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SABBATH SCHOOL  
LESSONS

# Look Up and Live

A Guide to Health



JAN FEB MAR 1993

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Adult Sabbath School Lessons (Standard Edition). (USPS 702-480.) Published quarterly by Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1350 N. Kings Road, Nampa, ID 83687, U.S.A. One-year subscription in U.S.A., \$6.25; single copy, \$3.50. One-year subscription to countries outside U.S.A., \$9.25; single copy \$3.50. All prices at U.S.A. exchange. Second-class postage at Nampa, Idaho. When a change of address is desired, please send both old and new addresses.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Adult Sabbath School Lessons (Standard Edition), P.O. Box 7000, Boise, ID 83707.

Editions in Braille available. Easy English Edition available.

Copyright © 1993 by Pacific Press Publishing Association.  
Adult Sabbath School Lessons (USPS 702-480)/No. 393/July-September 1993.

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The Adult Sabbath School Lessons are prepared by the Department of Church Ministries of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The preparation of the lessons is under the general direction of a worldwide Sabbath School Lesson Committee, the members of which serve as consulting editors. The published lesson quarterly reflects the input of the committee and thus does not solely or necessarily represent the intent of the authors.

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# How the Sabbath School Lessons Are Produced

Because we often are asked to explain the procedure by which the adult Sabbath School lessons are prepared, we are including here a brief description of the process.

Authors are selected from around the world field and are given specific guidelines regarding content, format, length, writing style, etc. When a manuscript is submitted to the Sabbath School lesson editor, it is presented without alteration to the General Conference Resident Reading Committee. This committee consists of competent Bible scholars, departmental leaders, administrators, pastors, and lay members. Committee members read the manuscript, write their reactions and suggestions, and attend a special meeting at which the manuscript is discussed in detail. Then a vote is taken as to whether the manuscript should be accepted for publication.

On the basis of the suggestions of the local reading committee, the accepted manuscript is edited and sent out to the World Reading Committee. Every division of the world field has representatives on this larger committee. These people read the manuscript and mail their suggested changes to the editor. The editor then edits the manuscript a second time, giving careful attention to the changes requested by the members of the World Reading Committee. A final vote is given by the Resident Reading Committee before the manuscript is sent to the Press and to the world field for translation.

**No one person writes the *Adult Sabbath School Lessons*.** The original author is the principal contributor, but the thought of many Adventist leaders around the world is incorporated into the quarterly. The aim is to produce lessons that are thoroughly representative of the spiritual and theological commitments of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. No one person, including the author, has all his ideas included in the quarterly. The material published consists of the consensus of two very competent reading committees.

Every attempt is made to exclude theological and mechanical error from the quarterly. Obviously in a task of this magnitude, involving somewhat detailed interpretations of Scripture, some of our members will have opinions on some Bible passages that vary somewhat from those published in the quarterly. We grow as we study, and in the process we may see some things differently. Even so, the adult Sabbath School quarterly editors and reading committee members are committed to presenting as carefully as possible the scriptural understandings of mainline Seventh-day Adventism.

## Introduction to the Health Lessons

# Look Up and Live

"This Is Where You Can Find Some of Life's Greatest Returns," blazed the headline of the bank advertisement. But the fine print wasn't far below. And yes, it contained plenty of restrictions.

Despite this fine print, most of us are interested in managing our money wisely. Certainly we benefit by "shopping" for investment plans that yield the best rates of return.

Yet how many of us ever think of our health in terms of an investment? That's how Ellen White considered it when she advised a fellow Christian: "Health may be earned by proper habits of life and may be made to yield interest and compound interest."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 408. Ellen White continues with this analogy by saying that good health is capital "more precious than any bank deposit."

As you study your Bible with the help of this quarterly, think of it as a passbook to a special account that will yield some of life's greatest returns. But, unlike the bank advertisement, you won't be intimidated by fine-print restrictions, because there aren't any!

Another advertisement reads, "This Is the Ad Our Competition Hopes You Won't Read." Yes, Satan has long realized that people who indulge in poor health habits have a difficult time understanding God's will for their lives. So he is hoping you won't study these lessons. We hope and pray that you will, and that God will bless your study.

And as God blesses your study, look for ways to share those blessings with others. As Seventh-day Adventists, we can delight in the fact that our church has recognized the relationship between health and spirituality since 1863. The current worldwide interest in health provides a special opportunity for us to draw many souls to Jesus, who is the great originator of life and maintainer of health, both physically and spiritually. "Many have no faith in God and have lost confidence in man. But they appreciate acts of sympathy and helpfulness. As they see one with no inducement of earthly praise or compensation come into their homes, ministering to the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, comforting the sad, and tenderly pointing all to Him of whose love and pity the human worker is but the messenger . . . their hearts are touched. . . . Faith is kindled. They see that God cares for them, and they are prepared to listen as His word is opened."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 145.

These lessons were prepared in consultation with the General Conference Health and Temperance Department.

# Why Be Healthy?



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Gen. 1-3; Rom. 3:23-28; Eze. 36:25-27; Mark 5:25-34; James 2:17-26.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 30:17).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Good health is the result of obeying God's natural and moral laws. The gospel of Christ frees us from habits that endanger our health and gives us the power to develop a healthful lifestyle.

**GOOD HEALTH CAN BE YOURS.** Why do you want to be healthy? There's the obvious reason that good health makes life easier and more pleasant. Yet for a Christian, the answer is more involved. Ellen White states in *The Ministry of Healing*, pages 128 and 130, that "whatever injures the health, not only lessens physical vigor, but tends to weaken the mental and moral powers. Indulgence in any unhealthful practice makes it more difficult for one to discriminate between right and wrong, and hence more difficult to resist evil. . . ."

"The body is the only medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character."

This is why the gospel includes not only spiritual restoration but physical restoration, as well. As you study this week's lesson, pray for the power to develop and maintain a healthful lifestyle.

**"AND GOD CREATED" (Genesis 1 and 2).**

To understand better how the gospel frees us from habits that endanger our health and how it gives us the power to develop a healthful lifestyle, we should go back to the beginning of time. After each day's work, God viewed what He had created and pronounced it good. But it wasn't until after He created Adam and Eve that He pronounced everything He made as *very* good.

**How were Adam and Eve different from the rest of God's creation? Gen. 1:26, 27.**

Of all God's creation, Adam and Eve were the only beings with the ability to relate to God.

"The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as He had not given to any other creature. . . . Man, made in the divine image, could contemplate and appreciate the glorious works of God in nature."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1082.

**What can we conclude about Adam's and Eve's health, and why?**

It's impossible to imagine that Adam and Eve were anything but vigorous and robust. Indeed, "man came from the hand of God perfect in *every* faculty of mind *and* body."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 29 (italics supplied).

**List the words and phrases in Genesis 1 and 2 that suggest that God created in an orderly, "law-abiding" way.**

"God has ordained laws for the government . . . of all the operations of nature. Everything is under fixed laws, which cannot be disregarded. But while everything in nature is governed by natural laws, man alone . . . is amenable to moral law."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 52.

And as long as Adam and Eve obeyed God's moral law, they enjoyed their health and happiness.

**What does it mean to you personally that God created you in His image? How have you been relating to Him?**

**UNFAITHFUL, UNHAPPY, UNHEALTHY, UNSAVED** (Genesis 3).

As long as Adam and Eve chose to remain faithful to God's laws they could enjoy health, happiness, and eternal life. But Genesis 3 describes their unfaithfulness and the need for a plan of redemption.

Many people talk about Adam and Eve eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil as if it were something about its fruit that was evil. But where did the evil really lie? Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:1-6.

By choosing not to trust God, Adam and Eve showed that Satan's promise was more appealing to them than the relationship they shared with their Creator.

Review the consequences of Adam and Eve's decision in Genesis 3:7-13, 16-19, 23, 24.

**What promise do we find in Genesis 3:15?**

**"I will put enmity."** "This judgment, expressed in prophetic language, has ever been understood by the Christian church as a prediction of the coming of the Deliverer."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 232, 233.

**"Between thy seed and her seed."** This refers to the conflict between Satan's followers (1 John 3:10) and Christ, who is the seed (Rev. 12:1-5; Gal. 3:16, 19).

**"It shall bruise thy head."** *Bruise* means "to crush."

Thus Genesis 3:15 provides us with the first record of the great controversy that began in heaven (Rev. 12:7-9), continues on earth, where Christ defeated Satan again (Heb. 2:14), and will end with Satan's extinction at the end of the millennium (Rev. 20:10).

Now Adam and Eve's relationship with God depended on their faith in this promise of a coming Saviour. Through Christ, Satan and sin are defeated, and humankind is granted the power to obey God's natural and moral laws that govern health.

**Imagine the comfort this announcement must have been to Adam and Eve. What hope does it bring to you?**

**IN HARMONY AGAIN** (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 3:23-28; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

Adam and Eve chose to disbelieve God. But "divine love had conceived a plan whereby man might be redeemed. The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but one who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 63.

**How is this plan of redemption put to work in individual lives? Rom. 3:23-28.**

God views us as righteous when through faith we believe that Christ paid the penalty for our sins. When this happens, we receive the power of the indwelling Christ (Gal. 2:20). And it is Christ in us that enables us to keep God's laws, including the laws of health, as well as the Ten Commandments. Salvation is a complete gift. God forgives us our sin, then changes our heart, and restores us mentally, physically, and spiritually.

**Amazing grace.** "The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ. A great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the grace of Christ that the work of restoration, physical, mental, and spiritual, can be accomplished."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143.

**What reason does Paul give for engaging in life reform? 1 Cor. 6:19, 20? What is the price that verse 20 refers to? 1 Peter 1:18, 19.**

**What can you do that you are not doing now to better "glorify God in your body," which belongs to Him?**

**Knowing that your body belongs to God and that it is the only medium through which we learn about Him, which of your health habits do you think need changing?**

## THE SECRET OF SUCCESS (James 2:17-26; Eze. 36:25-27).

Yesterday we studied God's plan for salvation, which ultimately includes physical, mental, and spiritual restoration. Briefly review this plan by reading Romans 3:23-28.

Since we are "justified by faith without the deeds of the law," where does obedience to God's natural and moral laws fit in? James 2:17-26.

A healthful lifestyle will not save us (Gal. 5:4). But if we truly believe in Christ, the Holy Spirit will help us develop health habits that keep us alert and strong.

"While our behavior and our spirituality are closely related, we can never earn salvation by correct behavior. Rather, Christian behavior is a natural fruit of salvation and is grounded in what Christ has already accomplished for us at Calvary."—*Seventh-day Adventists Believe—A Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines*, p. 280.

**What is the secret of obedience? Eze. 36:25-27.**

**What provision has God made for the converted Christian to attain self-control? 1 Cor. 6:11.**

**Three important aspects.** First Corinthians 6:11 gives three important aspects of conversion: (1) being washed (being baptized to signify a change of heart); (2) being justified (forgiven; declared righteous); and (3) being sanctified (receiving the power to live a new life).

**"By the Spirit of our God."** When the Holy Spirit dwells within, obedience follows. Our faith in Christ makes this possible. Paul explains in Romans 6:4 that we are buried with Christ through baptism in order to walk in newness of life. This does not suggest that the new life justifies us. Rather, the Holy Spirit brings us into harmony with Christ and His law, even the laws that govern health.

**Because the Holy Spirit empowers a Christian to obey God's laws, do you think it is easier for a Christian to develop a healthful lifestyle?**

## TOUCH HIS GARMENT (Mark 1:30-34; 5:25-34).

God's plan of redemption includes the restoration of our physical powers. Today we'll see how Christ demonstrated this in His earthly life.

Of the 35 miracles the Gospels record, 19 deal with disease or deformity. But these specific instances are not the only times Jesus showed His concern for people's health. Read Matthew 4:23, 24; 14:35, 36 and Mark 1:30-34.

"Jesus devoted more time to healing the sick than to preaching. His miracles testified to the truth of His words, that He came not to destroy, but to save."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 19.

In Mark 5:25-34 we find one of the 19 miracles dealing with disease and deformity. As you read these verses, ask yourself what this story tells us about the connection between faith and health.

"Thy faith hath made thee whole." Jesus wanted the crowd to know that it was not the touching of His garment, but faith, that restored the woman's body. To have believed the former would have been to believe in superstition.

**What does the woman's gesture tell us about the nature of faith?**

Our actions mirror our faith. What we do tells others that "it is not enough to believe *about* Christ; we must believe *in* Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour. . . . Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

**Review Matthew 4:23, 24; 14:35, 36 and Mark 1:30-34; 5:25-34. Then put yourself in one of the scenes these verses mention. Imagine that you are struggling through the hordes of people to reach Jesus. You are within inches of touching Him. Of what do you want Him to heal you? Is your faith such that He can make you well?**

**FURTHER STUDY:** Salvation includes physical restoration, as well as spiritual. With this thought in mind meditate upon the following verses: Luke 9:56; John 10:10; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; Heb. 7:25; 2 Peter 3:9. Also read one or more of the following: *Counsels on Health*, "The Violation of Physical Law," pp. 19-25, and "Govern the Body," pp. 41, 42; *The Ministry of Healing*, "Training for Life's Conflict," pp. 128-131; *The Desire of Ages*, "The Touch of Faith," pp. 342-348.

While it is true that the gospel frees us from habits that endanger our health and helps us to develop a healthful lifestyle, some people, regardless of how they live, are still more susceptible to disease than others. Furthermore, anyone can contract poor health owing to circumstances beyond his or her control. (Ellen G. White experienced ill health throughout her life as a result of being struck on the nose with a rock at the age of 9.) It is completely possible to be redeemed from our sins according to God's plan of salvation, yet still experience sickness. Not until Christ's return will any of us be totally free from the prospect of illness.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What reassurance can the following quotation give us for those times when our health fails us through no fault of our own?

"Often your mind may be clouded because of pain. Then do not try to think. You know that Jesus loves you. He understands your weakness. You may do His will by simply resting in His arms."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 251.

2. Can you tell in your own words how the gospel of Christ frees us from habits that endanger our health, and how it gives us the power to develop a healthful lifestyle?
3. The title of this week's lesson asks, "Why be healthy?" How would you answer that question now after a week of studying?

**SUMMARY:** As Christians, we desire to live a healthful life because Christ redeemed us (1 Cor. 6:19, 20) and because our bodies are the only medium through which we learn about Him. The plan of salvation includes our restoration to such a lifestyle, while at the same time giving us the grace to develop good health habits.

# "None of These Diseases"



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Ex. 6:7; Lev. 11:43-45; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 10:31; 1 John 3:2, 3.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, . . . and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee; . . . for I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Because the plan of salvation includes our restoration to health (Lesson 1), the Bible shows us our part in realizing this goal.

**THEN AND NOW.** About the time Moses was born, someone wrote the *Papyrus Ebers*, a first-aid book for Egyptians. To remove a splinter, the *Papyrus Ebers* recommended applying worms' blood and asses' dung. To prevent hair loss, the *Papyrus* suggested anointing the hair with the tooth of a donkey crushed in honey.

Because Moses was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22), he was probably well acquainted with the *Papyrus Ebers*.

But when God freed the Israelites, He gave them a different set of health guidelines along with the promise found in this week's memory verse. We will study some of these guidelines, as well as certain New Testament principles, in order to understand further how God has provided for the care and maintenance of our bodies so we can more effectively work for and learn about Him.

BURDENS (Ex. 6:7; Lev. 11:43-45).

**When God freed the Israelites from Egypt, they had been slaves for more than 100 years. What would have happened to them physically and spiritually during this period?**

After these years of slavery, the Israelites were in such a condition that God found it necessary to reeducate them concerning His plans regarding right living. The laws He gave to them at Sinai dealt with every aspect of their duty to God and their fellow human beings. These laws included the following: (1) the Ten Commandments, which reflect God's character and are therefore unchangeable because He is unchangeable (Matt. 5:18, 19, Mal. 3:6); (2) the ceremonial laws, which pointed to the cross and thus expired when Christ died (Col. 2:14-17; Heb. 7:12); (3) the civil laws, which "applied the broad principles of the Ten Commandments to the economy of ancient Israel as a nation" (*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 757); and (4) the health laws. These laws "were intended by a wise Creator to promote health and longevity (see Ex. 15:26; 23:25; Deut. 7:15; Ps. 105:37 . . .). Based as they are upon the nature and requirements of the human body, these principles could in no way be affected either by the cross or by the disappearance of Israel as a nation. Principles that contributed to health 3,500 years ago will produce the same results today."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 757.

"The people who had come from slavery with the uncleanly and unhealthful habits which it engenders, were subjected to the strictest training in the wilderness before entering Canaan."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 277.

**For what other reason did God want the Israelites to be healthy? Lev. 11:43-45; Ex. 19:6.**

Read Exodus 6:7, then consider the two prescriptions from the *Papyrus Ebers* quoted in yesterday's lesson. Do you think such medical advice could have been part of the "burdens" ("yoke," NIV) Exodus 6:7 mentions?

**Think about your personal health habits. Are some of them burdens from which God is waiting to free you?**

## QUARANTINE IN EFFECT (Lev. 13:1-4, 36).

God wanted the Israelites to be holy because He is holy. If they were to be His people, they needed to reflect His character. Thus He gave them a series of laws (yesterday's lesson) and His grace to help them obey those laws (Lesson 1).

While it's true that time changes the specific *application* of certain Old Testament health laws, the *principles* of the laws remain the same.

