



Good Health Is a Choice Learn How to Choose it

A Production of God's Healing Word
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Introduction: Lesson One

Lesson One Topics:

- A. Eating as an act of love
- B. The big disconnect
- C. Why the world is not attracted to the Church
- D. Why modern man suffers declining health
- E. Why modern medicine fails (one disease, two causes)

A. Eating as an Act of Love

Eating for many people is an egocentric act. That is, they eat with only one thing in mind: To satisfy their hunger, a craving unto themselves. It doesn't matter what it is they eat so long as it tastes good. There is no sense of thanks giving or gratitude expressed, only a gluttonous, solitary rush to fill up.

People who eat like this are reminiscent of pigs eating acorns under a tree. Pigs never look up to acknowledge the tree that provides the acorns. They only know there is food and lots of it. This pig analogy is a reflection of the carnal world and how it thinks and acts. Self-gratification rules the day.

Eating, of course, is a necessity and eating great tasting food is a joy. There is no malcontent in either by itself. But carnal, worldly-minded people go to the extreme and turn them both into a lifestyle that is slowly killing them.

In *Health is a Choice*, you will learn the act of eating and the kinds of food you eat should be an act of love expressed toward God, rather than a gluttonous journey in self-delight. You will learn that food is directly related to your health and wellbeing. You will learn health is a choice you alone make, and most importantly...you will learn how to make the right choices.

B. The Big Disconnect

Theme: a large disconnect exists between how we think and treat our physical body as it relates to the Lord, Jesus Christ's body.

A lot of well-informed people in professional health fields have had much to say about living a healthy life. Bookstore shelves are lined with books on the subject. And certainly there is a large market of willing customers to buy those books. That got me thinking.

The Christian community and churches, while strong on salvation, morality and Christian ethics, have had little to say about living a life of health for God. While it's true that some churches offer various kinds of health-oriented classes, the emphasis and motivation is most often on health for the sake of one's own health and benefit, not for God. And after doing several word searches on the Internet, I found few references on the subject.

While there are several reasons for this phenomenon, I strongly believe the primary reason lies with Church doctrines and the understanding of what is or isn't spiritual. The general concept of that understanding goes something like this: One looks to the Church for salvation, and to the world for diet, health and healing. In other words, a large disconnect exists between how we think and treat our physical body as it relates to the Lord, Jesus Christ's body.

This also explains why so few churches embrace health classes, healing ministries, or believe in divine healing today. However, a very important spiritual truth is being overlooked in the process.

Ephesians 5:30 states: "...we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Heritage Bible)

I Corinthians 6:19 states: “ Do you not absolutely see that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, which body you have from God, and you are absolutely not your own.” (Heritage Bible)

Romans 12:1 says: Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship. (NIV)

I believe some missing links in our walk with God include:

- Our lack of understanding of whom our body belongs to.
- How one’s eating habit, diet and lifestyle is directly related to living a life of sacrifice.
- Our lack of awareness of the spiritual message our health (or lack of it) sends to those around us.
- Our lack of understanding that a large percentage of our health is directly related to the quality and quantity of food we eat.
- Our lack of knowledge that God provides for every need.

Look in any Church and you will find that Christians eat the same junk foods, drink the same soft drinks, get just as obese, come down with the same diseases and are treated by doctors trained in the same medicine, take the same drugs and often die from complications following the same medications and treatment. This state of health in the Christian community confirms our thesis stated above and speaks volumes about the Christian community at large.

That we as a community of believers overlook the importance of living for God in body is deeply disturbing. I am speaking about our eating and lifestyle habits that are precursors to the majority of degenerative diseases in our culture. If our body is a temple of God, then the quality and kinds of food that we put into that temple should be very important to us.

We should also be aware that God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). But we are not aware of “all” these things, and so we suffer.

Speaking spiritually, if we are willing to eat any and everything placed before us, and many do, I believe we are communicating the wrong message to the world and

one another. And as for those Christians who do eat healthy foods and exercise to stay fit for the sole purpose of increasing longevity, they too are missing the mark.

There is something more important than longevity: It is knowing God and doing His will. We need to live for God, not for longevity.

I believe God's perfect will is not that He heal the sick, but rather that we never get sick. I believe because our body is a temple of God, we should make every effort to remain healthy throughout our lives. In fact, our first priority as Christians should be to ourselves to live a life of health. This should be consciously and purposely pursued as a sacrifice and service to God. Only then can God be glorified in our body (Being a member of His fleshly Body).

Does that make sense to you? It does to me. A healthy, physical body glorifies God, but a diseased, or unhealthy body does not glorify God.

