

BSLC NEWS

January 2019

EXERCISING THE SOUL

In these last years there has been an amazing spike in the desire to exercise. More and more people have been joining gyms or connecting to yoga, spinning, weight training, aerobics, or some other form of body-strengthening or toning.

I guess, as people consider their futures, they want to still be able to enjoy it by walking freely, traveling, and playing with their grandkids, rather than in a sedentary lifestyle due to bodily deterioration.

And people ARE living longer. The statistics make it quite clear that improved diet and regular exercise will literally add years to your life.

Today I'd like to suggest to you that there is also great benefit in spiritual exercise—specifically in keeping the soul in touch with God and His ways. Reading the Bible helps us confront our weaknesses and enables us to be more aware of the places where the Tempter might get a foothold. The stories of God's people and His love for sinners like us offers comfort and strength as we journey through life and deal with pain and loss.

As the book of Hebrews declares: *"The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."* (Heb. 4:12)

God gave us the Bible as His "letter of love," so that we might be "fully equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:17)



To that end, back in October, I asked you to consider joining me in a journey through the Bible with a specific and interesting reading plan that will help us read the entire book together in three years. As the year begins, I have set up a blog and an email service that will offer you these readings every day on your tablet, phone or computer (or through a daily guide that you can use to keep track in your own actual book).

Breaking it up into small chunks which includes an Old Testament reading, a New Testament reading and an everyday thought from the Psalms will stop you from getting bogged down in those books or chapters that are harder to get through.

The web address for this blog is: <https://bslcdailyreadings.blogspot.com/> You could just go there every day and a new Bible reading will be posted beginning January 1 (with the older ones archived by date). But if you sign up for the blog, you will also receive the readings every day in your email.

There is great blessing to be had by doing this together, too. As we journey through the Scriptures as a family, we can interact with each other about what we read and what we learn. This can help us support and encourage one another as God's people and help spark conversations that aren't just about the weather or sports—but about our walk with God.

May God's Spirit greatly bless this new venture of faith and may His Good News empower us to live out our lives in generosity and service.

In Christ,
Pastor Hillenbrand