



# Truth For These Times



## 23. HOW TO ENJOY VIBRANT HEALTH

To some it seems strange that the health of the body should have anything to do with Christian practise; but it is not so strange when we consider the close relationship of the mind and the body. The brain is in fact a physical organ, and whatever affects the health of the body, must have some effect on the mind. God communicates with us through the Spirit by impressing His truths upon the mind. If the mind is dull through sickness or unhealthy living, then God's avenue of communication is hampered, and our spiritual growth may be dwarfed.

3 John 2                      Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and **BE IN HEALTH**, just as your soul prospers.

John wished his friends good health in body and soul – the two are closely related. It is God's desire that we enjoy health. Some do not because of inherited weaknesses and others because of disobedience to the laws of their being; but if all follow health principles, each individual can enjoy the best possible personal health.

1 Corinthians 6:19,20 Or do you not know that **YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT** *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

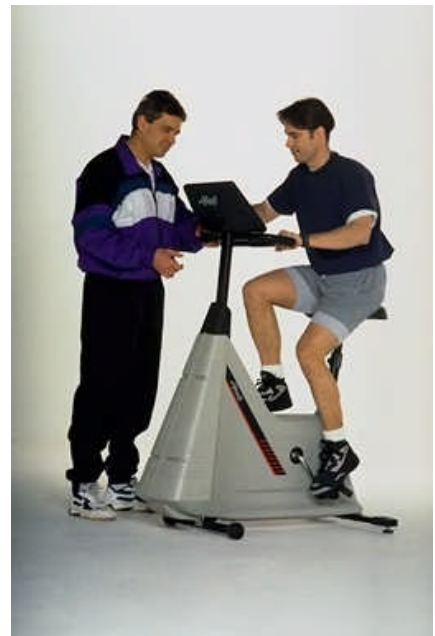
Some feel they have a right to do as they please with their own lives. But the fact is we do not belong to ourselves, but to God, first of all because of creation, secondly because of redemption. When we consider our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, this places us under obligation to care for our bodies.

1 Corinthians 3:16        Do you not know that **YOU ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD** and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

The condition of the human life is clear – it should be the dwelling place of the Spirit.

There are eight main rules to follow to enjoy good health. They are as follows:

1. Fresh Air:                It is good to breathe deeply in the open air.
2. Sunshine:                We do not need more than several minutes a day, but it is vital.
3. Water:                    This is needed on the inside – about six glasses a day between meals. And on the outside – bathing or showering regularly.



4. Exercise: This very important feature of healthy living is often neglected, which can result in contracting varying diseases. Brisk walking daily for at least 20 minutes is one of the best exercises.
5. Rest: It is equally important to get adequate rest. The batteries need to be recharged.
6. Temperance: True temperance is moderation in what is good, and total abstinence in what is harmful.
7. Diet: Correct eating is vital. We are what we eat.
8. Trust in God: Most sicknesses originate in a disturbed mind. The relationship between a troubled mind and a diseased body is very real. When we trust God we experience peace of mind.



Genesis 1:29 And God said, “See, I have given you EVERY HERB *THAT YIELDS SEED* which *is* on the face of all the earth, and EVERY TREE WHOSE FRUIT yields seed; to you it shall be for food.”

Genesis 3:18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall EAT THE HERB OF THE FIELD.

After the first humans sinned, the “herb of the field”, or vegetables, was added to their diet perhaps because of their cleansing properties now needed because of the effect of sin on the human body.

Genesis 9:3,4 EVERY MOVING THING THAT LIVES SHALL BE FOOD FOR YOU. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *THAT IS, ITS BLOOD*.



After the flood, vegetation and food was scarce, so God permitted people to eat flesh, with one stipulation – the blood must first be drained. To suggest anything that lives is good for food, is not what is intended here, for Noah knew the difference between clean and unclean animals. For instance, to eat some fish will cause death. There was a limit on what could be eaten.

Genesis 7:2 You shall take with you seven each of every CLEAN ANIMAL, a male and his female; two each of ANIMALS *THAT ARE UNCLEAR*, a male and his female.

