



# LOVE FOR THE LEAST OF THESE

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The times when I have felt closest to Jesus is when the believers have shared blessings with the homeless, the addicts, and the poor, and seen their gratitude as we handed them things that they needed. Los Angeles, although a city of attraction to many tourists, is also a city of destitute souls in desperate need. Current statistics count 58,936 individuals in Los Angeles County who are experiencing homelessness, a 12% increase from 2018. Seventy-five percent of them lack a permanent place and live in tents, other forms of self-built shelters, or their vehicles. I have

often questioned why God keeps our church facility in such an area when we live quite far away, and the answer is clear—there are thousands of people looking for one act of love.

My heart aches when I see passersby shun those in need, and I don't mean just those who are begging for money. I mean those who are sitting at a street corner unable to move because of swollen feet and suffering hunger and pain. Obviously, we must help those in need, despite those whose intentions are to only take advantage of others. There are so many young people in these areas who are lost to drugs, who are tied to the enemy's chains, and who have lost everything due to medical bills or loss of jobs; tents are their new residences. No matter what, we are called to love these souls. As the year ended, I prayed to God and put plans in His loving hands to do one last giveaway of things these individuals might need.



On December 24, 2022, we who are so blessed to be part of a wonderful spiritual family got together and prepared hygiene packs, food bags, warm socks, and small bags with spiritual literature. The hygiene packs held disinfectant wipes, flushable wipes, tooth brushes, and toothpaste. The food bag contained a homemade vegetarian burrito, vegetarian sandwich, oranges, fig bars, healthful juices with no sugar, and bottled water. Also included were socks for men and women. We prepared these for 80

people. Then we headed to MacArthur Park in Los Angeles, which is famous for people living in tents and sleeping on the



ground in sleeping bags. We had a beautiful time handing out the bags, and we also prayed with those who accepted prayers for them. There were two young people at this park who were doing drugs; when we spoke to them, they listened intently, as if knowing that they were wasting their lives. We prayed with them, and they also took some food.

It was a great blessing. I realized that there are thousands to reach, and now I know for certain why the church building is in Los Angeles. May God bless this work!

“And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.” Matthew 25:40.

# Baptism in Riverside, California

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*"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*  
Matthew 28:19.

We are very thankful to the Lord for blessing us with a new soul who will be working to raise up a church in the city of Phoenix, Arizona! On December 17, 2022, the believers in Riverside, California, gathered to witness with joy the baptism of Brother Jaime Salgado. Those present at this feast were the entire congregation of the Huntington Park church, believers from the Riverside church, and Brother Jaime's family. Since his family lives in Arizona, he has been



guided by the Holy Spirit to begin the work necessary to establish a new church in Phoenix. He is the only member there now as his family makes up for visitors. However, through the work of the Holy Spirit, there are currently fifteen souls who are interested in the faith that we share.

Furthermore, it is a great blessing to know that Brother Jaime is not alone in putting forth the spiritual efforts necessary to reach the souls who are near him. Shortly after his baptism, Elder Joel Barnedo and Brother Jose Sabaj joined together to travel to the area where Brother Jaime is working. The three of them then set out to win souls for Christ through missionary outreach. We pray earnestly for the work in Arizona. God will provide souls to come and be saved in His kingdom!



"In these days of travel, the opportunities for coming in contact with men and women of all classes and of many nationalities, are much greater than in the days of Israel. The thoroughfares of travel have multiplied a thousandfold. God has wonderfully prepared the way. The agency of the printing press, with its manifold facilities, is at our command. Bibles and publications in many languages, setting forth the truth for this time, are at our hand, and can be swiftly carried to every part of the world."  
—*Evangelism*, p. 702.

## THE SPIRIT OF TRUE SERVICE

The Jews had been first called into the Lord's vineyard, and because of this they were proud and self-righteous. Their long years of service they regarded as entitling them to receive a larger reward than others. Nothing was more exasperating to them than an intimation that the Gentiles were to be admitted to equal privileges with themselves in the things of God.

