



CREATOR

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A TALE OF THREE MUSCLES

“For in Him we live and move and have our being.”
Acts 17:28¹

Healthy muscles can accomplish much and much joy can be had when exercised for our Lord’s glory. If our muscles, bones, and joints are lawfully used—even when we are not thinking about God—they bring Him glory. For in Christ, “we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).¹ This truth, which the Holy Spirit proclaimed through the Apostle Paul, is for Believers and unbelievers alike.

As a youngster growing up in Chicago, my older brothers and I often joined other kids playing softball in the streets of our neighborhood. We used a 16-inch ball² that became soft after many “at bats” . . . no mitts needed. If the ball accidentally landed on the windshield of a parked car, it would cause no damage. When an approaching vehicle came down the street, we’d yell, “Car,” and everyone would move to the side. Once it passed, we would yell, “Game on!” and play continued. It was a delightful, carefree time.

The muscles needed to play ball are numerous and divinely designed. Each of our bodies contains many skeletal muscles, hundreds of smooth muscles, and the tireless muscle of our heart. The primary control of most of these comes from the thinking part of the brain. Yet we will soon see that some work automatically.

SKELETAL MUSCLES

Our great and gracious Creator designed our bodies with a complex set of 650 skeletal muscles. They are known as “skeletal” because these are the muscles God attached to our bones or skeleton and that provide us great freedom of movement and creativity. Skeletal muscles are “voluntary” because



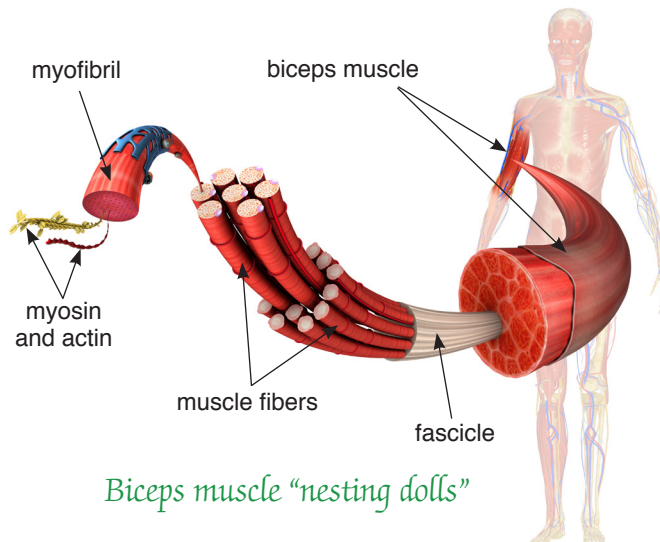
*Matryoshka
dolls*

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² Outside Chicago, most softball games employ a ball 12 inches (30 centimeters) in circumference.

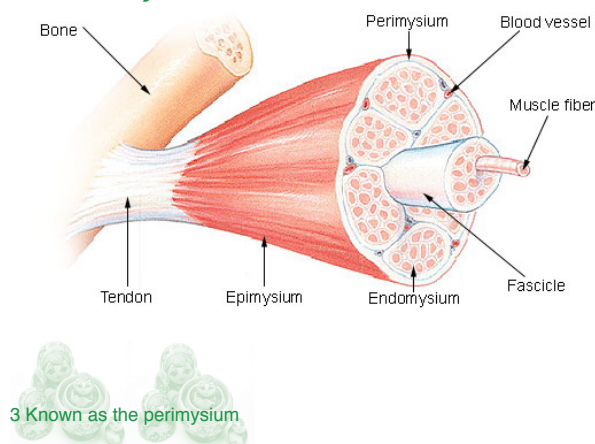
they are the ones we can control and flex/extend freely. Consider just a few of the things that these muscles can accomplish:

Running, walking, standing
Breathing, coughing, sneezing
Eating, speaking, seeing
Riding a bicycle, driving a car
Playing a musical instrument
Building, working, creating

