

The Body-Part 2 Movement with Strength



(The Muscular System)

We all know that muscles are part of what helps us move and do things daily. There are muscles in our body that we do not often consciously think of because we have no control over their movements. We also know when our muscles feel weak how it can make us feel tired, fatigued, or in pain. Sometimes, there are such circumstances that cause our muscles to not work at all.

When I was born, I was paralyzed on one side of my body for the first year. I don't fully know the exact truth of why but my mother has told me she believes it is because she had two epidurals too close to one another. My mother asked questions and did anything she could think of to change the diagnosed situation. She moved and worked my body to try and build those muscles along with other things. The doctors essentially said (among other things) that I would never walk. By God's grace this has not been the case. I began walking shortly after my first birthday and have been moving ever since. It was all God including having my mother not being convinced by what the doctors were saying and doing the research to know which exercises to use to build up my muscles.

When we do not strengthen our muscles, they can become weak. If our muscles become weak, there are other systems that may not perform as they are designed to.

There are three types of muscles: skeletal muscles (these are the muscles we often think of like biceps, quadriceps, etc.), cardiac muscle (which is the heart), and smooth muscle (usually

associated with the internal organs such as the stomach or intestines). Skeletal muscles are the only of the three that we have control over as far as movement (voluntary muscles). The other two are classified as involuntary muscles because we cannot consciously move these or have them perform. However, how we treat our bodies (meaning what we allow in them) can affect their performance. This is also true of The Body of Jesus Christ (on an individual level and a corporate/global level). For this writing I will focus on the skeletal muscles.

The health of the skeletal muscles of our bodies controls things other than movement, strength, and physical appearance. They also control things like posture, facial expressions, eye movement, and respiration. These are things we don't really think about until something goes wrong. These muscles are attached to our bones (the skeletal system). Some researchers believe that some bone loss brought on through the natural aging process can be slowed with strength training. If the muscles are strong (meaning worked on a regular basis) then the bones tend to be stronger. I don't have a citation for that but I'm sure you can find it and come to your own conclusion. For this writing I am going to go with that theory.

Skeletal muscles are attached to the bones. The stronger the muscle (as some believe), the higher the bone density. The higher the bone density, the lower the risk of things like fractures. Hmmm...can anyone guess where I may be going with this in relation to The Body of Christ?

Whenever someone is building, designing, organizing, or planning something, they always share the initial part of the project. Most of us always say something like "This is the skeleton of the project". The skeletal system is like the supporting structure that everything else is built around. The muscles are the overlaying structure of the skeleton. We can't have one without the other (skeletal system coming next week). However, without the skeletal system working and moving in proper order, the skeletal muscular system may not work in proper order. If the foundation is broken, everything else that attaches to it will not work in proper order. The same is true vice versa. If the muscles are not in proper order then the skeletal system may not function properly.

If the foundation of The Body of Christ is broken then everything else built on top of it will not perform as it was designed to. For example, if one does not believe that God is Who He says He is, the spiritual "muscles" (actions) built upon

that structure will not function in full capacity. On the other side of that, if the main structure is built strong then everything else that is built upon it will be strong also (even with a few slips, falls, or moments of apathy/discouragement).

I spent the better part of my teenage years building my muscles. I loved lifting weights and doing aerobic exercises. Because of how much I trained my body (along with other factors like genetics), whenever I choose to get back into working out, it does not take my body long to readjust. It does take a bit longer as the number of my age increases (hey, I do not like to use the "O" word often-old or older-hahahahahaha). However, it is not like my body has to start all over again.

When we have a solid foundation in the Lord, no matter what happens in our life, it doesn't have to be a process of always starting over. There are times where we have to go back to the beginning to see if there were any cracks in the original foundation of our spiritual structure (such as what we truly believe). This is still not the same as starting something completely over. There are two verses that come to mind as I am writing this and both have stuck with me since the beginning of my walk with the Lord.

Ezekiel 37:1-6 - The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. 2 Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. 3 And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord God, You know." 4 Again He said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! 5 Thus says the Lord God to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. 6 I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the Lord."'"

The bones of our bodies are the structure in which our muscles are attached to. I know I keep repeating myself but it's because it is important. Our skeletal muscles provide the strength which moves our bones. If our muscles are weak then movement will be limited. Just as we are supposed to exercise on a regular basis in the natural, we are also supposed to exercise on a regular basis in the spiritual. When muscles are unused they become atrophied:

**Gradually decline in effectiveness or vigour due to underuse or neglect.*

How do we strengthen our spiritual muscles to avoid atrophy? The same way we strengthen our natural muscles; through exercise and proper maintenance. We go to the doctor for annual checkups or if something goes wrong. Jesus Christ is our physician and healer. It is important to have relationship with Him and ask Him often to show us the condition we are in. The spiritual exercise (in my personal opinion) is communing (talking, walking, reading, loving) with Him on a regular basis. Everything else comes from this. What good is evangelizing with someone if we haven't spent time with the Lord? How can we tell someone about God's love if we don't yet believe it to be true or have not experienced it yet? How can we explain God's mercy if we have not ourselves cried out for it and received it for our own lives? Those, to me, are examples of working our spiritual muscles. As we continue to do that in our individual lives then we can carry it to other believers/non-believers which in turn builds The Body of Christ.

The second verse that came to my mind earlier in this writing is:

Proverbs 22:6 - Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

I hold firm to this verse because I have seen it to be true just in my own personal experience and my back and forths with the Lord throughout my lifetime thus far. MY ultimate goal is to come to such a place in my faith that I don't need only the experiences to help me believe but that I just believe and trust in and on Him. I am a work in progress as we all are.

Once the foundation is truly set, everything else will come as God has ordained, purposed, and designed them to be. We have things we are called to do. One cannot build natural muscle through doing nothing. One cannot build spiritual muscle through doing nothing. As we all do what we are capable of doing through wherever we are in the Lord, The Body WILL grow stronger. Blessings all!

[Note: Dream: I can't remember when I had this dream and I have WAY too many journals to sort through to try to find the date and the exact details. I had a dream years ago that freaked me out. Even when Holy Spirit gave me the meaning of the dream I was still a bit freaked out. In the dream I was in a basement of

a house. There was this toddler or child on the floor. The head was fully grown as it was supposed to be. The body looked emaciated-there was no muscle tone at all. The child could only be carried everywhere. It could not move on its own. What Holy Spirit revealed to me is that this was a picture of the Body of Christ in some respects. We understand Who The Head is (Jesus Christ) yet The Body was not developed. Fast forward a bit and I had almost the same dream within less than a year. Every part of the child was fully developed but it still took extra effort to move because it wasn't used to using the muscles. This dream has not left me which (from my personal experience for the gifts placed in me) means it is still something that is happening. The head and the body must move together which means both must develop in our spiritual consciousness. The only time they don't move together is in the circumstance of chickens ("running around like a chicken with its head cut off") or in the movies. I'm just saying. Think about it. Anyway, The Body of Christ is just as important as The Head of The Body. One without the other can bring chaos and confusion. Just something for all of us to think about as we move forward and deeper into our personal and corporate relationship with the God-Head.]

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Sources:

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