

You Say You Want to Be Like Jesus?

I love the slogan, “**W**hat **W**ould **J**esus **D**o?” WWJD was an idea that started in the hearts of members of a small youth group.

As people spoke those four simple words, it spread all over the world until it became a cultural phenomenon. It became a compass for their lives. But just what *did* Jesus do when it came to being physically active?

We don't know a lot about Jesus' early years at home with Joseph and Mary. We do know that His earthly father, Joseph, was likely a carpenter, and that Jesus took up the trade. We never read that Jesus went looking for a way to exercise. However, as a carpenter, He more than likely had to lift heavy pieces of wood, saw them into boards without power tools, and pound pegs into holes He had drilled by hand without the use of a pneumatic nailer. Just imagine the strength He would have developed in his arms over the years. It was a movement-driven society.

Jesus was always on the move, particularly after He began His ministry. His whole life was exercise! We know from Scripture that Jesus walked from Sidon to Tyre, which would have been a 40-mile trip in one day. The primary forms of transportation in His time were walking and taking a boat.

Jesus and His disciples were not wealthy men who could own carriages, wagons, or yachts. In fact, when Jesus sent them out in pairs, He told them to leave their worldly possessions behind and take only what they absolutely needed for the journey, because they were going to walk (see Luke 10:1-5). They walked through fields and valleys and up and down the mountains of that region.

Jesus, along with His disciples, must have been in great physical condition. They never had time to get out of shape. Just living their hard lives of manual labor and walking everywhere would have kept them conditioned.

Jesus and his disciples did not have to consciously determine to exercise, but *you do*, and in the beginning it's going to be hard for you to get going. Maybe you don't have a gym nearby, or perhaps other factors such as cost are keeping you from exercising. If so, start walking. It's a free exercise, and it can be done with a friend, your children, a spouse and anyone else.

Put on some earphones and listen to music, a speech or sermon while you walk—or even learn a new language! Take along your dog on the walk and kill two birds with one stone. Carry weights or use hiking poles to exercise the upper part of your body. Join a walking club at the local mall, or just walk there in inclement weather. You can also choose to walk on a treadmill or an elliptical machine, or just march in place.

So, for 2014, I challenge you to start doing what Jesus did. Be more physically active, walk more, and praise your Father in heaven every step of the way!

Steve Reynolds is the senior pastor of Capital Baptist Church in Annandale, Va. He is the author of the books *Bod4God* and *Get Off the Couch*. He is also the creator of the *Losing to Live Weight-Loss Competition*. Steve has lost more than 120 pounds and has led his church to lose over eight tons of weight.