

The Bible and Health



SABBATH—MAY 26

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Matthew 4:23; Luke 4:16-21; Romans 6:4; Romans 9–11; Philippians 4:4-9; Colossians 1:20, 21; Colossians 3:8-10.

MEMORY VERSE: “ ‘I am the Lord, who heals you’ ” (Exodus 15:26, NIV).

KEY THOUGHT: The Word of God gives us good reasons to take care of our health.

THE BIBLE TEACHES US TO VALUE OUR BODIES. The believer should understand and practice good health. Caring for our health is part of our service (work) for God. Our health influences (affects) how well we can carry out our service for the Lord.

The goals and values of health are given through God's Word. Science often proves that many of the health principles (laws) in the Bible are true.

Christians should do all they can to take care of their health. Exercise, a healthy diet, rest, satisfying work, drug-free and clean habits, peaceful relationships with others, and deep trust in God make the best possible use of the life God has given us. Our bodies are holy gifts to us from God. We need to take care of them the best we know how.

This week we will look at what the Bible says about health and the principles found in its holy pages.

SUNDAY—MAY 27**TO BE IN HEALTH (3 John 2)**

“Dear friend, I know that your spiritual life is going well. I pray that you also may enjoy good health. And I pray that everything else may go well with you” (3 John 2, NlrV).

We like to think that the Bible preaches spiritual health only. But this is not true. The Bible shows that God cares also about our physical (body) health. Our spiritual side is connected with the physical too. We can find in the Bible good reasons for taking care of our health.

Look up the following verses. Write out the reasons they give us to take care of our health:

Romans 12:1 _____

Romans 14:7 _____

1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 _____

1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 _____

Ephesians 5:29 _____

3 John 2 _____



God cares about our health.

The Bible makes it clear that God cares about the health of our bodies. That makes sense, too. Loving parents care that their children have healthy minds and bodies. How much more so would the Lord care about our health?

It has been said that some people never care about health until they lose it. If you are healthy, do you think seriously about your health? Talk to someone struggling with health problems. Then you will better understand why you should take good care of your health.

MONDAY—MAY 28**HEALTH AND RESTORATION (TO MAKE NEW AGAIN) (Romans 6:4)**

In the beginning God, our Creator, created us healthy. There was no sickness or disease. The plan of sal-

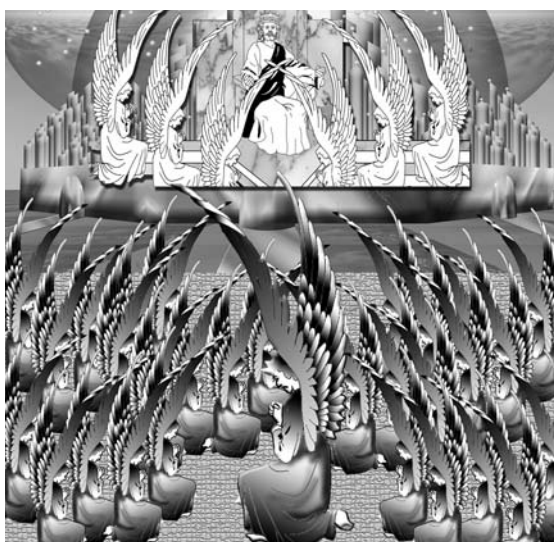
vation¹ is God's way of bringing us back to what we lost through sin. God wants to restore (to give back to) us to what we once had.

What important message is given to us in the following verses? What hope do these verses offer? Romans 6:4; Romans 9–11; 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Colossians 1:20, 21; Colossians 3:8-10; 1 John 3:2.

The Bible often talks about healing and restoration.² God's promises to restore Israel often include words of healing (Jeremiah 30:12-17; Jeremiah 33:6; Ezekiel 47:12; Malachi 4:2). In the New Testament one of the principal (most important) words for healing (*soteria*) can mean "healing" or "salvation." Salvation may include freedom from sin and its results. Salvation also may include restoration, or healing, of the whole person.

