

Healthful Lifestyle



SABBATH—MAY 22

READ FOR THIS WEEK’S LESSON: Genesis 9:20–27; Proverbs 20:1; Proverbs 23:31–35; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Peter 1:5–9.

MEMORY VERSE: “Let your moderation¹ be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand [coming soon]” (Philippians 4:5, KJV).

IN 2007, TV ANNOUNCEMENTS WERE FILLED WITH THE SAD NEWS of the unnecessary death of a young woman who died from drinking too much water!

Water? Yes. As part of a radio contest, she drank a lot of water and died later that day. The autopsy² showed that she had drunk too much water. Water is very important for life and is usually harmless. But too much water can be deadly.

This week we study about temperance³ in a world that seems to think that having too much equals success. The example above shows that unhealthy things should be completely avoided. Food, medicine, and good, healthy habits should be used in moderation (with care). In so many cases, people fail to use moderation in their healthful lifestyle.

Let us study what true temperance is about and why the Lord wants us to be temperate (careful with health).

To view and/or download a Hope Channel show on this week’s lesson, visit www.lifesbeat.org.

1. moderation—the practice of not going too far one way or another in doing things; avoiding (staying away from) extremes.

2. autopsy—surgery on dead people to learn why they died.

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

SUNDAY—MAY 23**THE BIBLE'S FIRST DRUNK
(Genesis 9:20–27)**

What would you like your legacy⁴ to be? For example, how would you like to be remembered after your death? That you were rich, popular, or politically⁵ powerful? What are the things that are really important?

All through the Bible, we find characters (people) who have left their gifts after death. Some very good, some very bad, and some a mixed bag.

Consider Noah. Noah may be remembered best as the first and not-so-successful evangelist.⁶ He preached for 120 years and could boast of only a few human converts.⁷ And they were from his own family.

But God's view of Noah was very positive. Among the evil and wickedness of the people before the Flood, "the Lord was pleased with Noah" (Genesis 6:8, NIV).

According to Genesis 6:9, 22 and Genesis 7:1, how did Noah please God? Why?

Noah was faithful and obedient in doing all that God had asked.

But there is another story that was written down for us too. What lessons can we learn from this foolish story in Genesis 9:20–27?

Noah became famous for being the first named drunkard in the Bible. How sad it was for a man who did so much good for the Lord. He had been given so much responsibility (duty). He had been so highly honored by the Lord. But he fell!

The mind is the channel (highway) for most communication.⁸ So it must be kept free from poisons that may cloud reason (thinking) and judgment. Noah's experience is a warning and example for us. Even the "best" among us, even the strongest and most faithful, are not safe from temptation⁹ and sin. Drinking would have been bad enough. But it seemed as if Noah drank way too much. If Noah could fall like that, what about the rest of us?

Do you know a well-respected church leader who has fallen in one way or another? It always hurts when someone we respect falls and disappoints us. How can we learn to give the promises of grace¹⁰ even to those who, like us, really do not deserve it?

4. legacy—something that happened in the past or that comes from someone in the past.

5. politically—having to do with ruling a country or a state; having to do with government.

6. evangelist—a preacher who travels, preaching the gospel (good news about Jesus).

7. converts—new believers; people who have accepted Christ; people who change their religious beliefs.

8. communication—the many ways God speaks to us.

9. temptation—anything that can turn us away from God and that tries to get us to do, think, feel, or say what is wrong.

10. grace—God's gift of forgiveness and mercy (kindness) that He freely gives us to take away our sins.



The mind is a highway for most communication. So it must be kept free from poisons that may cloud thinking and judgment.

MONDAY—MAY 24

ALCOHOL TODAY (Judges 13:2–8)

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, alcohol has been responsible for almost 1.8 million deaths per year. This means 3.2 percent of total deaths worldwide. The amount of alcohol that people drink is rising steadily. Men have four to five drinks each time and women three to four drinks. Alcohol drinking is growing fast among adolescents¹¹ and young adults. This trend shows no sign of slowing down. Alcohol has results that lead to drunkenness, dependence (addiction), and other chemical effects (results) on the body.

What lessons, experiences, and warnings are found in the Bible that warn us against alcohol, according to Judges 13:2–8; Proverbs 20:1; Proverbs 23:31–35; Isaiah 5:11; and Ephesians 5:18?

Interestingly, long before science reported on the negative results of

alcohol on a fetus¹² (fetal alcohol syndrome [FAS]), Samson's mother was warned not to drink alcohol during her pregnancy. Solomon also warns against the results of wine and beer. He also describes how alcohol changes actions, usually making a person feel sorry afterward. Isaiah describes how improperly priests behave when drunk. He repeats the warnings given by the other writers. Paul, too, has words of warning about alcohol.

