



# Christian Martial Arts Fitness

By

Sensei Mark McGee



## Martial Arts Fitness

Martial Arts Fitness is known around the world as one of the best fitness systems for men and women, boys and girls. Martial arts systems include many rules for training and defending.

The Apostle Paul was familiar with the rules of martial and athletic training and wrote this almost 2,000 years ago –

*“No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.” 2 Timothy 2:4-5*

Christian Martial Arts Fitness is specific to the truth of Christianity and the excellence of martial arts training. With both in mind we offer this special series for your consideration.

*Rule 1: “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.” Mark 12:30*

*Rule 2: “And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:31*

How do spiritual rules fit into physical goals – like fitness?

Our fitness efforts are in five basic areas:

1. Fitness of heart —> Love for God
2. Fitness of soul —> Love for God
3. Fitness of strength —> Love for God
4. Fitness of mind —> Love for God
5. Fitness of love for others —> Love for neighbor

God created our body, mind and soul in His image. He told Adam to be fruitful, increase in number, fill the earth, subdue it, and rule over fish, birds and land creatures.

God formed the human body from the dust of the ground and breathed into him the breath of life.

We have God's image and His breath in our bodies. Our purpose is to be fruitful, increase, fill, subdue and rule.

Humans are separated from God because of sin. They experience loneliness and fear, pain and death, because of sin. Jealousy, anger and bitterness led to the first crime of murder. (Genesis 4:6-8)

Sin is the cause of pain, illness, suffering and death. Disobedience to God's wisdom leads to poor health, dulled minds, weak bodies and troubled souls. It also leads to selfishness. Sin does not lead us to love God and others. It is God's special work in our lives that guides us to follow Rule #1 and Rule #2.

God does not want sin to reign in our mortal bodies. He wants us to offer the parts of our body as instruments of righteousness. "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace." (Romans 6:14) God wants us to present our bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1)



# The Battleground

The battleground for the human body is the human mind.

*“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” Romans 8:5-8*



The act of sacrificial worship comes through a mind set on what the Spirit desires.

*“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Romans 12:2*

Our bodies are meant for the Lord. Our bodies are members of Christ Himself. We must be careful to care for our body because it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. We belong to God. We were bought with a high price.

*“... therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:20b*

God wants us to have healthy bodies. His wisdom will prolong our life many years. It will bring health to our body and nourishment to our bones. Something as simple as a cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones.

*“My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you.” Proverbs 3:1-2*

*“Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.” Proverbs 3:7-8*

*“My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh.” Proverbs 4:20-22*

*“The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, And a good report makes the bones healthy.” Proverbs 15:30*

Jesus demonstrated the importance of good health and His power over the human body by healing thousands of people during His earthly ministry. Jesus sent His Spirit into believers and the Spirit of God gave the gift of healing to apostles and gifted members of the Body of Christ. A healthy body glorifies Christ and is able to be strong under the demands of service for God.



## Insights to a Healthy Body and Mind

God gave many spiritual gifts to the Church –

*“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-11*

*“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.” Romans 12:4-8*

Jesus Christ also gave the Church gifted people to help them become mature followers –

*“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we*

*all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”*

*Ephesians 4:11-16*

Every believer does not have every spiritual gift. We need each other –

*“For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you’; nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the*



*body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.” 1 Corinthians 12:14-27*

Every spiritual gift should be exercised in love. That’s important in the ministry of Christian fitness and health.

God has given us what we need to be healthy (e.g. sleep, water, healthy food, prayer). Prayer is an important aspect of Christians having good health –

*“Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.” Philippians 2:25-30*

*“Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.” James 5:14*

Individual prayers and the prayers of church leaders have a special place in God’s plan. He wants us to trust Him for everything in our life.



# Physical Fitness

A healthy body begins with healthy cells – trillions of cells that make up bone, muscle, organs, and blood. Proper inhalation, hydration, nutrition and exertion promote health in the body.

A healthy person should be physically fit. That's the ability to perform daily tasks rigorously and alertly with energy left over for enjoying leisure-time activities and meeting emergency demands. It is the ability to endure, bear up, withstand stress, and carry on in circumstances where an unfit person could not continue. Physical fitness is a major basis for good health and well-being.

## **Physical fitness components**

1. Cardio-respiratory endurance
2. Muscular strength
3. Muscular endurance
4. Flexibility
5. Body composition

## **Physical fitness exercise principles**

1. Overload
2. Specificity
3. Progression
4. Regression
5. Plateau

## Physical fitness training elements

1. Frequency of exercise
2. Intensity of exercise
3. Duration of exercise
4. Mode of exercise

Martial arts training includes all four elements.

Heart rate monitoring is important to develop the proper intensity of the training program. The Borg scale works well for general training programs. A good training program should include warm-ups, aerobics, cool-down, muscle strength and flexibility exercises.

Developing a good Christian fitness program includes a healthy lifestyle where trainees include activities and habits that enhance total fitness –

1. Exercise regularly
2. Maintain a healthy diet
3. Get adequate sleep
4. Relax and cope with stresses
5. Don't use alcohol, tobacco or non-essential drugs
6. Practice safety habits

### **Significant risk factors for disease**

1. Cigarette smoking
2. Hypertension
3. Sedentary lifestyle
4. Abnormal blood cholesterol levels
5. Obesity
6. Diabetes mellitus



7. Negative stress

## **Benefits of exercise**

1. Increase of heart efficiency
2. Improved lung capacity
3. Aids circulation of oxygen and nutrients
4. Lowers blood pressure
5. Increases HDL, insulin sensitivity, and glucose tolerance
6. Aids reduction of body fat
7. Aids building of muscle mass
8. Slows age-related declines in basal metabolism (minimum energy)
9. Reduces loss of muscle mass
10. Improves muscle strength and endurance
11. Improves muscle flexibility
12. Increases range of motion in joints
13. Increases bone density

14.Increases flow of synovial fluid to joints

15.Emphasizes positive attitude

16.Enhances overall health

Our hope and prayer is that this series will be a help to you in your training as a Christian and as a martial artist.

Scripture taken from the New King James Version®.  
Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

[Join our [Grace Martial Arts Facebook Community!](#)]

© Grace Martial Arts 1990 – 2021