**What health principle do we find in Leviticus 13:1-4, 36?**

"The idea of quarantining those afflicted with contagious diseases seems to have originated with the Hebrew people, a safeguard given them by God Himself."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 763.

"**True leprosy.**" For the following reasons, it seems likely that Leviticus 13 is describing skin diseases in general (including leprosy): (1) The symptoms listed in Leviticus 13 are not the symptoms of what we know to be leprosy. (2) Laws regarding ceremonial cleansing infer that some people with "leprosy" got well quickly. (3) "In a day when medical science as such did not exist it would have been a difficult thing for the priests to give a differential diagnosis of various diseases affecting the skin, when they were in many respects similar, and for which there were no specific names. Moses apparently grouped these related diseases under one general head, . . . which our English versions have translated 'leprosy.'"—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 763.

The Jews viewed leprosy as a symbol for sin (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 262). How can we quarantine ourselves from sin? In what ways should we quarantine ourselves from sinful people? How is sin contagious? Can you provide a text in your answers to these questions?

"The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 311.

WHITED SEPULCHERS (Num. 19:11-19; Matt. 23:25-27).

**What other principle did God give the Israelites to ensure their good health? Num. 19:11, 14, 16-19.**

Today, we almost take for granted that cleansing with water hinders the spread of disease. But this was not always the case. In Vienna, during the 1840s, Dr. Semmelweis became the director of a hospital's obstetrics ward. "The first order of each morning was . . . to perform autopsies on the unfortunate victims who had died during the preceding twenty-four hours. Afterward, without cleansing their hands, the doctors . . . marched into the maternity wards to make pelvic examinations on the living women. Of course, no rubber gloves were worn."—S. I. McMillen, M.D., *None of These Diseases* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1963), pp. 13, 14.

After watching one out of every six of these patients die over a period of three years, Dr. Semmelweis established a rule that all doctors who performed an autopsy must wash their hands before examining any living patients. Three months after this rule went into effect, only one out of every 84 patients died.

**Long before the time Jesus began His public ministry, the Jews had turned many of their laws into meaningless ceremonies. Such was the case with the laws of purification. Of what did the scribes and Pharisees accuse Jesus and His disciples? Matt. 15:1, 2.**

We are not to assume that Jesus lived an unhealthful lifestyle. The point He makes is this: We should never forget that the focus of God's laws is Christ Himself. When we keep any law simply because "it's tradition," we become hypocrites. When we lose sight of *why* we do something, we become like the "whited sepulchres" Jesus mentions in Matthew 23:27.

**After you read Matthew 23:25-27, think about why you practice some of the biblical health guidelines advocated by Seventh-day Adventists. For example, are you a vegetarian because that's the way you grew up, or is it because you want to be healthy so you can better fulfill God's plan for your life?**

GOD'S IDEAL (Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:20-24; Lev. 18:1-6, 20, 22).

Part of God's instructions to the newly freed slaves included His ideal for sexual relationships. Review this ideal in Genesis 2:20-24, Matthew 19:3-6, and Hebrews 13:4.

"As the Creator joined the hands of the holy pair in wedlock, saying, A man shall 'leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one' (Genesis 2:24), He enunciated the law of marriage for all the children of Adam to the close of time. That which the Eternal Father Himself had pronounced good was the law of highest blessing and development for man."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 63, 64.

God's instructions to the Israelites in Leviticus 18 indicate how far humankind had strayed from this ideal. Note especially verses 6, 20, 22, and 23.

Part of the wretchedness that such practices cause include both physical and emotional illness. The statistics concerning the "newest" sexually transmitted disease are staggering. Between 1980 and the beginning of 1991, one large country in the Western world reported a total of 152,326 cases of AIDS. It is estimated that 70-85 percent of these cases were contracted through sexual activity with infected persons. Such activity included sex between homosexuals; women and bisexual men; and heterosexuals and their multiple partners. In the same country, some researchers estimate that the number of AIDS cases doubles every 20-24 months.

When engaged in such activity, each partner is exposed to all the microorganisms of the partner's partners for the previous five years.

Read Revelation 17:2; 19:2, 7, 9; 21:2. Why did God cite the marriage relationship to describe Christ's relationship to the church? Why did He use the word *fornication* (a term that refers to all unlawful acts of sex) to describe spiritual apostasy?

TEMPLES OF GLORY (1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 10:31; 1 John 3:2, 3).

When God led Israel out of Egypt, He told them how to be healthy so they could better represent His character to the world. So far this week we've looked at three examples of these guidelines. Take a minute now to review them and to ask yourself how they work in your life.

The New Testament does not become as specific regarding health regulations as the Old Testament. But certain verses provide general principles we can apply to modern life.

**As you read 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 and 10:31, ask yourself how the counsel in these verses could apply to health in general and *your* health in particular.**

**What does Christ's death (the "price" of 1 Cor. 6:20) do to the value of a healthful lifestyle?**

**What is "the glory of God" to which 1 Corinthians 10:31 refers?**

"When Moses asked the Lord to show him His glory, the Lord said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before thee.' 'And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. . . . And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.' Exodus 33:19; 34:6-8. When we are able to comprehend the character of God, as did Moses, we too shall make haste to bow in adoration and praise."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 30.

We also might say that "when we are able to comprehend the character of God, as did Moses," we shall "make haste" to develop healthful lifestyles so we can better represent His character to the world!

**How can we apply 1 John 3:2, 3 to the area of health? How do these verses relate to Leviticus 11:44, 45?**

As we desire to be more like Christ, we will allow the Holy Spirit to purify us of anything that keeps us away from Him. This would include any habit that dulls the senses, preventing us from discerning His will.

**FURTHER STUDY:** Read the chapter "Hygiene Among the Israelites" in *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 277-286. Also read 1 Peter 2:9.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. How has Christ "acquired the church"? As a member of the Christian church, how is your lifestyle representing Him? As a member of the church, do you personally feel that you are "His own purchased possession"?
2. After studying this week's lesson, how would you respond to someone who says that parts of the Bible (such as the health regulations God gave to the Israelites) are unimportant and irrelevant to the modern world? To the person who excuses an unhealthy habit by rationalizing that the Bible doesn't specifically speak against it?

**SUMMARY:** When God freed Israel from slavery, part of His instructions included health regulations. These laws, along with general principles found in the New Testament, tell us that health is an important aspect of religious life.



Did you give a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering second quarter of 1987?

If so, you helped fund the agricultural development project (which included this water pump) at the Adventist school in Renk, Sudan.

The attached fields, not part of an organized division, are union territories directed from the General Conference headquarters.

Help them again this Thirteenth Sabbath. See back cover.

# One Hundred Thirty Years Ago



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Isa. 58:12-14; Rev. 1:2; 19:10; 14:6-12.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in" (Isaiah 58:12).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Just as God instructed the Israelites regarding health principles soon after their deliverance from Egypt, so He instructed the new Adventist believers as they embarked on their journey of faith and freedom.

1863. It was a year that, to many, seems as dry and brittle as the pages of their great-grandparents' family Bible. Yet 130 years ago the world was teeming with sorrow and joy just as it is today. In America, Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves by signing the Emancipation Proclamation. In London, workers began constructing the subway system, and laborers completed New Zealand's first railroad, connecting Christchurch with Ferrymead.

Also in 1863, a woman whose constitution was as frail as a fading flower received a vision from God regarding health reform. This week, we will study the significance of that vision given in a time when the world knew little and cared less about God's health-promoting natural laws.

**BUILDING THE WASTE PLACES (Rev. 14:6-12; Isa. 58:12-14).**

Ellen G. White's health vision is preceded by a rich biblical heritage. Thousands of years earlier, God instructed the newly freed Israelites regarding His health laws that had lain buried under more than 100 years of slavery. Their robust health was to be a beacon to surrounding idol-worshipping nations, urging them to inquire about Israel's God. But the history of Israel's failure regarding the fulfillment of their purpose is no secret. Not until June 6, 1863, in a nation racked by civil war, would God again make known in a special way His intentions regarding health.

**What were two of the many texts Adventists based their movement upon? Rev. 14:6-12; Isa. 58:12-14.**

**The prophecies in these two passages describe a people who keep the commandments of God. Considering lessons one and two of this quarter, in what way can we say that these commandments include God's natural laws?**

The messages of Revelation 14:6-12 and Isaiah 58:12-14 call upon all to keep God's commandments. And without obedience to God's commandments, no worship can be pleasing to God. Obedience accompanies "the faith of Jesus." These messages are timely, for, speaking of the last days, Isaiah writes: "The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt" (Isa. 24:5, 6, RSV).

**Healthwise, how does the earth lie polluted? In what ways have earth's citizens transgressed God's health laws? What curses are presently devouring the earth and its inhabitants as a result of breaking these laws?**

**Review this week's Memory Text. In what way can the health-message portion of the gospel help to "build the old waste places," "raise up the foundations of many generations," and repair the breach?**

**DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY** (Joel 2:28-32; Rev. 1:2; 19:10).

The pioneers of the Advent movement referred to Joel 2:28-32 to support their belief that God would gift the remnant church with the Spirit of Prophecy. Pointing to verse 31, they affirmed that this gift would reappear "before the great and terrible day of the Lord come."

**How does the New Testament provide support for the pioneers' belief regarding the Spirit of Prophecy? Rev. 1:2; 19:10; (see also 1 Cor. 1:4-8).**

It was against this backdrop that Ellen G. White received her major vision regarding health on June 6, 1863. The vision came less than two weeks after the first General Conference session adjourned in Battle Creek, Michigan—a providential timing coinciding with the organization of the church into a general body. Upon receipt of the vision, a united advance in temperance and godliness could now be effected among the Sabbathkeeping Adventists with the better organizational facilities at hand to prosecute this new concept.

**As you read Ellen White's report of the vision, notice the twofold duty God's message gave to the church.**

"I saw that it was a sacred duty to attend to our health, and arouse others to their duty. . . . We have a duty to speak, to come out against intemperance of every kind—intemperance in working, in eating, in drinking, and in drugging [using medications]—and then point them to God's great medicine, water, pure soft water, for diseases, for health, for cleanliness, and for a luxury. . . . I saw that we should not be silent upon the subject of health but should wake up minds to the subject."

"It is not safe nor pleasing to God to violate the laws of health and then ask Him to take care of our health and keep us from disease when we are living directly contrary to our prayers."—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 280.

**Has the passing of 130 years removed or intensified our obligation to live healthfully and to share health information with the world? Why?**

## THE LARGE SCOPE (1 Cor. 3:16, 17).

Arthur L. White, one of Ellen White's grandchildren, wrote with considerable insight about the large scope of Ellen White's 1863 health vision. As you read his words below, underline the different aspects the vision involved.

"Mankind suffered as, turning from God's plan, they made flesh food a part of the diet. Intemperance in eating and in drinking and the indulgence of base passions had benumbed the fine sensibilities, while the use of intoxicating beverages had beclouded men's reasoning faculties. Tobacco in whatever form it was used, was a slow poison; tea and coffee were stimulating, with effects similar to those of tobacco. In harmony with morbid appetite, rich desserts and every hurtful thing had been crowded into the stomach, bringing pain and various ills. Such appetite was to be denied, and they were to eat sparingly of food that was healthful. The use of swine's flesh had ever been forbidden and hurtful, and there were other animals that God had forbidden man to eat. Children had been led by their parents to eat improperly and had suffered greatly. Drug taking was baneful, resulting in more deaths than all other causes combined—strychnine, opium, mercury, and quinine were specifically named as having destroyed millions. In sickness, nature was to be aided by the common blessings of pure air, pure water, and a simple diet. These would result in a speedy and safe cure. Water was especially beneficial, but many had never experienced its helpful effects. Multitudes remained in inexcusable ignorance, wondering why the race was feeble and life short. There were many who had neglected personal cleanliness. . . . Houses were to be built with the value of sunlight taken into account. Rooms, especially those slept in, should be well ventilated. Healthful dress was an important factor. A diseased body affects the brain. Satan triumphs in the ruinous work of causing members of the human family to destroy themselves through wrong habits."—*Review and Herald*, June 6, 1968, pp. 3, 4; adapted.

Now organize below what you have underlined into a list of "do's." If you haven't already done so, how can you incorporate these into your life?

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE (3 John 2).

The obituaries in the *Review and Herald* for 1862 report 63 deaths. Eighteen were children under 7 years old. Nine were between the ages of 7 and 20, while 14 were between 21 and 40. Fourteen were 60, while only eight grew any older.

These figures suggest that the health of Adventists before 1863 was generally unfavorable. Imagine yourself as one of them as you continue reading.

Annie Smith, Uriah's sister, died when she was 27. Nathaniel and Anna, James White's brother and sister, died at the ages of 21 and 26, respectively, one in 1853 and the other in 1854. Robert Harmon, Ellen White's brother, passed away at the age of 27. If, in the winter of 1853 to 1854, God had not relieved Ellen White of a serious heart condition and a threatening cancer of the eye, she would have died when she was 27.

"Our forefathers, giving but little attention to health, took the situation in stride. Little known to them at that time was the fact that health was close to religion, and that God, who was leading a people who were preparing to meet their Lord through the means of His choice, was about to lead His people into a new and helpful experience."—Arthur L. White, *Review and Herald*, June 6, 1968, p. 2.

By the time Ellen White received the 1863 health vision, most of the principal "messengers" or preachers of the Advent movement were lying on their backs, the victims of exhaustion or dyspepsia (indigestion). Even she had struggled back to health from three strokes. How great was the need for such a vision!

What about today's world and church shows there is a need for more knowledge regarding health? Is there evidence to suggest improvement in certain areas?

What does it tell us about God that He providentially relieved Mrs. White of physical afflictions before He gave her the health vision? Does God miraculously heal the sick while they are disobeying known health principles?

## FULFILLING THE VISION (1 Cor. 9:25).

How quickly did the church organization accept the principles outlined in the 1863 health vision? Read what Mrs. White wrote about it: "In the vision given me in Rochester, New York, December 25, 1865, I was shown that our Sabbathkeeping people have been negligent in acting upon the light which God has given in regard to the health reform, that there is yet a great work before us. . . .

"I was shown that we should provide a home for the afflicted and those who wish to learn how to take care of their bodies that they may prevent sickness."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 485, 489.

Because of this, the fourth annual meeting of the General Conference in 1866 passed the following resolution: "Resolved, That we acknowledge the health reform as set forth in the testimony of Sister White, as part of the work of God incumbent on us at this time; and that we pledge ourselves to live in accordance with these principles, and that we will use our best endeavors to impress their importance upon others."—*Review and Herald*, May 22, 1866.

The church's first health paper, *The Health Reformer*, also appeared in 1866 as did the first "sanitarium," The Western Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek.

Looking back in 1901, Ellen White wrote, "In the light given me so long ago (1863), I was shown that intemperance would prevail in the world to an alarming extent, and that every one of the people of God must take an elevated stand in regard to reformation in habits and practices. . . . The Lord presented a general plan before me. I was shown that God would give to His commandment-keeping people a reform diet, and that as they received this, their disease and suffering would be greatly lessened. I was shown that this work would progress."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 481, 482. And progress it did. Presently, the church operates approximately 167 hospitals and sanitariums, 17 food companies, and 340 dispensaries and clinics.

The Advent movement brought about a restoration of the great truths of Scripture, thus pioneering a reform movement aimed at the restoration of humanity's health.

**Is there something about your health habits that you'd like to change in order to fulfill this vision on a more personal level? Next week's lesson will tell you how.**

**FURTHER STUDY:** As you read Isaiah 58:6-10, think about how the church's health message is part of letting "the oppressed go free" (verse 6) and "satisfying the afflicted soul" (verse 10). If available, read *Testimonies*, vol. 1, "The Health Reform," pp. 485-495, and "The Health Institute," pp. 633-643.

"Several research reports support the concept that personal health practices (lifestyle) profoundly affect one's health. One of the landmark studies in the area of health practices and mortality was conducted by Belloc and Breslow at the Human Population Laboratory. In a 12-year follow-up study of nearly 7,000 individuals, Drs. Lester Breslow and James Emstrom examined such health practices as not smoking, exercising, little or no drinking, eating breakfast, not snacking, not being overweight, and sleeping seven to nine hours per day, and their relationship to death. They reported that men who followed three or fewer of these seven favorable health practices had a mortality rate that was nearly four times higher than that of men who followed all seven. For women the comparable rate was more than twice as high."—*Ministry*, "Why Adventists Live Longer," by Jan Kuzma, September, 1989, pp. 25, 26. Thus, the passing of many years verifies the truth of the Spirit of Prophecy.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In relating her health visions, Ellen White used the phrase "I was shown" to let us know that God had given her the ensuing counsel. How does it make you feel to know that God communicated to us in such a way? What does it tell us about His character?
2. Adventists believe that they have been called by God to keep His holy law and to give the last warning message to the world. Is this the result of: (1) private interpretation of Scripture? (2) pride? (3) bigotry? (4) divine providence? (5) the actual demands of Bible prophecy?

**SUMMARY:** Lessons 1-3 tell us why God's health message is important. Because it is an integral part of His plan for our happiness, He gave to the remnant church, as He did to Israel, special instructions regarding His health laws.

# Making Changes



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Psalms 139:23, 24; 73:24; Mark 5:2, 13, 19; Gal. 6:7; Eph. 2:10; James 4:6-10; 1 John 3:22.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Because God's blessings for us include health, He will give us the power to do those things which will help us to be healthier. He will also give us the strength to break habits that make us ill.

