

HEALTH ALERT

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL'S WHO ARE
SUFFERING WITH DIABETES AND OTHER HEALTH
PROBLEMS RELATED TO THAT ILLNESS.



*Focus on
the REAL
YOU in*



God calls us to be exceptional in our work

Of all the characteristics, gifts, and virtues that indicate that we belong to God, two should obviously set us apart from those who do not profess to know the Lord: one is *love* and the other is the *quality of our work*. Our work is the tangible expression of the invisible reality that the power of God is at work in our hearts.

Love for God and others is our inward fuel and motivation that guides all that we do. But our labor is the visible output of that motivation. So we should view our work, regardless of what it is, not as a means to earn God's favor but to express the truth of His life in us.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 says, *"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom"* (NIV). The Lord used Solomon to teach us this practical standard for all labor that I call the Principle of All Your Might. This principle clearly establishes God's expectations for your work...put your whole effort to the task!

Seek to be the exceptional worker God made you to be by applying some practical steps to make progress.

Have a "Yes" attitude

What is written on your face when you work? Does your face say "Yes!" or "No, no, no!" Proverbs 15:13 says, *"A happy heart makes the face cheerful"* (NIV). A cheerful attitude toward your work can reduce the friction in your office, with your customers, and at home. Work with a happy heart even in circumstances that require all of your might to have the right attitude.

Seek to solve problems

Most jobs have two parts: the fun part and the hard part. Your willingness to accept responsibility for the tough parts of the job, the areas with problems and challenges, will set you apart and allow you to make the most difference.

These assignments may require extraordinary measures of patience, energy and effort—what Solomon calls "all" of your might. But these will also be the assignments when you experience the end of your human strength and the beginning of knowing God is there. You will discover that He is able to do more than you could ever ask or imagine.

A friend of mine worked for years in factory maintenance. The plant housed very large equipment that operated 24 hours a day making sheets of plastic. At the end of the process, the plastic was rolled onto a tube and cut by a very long blade that moved faster than the eye could track.

A malfunction caused the blade to improperly cut the plastic. This stopped one of the largest machines from production, resulting in a great deal of lost revenue. A team of engineers was brought in from out of state to fix the cutting process, but their efforts met with little success.

Although my friend did not have a high school diploma and was only the maintenance man on the night shift, he gave the problem his attention and extra effort by thinking about possible solutions during his off hours.

God gave him an idea that he thought might solve the improper cut of the massive blade. He submitted the idea in the company suggestion box, which was then routed to the team of engineers.

To everyone's surprise but his, the idea worked. He could have gone home and never thought about it, but instead, he gave the company's problem all of his might.

Perfection is not the goal

Our best effort should not be determined by standards of perfection. Only our Heavenly Father is perfect, and our labors cannot be perfect. Although good is often acceptable, it normally does not require all of our might to achieve good. We can press on to achieve excellence if we don't accept the average or norm.

Vince Lombardi said, "Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence." This is a great perspective that recognizes our limitations but does not compromise.

The Lord promises that He will use those willing to labor with excellence. *"Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men"* (Proverbs 22:29 NIV).

We may read this and think it is a motivation for mere vanity or fame, but I think the Lord is indicating that He will display before kings what He can do through His creation (men and women). When we are given opportunities for notice because of our work, we are given greater circles of influence to express gratitude to God who enables us to work.

During the summer of 1924, the Olympics were hosted by the city of Paris. Eric Liddell, a committed Christian and famous Scottish runner, refused to race on Sunday, with the consequence that he was forced to withdraw from the 100-meter race, his best event. The schedule had been published several months earlier, and his decision was made well before the games began.

Liddell spent the intervening months training for the 400-meter event. On the day of the race, as Liddell went to the starting blocks, an American masseur slipped a piece of paper into his hand with a quotation from 1 Samuel 2:30, *"Those who honor me I will honor"* (NIV). Liddell ran with that piece of paper in his hand. He not only won the race but broke the existing world record with a time of 47.6 seconds.

Start today

Applying the Principle of All Your Might is not dependent upon circumstances or other people. You simply resolve that you can take your efforts to new levels when you are assigned a job or responsibility. If you need a mentor, there is probably a friend or coworker you admire who would be blessed to give you advice and encouragement.

As Solomon reminded us, we are going to the grave where we can no longer work or plan. So before you get to the grave, adopt a "Yes" attitude, tackle the problems, and strive for excellence. Work with all your might and you, too, will feel His pleasure.

If you are going to go for it, let us know and we will be cheering you on in prayer.

Are you at risk for Pre-Diabetes?

(BlackDoctor.org) -- Pre-diabetes occurs when blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. Before developing the serious health condition of type 2 diabetes, a person will almost always be pre-diabetic beforehand. But pre-diabetes is a condition without symptoms, meaning that many people can have it without even knowing it. Left unchecked, pre-diabetes can lead to full-blown type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Luckily, pre-diabetes can be diagnosed with a simple test, and treatment can prevent many health problems and complications. Here's what you need to know to control pre-diabetes before it gets control of you.

Diabetes Basics

Under normal circumstances, the glucose (sugar) levels in your blood rise after you eat a meal or snack. In response, your body produces a hormone called insulin, which takes on the job of converting the glucose in your bloodstream into usable energy. But if insulin isn't available, or if the body isn't using it correctly, your blood glucose will remain elevated, and that can be harmful to your body. This is a condition known as diabetes. People who have higher-than-normal blood glucose levels that aren't quite high enough to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes are considered pre-diabetic.

Who's at Risk?

