

## God's Gym: Joining the Gym

*“Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1 Timothy 4:7,8). (“Discipline” = Gumnazoo in Greek.)*

### Spiritual growth is expected.

*“I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one” (1 John 2:12-14).*

- **CHILDREN:** Have a basic knowledge of God's love and forgiveness.
- **YOUNG MEN:** They are gaining strength, the Word of God abides in them, and they are achieving victory over the evil one.
- **FATHERS:** They know the truth about Jesus and can withstand the heretics.

*“But to as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but born of God” (John 1:12,13).*

### Spiritual growth is not automatic.

*“Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity . . .” (Hebrews 5:11-6:1).*

### Spiritual growth is good for you.

#### 1. Spiritual growth gives us strength to overcome the Evil One.

*I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one” (1 John 2:14).*

#### 2. Spiritual growth gives us discernment for wise living.

*“But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to discern between good and evil” (Hebrews 5:14).*

#### 3. Spiritual growth gives us stability in a world of conflicting opinions.

*“We are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (Ephesians 4:14).*

#### 4. Spiritual growth gives us the foundation to endure when trials come.

*“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who*

*built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock*” (Matthew 7:24-27).

**5. Spiritual growth enables us to have a fruit-filled life.**

*“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers” (Psalm 1:1-3).*

**6. Spiritual growth puts us on God’s path for our life.**

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5,6).*

**7. Spiritual growth equips us fully for whatever the future holds.**

*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2Timothy 3:16,17).*

**8. Spiritual growth benefits the people who live close to us.**

*“Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith” (Acts 14:22).*

**9. Spiritual growth brings God’s peace into our lives.**

*“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:8,9).*

**10. Spiritual growth stores up a great reward in heaven.**

*“Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1Timothy 4:7,8).*

**Pastors are trainers who help you pursue spiritual growth.**



*“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:11-16).*

\*\*\*Go online at [www.oakpointe.org](http://www.oakpointe.org) for “Training Tips” Monday – Friday. You can also download extra copies of the Spiritual Fitness Self-Test. The daily Training Tips, along with these study notes, can be used to facilitate group discussion and interaction.