

Dear Grace Church Family and Friends,

With the warmer weather, I was finally able to get outside this past week and go for a run. Let me tell you - it felt good. The sun. The air. It lifted my spirits. I had all the energy in the world as I started off and thought I would run forever.

Only, I couldn't. Pretty soon, I got tired. I was winded. My legs were weak, and I realized running the distance I originally intended would be nearly impossible.

Honestly, it was pretty disappointing. I thought I was in better shape. Despite the terrible weather in February, I was running as much as I could. It was inside, of course, on the treadmill in our apartment building, but still, I was running.

Unfortunately, it was not enough, and I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised. I don't really like running on the treadmill. I find it to be very repetitive and only do it as a last resort. My limit is about twenty minutes, which is better than nothing, but not as much as I run outdoors.

So, why did I expect to run farther when I got outside?

I think we often have the same unrealistic expectations when it comes to our spiritual life. We want to feel a connection with God, but for one reason or another, we don't put in enough time strengthening our spiritual "muscles."

Having a relationship with God takes some effort. We have to attend to it, through prayer and worship and service to those in need. That is how the bond gets stronger. If we don't give it that focus, we get out of shape spiritually, and that connection with God weakens.

Who knows why we expect more than we should. Perhaps, we hope God will do all the work. As my first run of the spring showed me, though, I have more work to do. We probably all do.

See you in church,

*Andrew*