All Bible teachings are based on what was lost when sin entered the world. Bible teachings are also based on what Jesus restores to us. Jesus our Savior heals our wounds. He accepted our sins on the cross. Then He appears at last in the book of Revelation as the Anointed (Chosen) Victor. Here, He shows His victory (win) over Satan and the forces of evil (Revelation 20:14; Revelation 21:8). Those who love and serve God will be

restored to a perfect condition³ that was before the Fall. All that is evil will be destroyed. Evil will never rise again. This new earth will be free from sickness, pain, and death (Isaiah 33:24; Revelation 21:4). Paul finds joy in Christ's resurrection (return to life). The Resurrection is proof that Christ defeats (overcomes) all evil forces. Christ's victory⁴ has become ours (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17).



Jesus wins the victory over Satan
(Revelation 20:14).

As Adventists we have been given important light on health and health principles.⁵ This light is meant to help us live free from disease. Do you follow these principles? How well do you know them? Why wait until you get sick to follow principles that could keep you from getting sick to begin with?

¹salvation—God's plan for saving sinners from eternal death.

²restoration—the act of returning to a right relationship with God. Sin separates us from God, but God brings us back to Him and puts His character in us.

³condition—the way a person or thing is; a state of being.

⁴victory—the act of winning the battle over, or winning the struggle against, something.

⁵principles—basic rules of life.

TUESDAY—MAY 29**JESUS, THE GREAT HEALER
(Matthew 4:23)**

We often hear of Jesus as the Great Physician. And no surprise! About 20 percent of the Gospels shows Jesus restoring (to bring back) sick people to health. The four Gospels report 35 examples of healing.

How important was healing to Jesus' earthly ministry (work)? Matthew 4:23; Luke 6:7-19; Luke 9:11.

Through the miraculous healings Jesus gave great proof of His work as the Savior. But He did so much more, too. The whole plan of salvation centers on our receiving what was once lost. Sin has injured our minds, souls, and bodies. But at first there was no sickness or death. In the end there will not be any sickness or death (read Revelation 21:4). By healing, Jesus showed the world the power of God to bring restoration. This means to give back to us what was lost by sin. The healings of Jesus pointed to something greater than health. They pointed to salvation in Jesus.

What does Luke 4:16-21 show us about the purpose and ministry of Jesus?



Jesus, the Great Healer

Jesus preached that God reaches out to His sinful, suffering people. God takes us back through His grace and love. Jesus' actions are proof of final deliverance⁶ from a world of sin. He had come to save, to forgive, and to preach the day of God's mercy. Jesus came to give everlasting⁷ life and to restore all that was lost. He was first of all the Savior. And when He healed people, it was proof that He was God.

We have wonderful promises in the Bible of healing and restoration. This means complete (full) healing and complete restoration. Pray for more faith to believe in those promises. If you know someone who is sick, point that person to this hope.

⁶deliverance—the act of setting free; Jesus sets us free from sin.

⁷everlasting—lasting forever; eternal; without beginning or end.

WEDNESDAY—MAY 30**MODERATION⁸ IN ALL THINGS
(Philippians 4:4-9)**

What useful principles⁹ can you find in Philippians 4:4-9 that can have a good influence¹⁰ on our physical (body) health?

What useful warnings are found in 1 Corinthians 9:25; Galatians 5:23; Titus 1:8; and Titus 2:2 that can influence our physical health?

The Greek word used in many of these verses for “temperate”¹¹ comes from a word often used to show how hard athletes train for a race. The athletes take special care to avoid using things that can hurt their bodies. How much more so should Christians use this principle in the race for everlasting¹² life (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Hebrews 12:1)?

We all know about health problems that can come from the use of alcohol, illegal (against the law) drugs, and so on. Those are the things that we know very well. But, so often, bad health comes by overuse of the gifts that God has given us to enjoy, such as food. It is not sinful to enjoy pleasures. God made us to enjoy these

things. But we must use good judgment. This is what the Bible teaches us.

“True temperance¹³ teaches us to avoid everything hurtful. We are to use wisely things that are healthful. There are few who really understand how their habits of diet influence their health, their moral strength, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal¹⁴ future. The appetite¹⁵ should always be under the control of the Christian’s mind.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance [Advice]*, p. 398. How much sense Ellen White’s words make! Examine¹⁶ yourself. How temperate are you, even with what is good? What changes might you need to make?

