

## The Messenger

By Phillip Rutledge

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### Total Fitness should include Mind, Body... and Spirit.

**Psalms 139:13-14 (NIV)** <sup>13</sup> For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

It can be hard to avoid; it seems almost inevitable – couch-potato syndrome. Some might say it is age-related. But if you observe all generations many of them appear afflicted with the same problem. I wonder if this condition developed as “spare time” increased and technology evolved. Regardless, I am determined not to let overtake me. God willing I plan to get and stay fit.

Following a health report from my doctor and some encouragement from my son and his girlfriend, I decided to join a running club and train for a local 5k race coming up in July. I knew little of the training process. When I was twenty I had energy to burn. If I wanted to run, I just did it. Oh, to be young <smile>.

Now that the training is nearing completion and the race is only weeks away; I have to say, I am feeling better for going through the process. I thank God for the club's friendly runners, experienced advisors and enthusiastic leadership. I offer a special thanks to my running companion. Training with a partner divides the load.

Although bodily fitness is important isn't there more to consider? Growing old is a fact of life and aging is inevitable. Keeping active is important. In retirement homes the activity director works with the residents to help keep them mobile. Activities are also planned to exercise the mind, too.

But what about the spirit? Personally, I believe the soul is the most important component of healthy living yet often times the one overlooked and never exercised. Through study of God's Word and the help of the Holy Spirit we can strengthen our soul. If exercised it will naturally strengthen and mature but not “age” as the body and mind does.

Scripture says God knit you together while still in your mother's womb, you were wonderfully made. Just as I failed to continue developing my physical body; many of us neglect our spiritual development. This must sadden our Creator?

Reading from the Life Application Study Bible (NIV) it says, *God's character goes into the creation of every person. When you feel worthless or even begin to hate yourself, remember that God's Spirit is ready and willing to work within you. We should have as much respect for ourselves as our Maker has for us.*

A Christian life is about a personal relationship with God's son, Jesus Christ. Spiritual exercise is about developing that relationship. To know Jesus is to know God. **John 14:7 (NIV)** If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

And just as my running companion helps me to become physically fit; your spiritual work out comes complete with a trainer, too – the Holy Spirit. *Glory to God, whose power working in us and through us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.*

So I encourage you to get your whole self in shape – Mind, Body and Spirit.

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