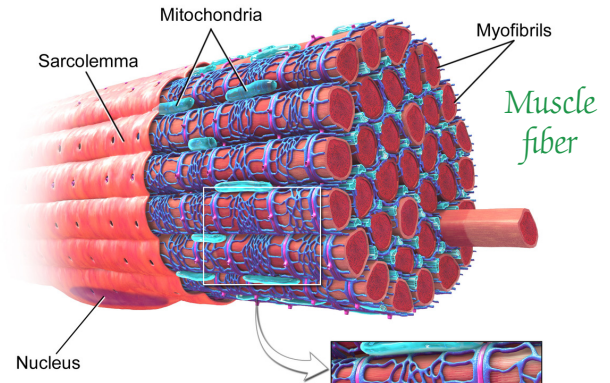


Christ's design of skeletal muscles can be likened to the parts of a Russian nesting doll (Matryoshka). Take the biceps muscle of your upper arm, for instance. Your biceps is covered by thin connective tissue that helps protect it.³ Inside this outer wrapping are many *fascicles* resembling thin sausages nestled next to each other. A fascicle possesses between 20 and 80 parallel muscle fibers. *Muscle fibers*—also

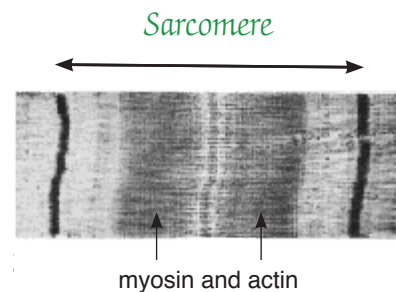
Structure of muscle



known as *myofibers*—represent the individual cells of a muscle. Long and cylindrical, these cells contain many nuclei, mitochondria, and sarcomeres.



Muscle fibers are composed of parallel myofibrils—fine threads that can contract. The *myofibril* represents a specialized organelle⁴ found only in striated muscle (skeletal muscle and heart cells).



The last of the muscle's "nesting dolls" is the *sarcomere*. A sarcomere is the tiniest part of muscle tissue that can move (contract).⁵ Sarcomeres are composed of parallel protein filaments (myosin and actin) that slide past one another when activated. The Lord organizes these filaments in such a way that under the microscope they appear banded or *striated*. This is why skeletal and heart (cardiac) muscles are called *striated* muscles.

⁴ Read about organelles in **CREATOR Journal** Volume 26 Number 1.
⁵ There are millions of sarcomeres in each muscle, working together in near-perfect harmony, allowing the muscle to contract.

At the risk of losing some of our readers, we'd like to explore even deeper into the world of the sarcomere and the incredible way our Lord Jesus fashioned it. (This is an opportunity for us all to love the Lord our God "with all [our] mind" Mark 12:30.) We truly believe this honors Him as Creator!

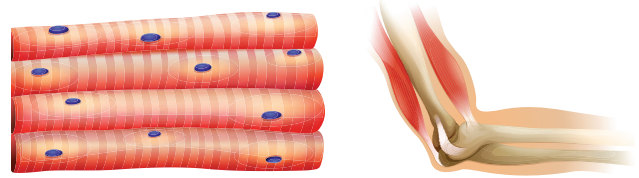
The microscopic filaments packed into a sarcomere are like the strands of an oriental rug, except these muscle filaments can move because they're composed of living tissue! Our Lord Jesus causes the protein molecule myosin to "grab onto" actin and slide it past itself during muscle contraction (see page 8).⁶ The interaction of these motor molecules (myosin and actin) is the dream of any mechanical engineer.

SMOOTH MUSCLES

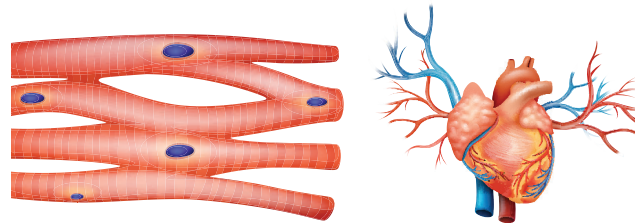
As we mentioned earlier, there are several muscles in your body Christ created that work without thinking about them. Apart from your tongue and throat, all the muscles of your digestive tract—including your esophagus, stomach, and intestines—function automatically. Good thing too! Even as you sleep, your body continues to digest the food you've eaten throughout the day, providing continuous nourishment.

