

Make This Your Year to Get in Shape—Physically and Spiritually*

How is your New Year's resolution going? Whether you decided to concentrate on your physical or your spiritual health, persevering can be difficult. That's where Church Publishing Incorporated's book ***Christ Walk: A 40-Day Spiritual Fitness Program***, by Anna Fitch Courie, can help.

Christ Walk links contemplation with physical fitness. There are 40 chapters in the book, one for every day of the program—and a reminder that reaching a goal is often a journey. “The average person finds it hard to find time for prayers, healthy eating, exercise, time with family, demands of job, and everything else we ‘should’ be doing,” Courie writes.

If you find yourself wavering, have experienced some setbacks, or determined that this is not the year for extra obligations, you can use Christ Walk. And if you're overextended right now, the book can be an especially powerful tool during Lent.

Getting Fit by Chapter and Verse

Christ Walk takes a unique approach to the challenges of staying the course. Readers are encouraged to walk, run, bike, or pray the distance of biblical routes, such as “The Nazareth Challenge” (1.6 miles each day), “The Jerusalem to Damascus Route” (3.75 miles each day), “The Bethlehem Challenge” (5 miles per day), and “The Exodus Challenge” (9.4 miles per day). The variety of routes can accommodate varying fitness levels and a range of abilities.

Participants don't have to follow the program to the letter. They are encouraged to spice up their routines, like accelerating their pace or inviting others to participate in communal walking.

The chapters include daily Bible verses related to healthy lifestyles. Some quotes focus more on the body while others are more spiritually or mentally directed. Each chapter includes a section for journaling at its end, so readers can record both their mileage progress and their spiritual thoughts and feelings.

Greater Mindfulness

Courie is clear about the difference between striving for perfection and aiming for self-improvement, which she calls “taking care of the temple.” She writes, “You can look at bad habits and change them for a healthier you and still be doing this for God's vision of you in the world”

The goal of the 40-day Christ Walk program is for participants to be more mindful of the ways in which they can care for themselves. It may mean treating their bodies better. Or it may mean promoting self-care by establishing some time for contemplation while pursuing physical activity. In short, it could be just the resource you need to reinvest in your resolutions—and make the most of the New Year.

*This material is not a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment. CPG does not provide any healthcare services and, therefore, cannot guarantee any results or outcomes. Always seek the advice of a healthcare professional with any questions about your personal healthcare, including diet and exercise.