

## EVERYDAY LIFE

Monday, September 15, 2008

**"We are the clay, and You are the potter. And we are all formed by Your hand."** Isaiah 64:8 NLT

***"Remain in God's hands until His work is complete and His plan evident to all."***

My thoughts today are about **"getting in shape."**

Getting in shape! Don't you wish that were easy? There seems a lot of talk about getting in shape, but people are not always as diligent about actually doing something about it. Then there are others who have nearly turned fitness into some form of a religious experience. The fitness center becomes their place of *worship and service*; the personal trainer seems their *guide and pastor*; the others who share their zeal are the *fellow congregants*. With strain and sweat, each person works to shape their body into something other than what they have let it become.

The Bible does not discourage your efforts for getting into shape, reminding you that your body is the Temple and habitation of God (See Ephesians 2:19-22), but advises that is **pointless unless also attending to a more significantly important area** of your personal well being. *"Spend your time and energy in training yourself for spiritual fitness. Physical exercise has some value, but **spiritual exercise is much more important, for it promises a reward in both this life and the next.**"* 1 Timothy 4:7-8 NLT. **Are you spiritually fit**, training your spirit as you train and shape your body?

As it pertains to your spiritual life and development, your best efforts alone will not fully achieve your goal. **Try as you might, hard as you will, you will always fall short.** What needs to happen in your spiritual life requires God's strong help.

Yes, there are spiritual disciplines to which you must steadfastly commit yourself - prayer and fasting, obedience and submission to God, study and meditation of Scripture, worship, stewardship, service to others - and be most diligent in your doing so. The Bible refers to Christ-followers who are *"mature . . . who by reason of practice have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."*

Hebrews 5:14 NKJV. Ultimately your **spiritual growth necessitates the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling and working** within you. See Romans 8:28-29. Getting in shape spiritually means placing yourself in His hands fully and continually, to do with as He wills.

Jeremiah visited a workshop and observed a potter at work with the clay, *"and the vessel was marred in the hands of the potter, so he made it another vessel as it seemed good to the potter to make it . . . as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand."* Jeremiah 18:1-4/6. The final vessel is not the result of the quality of the clay, but of the skill and art of the potter. There may be impurities in you or a momentary failure may seem to mar His design but all is not lost, **if you remain in God's hands until His work is complete and His plan evident to all.** The process may seem dizzying at times and the purpose unclear. See 1 John 3:1-2.

**God knows exactly what He is doing - faithfully getting you in shape**, as you have asked Him to do so. If Jesus, in anguish during the most painful and difficult circumstance of the cross could say, *"Father, into Your hands, I commend My spirit,"* then you can trust yourself to His care and providence in your comparatively comfortable everyday life. See Romans 9:20-24 NIV. **You are God's unique design, fashioned for His service and glory.** Cooperate and participate in the process.

**My prayer for you today is** that the fingerprints upon your life be His and no other's.

[allen.randolph@trintiychurch.com](mailto:allen.randolph@trintiychurch.com)

San Antonio, TX