Our amazing Creator wove together two groups of muscles: those we consciously control and those that work automatically. When we ride a bicycle or throw a ball, we use skeletal muscles—these we can control. Muscles that move food through our body and pump blood through our arteries work automatically. Our Lord Jesus controls these by His sovereign wisdom!

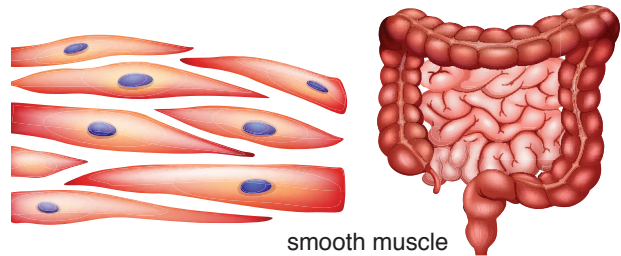
Types of muscles



skeletal muscle



cardiac muscle



smooth muscle

Most of these "automatic muscles" are known as smooth muscles because they don't have the striated appearance of skeletal or cardiac muscles under a microscope. Creator Jesus knitted smooth muscles into your arteries, veins, eyes, ears, gastrointestinal (GI) tract, bladder, and airways. And the ability of a mother to deliver her baby comes largely from the smooth muscles of her uterus.

Smooth muscles can maintain force longer than skeletal muscles and are less prone to fatigue. They also consume less energy. The function and control of smooth muscles are vastly more complicated than most other muscles in the body.

⁶ Researchers can't see myosin and actin interacting with one another but have come to understand how they work through intensive study.



CARDIAC MUSCLES

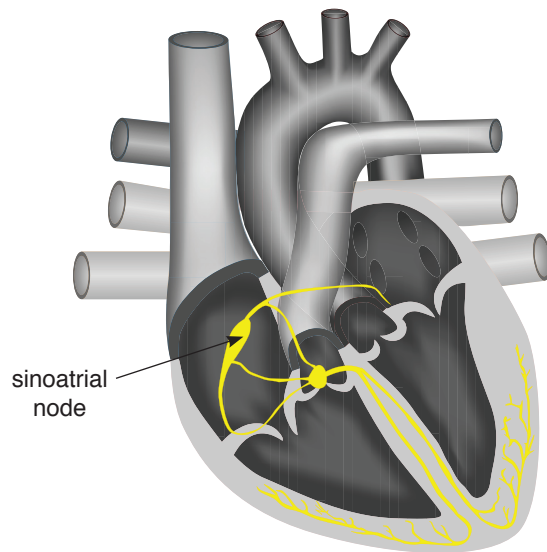
Skeletal muscles are the most abundant tissue in an adult, but the heart is the most vital muscle type. Positioned in the center of the chest by God, it is very carefully crafted by Christ our Creator, and without it, we would die.

All three muscle types—skeletal, smooth, and cardiac—can be recognized by their attributes, such as strength, how long they contract, and how quickly they tire out. The large muscles of the legs generate a great deal of force but quickly fatigue (an athlete can sprint at full speed for only a few seconds at a time). The smooth muscles of the stomach and intestines often produce long waves of contraction; an empty stomach contracts about three times per minute, giving rise to the “gurgling” sound you hear when you’re hungry. The small intestine contracts about 12 times a minute.

Heart or cardiac muscle contracts about once a second; its contractions, therefore, are short-lived. Unlike skeletal muscles, the heart never stops beating throughout its life. What a testimony to the brilliance of our Creator’s design and a symbol of Christ’s promise to His Bride, the Church, that He will never leave her nor forsake her (Hebrews 13:5)! Your heart relaxes very briefly between contractions. We could say that during an average lifetime, it takes about three billion “sabbath rests.”

In ways, cardiac muscle is a melding of skeletal and smooth muscles. Under a microscope, heart muscle has bands like skeletal muscles yet like smooth muscles, it works automatically. And it has its own pacemaker (sinoatrial node); we don’t need to worry about keeping our hearts beating. (If we did, we could never sleep or would die when we nodded off.)