"Christ warned the disciples who had been first called to follow Him, lest the same evil should be cherished among them. He saw that the weakness, the curse of the church, would be a spirit of self-righteousness.

Men would think they could do something toward earning a place in the kingdom of heaven. They would imagine that when they had made certain advancement, the Lord would come in to help them. Thus there would be an abundance of self and little of Jesus. Many who had made a little advancement would be puffed up and

think themselves superior to others. They would be eager for flattery, jealous if not thought most important. Against this danger Christ seeks to guard His disciples....

"It is not the length of time we labor but our willingness and fidelity in the work that makes it acceptable to God. In all our service a full surrender of self is demanded. The smallest duty done in sincerity and self-forgetfulness is more pleasing to God than the greatest work when marred with self-seeking. He looks to see how much of the spirit of Christ we cherish, and how much of the likeness of Christ our work reveals. He regards more the love and faithfulness with which we work than the amount we do.

"However trying their labor, the true workers do not regard it as drudgery. They are ready to spend and to be spent: but it is a cheerful work, done with a glad heart. Joy in God is expressed through Jesus Christ.

Their joy is the joy set before Christ—to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.' John 4:24. They are in cooperation with the Lord of glory. This thought sweetens all toil, it braces the will, it nerves the spirit for whatever may befall. Working with unselfish heart, ennobled by being partakers of Christ's sufferings, sharing His sympathies, and cooperating with Him in His labor, they help to swell the tide of His joy and bring honor and praise to His exalted name.

"This is the spirit of all true service for God. Through a lack of this spirit, many who appear to be first will become last, while those who possess it, though accounted last, will become first." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 400, 402, 403.



# Consider Walking

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Every year, more and more studies provide evidence for the benefits of regular exercise. Have you ever started a new year by resolving to improve your physical fitness? In a series of articles over three months, we will examine how a simple walking routine can be an important part of an overall fitness program. Benefits of walking, the proper form, a suggested walking routine, and a few coaching points will be offered. Let us consider a basic definition of fitness and a few historical notes.

## **What is the real meaning of fitness?**

Experts define physical fitness as “one’s ability to execute daily activities with optimal performance, endurance, and strength with the management of disease, fatigue, stress, and reduced sedentary behavior.” This description goes beyond being able to run quickly or lift heavy weights. Fitness includes physical qualities such as strength, flexibility, endurance, balance, and coordination.

Up to the time of the Industrial Revolution and the Modern Age, our forebears did not have to worry about taking time out to exercise and maintain their fitness.

It is true that the upper classes in the Greco-Roman world enjoyed sports and recreation. After all, the Olympics originated in ancient Greece. We may recall the apostle Paul referring to running a race in 1 Corinthians 9:24, 25. “Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one.” —*New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*.

Apart from a few historical exceptions, exercise was an integral part of what the vast majority of people did every single



day, just to survive. They did not have gym memberships. They did not have exercise equipment. They did not have exercise programs. They just got out, moved, and worked their bodies in their ordinary daily activities.

But especially in the cities these days, most of us are plagued by a sedentary lifestyle, also known as “sitting disease.” Prolonged sitting—an appropriate phrase for modern life, including work and home living—is harmful in many ways, according to recent research. Sitting for hours on end is now associated with 34 chronic diseases and conditions, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers. The human body was created for activity. When muscles are inactive, they do not absorb glucose from the bloodstream adequately, blood pressure rises, and sleep suffers.

Anyone who has been a long-term member of a fitness club has probably seen a fairly regular spike in number of new members

in January, and then the number of those who attend dwindles as the year goes by. The reasons for such attrition may include the cost of membership, the time it takes to commute and complete a workout, and its interference with family responsibilities, just to list a few.

## **Walking**

I would like to suggest a simple way to improve and maintain overall fitness just by walking. No equipment is needed, except for comfortable shoes and socks. There is virtually no expense. For most people and in most places, walking can be done nearly year round. In areas where the summers are too hot and winters are too cold, shopping malls may be an answer. But before getting into a walking fitness routine, I would like to point out some very important health risk factors.



