



September 2013

God wants all of us to prosper and be in health (III John 2), and He has equipped His children with the means to do so. He has given us a body that is designed to heal itself, a sound mind (II Timothy 1:7) to believe His Word, and holy spirit to operate His power. Then out of thankfulness for God's love, grace, and mercy to us, we can give back to Him.

One way we can show our thankfulness is to faithfully steward our bodies so that we are physically fit and ready to give in any capacity. Maybe that means providing support for someone in need, doing extra work to make something the best, reaching more people with God's Word, developing our long suits in the Body of Christ, or doing whatever God has called us to do for Him.

*I Thessalonians 5:23:*

*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

A man or a woman who is born again of God's spirit is a complete person of body, soul, and spirit. Each of these aspects is important, and all are interdependent. II Corinthians 4:7 says that we have the "treasure" (of God's Word and His gift of holy spirit) in "earthen vessels"—our physical bodies. Logically, the better we steward our body, the better our complete person of body, soul, and spirit can function as God intended. When our physical bodies are strengthened, we are in a better position to give more freely.

#### WHY BE PHYSICALLY FIT?

Our motivation as believers is always our love for God.

*Mark 12:29,30:*

*And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is,  
Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:  
And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with  
all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is  
the first commandment.*

Ultimately, what directs our decisions to do anything or to not do anything in life is our love for God. Recognizing that God has done so much for each one of us because of His love is reason enough to love Him back. We not only love our heavenly Father with all of our heart, soul, and mind—but with all our strength!

#### WHAT DOES LOVING GOD HAVE TO DO WITH PHYSICAL FITNESS?

*Romans 12:1:*

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye  
present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,  
which is your reasonable service.*

The word “bodies” in this verse is a figure of speech in which a part is put for the whole. In other words, we aren’t to present just our bodies but our entire person—all that we are—as a living sacrifice. Our physical bodies are part of our entire person. Our physical fitness can have a significant impact positively or negatively on how effective we are as a living sacrifice, giving our all as we serve God.

#### HOW CAN WE BE PHYSICALLY FIT?

God built into people the natural desire to nourish and care for their bodies (Ephesians 5:29). He wants us to make the necessary effort to keep our bodies in order.

*I Corinthians 9:27:*

*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection....*

There are physical benefits to consistent fitness activity. It enhances quality of life by improved health, helps prevent chronic health conditions, and can improve our strength, endurance, and flexibility. There are also mental benefits to exercising and staying active. Building physical strength and endurance requires mental effort because we have to decide to do it. Like many categories of life, physical fitness takes consistency to maintain its positive effects. Including others in our fitness routine can inspire faithfulness. Even if we are alone, we can exercise and enjoy fellowship with our heavenly Father.

#### WHEN CAN WE BE PHYSICALLY FIT?

Each day as we are faithful in physical matters, we can also be faithful in spiritual matters. According to I Timothy 4:8, “bodily exercise profiteth little [or for a little time, referring to our lifetime on earth].” This same verse also says, “but godliness [a true, vital, spiritual relationship with God] is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” As we exercise ourselves to a true relationship with our heavenly Father, we will have profit in this life and throughout eternity.

#### WHO CAN BE PHYSICALLY FIT?

Remember, God wants all of us to prosper and be in health (III John 2). The Bible has many examples of physically fit believers. Adam had a body able to dress and keep the garden. Noah had the stamina to build the ark, care for the animals in it, and bring them forth with him to multiply upon the earth. In Joshua 14:10 and 11, Caleb declared that he was just as strong at age eighty-five as he had been forty-five years previous (at age forty). According to Psalms 18:29, David was able to “run through a troop” and leap “over a wall.” Jesus Christ fasted for forty days and forty nights. Though physically drained, he was mentally strong and victorious with God’s Word, holding fast to “It is written.”

Strong in the Lord, we have so much to live for and to give. Let’s show our thankfulness to our heavenly Father for all He has given us by faithfully stewarding our bodies so that we are physically fit and ready to give.

*For more information, visit [www.theway.org](http://www.theway.org)*

© 2013 by The Way International™. All rights reserved.