The Bible describes alcohol drinking as causing undesirable behaviors (actions) and warns against these.

We can be sure that the use of alcohol is one of the devil's greatest traps. How many millions of lives have been ruined over many hundreds of years through use of this dangerous drug? Alcohol is poison to both the body and the mind. How much better for ourselves and our loved ones if we avoided this dangerous trap completely.



Alcohol is a poison to both the body and the mind.

Who does not know people whose lives have been hurt by alcohol? Why take a chance for yourself? This kind of path promises nothing

11. adolescents—young people who are developing (growing) into adults.

12. fetus—a human being (person) or animal in the later stages of development (growth) before it is born.

good, only sorrow and heartache. What steps can you take to make sure that you or your loved ones never start down this dangerous path?

TUESDAY—MAY 25

**“BUT ISN’T [IS NOT] ALCOHOL GOOD FOR THE HEART?”
(1 Corinthians 10:31)**

Since the early 1970s, debate (argument) has been going on about how good wine and alcohol are for heart health. Much has been written and printed about studies done in France on this issue. In recent years, research on the French people and further follow-up have shown much doubt about the whole theory.¹³ Businesses in the alcoholic beverage industry have kept the subject in public view. Many church members are wondering if their health is suffering because they do not drink alcohol on a regular basis.

There is no proof in recent articles that alcohol is good for the health of young people. Many scientific articles have shown that alcohol is not good for the heart health of middle-aged people.

In the studies that supported the use of alcohol, many people who had been alcohol drinkers in the past were included in the control (nondrinking)

groups. Some of these people had stopped drinking because of alcohol-related health problems. These same people in the control groups were in poorer health than the drinkers. A new study was made, correcting these weaknesses in the earlier study design. It showed no improvement to health from moderate drinking, as compared with the nondrinkers. And more information from the study groups showed that those in the moderate drinking group were different in other ways from the control group. They had better diets, exercised regularly, were of a higher income group, and had better health insurance. But the newer study also shows proof that these improvements were not due to moderate drinking but to other lifestyle practices.

How blessed we have been to have a health message that has warned us about the poisons of drinking alcohol. How dangerous it is to try to use a desire for good health as a reason to use alcohol. The dangers of drinking alcohol can include weakened motor skills,¹⁴ fuzzy thinking, poor decision (choice) making, getting into more fights, having more accidents, violence in the home, cirrhosis,¹⁵ cancer, addiction,¹⁶ and even dementia.¹⁷ Even just one measure of alcohol hurts the human¹⁸

13. theory—an idea or set of ideas that is intended (meant) to explain facts or events.

14. motor skills—of or relating to the part of the nervous system (system of nerves in the body) that controls the movement of muscles.

15. cirrhosis—a disease of the liver, often caused by drinking alcohol.

16. addiction—a strong and harmful need to regularly (often) have something, such as a drug, or to do something, such as gamble.

17. dementia—the loss of memory and the ability to think clearly.

18. human—having to do with men, women, or children.

nervous system.¹⁹ It may even start alcohol dependence.²⁰ Most important, alcohol robs us of our ability to make wise judgments and listen to the Holy Spirit's leading. Who has not seen people make fools of themselves through alcohol use?



Even just one measure of alcohol hurts the human nervous system and may even start alcohol dependence.

How could 1 Corinthians 10:31 be used for the topic at hand? How can you take that principle (rule) and use it in your own life? What changes might you need to make to better show what the Bible says here?

WEDNESDAY—MAY 26

TEMPERANCE IN ALL THINGS (2 Peter 1:5–9)

How should the words in 2 Peter 1:5–9 be used in all areas of our

lives, especially our health habits? How can we take this Bible warning and make it a real part of our lives?

Temperance is so much more than not smoking cigarettes, taking illegal (against the law) drugs, drinking alcohol, or even tea, coffee, and soft drinks. And that is because even good things, when taken too much, can cause problems.

What are your work habits? Do you keep reasonable hours? Is there time for God, family, recreation, physical fitness, and service to others?

How much time do you spend sleeping? Or are you working all the time? Or, on the other hand, do you sleep too much? Too much sleep or too little sleep can have negative health effects (results).

What about your diet? Maybe you do not eat pork or even chicken. But are you piling your plate so high with food that you almost cannot get up from the table when done?

We know sunlight is good for us. But too much sunlight can cause cancer. Exercise, too, is important. Many do not get enough, while too much can hurt your body. Even sex, a gift from God, can be used too much, with negative results.