**THE NEXT STEP.** So far this quarter we have seen (1) that the plan of salvation includes health reform, and (2) that the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy give us a broad platform on which to base our health consciousness.

But what if you're trapped in a habit you know is making you sick? What if you want to stop overeating or drinking coffee, but just can't?

Not being able to do what we should has been a dilemma plaguing humankind since the beginning of sin on this planet.

Read how Paul felt about this problem in Romans 7:18, 19, 24. What was his solution? Read the first half of verse 25.

This week's lesson should provide you with insights on how to change unhealthful behavior. Then you can apply these insights to your life as you study the rest of the quarterly.

**IDENTIFY!** (Ps. 139:23, 24; Lam. 3:40; Matt. 5:4).

The most important thing to remember about changing our behavior is that *we can't do it by ourselves!* (Rom. 7:18, 19). *Instead, Christ helps us break the spell bad habits hold over us.*

**At what point in our lives is Christ able to do this for us?**  
Ps. 139:23, 24; Lam. 3:40; Matt. 5:4.

When we are serious about asking God to help us examine our lives, He will help us identify what behavior we should change and give us the strength to do so.

**"Blessed are they that mourn."** "The mourning here brought to view is true heart sorrow for sin."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 9.

**An essential ingredient.** Notice that Psalm 139:23, 24 is a prayer. Regardless of which bad habits we are trying to change, prayer is essential in helping us understand their seriousness. Because they are health-destroying, and therefore contrary to God's plan for our lives, we need to confess such habits to Him and ask Him for guidance in establishing health-promoting behavior.

"To those who desire prayer for their restoration to health, it should be made plain that the violation of God's law, either natural or spiritual, is sin, and that in order for them to receive His blessing, sin must be confessed and forsaken."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 228.

**As you reread Psalm 139:23, 24, notice that it is a prayer of self-examination. Make it your prayer as you seek to develop a more healthful lifestyle.**

Here is a strategy to help you understand any problem area the Lord may point out to you: Keep a diary for one week of the habit you want to change. For example, if you're eating too much, keep a record of everything you eat or drink, the times you eat or drink, and your feelings at the time (hunger, nervousness, etc.). Over a period of days a pattern may emerge, helping you to better understand the problem. The better you understand the problem, the easier it will be to allow God to change your behavior.

EXPLORE! (Gal. 6:7; Isa. 30:21).

**What are the physical, mental, and spiritual consequences of a habit, good or bad? Gal. 5:19-24; 6:7, 8; Rom. 8:12-15.**

Do you exercise for 20 minutes three or four times a week? Then you probably stay alert for longer periods of time. Do you drink caffeinated beverages? Then you are apt to be nervous and edgy. Whatever kind of habit you're sowing, you'll reap the consequences of its accumulative effect.

Review Psalm 139:23, 24. As you become aware of your problem, it's helpful to think about its consequences.

Take stress, for example. We're all exposed to it, and each of us needs a certain amount of managed stress. But suppose you aren't managing it. You might experience tightening of the muscles, upset stomach, ulcers, maybe even a heart attack or stroke. When we recognize such symptoms as the result of ill-managed stress, we can look for ways to change our attitudes toward the things that cause stress. If possible, we can also find ways to reduce stress or call on available resources to help us manage what we cannot handle alone.

**As you search for possible solutions to any unhealthful habit, what promises will be helpful for you to claim? Ps. 32:8; 37:5; Isa. 30:21.**

A calm feeling of assurance comes over us as we realize that God is in control. Knowing this, we are better able to find ways of changing unhealthful behavior.

Here is a practical idea to help you change an injurious habit:

Write the desired change you want to make. For example, "After examining several alternatives and the consequences of each alternative, I have decided to be temperate in my choice of desserts. I will choose fruit instead of sugary sweets. I admit to God and, if appropriate, to my family and friends that I need God's power in my life to act on this decision."

**DEVELOP!** (Eph. 2:10; Ps. 73:24; Dan. 9:3, 4; 1 John 3:22).

Once God has convinced you that you need to change a habit, and once you've explored possible solutions, it's time to develop a realistic plan that will help you reach your goal in small steps. If you fail to plan, you'll plan to fail.

**What guidelines should you consider in developing a plan?**  
Eph. 2:10; Ps. 73:24.

"Success is not the result of chance or of destiny; it is the outworking of God's own providence, the reward of faith and discretion, of virtue and persevering effort."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 353.

**How does Daniel's prayer teach us about God's plan and the need to change?** Dan. 9:3, 4, 17, 19.

Change rarely takes place unless one is discontented with those things preventing it. No one makes plans or prays when satisfied with the status quo.

**Are you willing to make such a commitment in order to form more healthful habits? Is Daniel's prayer your own?**

**What part do you have to play in the fulfillment of such a determined petition?** 1 John 3:22; James 1:6, 7; Matt. 21:22.

The following is an example of a realistic plan for reaching a goal in small steps:

To reduce high blood pressure, reduce salt intake. The eventual goal is to reduce sodium intake to one teaspoon per day. Begin by cutting the content of salt in recipes by one fourth for a week or two, and then by one half, until finally you reach your goal. Without a definite plan, your salt intake may continue to increase.

**Are there some habits that a person can, or should, break immediately, without gradual withdrawal?**

**ACT!** (James 2:26; Eph. 4:22-24).

God has convinced you that you need to change certain habits in order to be healthier. With His guidance you've examined possible solutions and developed a realistic plan. Now you're ready to act.

**What is the relationship between faith and action? James 2:26. In Hebrews 11, notice how many action words the author used. What does this tell us about faith and works?**

True faith is always willing to cooperate with God's plan for restoration.

"There was nothing dead about either Abraham's or Rahab's faith or that of any of the other heroes of faith honored in Heb. 11. By faith they obeyed. Church members in name only, without a personal witness that reflects the ministry of Christ on their behalf, are, as it were, mere corpses."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 524.

**Describe the change that takes place when a person forms better habits. Eph. 4:22-24.**

"The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. . . . When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 172, 173.

New habits are more quickly and firmly established when physical and mental action are involved. For example, gymnasts not only spend several hours physically practicing, they also mentally practice their actions.

What if a person tends to explode verbally when someone wrongs him or her? That person can practice remaining calm in actual situations. But he or she can also practice a response in advance by thinking, *When this happens again, I will pray, Lord, You love this person as much as You love me. Help me not to let [person's name] control me. Help me to remain calm and gentle.*

**How do Isaiah 26:3 and Philippians 4:8 illustrate this principle?**

**RESIST AND SHARE!** (Ps. 139:23, 24; Gal. 6:7; James 4:6-10; 1 John 3:22).

Once you've acted on a plan to help change a habit, don't become discouraged if you should meet with temporary setbacks. Such changes require time. And Satan is never happy when we decide to give up something that has the potential for separating us from God. These suggestions will help you meet the arrows the enemy will point in your direction:

1. Avoid situations you know will be tempting.
2. Prepare an action plan to meet temptations when they arrive.
3. Practice your responses.
4. Don't hesitate to resist temptation. Delaying makes it more difficult to resist.
5. Remember that with Christ's help you can succeed.
6. When appropriate, share with others how the Lord has helped you.

**How can this last suggestion help you in establishing a more healthful lifestyle?**

"The relation which exists between the mind and the body is very intimate. . . . The condition of the mind affects the health of the physical system. If the mind is free and happy, from a consciousness of rightdoing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it creates a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing a freer circulation of the blood and a toning up of the entire body. The blessing of God is a healing power, and those who are abundant in benefiting others will realize that wondrous blessing in both heart and life."—*Counsels on Health*, p. 28.

"We become overcomers by helping others to overcome, by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 974.

**What did Jesus instruct a demoniac to do after He healed him? Mark 5:2, 13, 19. How can you tell others about the effect of Christ's healing powers in your life? Is it always necessary to tell someone verbally?**

**FURTHER STUDY:** Changing any habit requires that we depend upon God's power. Read about His power in Genesis 18:14 (first half), 2 Chronicles 25:8, Isaiah 40:29, and Jeremiah 32:17. Also read the chapter "A Higher Experience," pages 503-516, in *The Ministry of Healing*.

"Those who put their trust in Christ are not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habit or tendency. Instead of being held in bondage to the lower nature, they are to rule every appetite and passion. God has not left us to battle with evil in our own finite strength. Whatever may be our inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong, we can overcome through the power that He is ready to impart."—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 175, 176.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How is David's prayer in Psalm 139:23, 24 a prayer of confession and repentance? What is "the way everlasting," and how does it relate to a healthful lifestyle?
2. Do you think some persons exercise proper health habits as a way to earn salvation? According to Lesson 1, what is the real reason for adopting a healthful lifestyle?
3. Consider Paul's life. What habits did he need to change and how did he change them? How can we apply his experience to ours when it comes to changing habits? What does his experience tell us about the process of changing?
4. After studying this week's lesson, what habit do you think God wants you to change? Will you ask Him now to help you do so?

**SUMMARY:** In the space below, outline the steps necessary in breaking a bad habit. (If you have identified a habit in Discussion Question 4, make your outline with that habit in mind. You might also want to outline a plan to help break that habit.)

Remember these steps as you study the rest of the quarterly. They will help you apply the lessons so you can have a healthier, happier life.

# True Remedies



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Gen. 1; 2:15; Mark 6:31.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalm 139:14).

**KEY THOUGHT.** "Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies. Every person should have a knowledge of nature's remedial agencies and how to apply them."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 127.

**AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION . . .** Can you finish this old saying? It goes like this: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. This is especially true when applied to health. It makes so much more sense to know how to prevent disease than to know how to treat it when you get sick. Yet how many of us know about and practice nature's inexpensive remedies?

This lesson begins a six-week study that will explore nature's eight basic principles governing our health. Violation of these principles will inevitably increase the risk of illness, disability, and premature death. Following them will do more to enhance our health and our Christian experience than modern medicine, medical advances, national insurance programs, and the best-equipped hospitals in the world!

## THE FACE OF THE DEEP (Gen. 1).

During Creation Week, God provided for many of the ways nature keeps us healthy. Search through Genesis 1 and 2 to see whether you can pick them out. What is the first one mentioned?

Water has existed since the beginning of Creation and is an important factor in keeping our bodies running smoothly:

1. By weight the body is about 70 percent water.
2. Blood is approximately 83 percent water, and bones consist of nearly 22 percent water.
3. Water comprises approximately 75 percent of the body's muscles.
4. The body requires about two and one half quarts (2.4 liters) of water per day to perform all of its functions. Some of these functions include blood circulation, waste removal, nutrient transport, and digestion. (We obtain water both by drinking it and from the food we eat.)
5. The average person has between 15 and 40 billion brain cells. Each one of those is 70 to 85 percent water. Sufficient water to supply these cells helps keep you mentally alert and helps prevent depression and irritability.
6. It is not only the water you drink that is important. A cool or tepid daily bath or shower improves circulation, thus energizing the body and mind. A shower or bath can also soothe jangled nerves, which can cause illness by weakening the immune system. Bathing also removes impurities from the skin and can reduce fever.

What does water symbolize in the Bible? John 4:5-14; 7:37, 38.

"Refreshing water . . . is an emblem of the divine grace which Christ alone can bestow, and which is as the living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul. He in whom Christ is abiding has within him a never-failing fountain of grace and strength."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 412.

**How has Jesus refreshed your soul lately?**

## FIRST THINGS FIRST (Gen. 1:3-5).

Day 1. "Without light there could be no life; and as the Creator began the work of bringing order from chaos and of introducing various forms of plant and animal life upon the earth, it was essential that there be light."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 209, 210.

The benefits of sunlight are many:

1. Fifteen to 30 minutes of daily exposure to sunlight in the early morning or late afternoon helps the body synthesize or make its own vitamin D, an essential nutrient/hormone in the skin. (Vitamin D helps blood to produce calcium and phosphorus, which build and repair bone mass.)

2. Sunlight acts as a disinfectant and a killer of bacteria and germs.

3. Being in the sun after a plane trip that crosses several time zones is helpful in adjusting to jet lag.

4. The sun "provides energy to convert carbon dioxide and water into carbohydrates by the plant kingdom. Without this process animals and humans would starve to death."—Eleanor N. Whitney and Eva M. Hamilton, *Understanding Nutrition* (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Company, 1981), p. 401.

5. Sunlight also helps a person adjust to night work and relieves depression related to dark days where winter occurs.

(A word of caution: Sunlight can also be harmful. Prolonged exposure can burn skin, increase the risk of skin cancer, speed up the aging process, damage the eyes, and cause cataracts.)

**Light as a symbol.** In the Bible light is a symbol of God's presence (Ps. 18:28; 112:4; Isa. 60:1; John 1:4-9). Just as physical light is essential to physical life, so spiritual light is essential to moral and spiritual life. Read 1 John 1:5. "To those in whose hearts the work of recreating the divine likeness is going on apace, He comes again today bidding the shadows of sin, uncertainty, and discouragement flee, saying, 'Let there be light.'"—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 210.

How can you add more sunlight, both physical and spiritual, to your life? How can the Son's light protect your immune system from the germs and bacteria of sin?

**TAKE A DEEP BREATH!** (Gen. 1:7, 8).

What else besides water and sunlight did God create to keep our bodies finely tuned? Gen. 1:7, 8.

**Heaven.** "In this verse [verse 8] 'heaven' refers to the atmospheric heavens that appear . . . as a canopy . . . vaulting our earth."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 211.

No one can live longer than five or six minutes without using some of the heaven mentioned in Genesis 1:7, 8. "In order to have good blood, we must breathe well. Full, deep inspirations of pure air, which fill the lungs with oxygen, purify the blood. They impart to it a bright color, and send it, a life-giving current, to every part of the body."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 272.

*No problem here*, you may think. *We breathe naturally!* But we don't naturally breathe the way we should. Have you ever seen a baby's abdomen expand like a balloon with each breath and flatten while breathing out? Then you've seen the correct way to breathe. You can learn to breathe like a baby again by doing the following:

Sit in a straight-backed chair and slide forward a few inches. Place the palm of one hand over your navel, and place the other hand on top of it. If your abdomen flattens as you inhale, you are breathing incorrectly.

To practice breathing correctly, take a deep breath and exhale completely through your mouth. Notice how your abdomen naturally flattens, then flatten it even farther. Now let the next breath flow naturally through your nose. If your abdomen expands like a balloon, you're breathing properly.

What *kind* of air you breathe is also important. Buildings should allow for proper circulation. And sleep with the window open, safety and weather permitting.

**This lesson emphasizes how dependent we are on air for life. Compare this dependence with our dependence on Christ for salvation.**

**Practice spiritual breathing as you exhale the bad air by confessing and submitting sin and weakness to Jesus. Inhale the heavenly atmosphere by receiving Jesus through pardon and cleansing. (See John 20:21, 22; Rom. 8:11.)**

## LET'S GET MOVING! (Gen. 2:15).

God appointed Adam and Eve to do work that involved exercising the body. Unfortunately, many of us today have work that involves a minimal amount of movement. Yet the fact that exercise is vital to our health has not changed. Here are only some of the things it can do for us:

1. Exercise helps to normalize blood pressure.
2. Exercise allows more blood to reach all parts of the body, keeping the extremities warm.
3. Exercise releases both physical and emotional tension, helping you to feel better about life.
4. Exercise provides electrical energy to the brain and nerve cells.
5. It can help with your complexion and keep you trim.
6. Exercise makes you more energetic, thus delaying both physical and emotional fatigue.
7. It aids in the brain's production of a chemical that gives you a sense of well-being and increases your tolerance for pain.

This partial list should convince us that it is time to stop making excuses and start exercising. Start slowly and gradually increase as you gain endurance. It may be wise to consult your physician before starting. High blood pressure and cholesterol often do not manifest symptoms, but can prove harmful when starting an exercise program. Your goal should be to engage in any type of aerobic exercise or recreation that is comparable to walking one mile in 15 minutes four or more times a week. (Aerobic exercises repeatedly use the large muscles of the legs and arms until the heart rate increases 20 to 25 percent.)

**Better than medicine.** "Those whose habits are sedentary should, when the weather will permit, exercise in the open air every day, summer or winter. Walking is preferable . . . for it brings more of the muscles into exercise. The lungs are forced into healthy action, since it is impossible to walk briskly without inflating them.

"Such exercise would in many cases be better for the health than medicine."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 240.

**What modern conveniences rob us of the opportunity to exercise? How can you exercise despite these conveniences?**

**"COME YE . . . APART"** (Gen. 2:2, 3; Mark 6:31).

**What other types of rest besides the Sabbath rest are necessary?**

"I was shown that Sabbathkeepers as a people labor too hard, without allowing themselves change or periods of rest. Recreation is needful to those who are engaged in physical labor, and is still more essential for those whose labor is principally mental."—*Counsels on Health*, p. 195.

Rest helps us work more efficiently and think more clearly. It also helps the body fight infections and contributes to a longer life. There are three types of rest: (1) rest from emotional or mental stress, (2) rest from physical exertion, and (3) rest from an illness or injury. If you spend too much time thinking or worrying, you may experience anxiety, depression, or irritability. "Rest" from this is to exercise in the fresh air. To rest from physical exertion, know your body's limit, then quit before you become exhausted. And finally, illness or injury require bed rest to provide healing to the body.

To sleep well, follow these tips: Choose regular hours to sleep. Use a comfortable bed. And if possible, allow plenty of fresh air in the bedroom, and keep the room around 60 degrees F (16 degrees C). Also keep physically fit. Relax prior to bedtime. And if you eat an evening meal, make it light and at least 4 hours before retiring.