Unlike skeletal muscles, cardiac muscle cells are connected to one another electrically. This means that an electrical signal spreads



from one cell to another throughout the heart without any outside influence. Your heart is also similar to the smooth muscle of the stomach because it, too, can contract on its own.

Our bodies are wonderfully and fearfully fashioned by our Lord Jesus Christ. But it seems that He applied extra tender care when creating our hearts. This may explain why He often ties the heart to our soul in Scripture.⁷ We can survive the loss of any number of muscles, but we cannot live without a heart.

*My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the Lord;
My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.
Psalm 84:2*



⁷ Puritan John Bunyan wrote, “The Greatness of the Soul and the Unspeakableness of the Loss Thereof,” a work we highly recommend.

A HEART OF STRENGTH

My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Psalms 73:26

Everything about God is amazing, and everything in the universe testifies to just how amazing He is! Scripture loudly proclaims the Father's great care for us, so should it be any surprise that Creation frequently illustrates the magnitude of His love (Matthew 6:25-33)? Deep within the hidden recesses of our chests lies a living emblem of God's providential kindness and incomparable strength. Here resides a very special type of muscle His Son created to provide us life—the human heart.

The heart or cardiac muscle (also known as the *myocardium*) is composed of a family of intertwined fibers not unlike the threads of a wool coat, except that myocardial fibers are immensely more complex. Miraculously



Heart muscle fibers—scanning electron microscope

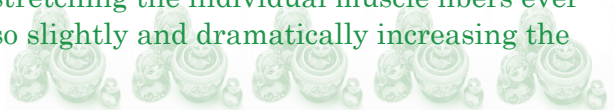
designed by Christ (Colossians 1:16-17), each strand of muscle allows the heart to pump blood tirelessly throughout the body, something no other muscle can do. And Jesus protects each fiber by surrounding it with countless other fibers.

Cardiac cells work selflessly in concert—there are no loners in this business. Without a coordinated effort, the heart could not function properly and we would die. There's no need for alarm, though; our Maker carefully and lovingly watches over the activities of each fiber and faithfully directs their work every moment of every day. For, "He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:17).

By the end of the nineteenth century, scientific research into human anatomy and physiology brought to light the incredible and precise ways God orchestrates the performance of cardiac muscle. German physiologist Otto Frank and English doctor Ernest Starling each discovered that when muscle fibers in the heart are stretched, they work harder. This principle is now known as the Frank-Starling law of the heart. It's a little like facing a world-class rugby team. The harder you push against their front row, the harder they push back.

At first glance, this may not seem like a big deal. But our bodies are daily subjected to stress, so the ability of cardiac muscle to alter the power of blood flow is extremely important. We are immersed in a universe of physiological trials and tribulations. Every day we are exposed to temperature fluctuations, physical activity, germs, hormones, and many other burdens, requiring each of us—and especially our hearts—to be adaptable.

Consider a busy fire department as another analogy. Firefighters have to be trained for all contingencies. The greater the emergency, the greater their response. So it is with our hearts. If we lift a heavy object or become frightened, the myocardium kicks into high gear. It works harder to supply extra oxygen and nutrients to our stressed bodies. As it does, an increased amount of blood fills the chambers of the heart, stretching the individual muscle fibers ever so slightly and dramatically increasing the





heart's ability to perform work (the Frank-Starling law of the heart). Again, this is only possible because our Lord Jesus created us and, with His Father, deeply cares for us (1 Peter 5:7)!

God places us in stressful circumstances at times to test and establish our faith. "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance" (James 1:2-3).¹ But he also promises that he won't stretch us too far. "God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it" (1 Corinthians 10:13). One of the ways our Lord Jesus prevents this from happening is by surrounding us with other Believers. As it is with heart muscle cells, God doesn't intend for us to be "isolated fibers" within the Church. "The entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God" (Colossians 2:19). He gave us the Church to strengthen and protect us from the wiles of the world, its prince, and our own wickedness.

