

## **Did Jesus Exercise?**

MANY CHRISTIANS SEEM TO BELIEVE THAT EXERCISE is of very little value. They base their opinion, in part, on what the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy: "Bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things" (1 Tim. 4:8).

However, biblical times were vastly different from today with regard to people's need for additional "bodily exercise." When Jesus walked the earth, most people walked from three to ten miles a day in the course of their daily lives and work! The people did not need to engage in additional exercise. Extra exercise was usually only done in the Roman Empire to increase muscle size and strength for participation in spectator sports. Certainly Paul valued physical health; he simply believed that getting bodily exercise for the purpose of engaging in sports was not as profitable as using one's time and energy to develop spiritual strength.

When Jesus was approximately four or five years old, He walked with His family from Egypt to Nazareth, a distance of more than four hundred miles. His ministry was marked by frequent travels to various parts of Israel, many of the trips being ones from the Galilee region to Jerusalem, a distance of about 120 miles.

The Jews had seven official feasts-three of which were to be celebrated in Jerusalem: Passover (Feast of Unleavened Bread), Pentecost (Feast of Weeks), and Succoth (Feast of Tabernacles). Exodus 34:23 said of these feasts: "Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the LORD," which meant a visit to the tabernacle or temple.

Being a devout Jew, Jesus' earthly father, Joseph, would have attended - these three annual feasts in Jerusalem. It was customary to take one's entire family on these pilgrimages. These trips meant walking through mountainous and desert regions, often in temperatures that might range - from freezing (in the fall and early spring) to more than 110 degrees Fahrenheit (in the summer). Jesus very likely made this trip to Jerusalem three times a year from the age of five until the age of thirty. If so, He walked at least 18,000 miles just on these three annual pilgrimages from Galilee to Jerusalem!

We certainly know that Jesus made the trip from Nazareth to Jerusalem when He was twelve years old. In the gospel of Luke we read:

His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.  
And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. (Luke 2:41-42)

Evangelist Arthur Blessitt once obtained maps that showed the roads Jesus traveled. He calculated that the total miles Jesus walked during three years of His public ministry were 3,125 miles. He added this mileage to the mileage from Egypt to Nazareth, as well as the miles Jesus - walked from Galilee to Jerusalem, and he came up with a total of 21,595 miles that Jesus likely walked during His life.

On many days, it appears that Jesus walked between ten and twenty miles. We have no idea how many miles Jesus may have walked while in the wilderness for forty days at the outset of His ministry. The actual miles Jesus walked in His life may have been double the amount calculated by Blessitt.

As a comparison, the distance around the world at the equator is 24,901.55 miles. It is not difficult to assume that Jesus walked almost the distance around the world in His lifetime, (and possible more)!

This excerpt is from [What Would Jesus Eat?](#) p167-169

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