

IN THE LONG RUN, WE GET STRONGER

Scripture reference: Romans 5:3-5 We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance and endurance produces character, and character produces hope and hope does not disappoint.

I am going to let you in on a little secret. Strenuous exercise is actually not good for you. Let me clarify myself. Strenuous exercise is not good for you in that small segment of time you are running hard or lifting heavy weights because actually what you are doing is tearing the muscles down. We are literally tearing the muscles down. But there is a valid reason why we do it. During the recovery phase, our muscles begin to heal themselves and they will actually come back stronger. If we are lifting weights, those muscles will get stronger each time. And perhaps bigger or firmer depending on the type of lifting you are doing. If it is walking or running you are doing, then the legs will begin to strengthen and so will your breathing.

So, what about the trials we face in life? Do you sometimes feel like each and every day you are running more than a marathon because of all of the situations you are facing. There are no water stops along the way or at least it seems like you don't have the time to enjoy taking a break. Modern society has pushed us into believing this breakneck pace is necessary for us to survive. Stress has become a major contributor to our physical ailments. So what can we do? When we face the problems in our life, we can remember what Paul wrote in the scripture above. "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance and endurance produces character, and character produces hope and hope does not disappoint." We just need to remind ourselves that God is near and always there for us. Take a deep breath and meditate upon the lessons He has taught us. If we study the Bible, can we find a biblical character that didn't run into problems? And they seemed to turn out alright. I would add they even turned out stronger after the trials they faced.

While we exercise, try not to focus entirely all the difficulties you are facing. Don't concentrate on how much longer you have to go or how much farther. Don't look at the top of the hill you are trying to climb. Just enjoy the process and know that everything you are doing at that moment will make you stronger and in better health in the long run. Each time we push our bodies, our health will get better. We might not think so as we battle some soreness the next day, but I promise you that it will get better. And as an added bonus, just remember that the walking, lifting, or running can serve as an excellent prescription to reduce the stressors we are facing every single day.