**How can the Sabbath help with the first two types of rest mentioned above?**

True Sabbathkeeping also involves learning more about God and ministering to the spiritual needs of others.

**Of what special rest was the Sabbath designed to remind us? Ex. 31:13; Heb. 4:1, 3, 10, 11. How can this rest help us to be physically healthier?**

Hebrews 4:1, 3, 10, 11 "refer to the Christian's rest from the works of sin and from attempts to earn salvation by his own merits."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 414.

**FURTHER STUDY:** In light of what you studied this week, meditate upon Psalms 33:5; 51:7; and Ecclesiastes 11:7. Read also "The Smitten Rock" in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 411-413 (water), and *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 127, 220, 275 (sunlight); 274 (air); 127, 237-239, 265, 293 (exercise); 127, 236 (rest).

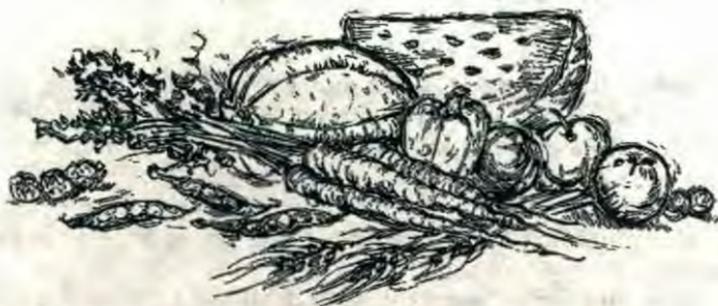
"Great blessings are enfolded in the observance of the Sabbath, and God desires that the Sabbath day shall be to us a day of joy. There was joy at the institution of the Sabbath. God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All things that he had made He pronounced 'very good.' . . . Though sin has entered the world to mar His perfect work, God still gives to us the Sabbath as a witness that One omnipotent, infinite in goodness and mercy, created all things. Our heavenly Father desires through the observance of the Sabbath to preserve among men a knowledge of Himself. He desires that the Sabbath shall direct our minds to Him as the true and living God, and that through knowing Him we may have life and peace."  
—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 349.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Make a list of the most important lessons you have learned about good health and its relationship to water, fresh air, sunlight, exercise, and rest. Given what you've learned about these principles, how can they help you attain a more rewarding spiritual life? (Reviewing Lesson 1 may help you answer this question.)
2. Which natural remedy studied this week do you need more of? Use the techniques described in Lesson 4 to discover where you need improvement and to implement a plan to help create a change in your lifestyle.
3. Have you noticed how the natural laws studied this week relate to one another in terms of function? Review the Memory Text with this in mind. What do these principles tell us about God and the way He views us?
4. How will the use of these natural laws help spread the gospel message?

**SUMMARY:** God has given us natural laws to help maintain our health so we can more easily learn about and work for Him. These principles work together to promote a state of well-being that will attract others to the gospel message.

# Body Building



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Gen. 1:29; 3:18; Dan. 1:1-20.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: . . . Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's" (Psalm 103:2, 5).

**KEY THOUGHT:** "Each organ of the body requires its share of nutrition. . . . "Those foods should be chosen that best supply the elements needed for building up the body."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 295.

**FOOD FOR LIFE.** Last week we began looking at the natural powers God supplies to help us with our health. This week we'll discuss another natural remedy—diet. Food helps to form all bodily tissues and cells and provides energy. And finally, we enjoy food so much. It tastes, smells, and looks delicious. Even many social events revolve around a carefully prepared meal.

The importance of food is illustrated by your experience. Calculate the amount of time you spend doing the following during a given week: shopping for food (include travel time to and from the store or restaurant), preparing meals, eating, cleaning up after meals, etc. Divide that figure by 168 hours (one week's time) and you will have the percentage of a week's time spent with food.

**How has food added enjoyment (or sorrow) to your life?**

**DIVINE DIET (Gen. 1:29; 3:18).**

**What did God originally intend for us to eat? Gen. 1:29. What did He add after the Fall? Gen. 3:18.**

Before they sinned, Adam and Eve ate fruits, seeds, grains, and nuts. These foods are without animal fat and cholesterol, which increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and certain cancers.

This diet was also high in vitamins A and C. It appears that foods containing these nutrients lower the risk of a variety of cancers.

Even the herbs (vegetables) God allowed for food after the Fall have advantages. Cabbage and beans, for example, contain substances that reduce the risk of colon cancer.

**When did God finally give His consent for people to eat meat, and why? Gen. 9:1-3.**

**What restrictions did God place on eating meat? Gen. 7:2. As you read Leviticus 11, make note of items that are familiar to you and anything you may not have heard of before. What do verses 23-25, 29-39, tell us about the relationship of diet to our spiritual health?**

**Think about it: Why does it make sense now more than ever to return to God's original diet (if the preferred foods are readily available)?**

**Food for thought.** According to the Loma Linda Adventist Health Study, 40-year-old male vegetarians (those who ate no meat or who ate it less than once a month) can expect to outlive male nonvegetarians by 3.7 years. The figure for women is 1.1 years. An Adventist nonvegetarian man in his forties has a heart attack risk four times greater than his vegetarian counterpart. The death rate from all causes combined for men and women was 33 percent greater for nonvegetarians than it was for vegetarians. Cancer death rates are 51 percent greater for prostate cancer and 66 percent greater for ovarian cancer among nonvegetarians.

## A TEST CASE (Dan. 1:1-20).

Yesterday's lesson cited modern statistics favoring a vegetarian diet. What incident occurred between 606 and 605 B.C. that supports these findings? Dan. 1:1-20.

**The king's meat.** "Among the viands [foods] placed before the king were swine's flesh and other meats which were declared unclean."—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 19.

**Pulse (verse 12).** " 'Food derived from plants,' such as cereals and vegetables. According to Jewish tradition, berries and dates were also comprehended in the term."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 761.

**Without equal.** "At the court of Babylon were gathered representatives from all lands, men . . . possessed of the broadest culture that the world could bestow; yet among them all, the Hebrew youth were without a peer. In physical strength and beauty, in mental vigor and literary attainment, they stood unrivaled. The erect form, the firm, elastic step, the fair countenance, the undimmed senses, the untainted breath—all were so many certificates of good habits, insignia of the nobility with which nature honors those who are obedient to her laws."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 485 (italics supplied).

**What lesson in changing any health habit does Daniel's experience teach us?**

Through His Holy Spirit, God will strengthen us to follow His plans for our health and happiness.

Daniel's test case was not so much over the benefits of vegetarianism as it was over his loyalty to God. What does this tell us about the importance of what we eat as it relates to our experience with the Lord?

What does Daniel's test case show us about meeting health concerns in an evangelistic approach? Is there a way you can personally witness to a friend by using this method?

**ATTENTION, VEGETARIANS!**

Maybe we don't eat meat. But with the availability of so much "ready-to-eat" food, we need to remind ourselves of some things about the original diet that our modern life often leads us to forget.

**How did Adam and Eve obtain their food? Gen. 2:15, 16; 3:17, 18.**

Even today, there are steps we can take to ensure a healthful diet.

1. Purchase the freshest and best-quality fruits, nuts, grains, and vegetables available. Then store them in a cool, dry place for a short amount of time.

2. Eat some raw food every day. When you do cook, use a minimum amount of water and time.

3. Stay away from as many refined foods as possible. Buy or make breads with whole-grain cereal flour, and use brown rice instead of white. Your intake of such starches and complex carbohydrates should consist of six or more servings a day. (This also includes seeds and legumes.)

4. Try to eat five or more servings (one half cup) of fruits and vegetables every day. Green and yellow vegetables, along with citrus fruits, are especially important. Also try to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables as they come into their season.

5. Replace your intake of animal fats (butter, cream, lard, suet, etc.) with vegetable fats. Your total fat intake should not be more than one third of your total calories.

All red meats and dairy products are high in saturated animal fats and cholesterol. Both saturated fats and cholesterol increase the risk of heart disease, cancer, stroke, obesity, and diabetes.

**List the foods you ate yesterday. How does your list compare with the above recommendations?**

"In planning vegetarian diets of any type one should choose a wide variety of foods which may include fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, nuts, seeds, legumes, lowfat dairy products, or fortified soy substitutes."—*American Dietetic Association Reports*, March 1988, pp. 352, 354.

## IT'S NOT JUST WHAT YOU EAT

So far this week we've studied about what to eat. But knowing *how* to eat is just as important.

**What advice do we find in Ecclesiastes 10:17? What do the phrases "eat in due season," "for strength," and "not for drunkenness" imply?**

**In due season.** "At the proper time."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1099.

**For strength.** "According to physical need, not for the sake of indulging appetite, or primarily as a social activity."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1099.

"It was customary for the Hebrews to eat but twice a day, their heartiest meal coming not far from the middle of the day."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1165.

**What other things should we remember about *how* to eat?**

1. Eating slowly and chewing thoroughly aids digestion.
2. Food should be neither too hot nor too cold. Cold food forces the stomach to spend its energy warming the food rather than digesting it.
3. Drinking large quantities of liquid with meals hinders digestion for two reasons: (a) If the liquid is cold, the stomach must spend energy warming the liquid before it can begin the work of digestion. (b) The stomach must first absorb the liquid before it can digest the food.
4. Overeating weakens the digestive system, making it more susceptible to disease. Immediate results of overeating can include headache, indigestion, and stomach pain.

"Many feel that if they do not eat meat and the grosser articles of food, they may eat of simple food until they cannot well eat more. This is a mistake. . . . Overeating has a worse effect upon the system than overworking; the energies of the soul are more effectually prostrated by intemperate eating than by intemperate working."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 102.

5. Eating between meals can cause tooth decay and weight gain, increase the risk of heart attack, delay stomach emptying, and increase blood-fat levels.

**Summarize in your own words the *what* and *how* of eating.**

PROBLEMS? (Mark 7:15-23; Acts 10:9-19; Col. 2:16; Romans 14).

What about the scriptural passages many people use when attempting to counteract biblical dietary teachings?

**Mark 7:15-23.** "The context makes emphatically clear that Jesus was not calling into question in any way any precept of the Old Testament, but rather was denying the validity of oral tradition . . . and here specifically the tradition that declared food eaten with hands improperly washed (in a ritualistic sense) became the cause of defilement. . . . Had Jesus at this time eliminated the distinction between clean and unclean flesh foods it is obvious that Peter would not later have responded as he did to the idea of eating unclean flesh foods."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 624. Furthermore, the Greek word here translated "meats" means "that which is eaten."

**Acts 10:9-19.** Peter received the vision in the setting of physical hunger. But instead of concerning food, it concerned human beings. Peter was to experience a hunger for the souls of all persons everywhere.

The Spirit's instructions in verse 19 suggest that Peter should associate the appearance of the delegation with the vision.

**Colossians 2:16.** Paul's statement does not imply the abolition of the law against eating unclean foods, because:

"1. The meat and drink are declared to be a shadow of Christ (Col. 2:17) . . .

"2. The prohibition not to eat certain meats antedates the ceremonial law (see on Gen. 7:2). Hence, certain animals are to be viewed as unclean for reasons other than ceremonial. . . . The apostle is not giving permission to the Colossian Christians to eat and drink what they want, disregarding all criticism. What he is saying is that Christians are no longer obliged to carry out the requirements of the ceremonial law. These meal and drink offerings have met their fulfillment in Christ."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 205.

**Romans 14:1-3.** Because Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians less than a year before he wrote to the Romans, it seems likely he is discussing the same problem he deals with in 1 Corinthians 8. This problem involves whether a Christian should eat food sacrificed to idols. Because an idol is nothing, there is nothing wrong in eating such food.

**FURTHER STUDY:** Psalm 104 celebrates creation. As you meditate upon this psalm, consider the wonders of how God provided for our nourishment. Also read "Diet and Health," "Flesh as Food," and "Extremes in Diet," in *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 295-324.

Occasionally, conditions justify the use of clean meats as food. In some lands flesh food is obtainable but not fruits, vegetables, et cetera. And some individuals are unable to secure proper nourishment from natural foods.

"In certain cases of illness or exhaustion it may be thought best to use some meat, but great care should be taken to secure the flesh of healthy animals. . . .

"Those who have feeble digestive organs can often use meat, when they cannot eat vegetables, fruit, or porridge."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 394, 395.

"Should health reform in its most extreme form be taught to those whose circumstances forbid its adoption, more harm than good would be done. As I preach the gospel to the poor, I am instructed to tell them to eat that food which is most nourishing."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 163.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What duties do we have as Christians to observe proper stewardship of the earth so food supplies are plentiful and healthful?
2. Can you explain the texts in Thursday's lesson to a person inclined to question or doubt? How could you explain the health message to someone who thinks it is the equivalent of trying to earn salvation?
3. What should be our attitude toward those church members who eat differently from the way you do? Rom. 2:1-3; Matt. 7:1; 1 Sam. 16:7; Rom. 14:3, 4, 10.

"It is impossible to make an unvarying rule to regulate every one's habits, and no one should think himself a criterion for all. Not all can eat the same things. Foods that are palatable and wholesome to one person may be distasteful, and even harmful, to another."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 198.

**SUMMARY:** What and how we eat are essential to good health. To the best of our ability we should healthfully prepare and eat foods that keep our minds and senses clear and vibrant.

# Character Building



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** John 15:1-5; Gal. 5:22, 23; Gen. 3:1-6; 25:29-34; Luke 1:13-17; Matt. 4:1-4; Eph. 6:10-18; John 12:24, 25.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4, 5).

**KEY THOUGHT:** "We need to learn that indulged appetite is the greatest hindrance to mental improvement and soul sanctification."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 127.

**ANOTHER ASPECT.** Last week's lesson dealt with the relationship of diet to *body* building. This week's lesson will study how the *control* of appetite relates to *character* building.

"The gratification of unnatural appetite led to the sins that caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. . . . *Indulgence of appetite and passion was the foundation of all their sins.*"—*Counsels on Health*, p. 110 (italics supplied).

The italicized sentence above explains the relationship of bad physical habits to character building. It suggests (1) the control of the body over the mind; (2) the surrender of self-respect to self-gratification; and (3) the worship of self rather than the worship of God.

**What does 1 John 5:2-5 teach about how to gain control of our appetites?**

CHARACTER DEFINED (John 15:1-5; Gal. 5:22, 23).

How do the following verses define Christian character?  
Matt. 7:16-20; John 15:1-5; Gal. 5:22, 23.

Committing ourselves to Christ means connecting ourselves to Him much as a branch connects to a vine. When we establish this type of connection, God's grace (see 2 Cor. 12:9) will help us obey His law, the principles of which are listed in Galatians 5:22, 23.

**The fruit of the Spirit is love.** "Those who have genuine love for God will manifest an earnest desire to know His will and to do it. . . . The child who loves his parents will show that love by willing obedience; but the selfish, ungrateful child seeks to do as little as possible . . . , while he at the same time desires to enjoy all the privileges granted to the obedient and faithful. The same difference is seen among those who profess to be children of God. . . .

"We are commanded to love one another as Christ has loved us. He has manifested His love by laying down His life to redeem us. . . . If we love Christ, we shall love those who resemble Him in life and character. And not only so, but we shall love those who have no hope, and are without God in the world' (Eph. 2:12)." —*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 81, 82.

Our love for God will inspire us to do His will. And His will includes that we be temperate (Gal. 5:23). Intemperate people seldom are interested in God's will or the welfare of others. Instead, they constantly seek for ways to gratify their appetites.

**What happens to such persons? Phil. 3:19.**

"The end of such men is ruin; for their appetites are their God" (Twentieth Century New Testament).

Tomorrow we will study the lives of some biblical characters to see that appetite and character development share a vital link. As you study, determine whether the actions of these persons displayed a genuine love for God.

**What do your eating habits display?**

**STRONG DESIRES (Gen. 3:1-6; 25:29-34; Luke 1:13-17).**

We need not look far in Scripture for a story that teaches how character development is related to appetite control. Read Genesis 3:1-6. How did Eve's desire for power and wisdom manifest itself?

When the woman saw, "Three times mention is made of how charming it [the fruit] was; it appealed to her taste, to her eye, and to her longing for increased wisdom. Looking at the tree in this way, with a desire to partake of its fruit, was a concession to Satan's inducements."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 230. Thus Eve's appetite not only for the taste of the fruit but also for something she shouldn't have, led humanity into sin.

**What does Genesis 25:29-34 teach us about the relationship between appetite and character development?**

Esau did not recognize the need to turn from temptation, because he desperately wanted the food and because he was used to allowing himself what he wanted. He thought about his desire until his appetite gained the victory. "He thought he would suffer great inconvenience, and even death, if he could not have that particular dish. The more he reflected upon it, the more his desire strengthened, until his birthright lost its value and sacredness in his sight."—*Counsels on Health*, p. 110.

**What does John the Baptist's experience teach about appetite and character development? Luke 1:13-17.**

Can you imagine John being mentally, physically, and spiritually able to do God's will if he had been self-indulgent like Esau? John's message was, "Get ready for the Lord. Give up your sensuous pleasures so you will have the strength to follow Him." (See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 100.)

**Which person in today's lesson revealed the greatest love for God? Was this person temperate or intemperate?**

**How has your appetite affected your character development?**

## STANDING IN ADAM'S PLACE (Matt. 4:1-4).

Yesterday we studied two Bible instances showing how appetite and character development are related. Today we'll study the most important instance of all. As you read Matthew 4:1-4, notice the extent of Christ's fast. How long have you gone without food; how hungry did you become?

