

## Daily Exercise

In 1 Timothy 4:8, the apostle Paul had something to say about physical exercise. He told Timothy – “Bodily exercise profits a little.” He went on to draw a strong contrast – “But godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.”

How is it that bodily exercise only “profits a little”? The answer lies in the fact that our physical bodies are short-lived and temporary. If you were the healthiest person on Earth, you would still die eventually. If you were the strongest person on Earth, you would still die eventually. If you were the most athletic person on Earth, you would still die eventually. Being physically healthy, strong, or athletic will not do a person’s spirit one bit of good when the Day of Judgment comes. God does want us to take care of our physical bodies, which truly belong to Him (1 Cor. 6:19, 20), but His primary concern is our spiritual condition. Have we lived as a righteous follower of His? Have we labored faithfully for Him to the best of our ability? Have we tried to mature spiritually and grow in knowledge? Those are questions that matter to the Lord.

Physical exercise is profitable in a small way, but what God really desires is that we exercise ourselves toward godliness (1 Tim. 4:7). He wants us to continually train our minds with His word, striving toward the goal of developing into the holy, righteous, devoted people He wants us to be. If a Christian is going to effectively exercise himself toward godliness, he must dedicate himself to learning and applying God’s word. Without rigorous, consistent spiritual exercise, no Christian will develop to his full potential. He will either plateau spiritually or slowly begin to weaken and die. Can you be more specific, Donald? What do you mean by rigorous, consistent spiritual exercise? Well, let me offer a couple of suggestions. True disciples of the Lord ought to be serving Him with all their might. Such would include: daily Bible reading and reflection (either alone or with one’s family), daily prayers offered up to God, participation in the works and worship of the local church as much as possible, regular sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ with others verbal-ly and via one’s good deeds.

Religious devotion to the Lord is profitable for all things; that is, it is beneficial now and in the life to come. In this life, spiritual exercise promotes inner peace, hope, and joy. It supplies a purpose for life and guarantees physical necessities. The ultimate consequence of spiritual exercise will be seen in the hereafter – an eternal, perfect, heavenly abode with Almighty God!

Perhaps one of your New Year’s Resolutions is to get more exercise or to get in better shape. That is a commendable goal, both physically and spiritually. Physical exercise is an important component in a healthy lifestyle, but do not let it (or anything else) interfere with rigorous, consistent, spiritual exercise, which is infinitely more important.

Are you getting enough daily exercise?

Donald