THURSDAY—MAY 31**GETTING ALONG WELL
WITH OTHER PEOPLE
(Matthew 22:37-40)**

The Bible speaks often about loving one another. Jesus said that loving one another is the greatest of all commandments (Matthew 22:37-40). Paul speaks about the good points a Christian should have, such as faith,

⁸moderation—the practice of not going too far one way or another in doing things; avoiding extremes.

⁹principles—basic rules or standards of good behavior.

¹⁰influence—to have power or an effect over persons or things.

¹¹temperate—having self-control in all things that affect our health. Controlling the things we do and eat; not doing anything too much; not eating too much or working too much. Being careful to live a healthy lifestyle.

¹²everlasting—lasting forever; eternal; without beginning or end.

¹³temperance—not overdoing anything we do; taking care of our health by avoiding habits that are not healthy.

¹⁴eternal—forever; without end.

¹⁵appetite—a desire for food or any strong desire.

¹⁶examine—to think about your life and learn what habits you need to change.

hope, and love. Paul also says that the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13, NIV). Jesus said that one important thing His followers need to do is to love one another (John 13:35).

How do the following verses teach Christian love?

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 _____

1 John 4:7 _____

1 John 4:18 _____

Many studies teach how family love can stop the influence (power) of bad habits in young people. These evils can lead to terrible results in adulthood.

As God's people we need to love one another (1 Thessalonians 3:2). We need to serve one another (Galatians 5:13). We need to be patient with one another (Ephesians 4:2). We need to be kind to one another (Ephesians 4:32). We need to warn one another (Romans 15:14). We need to be gentle and forgiving to one another (Ephesians 4:32). We need to comfort one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18). We need to show mercy toward one another

(1 Peter 3:8). We need to be hospitable¹⁷ to one another (1 Peter 4:9). And we need to pray for one another (James 5:16). These rules are clearly outlined (taught) in the Bible. They help us to be connected with one another as God's people. They also strengthen family bonds. And they protect our youth from making bad choices. Close bonds to others help us to give and receive love and care. Close bonds to others also help us to have good influences on one another. The Bible shows how important good relationships are for our minds and bodies, too.



We need to help one another (Galatians 5:13).

Think about some of your relationships. What do you do to encourage these relationships? Are these relationships self-serving or self-giving? Are they encouraged by greed or love? Are they

¹⁷hospitable—liking to have guests in your home and treating them in a warm and generous way.

based on a desire for what you can get or on what you can give? Think about the good you have done for others. How have the rules listed in today's lesson given you good reason for having good relationships with others?

FRIDAY—JUNE 1

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, “The Use of Remedies,”¹⁸ pp. 234–240; “Diet and Health,” pp. 295–310, in *The Ministry*¹⁹ of Healing; “The Health Reform,”²⁰ pp. 273–296, in *Selected Messages*, book 3.

“The relation [connection] between the mind and the body is very close. . . . When the body is healthy, the mind is healthy. When the mind suffers, the body suffers. The mind influences²¹ the health far more than people think. Many people suffer from diseases that come from mental depression [sadness]. Grief, worry, guilt, distrust! All are likely to break down the life forces and lead to decay and death. . . .

“Courage, hope, faith, sympathy, love, and health give us longer life. A happy mind, a cheerful spirit, is health to the body and strength to the soul.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Counsels [Advice] on Health*, p. 344.

“Many of the people who came to

Christ for help had caused disease to happen to themselves. But Jesus did not refuse to heal them. And when power from Him entered into these people, they felt guilty for their sins. Many of these people were healed not only from their physical sickness but from their spiritual diseases.” —Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Ministry [Work] of Healing*, p. 73.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ❶ Jesus' healing helped lead people to salvation.²² How can your church use the light we have on health and healing as part of its message to the world?
- ❷ As a class, talk about what the Bible says about such things as diet, use of alcohol, rest, and so on. What health principles (rules) on these topics do you find in the Bible? To the best of your knowledge, how has modern science supported these principles? What blessings have members received from following the Bible on these things?
- ❸ As a class, take time to visit any members who are sick or hurting. Bring Bible promises to share with them. What useful things can you do to help them and bring relief to their sufferings?

¹⁸remedies—treatments that cure, heal, or make better.

¹⁹ministry—work done for God.

²⁰reform—a change for the better.

²¹influences—to have power or an effect over persons or things.

²²salvation—God's plan for saving sinners.