Everything was lost when Adam and Eve allowed their appetite to control their decision making. But Christ had come to stand in their place. The time involved in His fast and the conditions under which it took place attest to the sinfulness and power of appetite upon humankind.

**What does Christ's experience say about the importance of having our appetites under control?**

"Of all the lessons to be learned from our Lord's first great temptation none is more important than that bearing upon the control of the appetites and passions. . . . Through intemperance, Satan works to destroy the mental and moral powers that God gave to man as a priceless endowment. Thus it becomes impossible for men to appreciate things of eternal worth."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 122.

**How did Christ answer Satan? Matt. 4:4.**

When we discover the power residing in His Word, we will be able to resist Satan's suggestions. Our concern will not be how to gratify physical appetite, but how to gratify spiritual hunger. The "food" that will be the most satisfying will be the answers to the questions What is God's command? and What are His promises?

"In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. . . . But to the obedient is given the promise, . . . 'bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.' Isa. 33:16."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 121, 122.

**If we do not learn to control our appetites now, how will it be for us in "the last great conflict"?**

HIS VICTORY IS OURS (Eph. 6:10-18; John 16:33; 1 John 5:4).

What battle rages in the life of every Christian? Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Peter 2:11.

We witness the struggle between the inclination to do right and the inclination to do evil in the battle over appetite. Upon what fact can we base our hope of victory? John 16:33; 1 John 5:4.

"Who will enter in through the gates into the city?—Not those who declare that they cannot break the force of appetite. Christ has resisted the power of him who would hold us in bondage; though weakened by His long fast of forty days, He withstood temptation, and proved by this act that our cases are not hopeless. I know that we cannot obtain the victory alone; and how thankful we should be that we have a living Saviour, who is ready and willing to aid us!

"A pure and noble life, a life of victory over appetite and lust, is possible to everyone who will unite his weak, wavering human will to the omnipotent, unwavering will of God."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 169, 170.

**To everyone who will unite.** These words from the quotation above suggest there is something for us to do to help win the battle against appetite. What do you think that something is?

"You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can *choose* to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 47.

Yet even surrendering our will to Christ depends on faith. No one chooses righteousness unless that person first believes. Those whom Christ healed believed in Him before they chose to obey His words. Their behavior exhibited their faith that His word was true.

Have you chosen Christ to the point where He can work in you according to His pleasure? If so, how do you think this will affect your appetite and character development?

**A PLEDGE OF IMMORTALITY (John 12:24, 25).**

**This week's lesson has shown that character development and appetite are closely related. How does Jesus illustrate this point? John 12:24, 25.**

"All who would bring forth fruit as workers together with Christ must first fall into the ground and die. The life must be cast into the furrow of the world's need. Self-love, self-interest, must perish. And the law of self-sacrifice is the law of self-preservation. The husbandman preserves his grain by casting it away. So in human life. To give is to live. The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man. Those who for Christ's sake sacrifice their life in this world will keep it unto life eternal."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 623, 624.

Living to give is one of the main reasons for controlling one's appetite. It is impossible to live for others while we are busy indulging ourselves. Further, indulging our appetite hinders mental and spiritual development, making it difficult to assist others when they need it.

**What is the symbol of our death to self-indulgence and self-interest? Luke 9:23.**

"The cross, the cross; lift it, . . . and in the act of raising it you will be astonished to find that it raises you, it supports you. In adversity, privation, and sorrow it will be a strength and a staff to you. You will find it all hung with mercy, compassion, sympathy, and inexpressible love. It will prove to you a pledge of immortality. May you be able to say with Paul: 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' "—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 47.

**What are your motives for ridding your life of self-indulgence? Do you feel as Paul did about the cross? How does looking upon the cross help you to recognize your impure desires? How does looking at the cross free you from these desires? Be specific.**

**FURTHER STUDY:** Read "Christian Character" in *The Sanctified Life*, pp. 80-88, and "The Temptation" in *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 114-123. Also read Galatians 5. What does it mean to walk in the Spirit? Does it mean the same thing as placing yourself "in right relation to God"? (See the first sentence of the following quotation.)

"Will you not without delay place yourself in right relation to God? Will you not say, 'I will give my will to Jesus, and I will do it now,' and from this moment be wholly on the Lord's side? Disregard custom and the strong clamoring of appetite and passion. . . . Say, 'I will believe, I do believe that God is my helper,' and you will find that you are triumphant in God."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 514.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Reread the first sentence in the above quotation. Where will we be (figuratively speaking) when we place ourselves in right relation to God?
2. In what way did Christ's battles against appetite reveal His love for us?
3. John was called to be a reformer. In what respect has God called the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be an agency of reform? (Review Lesson 3.) What can you do to be a part of that reform, both personally and in helping others?
4. What other biblical accounts show a relationship between appetite and character development? Did these persons' behavior reflect their love for God or for self?
5. Eve ate fruit she was not supposed to eat. And Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of lentils. What was it that made these seemingly minor items major?
6. How does overeating relate to appetite and character building? On what level does Scripture put the sin of gluttony and why? Prov. 23:20, 21.

**SUMMARY:** Eve, Esau, Daniel, John the Baptist, and Christ all show us that appetite and character development share a vital link. Only by surrendering ourselves at the foot of the cross can we enable the Lord to help us surmount the temptation to gratify appetite. Only thus can He help us build characters for heaven.

# Striving for the Mastery



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** 2 Cor. 5:14; John 15:5; Ex. 16:15, 18-20; 2 Peter 1:4-10; 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" (1 Corinthians 9:25).

**KEY THOUGHT:** "God's people are to learn the meaning of temperance in *all* things. . . . Before they can really understand the meaning of true sanctification and of conformity to the will of Christ, they must, by cooperating with God, obtain the mastery over wrong habits and practices."—*Temperance*, pp. 138, 139 (italics supplied).

**OLD-FASHIONED?** In the Greek New Testament, we find the word *egkrateia*, meaning self-control. In 1611, the King James Bible translated it as "temperance." The word *temperance* may seem old-fashioned to us. But the concept of temperance never goes out of style. What is old-fashioned about developing habits that lead to a more satisfying life? Yet for the Christian, the major reason for self-control is expressed in the Key Thought. Second Corinthians 7:1 tells us how closely sanctification and self-control are related. Also read Ephesians 5:25-27. "Here is Bible sanctification. . . . It is truth received in the heart, and practically carried out in the life."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 339.

This week we will take a look at the broad aspects of self-control. Next week we will study temperance in relation to specific areas of life.

**WHAT CONTROLS YOU?** (1 Cor. 13; 2 Cor. 5:14; 2 John 5, 6).

**What motivation do we have for being temperate (self-controlled) in all things? 2 Cor. 5:14.**

"It is Christ's love that controls me" (Goodspeed).

"Christ's love compels us" (NIV).

**How has Christ expressed His love? John 3:16; 1 John 3:1, 3, 9, 16. In what way does this love constrain us? 2 John 5, 6.**

We express living a controlled life in two ways—loving acts that honor God and loving acts that bless those with whom we associate (see Matt. 22:35-40).

"Have I not a right to do as I please with my own body?—No, you have no moral right, because you are violating the laws of life and health. . . . You are the Lord's property, His by creation and His by redemption. 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' The law of self-respect and [respect] for the property of the Lord is here brought to view. And this will lead to respect for the obligations which every human being is under to preserve the living machinery."—*Temperance*, p. 213.

**List below some of the phrases 1 Corinthians 13 uses to define love. Then consider what these phrases mean in light of Matthew 22:35-40 and 2 John 5, 6.**

**First Corinthians 13:1-3 implies that some people are motivated by things other than love. What might some of these other motivations be?**

Selfish motives render a person blind to God's requirements and the needs of those around us. But those motivated by the love of Christ, who reigns within their heart, will seek ways to honor God and bless those with whom they associate.

**How would you answer the question in today's title? Define how love is related to self-control.**

**BECOMING SELF-CONTROLLED** (John 15:5; Ps. 139:14; Mark 9:43).

Having established the proper motivation for self-control in all areas of life, we need to establish how we *become* temperate.

**Step 1—John 15:5; Acts 3:19.** We begin to achieve self-control when we realize that without Christ we are incapable of doing anything good. This realization then hopefully causes us to repent and turn away from sin.

The Greek word translated as “repent” in Acts 3:19 means “to change the mind.” The Greek word translated as “be converted” means “to turn about.” Relate the meanings of these words to the process of becoming self-controlled and establishing more healthful habits.

**Step 2—Psalm 139:14.** Learning how we “are fearfully and wonderfully made” is an asset when it comes to developing temperance. If we know how the body functions or why we feel the way we do about a situation, we can develop habits that will enhance our physical and emotional health.

**Step 3—Underline the word in the paragraph below that illustrates the next step in developing self-control.** “Let the will be kept awake and rightly directed, and it will impart energy to the whole being and will be a wonderful aid in the maintenance of health. . . . Exercised in the right direction, it would control the imagination, and be a potent means of resisting and overcoming disease of both mind and body.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 246.

**Step 4—Set realistic goals.** For example, don’t start an exercise program by jogging a mile (1.6 kilometers) right away. Start by jogging a short distance, then walking back. Increase this distance gradually until you work up to your desired distance. (Remember to consult your doctor before starting any vigorous exercise program.)

**Step 5—Mark 9:43.** Walk away from what’s tempting you. For example, if you can’t control what you watch on television, get rid of it.

How do these five steps compare with the steps in lesson 4 for making changes? Why not make the first step now? Or is there something holding you back?

## TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING (Ex. 16:15, 18-20).

What aspect of a healthful lifestyle does Exodus 16:15, 18-20 suggest?

Each Israelite received just enough manna for his or her needs. Thus, no one went hungry, nor did anyone go to extremes by eating too much.

**Shunning the extreme.** "Those who understand the laws of health and who are governed by principle, will shun the extremes, both of indulgence and of restriction. Their diet is chosen, not for the mere gratification of appetite, but for the upbuilding of the body. They seek to preserve every power in the best condition for highest service to God and man. The appetite is under the control of reason and conscience, and they are rewarded with health of body and mind. While they do not urge their views offensively upon others, their example is a testimony in favor of right principles. These persons have a wide influence for good."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 319.

Judging from what we've studied so far this quarter, do you think the above paragraph applies only to diet? What other words could we substitute for that one?

"The word [temperance] includes much more than abstinence from intoxicating drinks. It signifies moderation in all things and complete control over every passion and appetite. Excesses of every kind are excluded."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 982.

How does Exodus 16:15, 18-20 illustrate the avoidance of extremes?

Mike decided to follow God's original diet. But until then, he was habitually careless in his selection of food. After only a few days of nuts, fruits, and grains, he experienced stomach pain and digestive problems. Was he being extreme to make such changes so rapidly?

What can you do personally to avoid extremes as you attempt to achieve a healthful lifestyle?

## A RUNG IN THE LADDER (2 Peter 1:4-10).

What part does temperance play on what has been called Peter's ladder of Christian life? 2 Peter 1:4-10.

Why do you think it is significant that temperance is the middle rung?

Temperance has an important place in the ladder of Christian spiritual growth. In the believer's life "knowledge" precedes "temperance," and "patience" follows it. These verses announce a physiological truth. A knowledgeable person tends to be self-controlled and a self-controlled person tends to be patient. Temperance is the fruit of divine knowledge.

"The preceding qualities will be of little avail if not accompanied by self-control on the Christian's part."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 597.

**"For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful" (2 Peter 1:8).** The Greek word for *barren* in this verse means "lazy" or "idle." A person who, with God's help, has developed the graces Peter mentions in 2 Peter 1:4-7 will be compelled to work for others and for their Saviour.

**How does the Christian grace of self-control compel a person to work for Christ and others?**

Self-control is a safeguard against the creeping moral paralysis and physical and mental decline of today's world. While nations spend billions to erect and maintain strong defense systems, the goal of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to safeguard the church and the world from intemperance, disease, and premature death.

**How well do you think the church is doing regarding this goal? What are you personally doing to help? Is there a need for enlarging your temperance witness? If so, how?**

**RUNNING THE RACE; RECEIVING THE PRIZE** (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

**What background lies behind the motif of running a race in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, and how does it apply to self-control?**

To make his point about using self-denial in order to help others, Paul refers to the famous athletic games of Greece. These games consisted of contests in foot racing, boxing, wrestling, and throwing the discus.

In order to be victorious, athletes of these games needed to have their appetites and passions under control. They needed to abstain from stimulants and excitement that would weaken not only their bodies but their minds. And even those things that were good for them they could use or do only in moderation.

Those seeking the prize of eternal life must follow a similar program. God will not grant us eternal life if we believe our present life is merely an opportunity to get and do everything we want.

Instead, eternal life belongs "to those who use this present life as an opportunity to gain the victory over everything that would interfere with mental, physical, and spiritual health, thus demonstrating their true love for, and obedience to, the Saviour, who endured so much for them."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, pp. 736, 737.

**How does the ministry of health reform and exercising self-denial promote the salvation of others?**

"The Lord has presented before me that many, many will be rescued from physical, mental, and moral degeneracy through the practical influence of health reform. Health talks will be given, publications will be multiplied. The principles of health reform will be received with favor, and many will be enlightened."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 378, 379.

Many think our church standards are going by the wayside, and we are losing our distinctiveness. Is health reform a standard of the church? If so, in what way? How does the church hold up this standard if the members are at different levels of growth and we are not to judge them?

**FURTHER STUDY:** Meditate upon 2 Peter 1:4-10; 2 Corinthians 5:14; and 2 John 5:6 in conjunction with John 15:4-10. What similarities do you find in these passages? How do these relationships enlarge your understanding of self-control as part of the Christian lifestyle? Also read "Ministers to Teach Health Reform" in *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 376, 377; "Christian Temperance" and "Extremes in Health Reforms," in *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 354-390; or "A Higher Standard" in *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 309-322.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How has this lesson changed your view of temperance?
2. After studying this week's lesson, how would you explain the Christian concept of self-control to a curious neighbor?

**SUMMARY:** True temperance is refusing to use or do anything harmful and using or doing in moderation those things which are good. It is motivated by our love for God and fellow human beings. And we receive the strength for it from our heavenly Father.



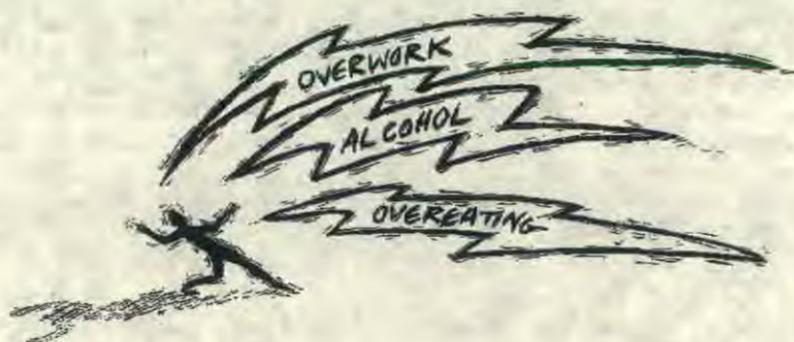
Did you give a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering second quarter of 1987?

If so, you helped to build this girls' dormitory at Nile Union Academy in Egypt.

The attached fields, not part of an organized division, are union territories directed from the General Conference headquarters.

Help them again this Thirteenth Sabbath. See back cover

# Ruthless Killers



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Prov. 20:13; 23:1, 29-35; 25:27; Eccl. 3:17; 12:12; Mark 4:19.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments" (Psalm 119:73).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Temperance stands on a broad platform of self-control (Lesson 8). These principles of self-control enable us to deal with the specifics of moderation and abstinence as we strive, with God's help, to reach the goal of temperance, which is having clear minds so we can better discern God's will.

**MADE AND FASHIONED.** What Old Testament verse could the psalmist have had in mind when he wrote this week's Memory Text? (See Genesis 2:7.) Because God created humankind, David asked God to give him understanding so he could learn God's commandments. We can ask God for the same favor in relationship to our health and His laws regarding self-control. Since He created us, He knows what is best for us physically, mentally, and spiritually. We will look at some areas of temperance most apt to touch our lives. For now, review the steps in Lessons 4 and 8 for making changes and becoming temperate. (You might outline these steps on a separate paper to keep with you as you study.) Be ready to apply these steps to any of the areas in the lesson where you feel you need help.

EXCESSES (Prov. 20:13; Eccl. 3:17; 12:12; Mark 4:19).

**Underline the specific aspect of self-control that each of the following quotations discusses. Perhaps some of them will surprise you.**

1. "Excessive indulgence in eating, drinking, sleeping or seeing, is sin. The harmonious healthy action of all the powers of body and mind results in happiness."—*Temperance*, p. 138.

2. "We should practice temperance in our labor. It is not our duty to place ourselves where we shall be overworked. . . .

"As a rule, the labor of the day should not be prolonged into the evening. . . . I have been shown that those who do this, often lose much more than they gain, for their energies are exhausted, and they labor on nervous excitement."—*Temperance*, pp. 139, 140.

3. "Intemperance in study is a species of intoxication, and those who indulge in it, like the drunkard, wander from safe paths, and stumble and fall in the darkness."—*Temperance*, p. 140.

4. "One of the most fruitful sources of shattered constitutions among men is a devotion to the getting of money, an inordinate desire for wealth. They narrow their lives to the single pursuit of money, sacrifice rest, sleep, and the comforts of life to this one object."—*Temperance*, p. 140.