We see this principle marvelously illustrated in the heart. If our hearts are healthy, no individual muscle fiber can be stretched beyond normal limits and thus

injured because the surrounding muscle fibers are too strong to allow this to happen. The sheer quantity of fibers composing the heart (numbering in the millions) protects the individual muscle cells from damage. So it is with the Church of the Living God when we fervently love one another (1 Peter 1:22). This is one reason why Christ commands us not to neglect meeting together (Hebrews 10:24-25). Ours is a caring Creator!

He placed in the center of our chests a working symbol of His love. Our hearts teach us that we shouldn't run away from difficulties, nor should we avoid those people through whom God strengthens us. Like the heart muscle, we can exercise our faith in Christ and allow ourselves to be stretched so God's will is accomplished through us. And if we support one another, we will take part in Christ's promise that even the gates of Hell will not overcome His Church (Matthew 16:18).

THOSE WITH WEAKENED HEARTS . . .

Be encouraged. God intimately cares for you—directing and sustaining each muscle fiber of your heart, including the damaged ones. This organ truly reflects the strength of an infinite God! No other pump is so resilient. The average life span of the best man-made pumps is 10 to 15 years, but a person's heart can last 70, 80, 90 years, or more. It beats two to three billion times during its lifetime. The heart stops and rests no more than a second between contractions, yet it doesn't tire out.

Our Lord Jesus uses the heart to proclaim His enduring power and the persevering love of His Father. He intimately sustains each muscle fiber of your heart—from the time you were three weeks old in your mother's womb until your work on Earth is finished.

*Casting all your anxiety on Him,
because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7*



CHRIST'S CREATED ORDER

"O LORD, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You."
2 Chronicles 20:6

When our Lord brought all things into existence—stars, mountains, plants, and animals—they were each given an unalterable function. In other words, Jesus made everything precisely the way He wanted it to be, for His own glory and the glory of His Father.

The only way the world or the universe can survive is if each creature obeys its Creator and does not try to change itself into something God did not make it be. The late theologian, R.C. Sproul, would describe this type of rebellion as "cosmic treason."⁸

The most infamous case of Creation's insurrection comes from the mind of Satan: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, . . . For thou hast said in thine heart, 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: . . . I will be like the Most High'" (Isaiah 14:12, 13, 14 KJV). But the Lord says, "For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me" (Isaiah 46:9). Jude goes on to write, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6 KJV). Thus any attempt to alter the unalterable is cause for divine judgment and damnation.

Jesus also made all things precisely the way He did for our benefit and joy and the health and well-being of society.⁹ The only true happiness is found in the safety of *Christ's Created Order*.

8 R.C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God*

9 Here "society" includes the numerous ecosystems God created.

MALE AND FEMALE

*But from the beginning of Creation,
God made them male and female. Mark 10:6*

The Lord graciously provides both men and women, boys and girls, muscles for work, play, and praise. The number and types of muscles in both sexes are the same. But their abilities in each are markedly different. Researcher Birgitta Glenmark has discovered that "there are major differences between female and male skeletal muscles."¹⁰

Men typically have more muscle mass than women. A woman's body is one-third muscle by weight, whereas God designed men with 40 – 50% muscle by weight.

Our Lord Jesus gave men larger muscle fibers and consequently more strength. On average, women are about two-thirds as strong as men. If male and female athletes do the same training over a similar period of time, women athletes will possess 40–70% less



muscle strength than men. This does not mean men are better than women, just physically stronger (1 Peter 3:7). Christ designed it this way for our good and the good of society.