Noah was well aware of the clean and unclean animals. After humans started eating meat, it is interesting to see the decreased life span which eventuated. The first ten patriarchs lived approximately 900 years each, but after the flood the age span gradually fell, until Abraham, the tenth after the flood, lived 175 years.

Deuteronomy 14:3-8 You shall not eat any detestable thing. **THESE ARE THE ANIMALS WHICH YOU MAY EAT:** the ox, the sheep, the goat, the deer, the gazelle, the roe deer, the wild goat, the mountain goat, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. And you may eat every animal with cloven hooves, having the hoof split into two parts, *and that* chews the cud, among the animals. **NEVERTHELESS**, of those that chew the cud or have cloven hooves, **YOU SHALL NOT EAT, SUCH AS THESE:** the camel, the hare, and the rock hyrax; for they chew the cud but do not have cloven hooves; they *are* unclean for you.



Pigs are unclean animals.

A clean animal must both chew the cud and have a split hoof. Cows, sheep, deer, goats, etc, are classed as clean because they chew the cud and have a split hoof. The rabbit, pig etc, are classed as unclean. In Isaiah 66:17 God says that eating of swine's flesh is an abomination.

Of course it is not a sin to eat meat, but because God made humans to be vegetarian, this must be the diet God intended them to follow; therefore it appears the most healthy. Our teeth and digestive system parallel herbivorous animals. Some feel that one would suffer bad health if meat was eliminated from the diet, but the opposite is more likely to be true. Meat contains many waste substances which the body must deal with in the digestive process. Also in our world today meat is often diseased, which makes eating it a health risk. There are a number of animal diseases which can be transmitted to man. According to some nutritionists, a lacto (milk and milk products) ovo (eggs) vegetarian diet is nutritionally sound. Other nutritionists have found a vegetarian diet without milk and eggs is even better. Individuals must make their own choice. Modern science has discovered that a plant diet can eliminate many degenerative diseases. On average vegetarians are known to live longer than those who choose a flesh diet.



Sharks are unclean because they have no scales.

Deuteronomy 14:9,10 These you may eat of all that *are* in the waters: **YOU MAY EAT ALL THAT HAVE FINS AND SCALES.** And whatever does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it *is* unclean for you.

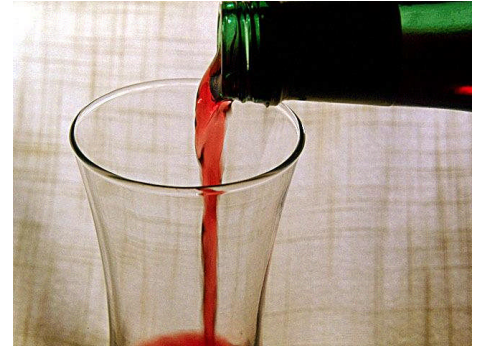
The only foods to be eaten from the sea are fish with both fins and scales. This eliminates shellfish, crabs, lobsters etc.

Deuteronomy 14:11-20 All clean birds you may eat. But these you shall not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, the stork, the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe and the bat. Also every creeping thing that flies is unclean for you; they shall not be eaten. **YOU MAY EAT ALL CLEAN BIRDS.**

Here is a long list. The birds allowed for food seem to be limited to fowl, turkey, duck, goose and dove.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Therefore, whether you **EAT OR DRINK**, or whatever you do, **DO ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD.**

It is not what goes in the mouth, but what comes out of the mouth that defiles a person. Sinful actions and words condemn us. Nevertheless the type of food we use can have a definite affect upon the temperament. For example, take alcoholic beverages – these can cause unworthy behaviour. We cannot glorify God when we partake of such things.



Proverbs 20:1      *WINE IS A MOCKER*, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.

Those who partake of alcoholic beverages are most unwise.

Proverbs 23:29-32      Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. **DO NOT LOOK ON THE WINE WHEN IT IS RED**, when it sparkles in the cup, *when* it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper.

The message here is that when the wine has become alcoholic – keep away from it. The results are disastrous - physically, socially and spiritually – not to mention the effect on home and family.

Habakkuk 2:15      **WOE TO HIM WHO GIVES DRINK TO HIS NEIGHBOR**, pressing *him* to your bottle, even to make *him* drunk, that you may look on his nakedness!

God is not only against the drinking of strong drink, He opposes those who make it available to others who act like drug pushers.