**What aspects of modern life could we classify under "seeing" (number one in the list above)?**

**In what ways are riches deceitful? What is meant by the "word," and how does the "deceitfulness of riches" choke it? Mark 4:19.**

**In what way were the individuals in Luke 12:16-21 and 18:18-23 out of control, and how did it affect their lives? In what way do their stories shed meaning on Mark 4:19?**

Both men were so obsessed with making money that they overlooked the greatest treasure of all—eternal life with their Saviour. Intemperance choked the gospel from their hearts and prevented them from bearing godly fruit.

**YET ANOTHER EXCESS!** (Prov. 23:1, 2, 21).

If someone were to ask you what is the “prevailing sin of this age,” how would you answer? Would you be surprised by the following quotation?

“Gluttony is the prevailing sin of this age. Lustful appetite makes slaves of men and women, and beclouds their intellects and stupefies their moral sensibilities to such a degree that the sacred, elevated truths of God’s word are not appreciated.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 486.

Thus overeating directly thwarts the goal of self-control—to have clear minds in order to discern better God’s will for our lives.

“The energies of the soul are more effectually prostrated by intemperate eating than by intemperate working. . . .

“All that is taken into the stomach, above what the system can use to convert into good blood, clogs the machinery; for it cannot be made into either flesh or blood and its presence burdens the liver, and produces a morbid condition of the system.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 102, 103.

Habitual overeating can cause obesity, which in turn can increase the risk of contracting certain types of cancer. Obesity can also be a factor in type II diabetes, hypertension, high blood glucose, and high cholesterol.

Other problems caused by overeating include headaches, indigestion, and abdominal pain.

**Paraphrase the advice given in Proverbs 23:1, 2, 21. How is it that a glutton can “come to poverty”?**

“Control yourself if you have a big appetite” (Prov. 23:2, New Century Version).

Certainly verse 2 is not advocating suicide. It uses exaggeration as a literary device to emphasize the seriousness of the point: Overeating is such an important matter that we should take whatever steps necessary to resist the temptation.

Since overeating “beclouds” the intellect and “stupefies” one’s “moral sensibilities,” how should we eat, especially on the Sabbath, and why?

CLOUDED BRAINS; COMMON DRUG (Prov. 25:27; 1 Cor. 10:31).

What advice does the first part of Proverbs 25:27 give? What "modern" word could we substitute for the word *honey*?

**Clouded brains.** Sugar "causes fermentation, and this clouds the brain and brings peevishness into the disposition. . . .

"From the light given me, sugar, when largely used, is more injurious than meat."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 327, 328.

An excess of sugar can be responsible for many health problems. First of all, the acid formed by sugar and bacteria in the mouth causes tooth decay. Children are especially susceptible to this problem. An excess of sugar (as well as fat) can also cause obesity. To the problems of obesity mentioned in yesterday's lesson, we can add that early death increases as the degree of obesity increases.

There is also a relationship between sugar and diabetes. A diabetic-prone individual may defer this disease by eating a diet high in complex carbohydrates and low in refined sugar.

And finally, sugar decreases white-cell activity. These cells are instrumental in helping the body fight disease and infection.

**A common drug.** What do coffee, tea, some pain relievers, and some soft drinks have in common? Caffeine. And because caffeine is a drug, it will cause side effects.

Caffeine raises your blood sugar, blood pressure, and heart rate. It can cause ulcers, an acid stomach, and heartburn. It also increases the risk of heart disease.

Caffeine also can cause anxiety, depression, and birth defects. Animal studies have shown that high amounts of this drug can cause skeletal birth defects, retarded fetal growth, reduced birth weights, and increased stillbirths. Just 2 cups of coffee per day may retard bone growth.

The physiological effects of caffeine can be achieved with only 1-3 cups of coffee. A child who drinks only one caffeinated soda drinks the equivalent of 4 cups of coffee for an adult.

**Review 1 Corinthians 10:31. Could either caffeine or an excess of sugar be dulling your spiritual perceptions?**

"WHO HATH REDNESS OF EYES?" (Prov. 23:29-35).

What is responsible in one country alone for 30 percent of all suicides; 55 percent of all auto deaths; 60 percent of all child abuse; 85 percent of all home violence? Prov. 23:29-35. (Figures from Kathleen Whalen Fitzgerald, *Alcoholism* [New York: Doubleday, 1988], p. xii.)

Just one or two alcoholic drinks decreases the brain's ability to gather information from more than one source at a time. The same amount also impairs memory, perception, and judgment. Alcohol also affects the following bodily systems:

1. The immune system—Alcohol decreases the white cells' ability to fight disease, thus increasing the risks of pneumonia, tuberculosis, hepatitis, and several cancers.

2. The endocrine system—Only 2 or 3 alcoholic drinks per day increase the risks of miscarriages, stillbirths, and premature births.

3. The circulatory system—The use of alcohol increases the risk of coronary heart disease, reduces blood sugar, and elevates blood fats and blood pressure, thus increasing hypertension.

4. The digestive system—Alcohol irritates the stomach, thereby causing gastric ulcers and bleeding. Perhaps the organ most affected by alcohol is the liver, the primary site of metabolism. Habitual use of alcohol raises the risk of fatty liver, hepatitis, and cirrhosis of the liver.

**How does Leviticus 10:1-11 demonstrate the effect alcohol can have on a person's judgment?**

**Strange fire (verse 1).** This is ordinary fire not taken from the altar of burnt offering, whose fire God Himself had started.

**Do not drink (verse 9).** "This prohibition suggests the cause of the transgression. . . .

"Wine and strong drink can so benumb the faculties that man fails to make a clear distinction between right and wrong, between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean. This had led the two sons to take common fire as they entered the sanctuary; in their condition they could see no difference."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 749.

**BUT IT'S IN THE BIBLE! (Deut. 14:22-26; 1 Tim. 5:23).**

Yesterday we discussed the effects alcohol has on the body and what the Bible has to say against the use of this drug. Today we will study two major passages Christians use to justify their moderate use of alcohol.

**Deuteronomy 14:22-26.** The Hebrew words in verse 26 for "wine" and "strong drink" were used generically to denote either a fermented or unfermented drink. Also, the source of the Hebrew word for "strong drink" never included the concept of "strong." Originally the word referred to any sweet beverage that could turn bitter once it fermented.

That "wine" and "strong drink" in verse 26 refer to unfermented and sweet beverages make even more sense when we consider the context of the verse. Verses 22-26 instructed the Israelites on how to prepare for the yearly harvest festival when they brought their tithes to God to celebrate His goodness. During this celebration the priests instructed the people in several aspects of their lives, including sacred fellowship with God and the strengthening of family ties. How could the Israelites receive such instructions while under the influence of alcohol?

**1 Timothy 5:23.** Here Paul gives Timothy some advice to help alleviate a medical problem. But once again, the Greek word for "wine" was used generically to signify either fermented or unfermented grape juice.

Furthermore, the practice of using unfermented grape juice for medicinal purposes is well documented. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), Athenaeus (A.D. 280), and Pliny (A.D. 24-79; a contemporary of Paul's), each advised the use of sweet grape juice, or sweet wine, either mixed with water or warmed to alleviate stomach disorders.

**Does Paul's advice in 1 Timothy 6:11, 12 seem unrealistic if he were actually advising Timothy to use alcohol for medicinal purposes? Would it be possible for Timothy to "follow after righteousness" and to "fight the good fight of faith" if he were clouding his mind with even a small bit of alcohol for medicinal purposes?**

(For more detail concerning these verses, see *Wine in the Bible*, by Samuele Bacchiocchi, published by Biblical Perspectives, 4569 Lisa Lane, Berrien Springs, MI 49103).

**FURTHER STUDY:** How can we apply 2 Corinthians 5:10 and James 2:26 to what we have studied this week? Also read *Counsels on Health*, pp. 71, 157, 160 (on gluttony); 81-90 (tobacco and drugs); 98-100 (moderation, temperance); "Gain That Is Loss" in *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 252-259; and "One Thing Thou Lackest" in *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 518-523.

What will kill more than 3 million people worldwide this year? What will kill nearly 1 million people worldwide every month by the year 2020? The answer is tobacco-related diseases.

Generally speaking, tobacco damages every part of the human body with which it comes in contact. From cancer of the lip, mouth, tongue, and lungs, to heart and circulatory damage, tobacco stands condemned as one of the most ruthless killers of our age. Furthermore, while tobacco does not intoxicate, it does contain nicotine, a dependency-producing drug. Nicotine reaches the brain within 7 seconds. That's twice as fast as heroin shot into the veins.

The Bible doesn't mention tobacco specifically. In fact, it was unknown in biblical times. But what general verses relating to health can you think of that denounce the use of tobacco in any form?

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The tobacco industry is concentrating much of its marketing effort in Third World countries. In most of these places, tobacco products carry no warning labels and are often distributed free, even to children. How can Christians hinder such activities? Is it enough simply to work against the tobacco giants?
2. As you read Revelation 22:14, 15 from the King James Version, notice the word *sorcerers*. The Greek word is *pharmakos* or "poisoner." The related word *pharmakon* means "drug." Ancient sorcery involved the use of drugs. Think about modern drug problems and the "sorcerers" who promote the use of drugs. What relationship do you see between them and their Revelation counterparts?

**SUMMARY:** Because God created us, we can ask Him for understanding regarding His laws of health. Then we can apply these laws to specific aspects of our lives in order to attain the goal of temperance—clear minds that readily perceive God's will.

# “The Very Best Medicine”



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Matt. 5:38-47; 6:1-13, 25-34; 7:12.

**MEMORY TEXT:** “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7).

**KEY THOUGHT:** “The religion of the Bible is not detrimental to the health of either body or mind. The influence of the Spirit of God is the very best medicine for disease. Heaven is all health; and the more deeply heavenly influences are realized, the more sure will be the recovery of the believing invalid. The true principles of Christianity open before all a source of inestimable happiness.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 28.

**THE URGE TO SCREAM.** Military war breaks out in yet another part of the world as you continue to fight your own wars at home. A friend betrays you. There are so many people around you who really need help in some form or other. Economies fluctuate on almost a daily basis. People lose their jobs. And you begin to experience a feeling that more bad things are going to happen. So you begin to worry. The anxiety wears down your immunity. You catch a cold. The urge to scream wells up in your throat.

But stop! What is this about heavenly influences and health? Yes, even medical research is beginning to prove what Christ has been telling us all along—the principles of Christianity provide vigor to soul and body.

## WHITE ANTS (Matt. 6:25-34).

**A multitude.** That's how many came to hear Jesus speak. And even though they lived in a different time and place, they worried about their lives just as we do. As you read Matthew 6:25-34, remember that you are a member of a modern multitude also in need of faith, security, peace, and hope.

**Worry and our immune system.** Life can be a stressful state of affairs. And such stress can cause illness. A team of researchers studied 34 family caregivers of Alzheimer's-disease patients. The stress these 34 people experienced was ongoing and oppressive. The results showed that their immune systems had lower percentages of cells that help fight viruses than had other comparable persons. Caregivers who attended support groups, even though they had been caregivers for a long time, had higher percentages of these desirable killer cells. (Adapted from Norman Cousins, *Head First: The Biology of Hope* [New York: E. P. Dutton, 1989], p. 39.)

**Prescription for worry.** "If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day . . . all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 101.

How did Paul and Daniel manage to keep their faith strong? 2 Cor. 11:24-28; Phil. 4:13; Dan. 6:10.

What other means exist for keeping our faith alive and well? Isa. 26:3; 48:18; Phil 4:4, 8.

"The immune system is a mirror to life, responding to its joy and anguish, its exuberance and boredom, its laughter and tears, its excitement and depression, its problems and prospects. Scarcely anything that enters the mind doesn't find its way into the workings of the body."—*Head First: The Biology of Hope*, pp. 35-37.

"White ants pick a carcass cleaner than a lion." How are worries like white ants? How can you administer the above prescription this very moment to cure your worries?

**SHARE YOUR BLESSINGS (Matt. 6:1-4; Isa. 58:7).**

Imagine again that you are part of the multitude listening to Jesus as He describes the principles of His kingdom. You are so fraught with the urge to get as much as you can that when you have the opportunity to share, your first concern is *What's in it for me?*

**What does Jesus say about this in Matthew 6:1-4? (Doing or giving alms can be translated as giving to the needy.)**

"We are to give in sincerity, not to make a show of our good deeds, but from pity and love to the suffering ones. Sincerity of purpose, real kindness of heart, is the motive that Heaven values."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 81.

**Review this week's Key Thought. How does giving in "sincerity of purpose" and "real kindness of heart" help us to realize more deeply the "heavenly influences"?**

**How does Isaiah 58:5-11 describe this principle of religion? What does this passage say is the reward of living this principle?**

"Every ray of light shed upon others will be reflected upon our own hearts. Every kind and sympathizing word spoken to the sorrowful, every act to relieve the oppressed, and every gift to supply the necessities of our fellow beings, given or done with an eye to God's glory, will result in blessings to the giver. . . . The pleasure of doing good to others imparts a glow to the feelings which flashes through the nerves, quickens the circulation of the blood, and induces mental and physical health."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 56.

**How can sharing our blessings with others be a remedy for selfishness and covetousness?**

**Read James 1:27. How can you help someone today?**

A HOLIER ATMOSPHERE (Matt. 6:5-13).

**What third health-producing principle of Christianity does Matthew 6:5-13 tell us about?**

Communion with God through prayer keeps us in touch with the "heavenly influences" mentioned in this week's Key Thought. When we take our anxieties to Him and leave them there, we clear the muddied channels of our lives so His peace and love can flow through us unhindered. "We may close every door to impure imaginings and unholy thoughts by lifting the soul into the presence of God through sincere prayer. Those whose hearts are open to receive the support and blessing of God will walk in a holier atmosphere than that of earth and will have constant communion with heaven."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 99.

**What conditions must we meet in order for God to hear our prayers? Matt. 6:7, 11, 12; Heb. 11:6; 1 Thess. 5:17; 2 Chron. 7:14; Ps. 66:18, 19.**

When Jesus prayed in Gethsemane, He begged God to release Him from His mission. Yet at the same time, He was able to pray, "Not my will, but yours." How difficult it is for us to reach beyond our meager, stubborn will in order to claim God's loftier desires. So often our prayers are demands for God to do things *our* way. When this is the case our tensions mount. Only when we are willing to "let go and let God" can we rise from prayer filled with healing.

**What aspects of prayer do we often forget? Col. 4:2; Job 42:10; Ps. 46:10; 95:6.**

When we pray only for ourselves, it is easy to remain selfish. Only when Job began praying for others did his situation begin to change. When we praise God and worship Him through prayer, we soar above our anxieties and remember that He is in control, that He will answer our prayers according to what is best for us.

**How can your prayer life improve? How can prayer relieve any tension you may be experiencing now? Can you share a time when prayer made a difference in your life?**

## GOODWILL TOWARD MEN (Matt. 5:38-47).

Summarize the principle of Christianity that Jesus describes in Matthew 5:38-47.

How many times have you determined, *I'll get even with that person if it's the last thing I ever do!* Such concerns for justice are never pure. Nor are they healthy, because they foster such negative emotions as hate and bitterness.

Dr. James R. Averill divided 54 students into three groups: (1) a sadness group, (2) a happy group, and (3) a control group. The sad group watched a sad film. The happy group watched a funny film, and the control group viewed a boring documentary.

While each person in each group watched their particular film, his or her blood pressure, heart rate, and respiration were taken. Averill discovered that positive emotions caused respiratory changes, while sadness caused changes in blood pressure. These results persuaded Averill that emotions do indeed affect our physical well-being. (Adapted from *Head First: A Biology of Hope*, p. 133.)

So what is the Christian alternative to the negative emotions that seeking vengeance produces? God's children must, with no ulterior motives, exhibit goodwill toward others. When an injured person exhibits such goodwill to his or her oppressor, both are directed toward God.

"The demand of Christ is not that we 'resolve to like everybody,' but rather that we act in good will from God toward those we like and those we do not like."—*The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 7, pp. 302, 303.

Such is the love of God, "which Christ diffuses through the whole being. . . . Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy . . . health-giving, life-giving joy."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 115.

What Bible stories illustrate the principle of Matthew 5:38-47? After studying today's lesson, how might you interpret Psalm 18:48?

**"ONE COMPREHENSIVE PRINCIPLE"** (Matt. 7:12).

**How is the principle expressed in Matthew 7:12 related to each section of this week's lesson? In what ways do you think this principle can be health-producing?**

"On the assurance of the love of God toward us, Jesus enjoins love to one another, in one comprehensive principle covering all the relations of human fellowship.

"The Jews had been concerned about what they should receive; the burden of their anxiety was to secure what they thought their due of power and respect and service. But Christ teaches that our anxiety should not be, How much are we to receive? but, How much can we give? The standard of our obligation to others is found in what we ourselves would regard as their obligation to us."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 134.

"We need to be treated as if there were something in us that is beyond price despite our brokenness."—*The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 7, p. 330.

**Judging by the principle expressed in Matthew 7:12, could we also say that we need to treat others "as if there were something in them that is beyond price" despite their brokenness? What is that "something"? What will happen when Christians begin taking Matthew 7:12 seriously?**

Matthew 7:12 "is the truth as it is in Jesus. When those who profess the name of Christ shall practice the principles of the golden rule, the same power will attend the gospel as in apostolic times."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessings*, p. 137.

