

# **CrossFit and the Process of Progress**

***I am obsessed with working out. More specifically, I am obsessed with CrossFit!***

A global exercise phenomenon, CrossFit began in the small garage of a man in Santa Cruz, California named Greg Glassman around 2001. According to Glassman, "CrossFit is not a specialized fitness program but a deliberate attempt to optimize physical competence in...Cardiovascular and Respiratory endurance, Stamina, Strength, Flexibility, Power, Speed, Coordination, Agility, Balance, and Accuracy." In their online *CrossFit Journal*, Glassman shares that he developed CrossFit to "enhance an individual's competency at all physical tasks."

And as many CrossFitters proclaim, this high intensity workout has changed my life!

Now don't worry, this is not an appeal or an attempt to convince you to become a CrossFitter. Instead, I'd like to talk about the overall progress and the spiritual lessons that we can gain when we commit ourselves to consistent high intensity exercise.

## **The Process of Progress**

I began CrossFit in January of 2018 after meeting Coach Rachel Keele. Rachel has not only coached me in fitness, she has also given me tools that coach me through life. When I first began training with Rachel, I would show her pictures of people I hoped to look like as I sought to achieve my fitness goals. She kindly reminded me one day that my best, my bodies best, should be my goal. Me working hard and doing my best should be my goal; my personal progress should be my goal.



This idea revolutionized how I see the process of progress. Many workouts leave me on the floor. But I am coming to a place where I anticipate being on the floor. I look forward to feeling wrecked and coming back the next day to do it all again.

**The process towards progress in any area of our life requires that we commit to consistently giving everything we have to the point of pure exhaustion. It's only after you've given it all you have that you rest so you can do it all again.**

CrossFit has me truly sold-out to the journey. And I've learned to value the pain that comes with the process of progress. Hitting the floor keeps me humble. Each rep keeps me honest. And there is no better feeling than knowing you gave your all to something that left you sore but strong.

## **The Process of Christ for the Progress of the Church**

This principle of the process to progress is not original to CrossFit. In fact, when I look at the early church in Acts chapter one, I see a group of saints sold out to the process of progress. Christ, anticipating this reality, says in Acts 1:8, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."* See Christ's example of radical love, transformational grace, and mind blowing restoration threatened the religious and political climate of its day.

Many of His disciples and followers all watched him die for these acts. And in this verse Christ is letting the disciples know that being His witnesses in the Earth, joining Him in the process of progressing religious and non-religious people into a new spiritual understanding is going to be hard work. It's going to be work that's going to require not just a commitment, but a power outside of yourself that is far greater than yourself.

**The process of progressing religious and non-religious people into a new spiritual understanding requires the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.**

The disciples knew that following Jesus' example, shaking up the spiritual and political climate of a religious institution, wouldn't be popular or even widely accepted. These early apostles anticipated a difficult road requiring consistent prayer, vulnerability, and authentic fellowship with one another in order to make it. Expecting the discomfort and the soreness, they knew this gospel would cost them their lives. Yet, they still sold themselves out to the process of Christ for the progress of the Church. And like a strenuous work-out, the pain and soreness of the process served as a signal to them of their growing strength and faith.

## **The Commission to the Process of Progress**

2,000 years later, the bold courage of the disciples ignites within me a desire to be a part of a church that is progressing. I too sold out to the process of Christ and the progress of His church. Wanting to be apart of a counter-cultural church, I desire to fully embrace the struggle such a worthwhile cause requires. Like the first followers of the early Church, the Spirit of the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and liberty for those who are oppressed.

***The process of Christian discipleship calls us to be a revolutionary presence within our spheres of influence. The progress of the Church depends upon this level of unconventional, bold conviction.***

The apostles show us what it looks like. So now, I am ready to join a collection of dedicated followers committed to doing the same.

## **Sore But Strong**

CrossFit not only changed my body, it changed my perspective. One training session in particular is etched in my memory. One day, my coach designed quite the workout for me. Part of that workout consisted of doing *thrusters* with a barbell. The weight was really heavy and Rachel noted that I was struggling and taking long pauses. And as she saw me struggle she said something to me that I'll never forget. She said,

***"Tacy, it's heavy so if you need to put it down***

***that's ok. But you can't put it down for long.  
Count to ten and get back to work."***

We broke the reps into five lifts. I'd pause for ten seconds and then I'd continue. It took me longer, but I still completed my reps. In that moment I realized, sometimes life gets heavy. But progress comes when we choose not to stop, but instead to shift. So many things discourage us, but progress comes when we manage well what is before us.

I want to manage well what is before me. CrossFit has shown me that I can push myself. I've learned that your pain *does* produce results; that the pain of fitness *does* result in progress. There is no better feeling than knowing you gave your all to something that left you sore and strong. And it's because of my consistent training with CrossFit that I am able to anticipate that this adventure called life is going to continue to build me up, one rep at a time.