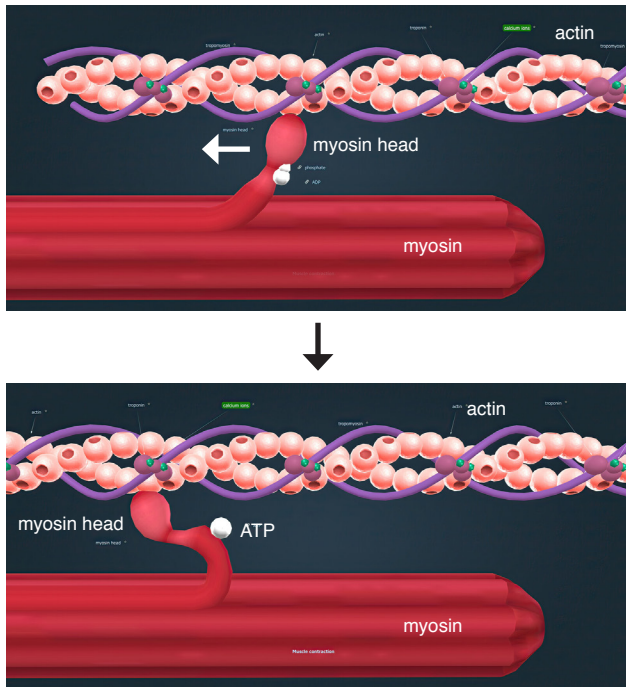
And *it is impossible* to change a man's muscles into a woman's or vice versa. Christ made us male and female (Genesis 1:27) for His own glory and He forbids mankind from trying to alter His created design!

10 Birgitta Glenmark, et al, *American Journal of Physiology-Endocrinology and Metabolism*, Vol. 287, No. 6

POWERED BY GOD

He gives strength to the weary,
And to him who lacks might He increases power.
Isaiah 40:29

In previous issues of the **CREATOR Journal**, we have learned that all living cells in plants, animals, and people are powered by a divinely-created molecule called ATP (adenosine triphosphate).¹¹ ATP molecules are the “batteries” that enable myosin to move actin along a muscle fiber.



The red object above represents myosin and the strings of “pink pitted olives” are actin filaments. When ATP (white ball) attaches to a myosin head, it provides energy to allow the myosin to move actin (from right to left above).

This “battery power” of muscle fibers is small. The stores of ATP in a skeletal muscle cell (myofiber) are only enough to allow for a few seconds of maximum contraction. Try grasping a solid object with your hand. How long can you continue to hold it using all your strength? No more than a few seconds, right? That’s because the muscles in your hand and arm rapidly use up all the ATP they possess. Therefore, Christ our Creator engineered cells to quickly regenerate additional ATP, essential for muscle contraction.

The Lord replenishes ATP in muscle cells using a complex carbohydrate known as glycogen (GLY - ko - jin). Glycogen is a large “ball” of sugar (glucose) molecules similar in ways to the starch found in plants.¹² The body can release energy from glycogen in the presence of oxygen. This released energy recharges the ATP “batteries.” If needed, energy can also be released from glycogen when little or no oxygen is present. A person who forcibly exerts their muscles over an extended period produces a chemical called lactic acid. But it is quickly reabsorbed by the body. Contrary to popular belief, lactic acid is not what causes muscle soreness after exercise.¹³

¹¹ Read about ATP in **CREATOR Journal** Volume 26 Number 1.

¹² Some scientists refer to glycogen as “animal starch.” Large quantities of glycogen are stored in the liver and skeletal muscles.

¹³ Muscle soreness is caused by microscopic damage to muscle fibers, inflammation, and subsequent repair of the tissues.

RED MUSCLES / WHITE MUSCLES

Yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary. Isaiah 40:31

Our Lord fashioned two types of skeletal muscle fibers.¹⁴ One type contains a lot of *myoglobin*. Myoglobin is a large protein that stores oxygen, which can be released when needed. It's similar to the hemoglobin in our red blood cells, which also carries oxygen. Like hemoglobin, myoglobin is red and sufficient quantities color muscle tissue dark red. So dark meat (red muscle) contains abundant myoglobin.

The white meat we find in a cooked turkey or chicken, on the other hand, possesses much less myoglobin; that's why it is lighter in color. These muscle fibers are capable of contracting quite quickly. Jesus designed the flight muscles of turkeys using "white meat" because their wings must be able to flap rapidly to escape from a threat. The downside is that these muscles tire quickly.¹⁵



Turkey taking flight

¹⁴ There are actually three different kinds of skeletal muscle fibers. But for simplicity's sake, we're focusing on only two.

¹⁵ Wild turkeys possess more dark meat than domestic turkeys but their flight muscles are largely "white."

