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# HEALTH & LIFESTYLE MANAGEMENT

taking care of God's amazing gift

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**A Bible Study**

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## INTRODUCTION

No one likes pain. We all want to be rid of it as soon as possible, in whatever way we can. But physical pain is there for a reason, telling us there is something wrong and needs fixing. Pain is not only physical but emotional, relational, societal and spiritual. Pain causes us to focus and therefore move away from danger.

Whether we experience pain, stress or difficulty in sleeping, these symptoms can often be a warning sign. These situations remind us that our bodies are as sophisticated as a car. If we care properly for the engine — having regular tune ups, using the right fuel — our car operates reliably, just like our bodies. God gave us an amazing gift. Our body is a collection of marvellous functions with boundless capabilities. **Read Psalm 139:14.**

God designed our bodies to weather rough terrain but not without cooperation from us. Just as our body is ours, so is the responsibility to manage our health and lifestyle.

We all have health — good health, or poor health — it is something we can't avoid having. Today "health" addresses not only the physical but also the psychological and spiritual. Life is interrelated and tied to health. A human being is an integration of body, mind and spirit. When Jesus met people, He talked to them, healed them, urged them and invited them. He viewed the individual as a whole person. Besides healing a person whose body showed signs of physical illness, Jesus reached out to the brokenness and sorrow in a person's life. **Read Matthew 4:23.**

## PART ONE

### Why do we struggle with our health?

#### 1. List some reasons why we struggle with our health?

We are frail creatures, subject to all the fears and frailties of the flesh; not least of which is disease. We go on our merry way, taking our health for granted, often forgetting to thank the Giver of Life, our Lord Jesus Christ. Only when we are unwell, troubled or facing a terminal illness do we begin raising questions. Why this illness? Is suffering the outcome of my sin? Have I lost all favour with God? Where does illness come from?

#### 2. Our ill health may be a consequence of our own sin. List some examples.

One remembers the words of the Lord to the man who was healed after lying at the Pool of Bethesda for thirty-eight years.

3. **Read John 5:14-15** Was there some relationship between sickness and sin indicated in the reaction of our Lord to the paralytic man?

## **PART TWO**

### **Caring for God's temple, "*the body*"**

#### **4. Read Mark 2:5**

Often we jump to the conclusion that sickness is always a result of some specific sin. We infer that disease arises because of disobedience to God. The disciples were just like us when they inquired about the man born blind.

#### **5. What inferences did the disciples make in John 9:1-3?**

The ill-health we suffer may not be because of lifestyle. An example of this is Job, a highly respected and upright man, who experienced a devastating disease.

#### **6. Read Job 1:8 and Job 2: 6-7.**

We hesitate to say that God causes ill health yet we still face the perplexing question: Why does God permit it?

In illness and disease we must seek God's wisdom. If our sickness is the result of our own sin, we are to repent, change our ways and commit our days to the Lord. On the other hand if Satan is the source, he must be resisted.

#### **7. What does scripture tell us in Psalm 31:15?**

#### **1. List some ways we can care for our bodies.**

Paul reminds us that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is not our own to do with as we please. We belong to God. Surely, if our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, we should strive to keep the temple as clean and well as possible.

#### **2. Read 1 Corinthians 6: 19-20.**

St. Paul gives us another reminder of what we are.

#### **3. Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17. What responsibility do we have?**

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## **PART THREE**

### **Strength for our weariness: “*the body and the mind*”**

- 1. What is the role of “confession and absolution” in renewing our minds?**
- 2. What promise does the Lord give when our bodies are tired and weary? Read Isaiah 40:29-31 and Philippians 4:13.**
- 3. What else does God promise? Read Isaiah 46:3-4.**

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle includes taking care of oneself. When work pressures are constant or when we are physically spent; we may need to do as Jesus did. **Read Mark 6:30-32.** Although Jesus was busy teaching and healing the people who came to Him He did not use His busyness as an excuse for not taking care of himself. He made time to get away to rest.

## **PART FOUR**

### **Renewing “*the Spirit*”**

We need quiet time to renew our spirit. We need to slow down, listen to God and to what is going on within ourselves. Through Christ’s life, death and resurrection we have been rescued from sin, death and hell. He has given us the gift of life. We are called to be wise stewards of this amazing gift.

We need to grow spiritually, but sometimes God uses illness to make that growth possible. Illness is a time to draw near to God and an opportunity for our faith to grow. Faith is trusting in God and knowing that He will keep His promises.

When we are troubled in mind, body and spirit we need to remember His promise.

- 1. Read Psalm 145:18.**

We do not need to be afraid to bring our problems to the Lord because we are encouraged to do so.

- 2. Read Hebrews 4:16.**

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus related to many people. He forgave sins, calmed those troubled in heart and mind and cured the sick. A personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the foundation of life and health, therefore let God speak to our hearts.

## PART FIVE

### God's promise to us

## CLOSING

(May be sung or used as a closing prayer.)

#### 1. What is God's promise to us? Read Philippians 4:19 and Psalm 46:1

When everything is coming apart and we feel our lives coming unglued, remember that the Lord is never far from us, even in troubled times.

#### 2. What did David do? Read Psalm 31:14-15.

As Christians we are called to take care of ourselves and to relate to others in ways that help them to be healthy and whole in body, mind and spirit. God gave us these amazing gifts. Keeping them healthy is an ongoing process. We need to use the right food, water, rest and exercise. When we do a better job of managing our lifestyle in harmony with God's design, we will work better, run better, feel better, heal better and live better. We will be healthy.

#### A Hymn of Health and Healing for God's People "CHRIST BE OUR SEED"

God prints the name of Christ upon the spirit.  
God leads the walk through hills and ocean sand.  
God wills each one a heritage of riches  
And holds all life inside a healing hand.

God is the source of daily health and healing.  
All medicines of life that make us well.  
God is the fountain of all our thanksgiving,  
Good words of grace we hear, believe we tell.

God knows the heart, the reasons we are crying,  
God knows the mind, each feeling, new inside.  
God knows old dreams, new things we want tomorrow  
God knows the fear a silent soul will hide.

God sends the light to wake the birth of seeding,  
And gives old death an Easter day to rise,  
God sends the rain, the seasons, then the harvest,  
While tunes of glory fill all earth and skies.

Christ be our seed, to grow what God has given;  
We do our work, as work in Jesus' name.  
We lift our hope, our want, our need before Thee.  
You healed us then; heal, heal us once again.

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