## Take precautions

As a general rule, always check with your physician before beginning an exercise program. Following are suggestions for people with specific health conditions.

**If you have diabetes**, consistent walking can help regulate your blood sugar by burning calories and making your body more sensitive to insulin. The American Diabetes Association recommends checking with your doctor before starting a new exercise program. Your physician may offer advice regarding maintaining safe levels of blood sugar during and after an activity by adjusting your diet and measuring your blood sugar levels before and after activity. Keep carbohydrates such as candy or glucose tablets handy in the event of hypoglycemia (dropping of your blood sugar level). Signs

of hypoglycemia include sweating, hunger, trembling, and confusion. Wear a medical alert bracelet indicating that you have diabetes and carry it with you, along with emergency contact phone numbers.

**If you have arthritis**, pain, soreness, and disability may increase with physical activity. But exercise such as walking can reduce pain and stiffness, while strengthening the muscles that support your joints. Discuss with your doctor various options for bracing or support devices (cane, hiking poles, or a rolling walker). The following tips may make walking easier:

tions for bracing or support devices (cane, hiking poles, or a rolling walker). The following tips may make walking easier:

- Schedule walks for times of the day when you feel your best and are least likely to experience pain and inflammation.
- Apply heat or take a warm shower before walking to ease stiffness.
- Warm up by walking at a slower pace than normal.
- When increasing distance or speed, progress slowly.
- Listen to your body. Never force a movement or activity.
- If you have rheumatoid arthritis, decrease the amount or intensity of your workouts.

- Staying active with frequent rest breaks can help more than periods of bed rest.
- Consider walking and other forms of exercises in a heated therapy pool program.

**If you have COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)**, research has shown that this condition can be benefited by exercise even in moderate or advanced cases. Check with your doctor before you start a new program. Start with pulmonary rehabilitation, breathing retraining, education, and other therapies that help you feel better and carry out day-to-day activities with greater ease. Here are some tips to make walking with COPD easier and safer:

- Start with short walks at a slow pace to avoid shortness of breath. Stop and rest for two or three minutes if you get breathless.
- Choose flat terrain instead of hills.
- Inhale through your nose, keeping the mouth closed, to warm and filter the air.
- Exhale slowly through pursed lips to improve lung function.
- Begin and end each walk at a slow pace.
- Avoid walking in areas or at times when the air is polluted.
- Seek indoor walking options when it is very cold or hot and humid outside.
- Check with your doctor if you need supplemental oxygen.
- Consider using an aid such as a rolling walker.

In conclusion, if you have been inactive for some time and want to begin any new exercise routine, remember to begin slowly. Easing into an exercise program is crucial for your body and mind. Rushing into an intense exercise regimen can lead to serious injuries from overusing muscles. Consider taking the fitness process slowly and building up to it. Next month we will look at the benefits of using walking as exercise. May God bless you in your health journey. "The whole body is designed for action, and unless the physical powers are kept in health by active exercise, the mental powers cannot long be used to their highest capacity." *—Education, p. 207.*

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## BOOK DONATIONS NEEDED!

Across the pages of history, Paul's instructions to Timothy are as clear today as they were when they were written. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15. Upon all of us rests the responsibility of studying the sacred writings so that we may be able to correctly differentiate between truth and error.

As Norman College works toward opening its doors as a learning center, a library has been set up. More than 3,000 books have already been donated. The Friends of the Library book program in Georgia and a church in Florida sent Bibles, biographies, commentaries, dictionaries, resource books, and more to line the shelves. The only thing that is missing is a rich selection of Spirit of prophecy books.

If you have any extra Spirit of prophecy books and are able and willing to share them with the library of Norman College, please send them (via Media Mail) to: **Norman College, PO Box 199, Norman Park, GA 31771**. Each donated book will be inscribed with the donor's name as a reminder of the many hands and hearts that have built up this center of learning. Thank you very much in advance! *—Margie Seely, American Union Secretary, Norman Park, Georgia*