

## Comfort Level

I suppose there are many things that are the “main thing” plaguing our culture these days. I think the lack of intelligence is one. The lack of thinking and common sense is another. Yet, I feel the big daddy is comfort. I work out using a fitness organization called IFit. They run an app and exercise machines. Recently, they have dropped some incentives to workout. The backlash was harsh. To be fair, the way they receded was poor thinking and timing. Yet, there are a bunch of issues that are related to IFit. There is customer care for the app, machines, and subscriptions. I have not had an issue with them but others appear to have. Many of the comments seem to come back to comfort.

It's raining outside and we are all huddled inside. Yet, you want to work out. The treadmill or bike is a great way to escape bad weather. During the Pandemic we could not use a gym. IFit to the rescue again. This whole exercising thing subjected me to the running world. In fact it opened my eyes to the fitness world. Socks are 25 dollars. Special shirts are 40- 300 bucks. I saw a light flimsy windbreaker for 400 dollars. Imagine running in the very first marathon? Was it in bare feet or sandals? 26 miles? Today's workout is a whole new rich cat!

It's interesting that someone died while running one of those early marathons. The people of those days began to believe 26 miles was too far to run. It was banned for awhile. In time we have improved the danger. We have cushion runners and sweat free socks. From tights to head bands, they have it all. Runners can wear very expensive watches to control their workout experience. From apps to GPS bibs, we can track your fitness and races. I was offered a power supplement in my last race. It was barley cold or rainy but people had toques, gloves and rain gear. I was surrounded by massage therapists and yoga instructors. Did they have that in ancient Greece? We love our comfort!

What does God have to say? Jerimiah 12:5 says *“If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?”* I could have quoted the Pauline “run the race” quote. Yet, comfort and running are friends and enemies. I got up to focus on the race.

Personally, rain and weather did not bug me. I brought a suitcase of clothes, yet, it was shorts, a t-shirt, and runners. Other people are fearing hills, rain, and wildlife. It’s an odd way to live fearing the unknown. Just run! God is telling the people to be concerned with running and not the things that make running hard.

To run a long race is a mind game. Parts of the body will hurt for a mile. Doubt will try and get you to walk. Is it rain or wind? It’s an outdoor race and believe it or not the outdoors doesn’t care that your there. In-fact running outdoors is partially an outdoor race. It’s you against the elements just like God said. Yet, we tend to comfort our body, feet, and power drinks. Hills are an issue for some when signing up. On IFit people get ticked off when the power goes out or the internet is down. How quickly can they respond to your broken machine over the whole world? It’s like you expect someone to be waiting for your call. Someone to control the elements.

Fitness does not require money for the most part. Run outside in bare feet. Do push-ups. Your body is enough. Now, we can add runners. We can add watches. There are apps and supplements. They all add to the fitness experience. It’s true that we all need motivation. Yet, all the motivation you need is sitting there right inside you. We just think it’s in runners and fitness instructors. In church they love their favorite seat. They love to hear comfort messages. It’s no different with taxes and programs. They all cost money. What are you willing to spend? It’s probably a comfort level thing.

Should working out be rain and pain free? Should your feet and back not hurt just a little? What about stress on the mind? They say we should workout because we can. So many do not get that chance. It's a good line but some people don't like it. There is comfort in power drinks and powders. We can supplement our workouts. Is that the way it should be? Where is the struggle and fortitude to win? So many people just want it too easy. They want easy taxes. Easy social programs and laws. We want our fitness machines to play ball all the time. That those who offer comfort us to be there every waking minute for us. Make races easy. Give us a break! Is that how survival of the fittest works? Is that how survival of the comfort level works.