1 Timothy 5:23      No longer drink only water, but **USE A LITTLE WINE** for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.



Fruits, vegetables, grains and nuts form the basis of the best diet.

Many use this verse as an excuse to drink alcoholic liquors. Notice first of all that it is suggested for medicinal purposes, and not for pleasure. Those who use this text as an excuse, usually do not need such medicine. The second point is that it is a gross assumption to suggest that this wine is alcoholic. Unfermented grape juice is called wine in the Bible. Only the context helps us differentiate between the two. It seems most unlikely God would condemn alcohol so strongly in the Old Testament, and condone it in the New Testament. The fact is; the water in many of these countries was not good for drinking. The same situation exists today. Therefore it was safer for Timothy to drink grape juice rather than water.

## **TEA AND COFFEE**

Although tea and coffee are not mentioned in the Bible, the principle still applies. Tea and coffee contain no substantial nourishment, but a drug is present – caffeine. Some drink green tea for its antioxidant properties but there are healthier ways to obtain these same antioxidants. Caffeine is a stimulant, and is detrimental to the nervous system. We cannot glorify God in what we drink while we partake knowingly of this drug. The same principle applies for all drugs unless they are used medicinally.

## **SMOKING and ILLEGAL DRUGS**

The Bible does not refer to smoking, simply because it was not practiced then. Again the principle applies. One who smokes tobacco, defiles the body, because cigarettes contain many poisons and the drug nicotine, which stimulates then paralyzes the nervous system. Like most drugs, it is addictive. There is no justification for this practise. There is no food value in tobacco. All harmful drugs defile the body temple. The medical world of today tell us that nothing is more detrimental to health than cigarette smoking.

1 Corinthians 3:17    **IF ANYONE DEFILES THE TEMPLE OF GOD, GOD WILL DESTROY HIM. For the temple of God is holy, WHICH *TEMPLE* YOU ARE.**

God's message is clear. If we knowingly defile our bodies we bring condemnation to ourselves. We have the solemn responsibility of eating, drinking, acting and worshipping in a way that will bring glory to the name of God. The Christian therefore, has an obligation to care for the human body. Dear friend, will you determine this day that whatever you eat or drink, or whatever you do, you will do all to the glory of God?

## Review Sheet – Healthy Living

Assignment: Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

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1. What physical benefit did John wish for the followers of Christ? 3 John 2  
That you may prosper in all things and \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. How sacred is the body as far as God is concerned? 1 Corinthians 6:19,20  
Do you not know that \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. What are the eight main rules to follow for good health?
    1. \_\_\_\_\_
    2. \_\_\_\_\_,
    3. \_\_\_\_\_
    4. \_\_\_\_\_,
    5. \_\_\_\_\_
    6. \_\_\_\_\_,
    7. \_\_\_\_\_
    8. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. How does the Bible describe man's original diet of fruits, nuts and grains? Genesis 1:29  
I have given you \_\_\_\_\_ and every tree \_\_\_\_\_.
  5. After man sinned, how does the Bible describe the addition of vegetables to man's diet? Genesis 3:18  
And you shall eat \_\_\_\_\_.
  6. After the flood destroyed most vegetation, what was man permitted to eat? Genesis 9:3,4  
Every moving thing \_\_\_\_\_.
  7. What are the clean animals God allows to be eaten? Deuteronomy 14:3-8  
Every animal with \_\_\_\_\_ ... and that chews \_\_\_\_\_.
  8. What fish does God permit man to eat? Deuteronomy 14:9,10  
You may eat all that have \_\_\_\_\_.
  9. What birds are permitted for food? Deuteronomy 14:11-20  
You may eat \_\_\_\_\_.
  10. What warning is given in the Bible concerning alcoholic drinks? Proverbs 20:1  
Wine \_\_\_\_\_.
  11. What warning does the Bible give to those who make alcohol available to others? Habakkuk 2:15  
Woe to him \_\_\_\_\_, Even to \_\_\_\_\_.
  12. How serious does God regard the defiling of one's own body? 1 Corinthians 3:17  
If anyone \_\_\_\_\_.
- Is it your determination to eat, drink, and act to the glory of God? \_\_\_\_\_.