The flight muscles in most birds are a combination of white and red muscle fibers (cells). Fowl tend to possess "breast meat" composed of white muscle fibers. Other birds, such as sparrows and hummingbirds, have only red fibers. Migrating birds also need muscles that can sustain flight over vast distances. Their breast muscles contain far more red muscle fibers since these do not fatigue easily.

Red muscles contract more slowly but sustain a contraction longer than white muscles. A turkey's legs are largely red muscles or dark meat; the bird can thus stand or walk around all day without getting tired. Christ uses red muscle fibers to sustain



posture in people and animals; these muscles do not need to contract quickly but keep the body stable. Our back and leg muscles are almost entirely of this type.

The truth is, most creatures possess muscles with a mixture of red and white fiber types. Though fairly clear-cut in domesticated chickens and turkeys, the fiber composition in virtually all other animals and people is far more complex!

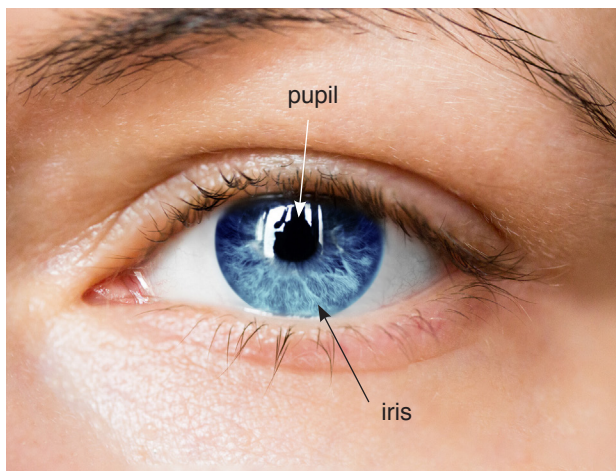


LITTLE-KNOWN MUSCLES

Lift up your eyes on high and see . . . Isaiah 40:26

God graced your eyes with external skeletal muscles that allow you to look up, down, and to both sides. Doctors call these the *extraocular* muscles. (*Extra-* means they are on the “outside;” *oculus* is Latin for “eye.”) But our Lord also provides sets of *intraocular* muscles that are “inside” (*intra-*) your eyes.

One set of intraocular muscles forms the iris or colored part of your eye. They are smooth muscles that control the size of your pupils. If exposed to bright light, certain



muscles in your iris automatically constrict the size of the pupils to prevent damage to the retinas in the back of your eyes. Our Lord is so kind!

Ciliary (sil - ee - er - ee) muscles are the other smooth muscles in your eyes. God uses these muscles to alter the shape of the lens so that you can focus on both close and far-away objects.¹⁶ Unfortunately, after the age of 40, the lens of each eye becomes stiff and can not easily change shape or focus on nearby objects. Glasses are usually prescribed at this age.



16 This is known as accommodation.

Did you know that our Lord Jesus also lovingly placed two different smooth muscles in the hidden recesses of your ears?¹⁷ These muscles attach to the tiny bones there and automatically adjust the tension on those bones when you’re exposed to loud noises, preventing damage to hearing. Christ’s creation of these muscles again demonstrates His tremendous kindness to us!

Inside your voice box (larynx) are six skeletal muscles with very long names.¹⁸ This unique set of muscles changes the length and shape of your vocal cords and allows you to freely produce different sounds. Without these, you would not be able to speak clearly.

Finally, Creator Jesus populated your skin with tiny smooth muscles—the *arrector pili* (pronounced pie-lie). These cause the hairs on your arms and legs to stand on end, creating “goose bumps” or “goose pimples.” Most of us experience their effect when we get cold or frightened, but few think of them as muscles.



“Goose bumps” on arm

17 The stapedius and tensor tympani

18 Cricothyroid muscle, thyroarytenoid muscle, posterior cricoarytenoid muscle, lateral cricoarytenoid muscle, transverse arytenoid (or interarytenoid) muscle, vocalis muscle

JOY AND SUFFERING

“The joy of the LORD is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:10

Our Triune God originally created muscles for useful work and childlike joy. Few things are more pleasing to older folks than watching children play: “Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each of them with cane in hand because of his age. The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there.” (Zechariah 8:4-5).¹ But adults play as well. It’s estimated that there are 8,000 different sports in the world, *all requiring muscles*.



