



## Exercise

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### **P**review

What is your favorite exercise? How often do you work out?

### **P**raise

If there is enough room, get up and do some type of exercise: stretches, run in place, pushups, or any standing exercise. Be creative. You may add a few of your own. Do as many moves as you can in the time you have.

### **P**arable

We all know how to move our bodies. We learn to walk at an early age, then we learn to run. Every day in our physical development we're busy moving our bodies from one place to another, turning, lifting, jumping, climbing, running, walking. By the time we start school we're strong enough to hold our own on the playground. As we grow, our coordination gets better and our strength increases until we can participate in more complex sports. Today we will learn how to apply this principle to spiritual exercise.

### **P**resent

The Word of God says, "Bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (I Timothy 4:8). Paul told Timothy that even though it is good to exercise the body, it is even more important to exercise our spiritual man. Learning to walk upright and talk intelligibly are childhood achievements, and a vital part of growing up. We could say they are two of the most important things in our physical development. Regular exercise contributes to the health and vitality of our earthly life. In the same way, learning how to exercise spiritually will contribute to our spiritual health and vitality and will lead to eternal life.

As we grow, we learn that we should walk daily with God. We walk "uprightly," that is, through the work of the Holy Spirit, not through the work of the flesh. In other words, we cannot please the Lord if we're walking in the flesh, being guided by a carnal mind. The Bible says the carnal mind is the enemy of God and leads to death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace (Romans 8:6-8). But "you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you (Romans 8:9, NKJV). There's only one way to become spiritually minded: spend time with



the Lord daily, learning to think and act and speak like Him. He does not expect you to produce these thoughts and actions on your own; indeed, you can't. But with the guidance of the Holy Spirit you can grow in Him until His thoughts, words, and actions become a part of you. Then you'll manifest His nature when you're around others, not just when you're alone with Him. Today I want you to leave with the knowledge of how to exercise your spiritual man so you can begin working toward the "life that now is, and which is to come."

## **P**actice

Does exercising once a month increase your strength? Why not? Consider the parallel between building physical strength and spiritual strength. Exercising your spiritual man once a month will not significantly contribute to your spiritual strength. Daily exercise is what builds strength. What are some ways you could exercise your spiritual man? (Listen and respond to preaching and wise counsel, obey those who have godly authority over you, read and study the Word of God, pray every day.)

## **P**ray

Lord, thank you for life, health, and strength. Thank you for helping me understand that the only way I can please You is to be spiritually minded. Help me to exercise my spiritual man every day to increase my strength in You. I want to please You in all I do. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

## **P**lus

Make up a prayer for each exercise you did in class today. For example, "Today, Lord, I thank you for the strength you give me to move my body. Being strong enough to do these pushups encourages me to exercise my spiritual man to develop the strength I need to push myself up when I'm down."