**How can the people in the following situations apply Matthew 7:12?**

- Deborah is the head of her department at work. One of the men working for her resents "answering" to a woman. How should Deborah treat this person? (Yes, Deborah is a Christian.)

- On your way to Sabbath School you notice a woman struggling with two small children and a flat tire. If you stop to help her, you'll be late. But then it's Sabbath. Should you even think about stopping?

**FURTHER STUDY:** Read the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12. Then decide with which area of this week's lesson each beatitude belongs. Also read *The Desire of Ages*, "The Sermon on the Mount," pp. 298-314; *The Ministry of Healing*, "Mind Cure," pp. 241-259.

"Courage, hope, faith, sympathy, love, promote health and prolong life. A contented mind, a cheerful spirit, is health to the body and strength to the soul. . . ."

"When temptations assail you, when care, perplexity, and darkness seem to surround your soul, look to the place where you last saw the light. Rest in Christ's love and under His protecting care. . . . Entering into communion with the Saviour, we enter the region of peace. . . ."

"Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does a spirit of gratitude and praise. It is a positive duty to resist melancholy, discontented thoughts and feelings—as much a duty as it is to pray. If we are heaven-bound, how can we go as a band of mourners, groaning and complaining all along the way to our Father's house?"—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 241, 250, 251.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In what area of this week's lesson do you feel you need the most help? Review the steps for change in Lesson 4.
2. Review this week's Memory Text. How does following the principles discussed in this week's lesson give us a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind?
3. How can following Christ's advice in Matthew 7:1-5 improve our life?
4. This lesson is the last of six that discuss "nature's remedial agencies" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 127). Review the Key Thought or Summary of Lessons 5-10. How would you summarize what you learned from this series of lessons?

**SUMMARY:** The principles of Christianity are a powerful weapon against illness. A Christian's faith, love, and prayers foster positive emotions that strengthen our immune systems.

# Belief and Cleansing



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Matt. 18:21, 22; John 5:1-16; Eph. 4:32; James 5:14, 15; 1 John 3:4.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psalm 32:1).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Often before we can realize physical health, "Christ must bring relief to the mind, and cleanse the soul from sin."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 77.

**THE WORST PROBLEM.** Irene was a young widow, inconsolable over the loss of her husband. His premature death left her with financial difficulties, which didn't help her feelings of rebelliousness against God. As if these obstacles weren't enough, Irene suffered from an illness, making it difficult for her to find work. But Irene's worst problem was feeling that God was punishing her for a specific sin she had committed.

When Irene discovered and began to experience the certainty of forgiveness in Christ, it wasn't long before she was able to work and smile again. (Adapted from Paul Tournier, *The Healing of Persons* [New York: Harper and Row, 1965], p. 150.)

Last week we discussed certain principles of Christianity and how they contribute to our physical health. This week we continue that discussion by looking at the most basic principle of all—forgiveness.

## THE GREATEST DESIRE (1 John 3:4; Luke 5:17-26).

**What is sin, and how does it relate to disease? 1 John 3:4.**

Because the laws of nature are as divine as the Decalogue, failure to observe them is as much a sin as failure to observe the Decalogue. And the result of this failure often manifests itself in illness. (See *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 113.)

**Many of the people who flocked to Christ were sick because they had not obeyed nature's laws. Read about one such person in Luke 5:17-26. What significance is there in Jesus' forgiving him first and healing him second?**

To Christ, "body and soul were bound up together in a living unity. There could be no wholeness of life unless the soul was at peace with God. Therefore he spoke directly to this man's first and most important need: Your sins are forgiven you, he said. When that was true, then strength and healing of the body could follow."—*The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 8, p. 106.

"He [the sick man] longed to see Jesus, and receive the assurance of forgiveness and peace with heaven."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 74.

**How does the palsied man's desire to see Jesus contrast with that of the Pharisees and doctors of the law (verses 17, 21)?**

In this verse doctors of the law were teachers of Jewish law who received special schooling and passed certain examinations. The Pharisees were the conservative religious sect of Judaism known for their strict adherence to all religious duties found in tradition and the Torah. Together with the doctors of law, they interpreted and applied the law to every tiny detail and situation in life. They had come as spies to quibble and find fault with Jesus. The palsied man's faith shone clear and bright against the concept of righteousness by human works.

**Think about your own life. Are you as eager to seek forgiveness as was the palsied man? Could there be a sin in your life that is preventing you from enjoying good health?**

“RISE AND WALK” (John 5:1-16).

**In what ways is the story in John 5:1-16 similar to the story in Luke 5:17-26?**

Jesus “saw one case of supreme wretchedness. It was that of a man who had been a helpless cripple for thirty-eight years. His disease was in a great degree the result of his own evil habits.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 81, 82.

**Why do you think Jesus asked the invalid such an obvious question (verse 6)? What does the invalid’s reply tell us about his situation (verse 7)?**

“It was obvious that the man desired release from his disease, but it [the question] served to turn the sufferer’s attention immediately to Jesus and to the problem of healing from his affliction.”—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 949.

The invalid’s reply reflects a pathetic tale of desertion, selfishness, unfulfilled hope, and despair. He had no one to help him. Others waiting to reach the pool first were apparently less ill than he. Yet in their desire to be made well, they kicked him aside like an old useless rag. Maybe next time. On and on. For 38 years.

We don’t know whether he knew who was standing before him. But something about Jesus must have affected him as the rippling waters never did, for when Jesus told him to rise and walk, he did so immediately.

“Every nerve and muscle thrills with new life, and healthful action comes to his crippled limbs. Springing to his feet, he goes on his way with firm, free step, praising God, and rejoicing in his new-found strength.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 84.

Before encountering Jesus, he was a “case of supreme wretchedness.” Afterward, his body thrilled with new life and healthy action. Such is the nature of God’s forgiveness.

**What is the significance of Jesus’ last comment to the man as recorded in John 5:14?**

“Wilt thou be made whole?” is a question Jesus asks each one of us. What story does your reply tell?

## THREE STRANDS; ONE ROPE

This week we are studying the effect forgiveness has on one's health. In light of the two scripture passages we've studied so far (Luke 5:17-26; John 5:1-16), what can we say about the relationship between forgiveness and faith? Must we have faith before God can forgive us?

Of the paralytic, Ellen White wrote, "It was Christ who had brought *conviction* to his conscience when he was yet at home. When he *repented* of his sins and *believed* in the power of Jesus to make him whole, the mercy of the Saviour had blessed his heart. Jesus had watched the first glimmer of faith grow into a conviction that He was the sinner's only helper, and had seen it grow stronger with every effort to come into His presence."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 75 (italics supplied).

Of the man by the pool, she says, "He might have stopped to doubt, and thus have lost his one chance of healing. But no, he *believed* Christ's word, believed that he was made whole; immediately he made the effort, and God gave him the power. . . . *Acting on the word of Christ, he was made whole.*"—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 84 (italics supplied).

**Note the italicized words in the quotations above. Then write a definition of faith based on those words.**

Faith, forgiveness, and action are three strands that braid to make one strong rope. Because of our faith, we take whatever action is appropriate and necessary to find Christ. Faith compels us to reach across the sin-eroded chasm that separates us from God. It urges us to grasp His hand outstretched in forgiveness. It grants us our desire to be made whole. Faith claims Christ's salvation now.

"The sense of sin has poisoned the springs of life. But Christ says, 'I will take your sins; I will give you peace.' . . . His grace is sufficient to subdue sin. Place your hand in His, and let Him guide you."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 85.

**Has sin poisoned the springs of your life, breaking your health and your heart? Place your hand in Christ's now.**

## THE GREATEST MIRACLE OF ALL (James 5:14, 15).

**How does James 5:14, 15 illustrate the hand-in-hand relationship of health and forgiveness?**

**In the name of the Lord.** We can be the instruments of God's grace. God alone has the power to heal and forgive.

"Prayer offered for any purpose is a serious undertaking, for it implies that a man is sincerely willing to cooperate with God and to obey all of His commandments. . . . Consequently, the sick member cannot expect God's blessing apart from a sincere purpose to abandon practices which may, in part at least, have caused his illness."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 540.

**Save.** In verse 15, the word *save* means "to rescue from destruction," "to heal." In answer to the prayer of faith, healing may come about instantly or over a period of time. It may come as a divine act of intervention transcending natural law, or as treatment is applied. But no matter when or how healing occurs, it is an answer.

**Sins.** "That is, most particularly, sins which may . . . have caused the sickness. . . . To be sincere the prayer must be accompanied by the confession of known sins and by the conscious purpose, untrammelled by reservations, to align the life with the will of God. When this is done the past departures from known principles of healthful living are freely forgiven on the basis of divine mercy and the sick man's determination henceforth to live in harmony with known health principles."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 541.

**How should we view the cases of people who followed the instructions in James 5:14, 15 but did not recover?**

In the miracle accounts we studied this week, both people were searching for forgiveness more than for health. And is not forgiveness the greatest miracle of all? Perhaps, too, we could interpret James 5:14, 15 this way: The prayer of faith will save the sick from his or her sins. And all whose sins are forgiven will surely be raised by the Lord in the resurrection of the just.

**How do the following verses help with this problem? James 4:13-15; Matt. 6:10; Rom. 8:28; Luke 22:42.**

## INFINITE FORGIVENESS (Matt. 18:21, 22; Eph 4:32).

Before Leonardo da Vinci began painting *The Last Supper*, he had a raging confrontation with another artist. Da Vinci remained so angry that he painted Judas' face to look like the person with whom he had quarreled. But when he proceeded to paint Christ's face, he discovered he could not do so. After several attempts, he concluded his trouble was grounded in his unforgiving spirit toward the model he had used for Judas. Thus he redid the betrayer's face, after which he was able to complete Christ's portrait. Likewise, the Holy Spirit cannot paint the features of Christ into our lives while we are coloring the face of another with hatred and bitterness.

**In what way do the following texts enlarge upon this principle? Mark 11:25, 26; Eph. 4:32.**

**Based on what we've learned about how positive and negative emotions influence our immune system, describe below how forgiveness can assist us in being healthy.**

**What therapeutic principle does Jesus offer in Matthew 18:21-35?**

Some Bible scholars believe that the rabbis limited the number of times one person should forgive another to three, based on a false interpretation of Amos 1:3. Perhaps knowing this, and being aware that Christ always gave broader meaning to the law, Peter asked Him how often a person should forgive another.

Christ's answer came in two forms: (1) a symbolic number signifying infinity, and (2) a parable that elaborates on the true spirit of forgiveness.

"The great lesson of the parable lies in the contrast between God's compassion and man's hardheartedness; in the fact that God's forgiving mercy is to be the measure of our own. 'Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?' "*—Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 251.

**Are you quick to forgive? Or are you better at holding a grudge? Is there someone you need to forgive?**

**FURTHER STUDY:** Read 2 Chronicles 7:14; 1 John 1:9; Matthew 5:39-45; Luke 6:37; 17:3, 4; Colossians 3:12, 13. Also read *The Desire of Ages*, "Thou Canst Make Me Clean," pp. 262-271; *The Ministry of Healing*, "Healing of the Soul," pp. 73-94; *Christ's Object Lessons*, "The Measure of Forgiveness," pp. 243-251.

"Prayer for the sick should be offered in trust and submission, with quiet confidence in a wise heavenly Father who knows what is best and who never makes a mistake. Every intelligent Christian prayer of request, therefore, will include the submissive thought, 'Thy will be done.'"—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 541.

"The paralytic found in Christ healing for both the soul and the body. He needed health of soul before he could appreciate health of body."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 77.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. After studying this week's lesson, how would you define forgiveness?
2. Can you share an experience in which you forgave someone who had mistreated you? How did it make you feel? What did it do for the other person?
3. What about forgiveness have you learned from this week's lesson?
4. "Forgiveness is . . . a beneficent invasion. It is alert and patient and creative. Nor should we forget what forgiveness accomplishes in the life of the forgiver."—*The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 7, p. 476. How is forgiveness a "beneficent invasion?" How is it alert, patient, and creative? What does it accomplish in the life of the forgiver?
5. Forgiveness is essential to a person's health just as are water, fresh air, exercise, etc. Therefore, how could you use the steps in Lesson 4 to help yourself be more forgiving?

**SUMMARY:** Forgiveness is a two-pronged principle that prevents negative attitudes and emotions from ruining our health. God's forgiveness releases us from the guilt of sin, while forgiving others releases us from bitterness and enmity.

# A Living Offering



## *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Ps. 8:6; 1 Cor. 9:25; Matt. 25:21.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Being healthy plays an important role in our ability to help spread the gospel of salvation in Christ. Therefore, managing our health is as much a part of God's stewardship plan as managing our money, time, and talents.

**A TALE OF TWO DRINKING GLASSES.** Suppose you receive as a gift a beautiful crystal glass. Despite its fragility, this glass is quite usable. And if you care for it gently, it will last indefinitely. However, if you're careless with it, it could easily shatter.

Now suppose someone gives you an equally elegant drinking glass made of silver. It can endure quite a bit of abuse without breaking.

These two glasses represent two types of physical health, either of which a person can inherit. Some may have a more fragile constitution than others. Most of us are somewhere in between. But *all* of us benefit when, in God's strength, we take care of whatever type of health we have.

Stewardship is the management of life. This week we'll study how such management includes taking care of our health.

**GOD'S MANAGERS (Ps. 8:6; 24:1, 2).**

**What two basic principles of stewardship do we find in Genesis 1:1, 26?**

Because God created the earth, He owns it. But when He gave dominion of the earth to Adam and Eve, He gave their dependents the responsibility of managing it and caring for it. Thus, we became God's stewards.

**How does Scripture affirm the Owner-steward relationship? Gen. 9:2; Ps. 8:6; 24:1, 2; 50:10-12.**

**After the Fall, in what new way did God lay claim to His creation? Isa. 43:1. How did the Fall affect the purpose of stewardship? Matt. 28:19, 20.**

After the Fall, fulfilling Christ's gospel commission became one of the goals of stewardship.

**What areas of life does stewardship involve? How does stewardship in each area help to spread the gospel?**

Haggai 2:8; Prov. 3:9, 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Ps. 90:10-12 \_\_\_\_\_

Matt. 25:14, 15 \_\_\_\_\_

Gen. 2:7; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20 \_\_\_\_\_

**Time and talents; wealth and health.** These resources that God has entrusted to us are the stuff of which life is made. Note how we are to recognize God's ownership of these resources.

Deut. 5:12-14 \_\_\_\_\_

Mal. 3:8-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Rom. 12:1 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Cor. 12:27-31 \_\_\_\_\_

## TO THE GLORY OF HIS NAME ( 1 Cor. 9:25).

Summarize the principles of stewardship discussed in Sunday's lesson.

"There are many who in their hearts charge God with being a hard master because He claims their possessions and their service. But we can bring to God nothing that is not already His. 'All things come of thee,' said King David; 'and of thine own have we given thee.' 1 Chron. 29:14. All things are God's, not only by creation, but by redemption. All the blessings of this life and of the life to come are delivered to us stamped with the cross of Calvary."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 362.

What an exciting responsibility it is to manage faithfully all the blessings God has given us! And one of these blessings is a healthy body, the only medium through which God can communicate with us.

**Recognition of God's ownership of our bodies by creation and by redemption calls for what kind of response? 1 Cor. 9:25.**

Maintaining physical health is a serious stewardship responsibility. Christians are obligated to live mentally, physically, and spiritually as their Creator and Redeemer directs, to the glory of His name, not to the gratification of fleshly desires. Good health contributes to clear thinking for the correct discernment of truth, and helps a person to be more effective in working for the Lord.

Good health is partly a result of knowing what causes illness and of realizing that we should live according to that knowledge. "The light God has given on health reform is for our salvation and the salvation of the world. Men and women should be informed in regard to the human habitation, fitted up by our Creator as His dwelling place, and over which He desires us to be faithful stewards."—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 136.

**The two great principles of stewardship are God's ownership and our management. What effect will these principles have when you apply them to managing *your* health?**

"YE SHALL WALK" (Deut. 5:33).

How does God's promise in Deuteronomy 5:33 relate to our stewardship responsibilities? What laws are included in the phrase "ye shall walk in all the ways"? (Review Lesson 2, Sunday.)

**"Prolong your days.** The blessing of God is conditional upon obedience to His precepts . . . because cooperation with eternal principles naturally tends to 'prolong' life. Furthermore, occupation of the Promised Land was conditional upon their continued loyalty. Their right to Canaan was based exclusively on the provisions of the covenant. Should they violate its requirements, they would forfeit their right to that land."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 973.

In what way does proper management of our health express "continued loyalty" to God? How does improper stewardship regarding health jeopardize our right to citizenship in the heavenly Canaan?

**Preserving length of life.** Treating the body unwisely shortens the time in which God means for us to work for Him. Forming wrong habits, keeping late hours, and gratifying the appetite at the expense of one's health robs us of the stamina we need to participate in fulfillment of the gospel commission. "Those who thus shorten their lives by disregarding nature's laws are guilty of robbery toward God. We have no right to neglect or misuse the body, the mind, or the strength, which should be used to offer God consecrated service."—*Counsels on Health*, p. 41.

**God's amazing creation.** Although the body can be compared to a machine, it is far more amazing. Each day the body wears out and replaces approximately 2 billion cells. Every 15 to 30 days, the body replaces the outer layer of skin.

The heart and kidneys work continuously. The heart of a 70-year-old has pumped at least 46 million gallons (174 million liters) of blood.

