

Building Spiritual Muscles

n/a

Ready:

Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. But endurance must do its complete work, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.—James 1:2-4

Set

All athletes have experienced it. The day after a hard work out, we roll out of bed barely able to move. Aching pains shoot like firecrackers through our bodies, making us feel 100 years old. The fact is, during those hours spent in the gym, running, or at practice, we were literally pulling our muscles apart. The resistance of weights and movement caused the muscles to tear and the soreness felt is the body struggling to rebuild those fibers, stronger than before. Isn't it crazy the pain we endure for a desired physical result—that six pack of abs and a set of pythons to make the Rock jealous? But what are we willing to suffer to be conditioned spiritually? Are we just as willing to continue lifting our spiritual weights, enduring the soreness associated with trials and temptations, so that our relationship with Christ can grow?

James 1:2-4 doesn't state "if" we experience trials, but "when." During the times of "soreness," God makes our spiritual muscles stronger, so we can be more effective for His kingdom. So, how do we handle spiritual soreness? Do we lift with a joyful heart, knowing the pain that ensues? Like muscles, it is through resistance that one's spirit becomes stronger. It can be painful, but the result is definitely worth it—Christ making us more mature and complete in Him!

Go

1. Why do you think God asks us to be joyful during hard times?
2. What are some spiritual trials in your life you are currently lifting?
3. How have you seen God use spiritual "soreness" to make you stronger?

Workout

Extra Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:3-13; 1 Peter 1:6-9

Overtime

Father, thank You for the sacrifice You made on my behalf. I pray my life will honor and please You as I learn to serve You more. Amen.



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