The purpose in offering this class is to help you grow spiritually in the Lord. The end result is intended not just to offer you better health, but to help you develop a closer relationship with God...To know Him. I want you to understand how wonderfully you were created and the love behind all that God provides for your well-being.

C. Why the World is Not Attracted to the Church

Theme: The lack of distinction between the world and the Church today is a hindrance to the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

When you compare the growth and spread of Christianity in the first century with Christianity today, it becomes abundantly clear the Church today is missing a vital, physical mark the early Church enjoyed that attracted the masses. That vital mark was/is following God's food laws and healing the sick.

During Jesus' ministry on earth he did two things: He preached the kingdom of God and healed the sick. As word spread, vast numbers of sick people flocked to Him for healing (Mark 3:8-10). Jesus taught His disciples to do the same (Mark 6:12-13). The early Church followed this same pattern (I Corinthians 12:28).

Doctrine aside for the moment, what distinguishes your Church from the world? The lack of distinction between the world and the Church today is a hindrance to the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The world outside looking in sees no visible difference between the Church and the rest of the world. This is why Christian Churches struggle to grow. Certainly the harvest fields remain ripe.

Whether you believe in spiritual healing or not, it is important to understand that healing the sick and following God's food laws is what separated the early Church from what the world could offer people. In other words, the early Church had something found nowhere else: Physical and spiritual healing! The Church grew rapidly because word spread that people were being healed by faith in the name of Jesus Christ. They learned good health could be attained by keeping God's food laws.

Put yourself in the shoes of someone desperately ill. The medical world hasn't healed you of your sickness. If anything, they have only complicated matters. Your medical treatments have created new health concerns, and the cost of your monthly medicine is as large as your house payment. What would you do if you heard of a Church that actually heals people of sickness and taught them how to remain healthy? I mean they're in the newspapers and people are talking about it on local radio shows. People everywhere are talking to loved ones and neighbors about it: The talk is all over town. Would you ignore all the hub-hub, or would you investigate? I think we all know what any of us would do. We would make a beeline to that Church.

Now when I say healing the sick, I don't mean that's all the early Church offered (read Acts 2:42-47). You see, when a Church has the faith and mind to heal the sick; all those other things (caring for others, teaching them how to live a healthy life) come naturally.

Just as the number one issue facing the 1st century world was sickness, so it is today. However, we live spiritually disconnected from physical healing, so we cannot see the problem of sickness and disease for what it is. We do not understand or believe that Jesus suffered in body to overpower sickness and disease, just as His blood was spilled to overpower death (Isaiah 53:4-5)

Side note: There can be no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22). Jesus shed His blood so forgiveness of sin could be made possible through faith. He suffered in body so we may be

physically healed through that same faith. That we do not consider His body is why we do not heal and die before our appointed time (I Corinthians 11:29-30).

Nothing in the New Testament diminishes this truth. Nowhere can you read in the Bible that healing the sick was strictly a first century Christian phenomenon. Why else are we admonished to pray and anoint the sick with oil in the name of the Lord? To heal them of sickness! (James 5:14-15).

We are all familiar with “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead” (James 2:26). We apply this verse to many things, but have you ever considered that healing the sick is also a deed? Is it not a work of faith as well? Read James 5:15. Yet we shun this most holy work. Why?

The real reason most churches do not heal the sick is Church leaders are fearful. They are afraid of what leaders in other churches of the same tradition may think or say about them should they walk out of step. They operate by fear and intimidation. In other words, they walk in step with the world carnally, instead of being led spiritually by the Spirit of God in faith.

Isn't this how the world operates, through fear and intimidation? It is, and this is the number one reason why the world looking in sees no difference between the Church and the rest of the world. Healing the sick and living a life of health are two tangible proofs God offers to the world found nowhere else. And what do we do with them? We shun them!

D. Why modern man suffers declining health

The last 100 years of human development has brought many changes, perhaps none more challenging than in the area of our health. Of the many things that can impact human health, none are greater than food and medicine. So let's look at these two in more detail, and see how they have changed. Let's look at food first.

The majority of people today have no idea where their food comes from, and this is because the United States as a whole has moved away from the traditional farming practices that our ancestors thrived on, and turned to mega-farming factories instead.

A hundred years ago...

- Our great grandparents ate seasonal food, food grown locally.
- The average diet consisted of fresh and dried fruits, fresh and dried vegetables, wild grain and seeds, fish, raw, un-pasteurized dairy products and meat from wild animals or locally grown livestock. The shelf life of most of these products was measured in days, weeks and months.
- The term “organic” was unknown, as all food was organic and people didn’t think about it like we do today.
- Farmers grew diverse crops and replenished the soil with what came out of it.
- Farmers let land lie fallow so the land could rebuild itself with life-giving nutrients before replanting.
- Farmers saved seed from each crop for next year’s planting.
- Animals were free range and fed on grass in pastures. Their waste helped those pastures grow.
- Ground or chopped beef consisted of meat from one cow.
- Meat and vegetables were preserved naturally.

