritual, you won't find yourself saying, "Oh, I could have had a V-8", because you won't need one. You will have everything you need to overcome if you just follow the formula: EAT RIGHT, EXERCISE DAILY, DRINK PLENTY OF WATER!