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Growing up, I developed a love for health and fitness. I worked for a number of years in the fitness industry and saw firsthand how improving one's physical fitness improved one's quality of life. As I have grown in my understanding of God's Word, I have learned that our physical health is closely tied not only to our quality of life but also to our spiritual service to God. In the book *By Grace*, written and developed by Grace Bliss and The Way International, Grace wrote, "We need to be healthy...because we've got a job to do for God." As sons of God, we want to make our physical bodies as vital as possible so that we can carry out the work God has called us to do. Our service to God can be greatly enhanced by staying physically fit.

God designed the human body to move. We can see this in the instruction God gave after He created man.

Genesis 1:28:

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Being fruitful, multiplying, replenishing, subduing, having dominion over fish, fowl, and every living thing on earth—that sounds like a lot of physical work! Not only that, but God also gave man the responsibility to "dress" and "keep" the garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15). That sounds like even more physical work, doesn't it? God saw everything that He had made, and it was very good. God beautifully designed man with the ability to move and be active. So as we stay physically active, we align ourselves with God's will in taking care of what He has given us. On top of this, as we keep our bodies active, we support other aspects of our lives as well.

The better we steward our body, which houses our spirit, the better our complete person of body, soul, and spirit can function and serve God.

II Corinthians 4:7:

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

The treasure of God's Word and the gift of holy spirit live in these earthen vessels. God chose our physical bodies to house His gift of holy spirit. It is the vehicle He chose to move His Word. A born-again believer is a complete person of body, soul, and spirit. Each of these aspects is important, and all are interdependent. It is logical that the better we steward our body, the better our complete person of body, soul, and spirit can function. Strengthening ourselves in the category of physical fitness enables us to have more to give in service to God.

Why do we want to have more to give for God? We are motivated by our love for God and a heart to better serve Him. God has done so much for us because of His love for us. We respond by loving Him back with all our heart, soul, mind, and with all our strength (Mark 12:29-31).

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.

God implores us to present our bodies a living sacrifice. The word "bodies" in this verse is a figure of speech in which a part is put for the whole. We are to present not just our physical bodies but our entire person—all that we are—as a living sacrifice. Our physical bodies are a part of our entire person. Therefore, our physical fitness can have a significant impact positively or negatively on how effective we are as a living sacrifice, serving God. As we steward our physical bodies, keeping ourselves physically fit, we have more to give in our service. The proper motivation for this discipline is not to perfect the flesh, but rather to be fit to serve.

Our bodies are awesomely and magnificently made, and God designed them to be active and to work hard. Let's be good stewards of our physical bodies by staying fit to serve our God.

Interested in learning more about this topic? Check out the book *By Grace* from The Way International Bookstore.

For more information, visit www.theway.org

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