Times have changed. Today...

- Produce and meat is shipped around the world. Food previously out of season can be bought in mega-grocery stores year-round.
- The average diet consists of highly refined, processed meats, fruits and vegetables, whose shelf life is measured in months and years.
- Dairy products are pasteurized and ultra pasteurized.
- The term “organic” refers to a specialty food.
- Single crop, large-scale farming operations that depend on chemical herbicides and pesticides, have replaced small, family owned farms.
- The land is fertilized with three inorganic chemicals, phosphorus, potassium and nitrogen, forsaking all other vital soil elements.
- Land is not allowed to lie fallow.
- Farmers buy genetically modified seed resistant to Round-up pesticide. This means Round-up pesticide can be sprayed on crops to kill weeds without harming the crop.
- Animals are crammed and fed in feedlots. They are given antibiotics and hormones to keep them from becoming sick and to make them grow as fast as possible.
- Ground or chopped beef contains the meat from as many as 50 cattle.

- Fresh, canned and frozen food is radiated and preserved using chemicals.

The net result of these agricultural and food changes has brought on a whole host of new diseases not known a hundred years ago. And every year new diseases are being diagnosed and named. The reason most of these diseases exist is due to our culture and diet. The very food we depend on to live has changed and is slowly killing us.

Unhealthy Food Additives:

Food producers have one thing in mind: To increase profits! One way they increase profits is by making food products taste good. By doing so they hope you will become a steady customer of their products. But if you buy food without reading the ingredient list, if you are not familiar with each ingredient, your long-term health may be in jeopardy.

90% of all food found at your local grocer contains ingredients not fit for human consumption. These ingredients include monosodium glutamate (MSG), high fructose corn syrup, artificial sweeteners, trans fats, and nitrates to name just a few.

By enrolling in the Health is a Choice program; you will learn to become a food savvy consumer. You'll learn how to read food labels, what to look for and what to avoid. There are plenty of healthy foods in the market. The trick is knowing how to spot them.

Allopathic Medicine

Allopathic medicine (the medical model of the American Medical Association), treats symptoms, instead of identifying and treating the root cause of the disease. Under this system of medicine, if you display no symptoms, you are healthy. You could feel lousy, but if the doctor cannot diagnose a symptom, you cannot be sick by their definition. The absence of symptoms is how allopathic medicine defines health. But do the lack of symptoms always mean you are healthy? No, of course not. Health is much more complicated than the absence of symptoms.

Allopathic medicine believes many diseases exist, and, it has many complicated treatments do deal with each one. In the Health is a Choice program; you will

learn there is but one disease with two causes. If you can prevent those two causes you can live a long life free of disease.

Pharmaceutical Drugs

From the beginning of time, mankind relied on plants for medicine when faced with sickness. Today pharmaceutical drugs have replaced plants as our medicine. But much more than this, allopathic medicine is wholly controlled and/or under the control and influence of the pharmaceutical industry. This means when you go to a clinic, whatever medicine is offered will be a drug in some form. So what's the big deal you ask?

All pharmaceutical drugs are poisonous to the human body and often fatal. Our body simply is not designed to digest and handle them. Further, God condemns continual drug use, calling it a sin of the flesh (Galatians 5:19ff). The term sorcery or witchcraft found in that verse and Revelations 18:23 is pharmakeia, meaning drugs from a pharmacy. The reason the continual use of drugs is a sin is that they create a false reality and the worship of a false god (Idolatry).

The Health is a Choice program will teach you trustworthy alternatives to pharmaceutical drugs. But more than that, you will learn to place trust in God's Word and His promises more than you do the world.

Lack of Faith in God

There are two kinds of Christians, carnal and spiritual (I Corinthians 2:14-3:4) Carnal Christians pick and choose what they want to believe from God's Word, the Bible. They are worldly in how they live their lives. When they become sick, God is the last person they call on, and then only as a last resort. They may be faithful in Church attendance, but are unfaithful in trusting God as their healer (Exodus 15:26; Psalm 103:2-3)

God tells us His people are destroyed from lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). If you want your faith to grow in the knowledge of God, the Health is a Choice program makes a good starting point. You will learn scripture and make practical application of God's Word in you life.

E. Why Modern Medicine Fails (one disease, two causes)

Let's begin with what should be obvious but for many people is not. God did not create your body to succumb to sickness. He created your body with the ability to ward off disease. He further incorporated into the plant kingdom, every element needed to sustain your health. In other words, good health is not a matter of chance, it is your birthright.