Street softball in the early 1960s

Sadly, muscles can also be a source of discomfort in this fallen world. Many of the severest pains we experience are due to smooth muscles contracting uncontrollably:

- hunger pangs (stomach muscles)
- colic/diarrhea (muscles of the bowels)
- gallbladder attack (gallbladder muscles)
- kidney stones (spasms of ureter muscles)
- asthma (muscles of the bronchial tree)
- migraine headaches (vascular muscles)¹⁹
- “brain freeze” (vascular muscles)¹⁹

Labor pains result from intense but *controlled* muscular contractions in the wall of the uterus.

¹⁹ Migraines and “brain freeze” are both caused by a rapid expansion in the size of blood vessels known as vasodilatation.

A TALE OF TWO WORKS

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; . . . For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. Ephesians 2:8, 10

Christ beautifully choreographs a dance of untold motor molecules (myosin and actin) within us so we can “live and move” and have our being. The Lord also uses the muscles of our bodies to illustrate His work of salvation and our good works. God uses the heart, in particular, to demonstrate the true spiritual life.

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you” (Ezekiel 36:26).

Why doesn’t God say He will give us a new arm of strength? Unlike the skeletal muscles in our limbs, the heart functions apart from our intervention. It is the *one striated muscle* in our entire body over which our Lord Jesus has total control, illustrating His sole work of salvation. He gives us additional striated muscles to serve Him if we are willing. We can also apply our energies to benefit others.

As Christians, we are made for good works, assigned to us from eternity past “so that we would walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10). This is an active expression of our living praise to God.

The goal of all things is the worship of our Lord and the enjoyment of His glory. Believing in Christ and loving Him is the greatest of all works (John 6:29). Jesus fashioned Creation to encourage and lead us into the worship of our Triune God. The stars, mountains, wind, and all living things on Earth were designed to praise their Creator (Psalm 96), and as they do, we may join them.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES / KINGDOMS

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field.” Matthew 13:44

In 1859, Charles Dickens published his now-famous novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*. The story is set between 1775 and 1792 and tells of Charles Darnay, an aristocrat wrongly punished during the French Revolution because of his heritage rather than rewarded for his sincere love of the people. Facing death, a dear family friend takes his place at the guillotine, saving Darnay’s life.

We who love and trust Jesus for eternal salvation also live in an age of two “cities” or kingdoms. The present world is the kingdom of the devil. As Christians, our chief work is to seek Christ’s heavenly kingdom (John 18:36) and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33), loving those He places before us. Our ultimate goal is the Celestial City.²⁰

The servants of this world, however, are commanded by Satan to hate God’s people and their heritage in Christ. The world rarely complains about a Believer’s good deeds because it usually benefits from them (Matthew 5:16). Yet it hates all who identify with Christ. Unbelievers want us to join them in rebellion against their Maker and heartedly approve of their sins. Otherwise, we incur their wrath.

Are we ready to refuse the world and continue seeking Christ, the only true Treasure? He is worth living and dying for! But seeking our Lord’s glory involves hard work (Hosea 6:3). We must apply ourselves in joyful diligence to dig it out . . . like a prospector hunting for hidden gold. Our Lord commands this work of all true Christians: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, *and with all your strength*” (Mark 12:30 emphasis added). Together with our affections and our minds, we use our God-given muscles to discover and proclaim His glory as best we can.

The world mocks Christ Jesus, our Heritage and true Treasure. Yet we are urged to bravely “proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called [us] out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

Will you join God’s people in seeking and proclaiming the eternal Treasure of His kingdom? Will you love and obey the King—the Treasure (Colossians 2:3)—or will you follow the world into destruction (John 5:29)? Jesus lived a perfect life and died on a cruel cross to satisfy the wrath of God’s righteous anger against sin. You cannot repent of someone else’s sins (Ezekiel 18), but if God wills, you must repent of your own sins and believe that Christ died to save you from eternal damnation.

“TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE,
DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS” Hebrews 4:7



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²⁰ John Bunyan’s name for the heavenly Jerusalem in *Pilgrim’s Progress*