FITNESS FACTS

Edd & Julie Sterchi (Campbellsville, KY)

As we wrap up the holiday season, some of us may be trying to shed those extra pounds. Please avoid the following exercises, for they will not help:

- → Jumping to conclusions → Beating around the bush
- → Climbing the wall → Passing the buck
- → Throwing your weight around
- → Dodging responsibility → Running others down
- → Stretching the truth → Walking on the wild side
- → Stepping on others
- → Swimming in debt
- → Twisting Scripture
- → Leaping in where angels
- → Running with the wrong crowd

fear to tread

On the other hand, here are some helpful exercises we all need to put into our daily routine:

- → Jogging your memory → Swallowing your pride
- → Turning the other cheek → Running from temptation
- → Getting a leg up on life → Skipping gossip
- → Pulling your own weight → Lifting others' spirits
- → Bedding your knees in prayer
- → Pushing sin out of your life
- → Jumping for joy → Raising your expectations
- → Reaching your goals → Stretching your money
- → Digging for truth → Following God's will
- → Chasing your dreams
- → Bending over backward to help

I'll Go As Far As I Can

The preacher of the gospel should not be overcome with material things. He must not lose sight of the spiritual values. It is unwise to turn aside after things that perish while neglecting the great things that will outlive him.

One is a hireling who preaches simply for what he can get out of it from a financial standpoint. I am afraid for the preacher who is forever seeking better and more comfortable quarters, bigger and better churches, and bigger and better salaries. It is true that the laborer is worthy of his hire, but the servant of the crucified Master ought not to be a seeker after luxury.

Preachers of today have it so much better than those of yesterday. Over a century ago, brother James A. Harding said to a young man, a student in the old Potter Bible School in Bowling Green, Kentucky, "Frank, I want you to hitch up the carriage and drive me to the depot. I must leave for a meeting." When the young man had stopped in front of the Harding home a little later, Mrs. Harding was inquiring how her husband expected to buy a ticket without money. That good servant was heard to reply, "I'll go as far as I can." The trip to Bowling Green was made without further word of ticket or money.

Soon after entering the little city, a man waved for the carriage to stop, explaining that for some time he had desired to have fellowship with Harding in spreading the gospel of Christ; he handed him a twenty dollar bill. At the depot, Harding purchased his ticket, turned to Frank, and placed every bit of the change in his hand, instructing that it be given to his wife.

Harding then boarded the train and continued his journey to some favored place to tell of Him Who said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33).

--Bobby Key (Miami, OK)

You Only Live Once

"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

"Go for it. You only live once." Have you ever heard somebody say something to that effect? Maybe you've thought about a career change, or doing some travel, or venturing out on some extreme activity. When you share that with friends or family you just may hear somebody say "Go for it. You only live once."

A phrase of more current origin concerns a bucket list, which is a string of activities that you would like to do before you die that you probably don't have the time, the money or the health to do. I would suppose that there are many other catchphrases that have passed through the generations that have urged people to be, do and experience it all.

Are these not ways of adding meaning to and/or wringing the most out of every day? Are we looking for a fun life for a full life?

With the words of John 10:10, Jesus makes this abundantly clear to us. Jesus affirms our desire for a well-lived life. Part of the ministry of Jesus was to give us a full life as God intended. Additionally, Jesus confirms that there will be others who will make similar claims but that only He (Jesus) can deliver.

Whether you are of the "you only live once" generation, or the bucket list brigade, you will miss out if Jesus is not your shepherd. You can make all the bungee jumps that you want, circle the globe in a hot air balloon or go skydiving over the Grand Canyon and you will have fun. But only Jesus gives a full life.

If you're serious about arriving at the end of your life spent, satisfied and fulfilled, then examining what Jesus brings to life, to make it abundant, is worth some serious effort.

--Dennis Russell (Santa Maria, CA)