What are you doing to help prolong the days of God's amazing creation? Is there anything you would like to be doing but are not? Ask God to help you follow the steps in Lesson 4.

**A GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT (Matt. 25:14-30).**

What does God require of us as managers of life's resources? What does He require regarding stewardship of the body? Luke 12:47, 48; 1 Cor. 4:2; 10:31; Rom. 12:1; 14:12.

Careful management of life's resources—including health—is one way of honoring our Creator and Redeemer. As we share our wealth—be it money, possessions, ability, or enabling health—others will see Christ's love in action.

**What does Jesus teach about stewardship accountability in Matthew 25:14-30? What does this parable teach us about the purpose of stewardship?**

Jesus makes it clear that we are not to neglect, abandon, or waste God's gifts. We are to use them wisely, applying good judgment about His intentions whenever specific instructions are lacking. When we do this, we will not fear being called to account.

**"Enter thou into the joy of thy lord."** We can experience the joy of service in this world. But our joy will be complete when in heaven we meet those who, because of our faithful stewardship, were impressed to commit their lives to Christ. (See *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 361.)

**List ways you believe health stewardship can impress others to follow Christ.**

"The misuse of our physical powers . . . unfits us to accomplish the work God has given us to do. . . .

"The physical life is to be carefully preserved and developed that through humanity the divine nature may be revealed in its fullness."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 346-348.

**Are you a good steward concerning weight control, exercise, sleep, etc.? How would better health help you to be a better steward in other areas?**

**"YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE"** (Rom. 12:1, 2).

To conclude our lesson on this topic, let's take an in-depth look at our Memory Text.

**According to Paul, what is it that motivates us to practice health stewardship? Rom. 12:1.**

God's mercies are abundant. But we witness His most tender mercy in Christ, as He hangs upon our cross, suffering for and because of our sins.

**Why does Paul first urge us to consecrate our bodies to the Lord before he calls us to dedicate our intellectual and spiritual faculties to Him (verse 2)?**

"To a large degree the condition of the mind and soul depends upon the condition of the body. Therefore, it is essential that the physical powers be kept in the best possible health and vigor. Any harmful practice or selfish indulgence that lessens physical strength makes it more difficult for us to develop mentally and spiritually."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 615.

**What does Paul mean in verse 1 by "your reasonable service"?**

Proper money management enables us to worship God with our tithes and offerings. Likewise, proper health management enables us to perform "an act of spiritual worship by offering to God a holy and healthy body, along with a consecrated mind and heart. . . . It is an act of religious service to preserve the physical powers in the best possible condition. The reason is that the Christian glorifies God in his body (1 Cor. 6:20; cf. 1 Cor. 10:31) by serving as a living example of God's saving grace and by participating with increased strength and vigor in the work of spreading the gospel."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 616.

**In the quotation directly above, underline the phrase that states why Christians desire to manage well all of life's resources, including health.**

**FURTHER STUDY:** Read Proverbs 9:10, 11; Romans 6:13. Read *Christ's Object Lessons*, "Talents," pp. 325-365. As you do so, relate what you read to health stewardship.

"Those who will keep themselves from the defilement of appetite and passion may become partakers of the divine nature. Their perceptions will be clear. . . . The Lord can use them: for they understand the words of the great apostle, 'I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.'"—Ellen G. White *Comments*, *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1105, on Ex. 20:3.

"Consider God's gift of health. As stewards, we are expected to preserve that gift with every resource available to us. Health is always subject to assault by factors over which we have no control. Yet we *can* control most of the influences that today cause degenerative disease and premature death. Responsible stewardship of health means choosing to exercise that control."—Richard E. Ecker, *Staying Well* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1984), p. 27.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. As Christians, we are stewards of the earth and our bodies. What environmental conditions in your part of the world might affect health? How can Christians work to remedy these conditions?
2. Review the tale of two drinking glasses in Sabbath's lesson. To which glass is your health most similar? If it is similar to the crystal glass, what can you do, with God's help, to improve it?
3. If your health is poor through no fault of your own, does this mean you cannot be a good steward of your body? Does it mean your witness for God might not be as effective as that of someone who is healthier?

**SUMMARY:** Managing our health is as much a part of Christian stewardship as managing life's other resources. One of the goals of proper stewardship in any area of life is to spread the gospel. A healthy body enables us to spread the gospel in two ways: (1) A healthy body reflects Christ's glory; (2) A healthy body gives us the strength to use our other talents for God.

## "Go Ye"



### *Sabbath Afternoon*

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Rev. 14:9-12; Acts 8:5-8; Matt. 9:35; 25:31-40; Luke 10:30-37; Ps. 67:1, 2.

**MEMORY TEXT:** "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19, 20).

**KEY THOUGHT:** "It is the Lord's design that the restoring influence of health reform shall be a part of the last great effort to proclaim the gospel message."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 75.

**ALL ABOARD!** This quarter we have taken a tour, so to speak, of the unique health message God offers. We began by viewing this message as part of God's plan of restoration, and from there we toured through the Bible to see how God implemented the message anew for both the Israelites and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As our tour progressed, we studied the natural remedies God gives in order that we may be healthier. We also observed certain principles of Christianity that foster a healthy immune system.

Because we have received a special message to be shared with the world, it is fitting that we end our tour with a lesson on sharing this message. We will do so in the setting of the gospel commission (Matt. 28:19, 20) and the three angels' messages (Rev. 14:6-12). As you study, be thinking of ways you personally can help spread the good news.

**"HERE ARE THEY" (Rev. 14:9-12).**

Because the body is the only medium through which God can communicate with us, Satan has devised carefully studied methods to weaken it. Then we will not be able to discern God's will for our lives and live accordingly. That is why God is so eager for us to follow, with His help, the laws that govern health. And that is why the third angel's message includes the message of health reform.

**Review the three angels' messages in Revelation 14:6-12. Summarize the third angel's message below.**

The pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church called the three angels' messages "present truth," that is, truth for the present time—the last and final times of the world. (See 2 Peter 1:12.) Reduced to its simplest form, the third angel's message becomes "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." This is the expression that represents the life and substance of the message committed to Seventh-day Adventists.

"The proclamation of the third angel's message . . . is the burden of our work. The message is to be proclaimed with a loud cry, and is to go to the whole world. The presentation of health principles must be united with this message."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 75.

The health-reform message is associated with the third angel's message because it equips God's children with strength of mind and body to live and preach the truth in times of great stress. It is also a message that will attract others to Christ and prepare them for His second coming. As such, it focuses upon Christ's work of redemption of the whole person. While we wait for the full redemption of all creation, Christians may on this earth enjoy blessings of improved physical and emotional health through careful attention to biblical instruction on health.

**How does Matthew 10:7, 8 define the gospel commission?**

**Matthew, Mark, Luke, and the other disciples live only through pages of Scripture. Today, you are one of God's disciples. How can you personalize and apply Matthew 10:7, 8?**

OUTSTRETCHED HANDS, OUTSTRETCHED LIVES (Matt. 9:35; 20:34).

How did Christ utilize a ministry of healing in His "effort to proclaim the gospel message" (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 75)? Matt. 9:35.

"Where He [Jesus] had passed, the objects of His compassion were rejoicing in health, and making trial of their new-found powers. Crowds were collecting around them to hear from their lips the works that the Lord had wrought."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 19.

How can we make "the restoring influence of health reform" a part of our individual and corporate "effort to proclaim the gospel message"? If we are just as interested in the welfare of others as Jesus is, what problems concerning church growth would we eliminate? How can we develop this concern? (See James 4:7, 8.)

What motivated Christ in His ministry of healing? Matt. 20:34; Mark 1:41.

**He touched him.** "This action was an expression of Jesus' spontaneous sympathy and compassion. It is also an expression of what we meet again and again in the gospel narratives, the fact that nothing less than a personal touch with the person in need would satisfy Jesus. . . . It was the physical expression and accompaniment of the giving of his heart and mind and power in personal contact. . . .

"There is no adequate substitute for outstretched hands and outstretched lives. No committee or organization can supplant them. Without them, the nerve of compassion atrophies. The word of love, which was in Jesus, must become flesh and dwell among men."—*The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 7, p. 667.

Has your nerve of compassion become numb from disuse? How can you begin sharing the good news about Jesus? How can the truths you understand about health help you to share Christianity? to share the Christ-centered truths given to Seventh-day Adventists?

USE IT! (Luke 10:30-37).

What can we learn about the “restoring influence” of health ministry from Luke 10:30-37?

The good Samaritan undoubtedly did not have Luke’s medical training. Nevertheless Luke wrote his story approvingly. He used the simple healing means within his reach and inconvenienced himself to help a person in need. What was his motive? Luke does not say it was to convert the Jewish man to Samaritanism. And the story plainly shows that he was not looking for reward or even for repayment. It tells us only that he acted from his compassion.

**Go, and do thou likewise.** Jesus clearly believed this man’s actions are an example He wants all His disciples of all ages to follow. Actually, He commands it: You go and do the same.

“The good Samaritan is not trying to do his duty. The point is that he is not aware of *duty* at all—any more than we are aware of duty when we act generously toward ourselves. We act so toward ourselves because we want to; so the Samaritan acts toward the stranger. He loves his neighbor as he loves himself.”—*The Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 8, p. 197.

**How does a personal or corporate health ministry fulfill the command to love your neighbor as yourself?**

Read 2 Kings 4:32-35; 5:1-4, 10; Acts 3:4-8; 28:8, 9; Colossians 4:14. Who are these verses telling us about, and what was unique about each person’s health ministry? What did these persons have in common regarding their health ministry?

The little maid “did not hide her faith in God; she used it. And let anyone today, however humble he may be, have faith in God and declare it to one in physical or moral need and he too may bring like miracles to pass.”—*The Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 3, p. 210.

**In what ways have you fulfilled the command “Go, and do thou likewise”?**

## IN CHRIST'S FOOTSTEPS (Matt. 25:31-40).

**What does Matthew 25:31-40 suggest about the relationship between fulfilling the needs of others and God's final judgment?**

The basis of God's judgment may be a shock to some of us who have settled comfortably into myopic rituals or routines. He will not ask us about our creed, worship, or position in the church community. Instead, He will want to know how well our lives exemplified the aspects of true religion as James 1:27 describes it.

**Sick and ye visited me.** The word translated "visited" also implies "to care for" or "to look after." This implies a true sacrifice of our time and self-pleasure.

**List ways you can think of to look after someone who is sick, handicapped, or widowed. Consider the time involved with each idea and the fact that spending time this way will keep you from doing something else.**

"Those whom Christ commends in the judgment may have known little of theology, but they have cherished His principles. Through the influence of the divine Spirit they have been a blessing to those about them. . . .

"Many feel that it would be a great privilege to visit the scenes of Christ's life on earth. . . . But we need not go to Nazareth, to Capernaum, or to Bethany, in order to walk in the steps of Jesus. We shall find His footprints beside the sickbed, in the hovels of poverty, in the crowded alleys of the great city, and in every place where there are human hearts in need of consolation. In doing as Jesus did when on earth, we shall walk in His steps. . . .

"To every soul a trust is given. Of everyone the Chief Shepherd will demand, 'Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?' "—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 638-641.

**How well does your life exemplify the aspects of true religion described in James 1:27? If you desire to do more for others, ask God to open your heart to the needs around you and give to you the power to make a difference in someone's life.**

THE RIGHT ARM (Ps. 67:1, 2; Luke 10:1, 8, 9; Acts 8:5-8).

With what words does the psalmist express the calling of all Christians? Ps. 67:1, 2.

**Saving health.** "Usually translated 'salvation'; but also rendered 'welfare' (Job 30:15); 'help' (Ps. 3:2; 42:5); 'deliverance' (Ps. 18:50 . . .); 'helping' (Ps. 22:1); and 'health' (Ps. 42:11)." —*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 787.

**Among all nations.** In essence, Psalm 67:1, 2 is the Old Testament counterpart of Matthew 28:19, 20. The church's responsibility is to bring the knowledge of salvation to all nations. Part of that knowledge includes the answer to the question Why be healthy?

Read Luke 10:1, 8, 9. Why did Christ instruct these 70 disciples to tell the healed that the kingdom of God had come? (See Isa. 42:6, 7; Luke 4:16-20.)

Imagine the scenes described in Acts 8:5-8. Do you think the people were joyful for reasons other than that they were healed physically?

"It is the divine plan that we shall work as the disciples worked. Physical healing is bound up with the gospel commission."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 141.

Why do you suppose "the medical missionary work is to be to the work of the church as the right arm to the body?"—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 77.

There are many people who never consider going to church or listening to religious services on the radio or television. Often assistance with the relief of their physical needs is the only way we can approach them as messengers and servants of God.

How can you personally approach such persons? What methods or programs has the Seventh-day Adventist Church developed to reach them? How long has it been since you or your church has participated in such efforts?

**FURTHER STUDY:** Read Isaiah 35:1-6 and Psalm 146. Also read "The Least of These My Brethren" in *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 637-641; and "Teaching and Healing" in *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 139-160.

"Medical missionary work brings to humanity the gospel of release from suffering. It is the pioneer work of the gospel. It is the gospel practiced, the compassion of Christ revealed. . . .

"Read the Scriptures carefully, and you will find that Christ spent the largest part of His ministry in restoring the suffering and afflicted to health. Thus He threw back upon Satan the reproach of the evil which the enemy of all good had originated. Satan is the destroyer; Christ is the restorer. And in our work as Christ's collaborators, we shall have success if we work on practical lines. Ministers, do not confine your work to giving Bible instruction. Do practical work. Seek to restore the sick to health. This is true ministry. Remember that the restoration of the body prepares the way for the restoration of the soul."—*Medical Ministry*, pp. 239, 240.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. After studying this quarter about the unique Seventh-day Adventist approach to living a more healthy life, would you be able to summarize the main points to an interested friend?
2. Other religions, including the New Age, promote healthful lifestyles. What makes the Seventh-day Adventist health message more appealing, and how could you present the Adventist viewpoint to a member of one of these religions?
3. Your neighbor has made a point of telling you that she wants nothing to do with religion. Just about the same time that she expresses a desire to quit smoking, your church decides to conduct its next stop-smoking clinic. Should you tell her about it? How?

**SUMMARY:** Our greatest privilege is to share the gospel with others. Sharing a healing ministry is the commission and high calling of us all. At this time in history, when the near arrival of the kingdom of glory is announced, such a ministry should again characterize Christ's missionaries at home and abroad.

## Lessons for Second Quarter, 1993

Sabbath School members who have not received a copy of the adult Sabbath School lessons for the second quarter of 1993 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first two lessons. This quarter's lessons cover the book of Job.

### First Lesson: Why Blame God?

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Job 1:1-5, 13-22; 2:7-13; 42:10-17.

**MEMORY TEXT:** Job 1:21

**KEY THOUGHT:** How should believers in God relate to the problem of suffering? The book of Job helps us find God's answer to this universal question.

**FURTHER STUDY:** What do the following Bible passages teach regarding the attitude we should adopt in times of suffering and trial? Deut. 8:5; Prov. 3:11, 12; Isa. 48:10; 1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 4:12, 13. Read from *The Ministry of Healing*, "Mind Cure," pp. 241-259.

### Second Lesson: The Adversary

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY:** Job 1:6-12, 21, 22; 2:1-7, 10.

**MEMORY TEXT:** 1 Peter 5:8

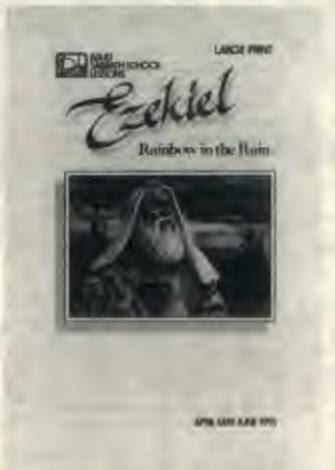
**KEY THOUGHT:** Evil and misery exist in a universe controlled by a God of love, because an enemy has arisen who is the cause of all that is wrong.

**FURTHER STUDY:** What is the relationship between Revelation 12:7-9 and the rest of chapter 12? Why did John introduce the casting of Satan out of heaven in the context of a discussion of the work of the "dragon" in the Christian Era? What has Satan been given permission to do to God's people throughout the ages? Has the Lord imposed restraints upon him? In what ways will Satan's attack on the last-day church be similar to his attack on Job? Read "The Origin of Evil" in *The Great Controversy*, pp. 492-504.

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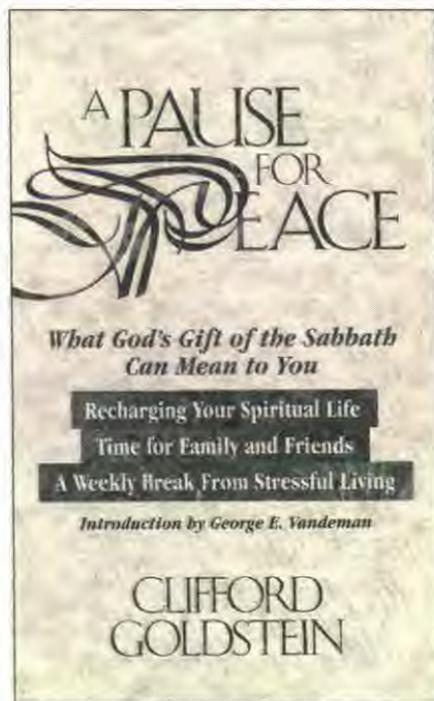
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