Ellen G. White caught the heart of true temperance with this simple statement: “True temperance teaches us to do away with everything harmful.

19. nervous system—the system of nerves in your body that sends messages for controlling movement and feeling between the brain and other parts of the body.

20. alcohol dependence—the state of being addicted to (a slave to) alcohol.

It also encourages us to make use of what is healthful.”—Adapted from *Patriarchs and Prophets*,²¹ page 562.



Even good things, when taken too much, can cause problems.

Think about all the areas of your life. How temperate are you? In what areas do you need to change? Might you even now be suffering some negative results from wrong practices? Why not try to get some help in making needed changes?

THURSDAY—MAY 27

BOUGHT WITH A PRICE (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20)

How has the intemperance (no self-control) of others hurt you or someone you know? Or, even more to the point, how might your harmful actions hurt others?

The Bible says the body is a home. This home is the place for our thoughts, plans, and actions. But our bodies also are temples (houses) of God. What a responsibility for us! Sometimes we take better care of the houses we live in than we do our own bodies.

21. patriarchs and prophets—patriarchs were leaders of God’s people in early Bible times, such as Abraham and Isaac, or other leaders of Israel, such as Moses; prophets are men or women who are given messages by God to give to His people.

22. salvation—God’s plan for saving sinners from eternal (without end) death; the gift of eternal life; being saved.

Why should we take care of our bodies? What theme (idea; topic) comes from John 2:19–21 and 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 that answers this important question for us? Why do these verses make sense only if God created us, and not if we are here by accident?

Jesus spoke of His own body as a temple. Paul focuses on this theme often. He also explains it further by pointing out that we do not belong to ourselves. “You do not belong to yourselves. Christ has paid the price for you. So use your bodies in a way that honors God” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, NIV).

What a price was paid for our salvation!²² Only the Cross and what happened there helps us to begin to understand our value and our worth before God. This thought alone should help us understand the holy responsibility we have to take care of ourselves, not just our spirits but our bodies too.

God emptied heaven and let the blood of Jesus be spilled for our salvation. We do not belong to ourselves. We have been purchased with a price and belong to God and owe Him our all. This includes faithful stewardship (management) in the use of our bodies.

Think more about the Cross and what Jesus did for us. Why should that encourage us in all that we do? Do you truly believe that Christ, the

Lord, died for your sins so that you can have the promise of eternal (forever; without end) life? If so, should that not take front and center in your life? How should this wonderful truth encourage you to take better care of your body temple?

FRIDAY—MAY 28

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Read Ellen G. White, “Helping the Tempted,” pages 161–169, and “Working for the Intemperate,” pages 171–182, in *The Ministry [Work Done for God] of Healing*.

Being overweight is a growing problem in many parts of the world. But overeating is encouraged and accepted. Type 2 diabetes²³ is becoming more of a problem because of poor diet, being overweight, and lack of exercise. It even happens to teenagers. Overuse of Internet activities and pornography²⁴ has encouraged unthinkable cases of violence and sexual abuse. Tobacco continues to be the largest single cause of deaths throughout the world—over 5 million per year. There are warnings on the cigarette boxes. But many people do not follow them. Information is not preventive²⁵ if we do not act on it.

“There are few who fully understand how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their character,²⁶ their usefulness in this world, and their eternal future. The

love for food should ever be under the control of the mind which knows right from wrong. The body should be servant to the mind, and not the mind to the body.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance*, page 398.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① Read again this quote taken from above: “There are few who fully understand how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their character, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal future.” What does this mean to you in your daily life?
- ② How does the society²⁷ in which you live influence²⁸ attitudes (feelings) toward temperance? Does it encourage temperance? Or does it encourage thinking that makes temperance seem old fashioned? Why is it important to know of these influences. If needed, how can you learn to help others, especially the young, believe in them?
- ③ If possible, have a health expert speak in class about the right balance of things like diet, exercise, sleep, and sunlight.
- ④ Some people seem to think that if a little is good for you, then a lot must be even better. For example, if a little salt is good for the body, then a lot must be even better for it. What is wrong with that kind of thinking?

23. diabetes—a serious disease in which the body cannot properly control the amount of sugar in the blood because it does not have enough insulin (a substance that the body makes and uses to turn sugar into energy).

24. pornography—movies, pictures, magazines, and other things that show or describe naked people or sex in a very open and direct way in order to cause sexual excitement.

25. preventive—when something is used to stop something bad from happening.

26. character—who someone is; all that a person does, feels, and thinks are what he or she is made of.

27. society—people living together as a group, or forming a group, with the same way of life.

28. influence—the power to affect or change persons or things.