

The Secret to Being Fit for Life

Being **fit** is difficult. Resisting the temptation to eat fast food, skip the gym or “get back on track tomorrow” is a constant battle in our frenetically paced world fueled by convenience foods, a phenomenal emphasis on wealth not health, and the prevalent procrastinator’s mindset that we will reprioritize when we have reached the next goal, met the next deadline and have less stress and more time or money. Never more **willpower**.

From the outset of this article, I want to explicitly state my opinion as both a fitness professional and someone who’s struggled personally with eating disorders: I don’t believe willpower has any lasting power when it comes to breaking **strongholds** and becoming fit for a lifetime.

I’m one chapter away from finishing pastor and author Mark Batterson’s latest book, *All In: You Are One Decision Away From a Totally Different Life*. In the 15th chapter, Batterson explains the difference between the two types of power mentioned in the New Testament: **dunamis** and **exousia**. The former describes the power to do things beyond our natural ability, while the latter, Batterson says, is best translated as “**supernatural self-control**.”

Exousia appears more than 100 times in the New Testament in a variety of contexts, but it always carries with it the eternal concept that no authority exists other than what is granted by God. In Acts 1:7, it describes the freedom of God to act. In John 17:2, it signifies the divinely given power of Jesus Christ that He received from His Father. In 2 Corinthians 13:10, it denotes the authority God imparts to leaders of the church. And in Mark 3:14-15, it represents the power given to believers to minister and expel demons: “He appointed

twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have *authority* to drive out demons” (NIV, emphasis mine).

So what does *exousia* have to do with becoming fit for a lifetime? Because without *exousia*, all we have are *excuses*. All we have are lackadaisical “maybes” and empty if/then statements—when what we really need is an espresso shot of supernatural self-control and a refill of devil-driving faith.

It took two years before this revelation of God-imparted *exousia* soaked into my spirit. The second it did, the process of healing and restoration began. (You can read more about my story here or in my book.) Countless visits to the doctor’s office couldn’t heal me. Books written by experts in the fields of psychology and nutrition couldn’t get through to me. Loving friends and family couldn’t tell me to simply *make* myself eat more and work out less.

The only weapon strong enough to break the chains of addiction and depression was ceaseless ***prayer***. The only medicine potent enough to rid the toxins of idolatry and pride from my spiritual bloodstream was the ***grace*** that flows from Jesus’ veins. The only aid powerful enough to guide me on a path of continued spiritual and physical fitness swoops down, swift as an eagle, from the throne of grace—it’s the supernatural ***exousia*** of our Father.

As followers of Christ and adopted sons and daughters of the living God, we have authority over **demons** and **strongholds** and **trials** and **temptations** of every kind:

- Over **laziness**, **complacency** and the **fear** of failure.
- Over an **overconsumption** of processed carbs and fast food.
- Over an **underfed body** that feels just as hopelessly

enslaved to food as the morbidly obese one standing alongside.

We have victory over it all because we serve a King whose blameless, holy Son died to conquer death once and for all, pay our sin debt in full and empower us to live lives of abundance both now and forevermore (John 10:10).

The Bible says we have not because we ask not. Ask Him today to be the all in all of your every day—your nutritional adviser, your personal trainer, your doctor, your accountability partner. He longs to be Lord of every single area of your life.

To quote Mark Batterson a final time, “If Jesus is not Lord of all, then Jesus is not Lord at all.”

Your answer doesn’t lie in the pages of a best-selling book. It can’t be found in a weight-loss program, a gym or a smartphone app. Simply put, it can’t be bought.

It can only be received by the simple confession, *Lord, I can’t do this on my own. I need You to be my guide. I need the willpower that only You provide.*

This, I believe, is the secret to becoming fit for a lifetime.

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