

## “When you’re Tough On...”

Zig Ziglar is someone whom I have actually seen live before; at a seminar many years ago, he appeared as one of several speakers. He is the type of individual that has amazing energy on stage; and he expends a lot of energy on stage. As the first writing under the title of *Tumble Blocks*, I think his energy is someone to understand and apply, if possible.

What I find most interesting about Zig is his heritage or upbringing – as it sometimes is described. Born one of twelve children, he knew what **competition** was all about; he was born with it!! And with the death of father when very young, he also learned much to compensate for the loss – both to his family and himself. Zig grew up with much challenge and, with that, much **courage** and **conviction**. I confessing Christian, he has likely grasped the passion of Christ in his life. He is a person with charisma – but also with **confidence**...and probable some toughness too.

In his statement or quote, he says “when you’re tough on yourself...” Now there’s an action that doesn’t *seem quite right*; but maybe deserves an explanation or some elaboration. When we set high standards for ourselves, we are basically trying to do our best; and when we try to do our best, we cannot do any more, can we? But what we do know in our conscience or heart is that we have given it our all – being tough on ourselves...

*“When you’re tough on yourself, life is going to be infinitely easier on you.”*  
 - Zig Ziglar

Not to contradict my explanation but, we can be too tough on ourselves too; yes, we can allow our failures or mistakes to be *blown out of proportion* – either by what we think, we feel, or even what someone says about us. We must be careful to remember that if God made us, he certainly thought we were worth his time – and God’s time has to be very valuable. In the relationship with God, we can do our best while accepting the possibility and certainty that it may not be good enough to please others. But what God looks at is the heart of his creation – and not what other people typically look at. God is an excellent judge of people because of his insight and, make no mistake, his opinion is far more important than anyone (or everyone) else.

In contrast, when we don’t accept or comprehend God’s worth in us, we don’t feel nearly as valuable or important; and if we depend on others (people) to make us feel valuable, we’re going to be highly disappointed and continuously let down. Are source of strength is God and, through God, we are able to give our best – because whatever we do, *whether word or deed*, we do as though we’re doing it for God. Recently I read a quote (from the Bible): that when a man honors God, than God honors him. How wonderful; now, let’ try to honor God in everything we do, we think, and we say.

It is not easy to do all this; to honor God in every way. I think then even Zig would agree that we always have room for improvement or growth. But this motivational speaker also reminds that: “you are the only person on earth who can use your ability.” Since you’re the only person – but because you are a unique, special person in the eyes of God – you can continue to improve and grow or the rest of your life. Even when you get to be an old man, you can still grow! Not physically of course, but spiritually...

Long before Zig, a man name Paul wrote about being tough on himself; he said, “I buffet my body” in regard to his conditioning for the Lord’s mission work. Paul endured a lot of sorrow and struggle – and he even went to jail in doing the Lord’s work – but he also “pressed on toward the upward call in Christ Jesus.” Yes, life was tough for Paul too, but he exhibited the qualities of courage, conviction and confidence. He placed his confidence in the Lord and, from that, received the courage and conviction to continue as long as the Lord willed...

Paul used the analogy of his mission work to that of a boxer or other athlete training for the event; he made such statements as *I run as though to win the prize* to draw the similarity of physical training with spiritually training. Was Paul tough on himself? I think so and he mentions that he was shipwrecked, his was beaten and imprisoned, and endured other hardships – all for the glory of God. I know may seem odd that he would do this but must try to understand that it was about love. Yes, the punishment or hardship he endured was about love.

His love for people came from God; and because God loved him, he could love people – even to the degree that of hardships and difficulty. If you are able to understand that love sometimes means sacrifice, than have to wonder how his being tough on himself made for a better or easier life? Well, he wasn’t really considering this life (on earth), but was considering (or work toward) a life with Christ. He so anticipated this life hereafter that he longed to with there – knowing that the afterlife would be far greater than his present life.

Perhaps I am adding more to Zig’s quote that he meant or is trying to convey; quite possibly, he is talking about life now – and not life in the hereafter. But the things that mean the most to us – for which we do work hard and apply ourselves – are not always accomplished or acquired in our lifetime. Yes, we work as though the reward could be now but the simply truth is that, for the believer in Christ, nothing now compares to the life hereafter.

We are tough of ourselves sometimes; and we do work hard and give our best sometimes; but with all our effort and expectation, we must realize that the rewards in life do not compare with “the prize” waiting for us in the life to come. *When you’re tough on yourself*, it probably hurts; but when you understand where true life begins, than life here becomes tolerable...and even more.