Modern medicine believes hundreds upon hundreds of diseases exist, each with a different cause. It also treats body parts or body systems as though they are unrelated to one another. This in turn has led to a system of medicine called allopathic medicine; so complex it knows only to suppress symptoms.

Allopathic medicine is the form of medicine taught by the American Medical Association (AMA). Allopathic medicine is practiced in most medical clinics, hospitals and the majority of physicians in the USA. It's important you understand: Allopathic physicians are trained only to diagnose and suppress disease symptoms, not to heal.

You can feel sick, but if an allopathic physician cannot diagnose any symptoms you are (by allopathic standards) not sick. You are not sick until symptoms can be diagnosed. So, let's say you get migraine headaches. By AMA standards, you do not get migraine headaches until you can be diagnosed to have migraine headaches. Once a diagnosis is made, the doctor will then declare you get migraine headaches and then treat the diagnosed symptoms.

By suppressing symptoms instead of addressing the root cause of those symptoms, allopathic medicine has fostered a pandemic of chronic illness. Go figure. It's important you realize modern medicine has no one single treatment or plan of prevention for life-long health. In our so-called "health system," long-term health is but an illusion.

From God's perspective of the human body, there is only one disease and two causes. That one disease is cell malfunction. Deficiency and toxicity are the two causes of cell malfunction. Let me explain.

Your body was created in such a way that it knows how to care for itself, provided it has what it needs to do so. The human body is composed of trillions of cells. If all your cells remain healthy, you cannot come down with a disease. It's only

when your cells become malnourished or are damaged or poisoned that they stop working as God intended them to work. This holds true no matter your age.

A malnourished cell is a cell that malfunctions. That is to say, it will replicate the malfunction rather than replicate a normal cell. The only way a cell can malfunction is if it suffers from lack of nutrition (a deficiency), toxic damage (toxicity) or both. Cells can be damaged by injury, of course, but injuries by themselves do not cause cell malfunction.

Again, if all your cells are healthy, you cannot be sick. But if a deficiency develops or toxins are present, cells will begin to malfunction. When cells are no longer able to perform their assigned tasks (because they have malfunctioned), health problems begin. When the malfunction occurs in a large enough number of cells to affect the body's ability to repair itself, disease occurs.

Dr. Roger Williams, one of the great bio chemists of the twentieth century, wrote, *"Body cells in general die for two reasons: First because they do not get everything they need; second, because they get poisoned by something they decidedly do not need."*

Genetic inheritance and infections by microorganisms may trigger cell malfunction, but they do so by causing deficiencies or toxicities. Deficiency and toxicity are always the two common denominators of disease.

Health is a constant struggle

No one can live his or her entire life in perfect health. That's because the body is under constant attack. Think of sickness and health as being two sides of a scale. As we go through life, either side can become weighted so as to make us either sick or healthy. The goal is to keep the health side weighted down.

There are six weights you can use to place on that scale. Which side of the scale those weights are placed on determines which side will be the heaviest - the sick side or the healthy side. Those six weights are called:

- Nutrition
- Physical
- Toxins
- Genetic
- Spiritual
- Medical

The ideal is to keep all six weights on the healthy side of the scale. If even one weight is placed on the sick side of the scale, sickness will follow. To the degree of the size of the weight, or as more and more weights are placed on the sick side of the scale, the greater the sickness will be. Of course, this illustration has its limits, but it's given so that you understand the importance of these weights in your life. The idea is: How you use or ignore the weights can either make you sick or keep you healthy.

The Health is a Choice class will address each of these weights in depth. But briefly:

- Weight 1 – Nutrition
God has given us food laws. We'll study God's food law and learn the types of food that can make us sick or keep us healthy.
We'll look at modern food production and how it relates to nutrition and relates to God's food law.
- Weight 2 – Toxin
A toxin is a substance that interferes with normal cell function causing cell malfunction. We'll learn where toxins are found and how to avoid them.
- Weight 3 – Spiritual
The body is connected to the soul. The soul is connected to the spirit, and all three are connected to God. The ways we react to God and life's events, and respond to our thoughts and emotions directly affect our cells and our health.
- Weight 4 – Physical
The body needs physical exercise, rest, sunlight and fresh air. Think of these things as routine maintenance for the body.
- Weight 5 – Genes
The genes we inherit from our parents affect our cells. However, genes do not play as large a role in health as modern medicine would tell us.
- Weight 6 – Medical

There is both good and evil medicine. Medicine that heals is good. Medicine that kills is evil. Modern medicine kills and maims millions of people every year. With God, there is no such thing as an “acceptable risk.” We’ll learn how to distinguish good medicine from bad. We’ll learn in practical terms what God means when he said, “I am the Lord that heals you.”