

Exercise can be good!

Actually, I have not had much participation in exercises for getting in shape. For that matter, I haven't gotten into exorcisms either!

The matter of my losing around 30 pounds over the past year has been a pleasing transition for me. It's easy to attribute those results to watching diet and walking a mile and a half around our neighborhood three or four times a week. That's the exercise I mean!

Recently, as Suzanne and I walked around, it occurred to me that there is more of a God-involved testimony about that reduction in weight, so let me share that now.

Our rural neighborhood is not populated as closely, as city neighborhoods are. A number of our residential lots are five and 10 acre plots, and most of the rest are one or two acre lots. So the people are distributed more widely.

The course of our walk has 40 households with 61 people in them who we have met and do know. There are a few others in those homes we don't know, but the 61 is most of them. We often pause to chat with neighbors who are out in their yard, which is a nice neighbor-bonding practice.

A recent morning's walk yielded two visits. One is an interesting woman. She is the wife of one of a former elected official. Both she and he was born and raised around here, and were sweethearts in a near-by high school. After school, they each went different ways, marrying different spouses. Each had good lives and families, and each of their spouses died later in life. In their senior retired years, they re-connected and married! They are one of our most fun and happiest couples in our neighborhood! Growing out of our visit out in the street that morning, she came over to our home that afternoon to bring some of her home-cooked cookies, and we had an hour-long visit! A really sweet Christian woman who does volunteer work at her church and in our City Hall.

It's a friendly neighborhood. Even two former mayors, our City Councilman, our City Administrator, our current Mayor, our County Commissioner, our County Tax Assessor and our current County Sheriff all have been guests in our home at one time or another for a meal or in one

of our neighborhood picnics and for fellowship. I like this kind of living! I believe it is what Christ would intend for us.

Our city administrator is a woman who was born here (grandparents first came here), and she owns a good bit of land here. She is well qualified to administer the city's work, and could qualify to do much bigger tasks! She possesses TWO earned PhD degrees, but her love for her city and her community keeps her working on our level. For example, this morning, Suzanne and I walked in a circle around our small city hall, praying for the staff, the Council and all the elected officials!

Our "city" is really rural. We have only one traffic light, and It's installed outside of our only restaurant! We have no fire department and no police department! We have low city taxes! We don't even have a drug problem!

The real reason, I believe, that those walks are effective for my health is the fact that we pray much of the way as we walk. As we pass by various homes, we pray specifically **by name** for the residents of that home and we pray at the city hall. Speaking their names out loud in prayer is really a spiritual blessing for us, and a reason for them to be blessed, protected, prospered and for their hearts to be quickened that day to be drawn close to God and to His people.

THAT is the reason, I believe, that our walks are good and positive exercise.

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