

Everyone these days seems to know the importance of “staying in shape.” We jog, go to the gym, do aerobics and try to eat the right things. Our vocabulary is filled with little axioms that remind us of just how important staying in condition is. No pain, not gain. Shape-up, or ship out. Thin is in. First the lips, then the hips. How true these man-made proverbs are remains to be seen. What we do know is that physically, we either “use it” or “lose it.” Staying in shape is hard work.

Getting into Shape



However, something is far more important than the physical shape we're in. Our spiritual condition is more important in determining what kind of person we are. A person who is strong in faith will have the stamina to survive when the challenges of life come their way.

What does your “inner man” look like these days? Is he staying “in shape?” God is much more interested in our “inner” or spiritual man than in our outer man that perishes. Physical exercise is important, but Paul told Timothy to “...exercise thyself rather unto godliness” 1Tim. 4:7b. Here is a spiritual exercise program to help the Christian to get and “stay in shape.”

1. Deep Knee Bends- Bend your knees in prayer at least twice a day both morning and evening and ask God to make you spiritually strong. This will keep you spiritually flexible and enable you to bend to God's perfect will. (Eph. 3:14)



2. Lift up Holy hands- Practice worship daily. Make sure you have confessed any sins and that you are clean. The emphasis here is on “holy” hands. (1Cor. 11:28; 1Jn. 1:9)

3. Chin-ups- Nothing will build up your spirits like praise. Remaining healthy in a negative world requires Chin-ups. Think of as many things to be thankful for as you can. Let everyone hear you. (Ps. 34:1-3; Acts 27:25; Neh.8:10)

4. Lift Weights- There are people everywhere who are carrying heavy loads. Helping them helps you as much as it helps them. Pray for others (Gal. 6:1,5)

5. Jog- Memorize God's Word and then jog your memory for 15 or 30 minutes every day. “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.” (Rom. 10:17; Ps 119:9-11)

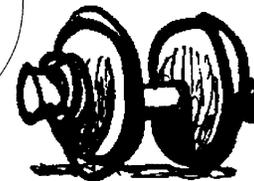
7. Isometrics- is performed by pressing against your bodies own resistance. This is “saying no to self.” Jesus said whoever does not deny himself “cannot be my disciple.” Spiritual exercise is spiritual discipline and that is not giving in to the lusts of the flesh. (1Cor. 9:27; Mk. 8:34; Matt. 4:4)

8. Aerobics- It is important to get your heart rate up. Read God's word until something gets your heart going. David wrote “thy word hath quickened me.” (Jn. 6:63; Gen. 1:2; Lk. 24:32).

9. Step-Master- When we Study God's precepts and principles we are following the Step-Master. Jesus meant what he said when he said “follow me.” We are to follow in his steps. “The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord.” (1Pet. 2:21; Ps 37:23; Ps. 119:133)

10. Rest- When it comes to exercise most can understand the need to exert one's self. Spiritually speaking God wants us to exert, but never to exhaust. After we “quicken” our spirits, we must “quiet” our spirits. After all the praying, praising, memorizing, and studying we need to find a quiet place, for the LORD said “Be still and know that I am God.” Rest in Him (Ps. 46:10; Mk. 4:39; Ps. 4:4)

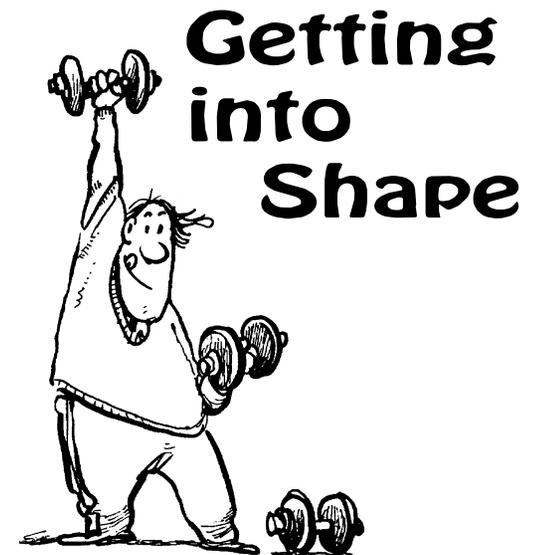
6. Push-ups- Are performed when you find yourself laying flat, but as you push the world away. Practice saying “no” to the world. The laws of gravity will try to pull you up close against the world, but practice saying “no” and pushing it away. (1Jn. 2:15; Prov.1:10; Matt. 4:10)



Our spiritual life begins when we are Born-Again. Have you been Born-Again? You can't maintain or develop what you don't have. Make sure you have repented of sin and have placed your trust in Jesus Christ, and then “exercise thyself...unto godliness.”

“For 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.” 1Tim. 4:8

“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.”
2Cor. 4:16



**Taking care of the
Inner Man-**

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