Over 30 million African Americans over the age of 20 have pre-diabetes, according to the American Diabetes Association. If you have any of the risk factors for type 2 diabetes, including uncontrollable factors like age and race, and/or controllable risk factors like obesity and physical inactivity, then you are also at risk for pre-diabetes.

Most of the time, pre-diabetes is asymptomatic (shows no symptoms), but some people will experience some general diabetes symptoms like extreme thirst, frequent urination, fatigue and/or blurred vision.

If you fall into any high-risk categories or experience any of the symptoms above, then visit your health care provider and get tested for pre-diabetes as soon as you can. Early diagnosis and treatment are crucial steps, as they can prevent the development of type 2 diabetes and its serious health consequences.

Testing & Diagnosis

There are two tests commonly used to diagnose pre-diabetes: a fasting plasma glucose (FPG test) and an oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT).

- The **FPG** test will measure your blood glucose level after an eight-hour (overnight) fast. A result less than 100 mg/dL is considered normal, but anything above that level is diagnosed as "impaired fasting glucose" (IFG). Between 100 mg/dL and 125 mg/dL is considered pre-

diabetes, while 126 mg/dL or higher full-blown diabetes.

- The **OGTT** will measure your blood sugar after a fast and then again after drinking a glucose-rich beverage. Two hours after the beverage, a result less than 140 mg/dL is considered normal, but anything above that level is diagnosed as "impaired glucose tolerance (IGT). Between 140 mg/dL and 199 mg/dL is considered pre-diabetes, while 200 mg/dL or higher is full-blown diabetes.
- Some people have both IFG and IGT.

Treatment & Prevention

While pre-diabetes in itself isn't necessarily dangerous, the fact is that many people with pre-diabetes will develop type 2 diabetes within 10 years. If you have pre-diabetes, realize that you're fortunate to have found out while there is still a lot you can do to prevent or delay the development of type 2 diabetes. Here are some preventative measures:

- **Lose weight.** In a study of more than 3,000 people with pre-diabetes, a five to seven percent weight loss (about 10 pounds for a 200-pound person) lowered the incidence of type 2 diabetes by nearly 60 percent.
- **Get active.** Physical activity (and its accompanying weight loss) will lower your risk of developing type 2 diabetes and boost your health in other ways too. Try walking 30 minutes a day, five days a week.
- **Eat sensibly.** Cut excess calories, sugar, saturated fat and trans fat from your diet and you will cut your risk of diabetes. Include more healthy fats, fiber, whole grains, fruits and veggies.
- **Quit smoking.** Smokers are 50% to 90% more likely to develop diabetes than nonsmokers. If you smoke, taking steps to quit today can reduce your risk of serious health problems, including type 2 diabetes.
- **Drink moderately.** Moderate drinking (no more than one drink daily for women or two drinks daily for men) has a protective effect against diabetes, but avoid heavy drinking.

If you have pre-diabetes, work closely with your doctor to create a plan of sensible lifestyle changes that will work for you. The complications of diabetes—heart disease, stroke, blindness, and more—can be avoided by taking these proactive steps today.

Better Diabetes Awareness Doesn't Equal Better Habits for Some Blacks

Focus on
the REAL
YOU in
2021



(BlackDoctor.org) -- African-Americans who have family members with diabetes are more aware of the disease's risk factors — but that awareness may not lead to a healthier lifestyle.

The type 2 diabetes epidemic disproportionately affects African-Americans, so researchers wanted to see whether having a family member with the disease had any influence on a person's awareness or behavior. Their findings appear in the May issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*.

The study evaluated 1,122 African-American adults, living in Raleigh and Greensboro, N.C. None of the participants were diagnosed with diabetes; however, 36 percent reported that an immediate family member had the disease.

Participants were shown a seven-item list and asked whether any of the factors increase a person's risk of developing diabetes. All seven items on the list are risk factors for diabetes — minority race or ethnicity, overweight, family history of diabetes, sedentary lifestyle, older age, high-calorie diet and diabetes during pregnancy.

Among the participants with a family history of diabetes, nearly 60 percent had a better-than-average awareness of the diabetes risk factors. About 47 percent of the participants with no family history demonstrated such awareness.

Yet, this awareness didn't necessarily translate into healthy behavior.

"We hypothesized that persons with a family history would be more aware of risk factors for diabetes, however, we were surprised that they were not more likely to engage in more of the healthy behaviors compared to persons without a family history," said study co-author Tiffany Gary, Ph.D., of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

More than 75 percent of the participants were aware that being overweight increases the risk of diabetes. But, of the 65 percent who were overweight, only 32 percent were trying to lose weight.

"Some reasons for this difference could be that people may not be aware of national standards used to define overweight and obesity," Gary said. "Furthermore, it has been shown in several studies that there may be a greater acceptance of a heavier body size among African-Americans."

So, what more can be done to raise awareness that being overweight can lead to dangerous health consequences?

"One approach would be to improve awareness of health risks associated with being overweight or obese and accurate perceptions of defining overweight and obesity," Gary said. "This could be accomplished by national campaigns, community activism and policy approaches."

Kate Lorig, R.N., a professor at Stanford University's Patient Education Research Center said people who are overweight are "definitely aware that being overweight is unhealthy, but may not be able to name a specific risk."

"Education is part of the answer," Lorig said. "But what we really have to do is make it environmentally and educationally appealing to change behaviors, not just for diabetes, but for most chronic health conditions."

The authors did find two areas of significant behavior difference. African-Americans with a family history of diabetes were more likely (26.9 percent vs. 20.4 percent) to eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily and to have had a diabetes screening test (74.6 percent vs. 61.2 percent).

By Glenda Fautleroy

Volunteers Needed
To help with
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