

Bible Study 1

Topic: **My Body is God's Temple**

Transitioning from the Sermon

A. The Main Points of the Sermon

1. Sourcing good health
2. Maintaining good health
3. Guarding our good health

B. Conclusions of the Sermon

When we see our bodies as God's temples, and more so, engage them as God's temples, we will benefit physically, emotionally and more significantly, spiritually. However, to do this, we must be prepared to fight against ourselves to attain this goal. It is then that we will become walking advertisement billboards of the healthy quality of life which god intends for us to live.

Scripture Reading - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NRSV)

"¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body."

Learning Objectives

The congregation will be able to:

1. Describe what is good health.
2. Explain the importance of taking care of the body, including consuming healthy diets.
3. Describe diseases that may occur if not taking care of the body.
4. Describe what is meant by the body being a temple of the Lord.

Material Needed

1. Laptop
2. PowerPoint Presentation (provided)
3. Projector and Screen
4. Zoom account or other online platform such as Microsoft Teams if studies are conducted online

Introduction

Welcome to this series of Bible Studies in which we will attempt to integrate our faith with dietary practices. The purpose of these studies is to engender awareness about the relationship between the food we eat and the quality of life which we may consequently experience. One of the most fundamental concerns regarding our body is its' health. It is a point worth stressing that the absence of good health renders the body ineffective in meeting its intended potential. Poor health will obstruct growth and development; it inhibits the body's movement and impairs its functioning. Good health is therefore not just an invaluable necessity, but a prerequisite for the body's operation. It is fundamental to life and also the quality of life which we live. **This study will explore three fundamental concepts namely, the understanding of what is meant by the term "good health," the importance of care for our bodies and the consequences of the failure to do so.**

Introductory quiz: Test your knowledge

1. How would you rate your health?
 - a. Very Good
 - b. Good
 - c. Fair
 - d. Poor
 - e. Not sure
2. How do you know you are in good health?
3. Name three tests that can be done as medical check-ups to see if something is wrong. These tests will show us what is happening in the body even before symptoms appear.

Exposition of the text

The text raises the questions of ownership, stewardship and purpose with regards to our bodies. The broader context of the passage is a discussion on the ultimate design and purpose of our bodies. The writer suggests our bodies belong to God and that its' primary purpose is to glorify God who made it and 'loaned' it to us. The text points to the proper stewardship which we ought to exercise over our bodies. It outlines some of the detrimental ways the body can be treated and the injurious actions which must be avoided. More specifically, it encourages us to understand that:

1. God made and owns our bodies. Although we have been given free will, we must endeavour to remain aware that we are not our own masters;
2. We must strive to honour God with our bodies; and,
3. The benefits of good stewardship of our bodies will be our own health and safety.

Focus on the main point

The awareness and acknowledgment of the care we must take for our bodies is grounded in a very important theological understanding. Paul encourages a personal understanding of our body as "a temple of the Spirit" and a dwelling place for God. This was accomplished by the salvific work of Jesus Christ which Paul points to with the phrase "bought with a price." This phrase alludes to the act of carrying out a purchase, in this context possibly a slave, at an auction. The one who has been bought

now owes his/her existence to a “redeemer.” In this way, the “redeemed” has certain expectations which are to be met, one of which is to maintain the sanctity of the temple. Paul implies that the Redeemer’s expectations have both moral and physiological applications; in maintaining the temple we are required to pay attention to caring for both inner and outer dimensions.

Application

The Jewish concept of the temple is shown in its architecture and its utility; its structure and its purpose. In like manner, the significance of our body rests both in its physical existence as well as its immaterial essence. Physically we are made up of limbs, organs and skeleton; flesh, fluids and bones. Scripture tells us, however, that we also have a spiritual essence and existence. The composite of the two realities, the physical and the spiritual, comprises the “temple” in which God lives. So how do we preserve the sacredness of our bodily temple, or conversely, how do we desecrate it?

What is good health?

Our study promotes good health and cares for the body as one way to honour God. In 1986 The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health as “A resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities.”¹

What is wellness?

Health is the resource that enables the actualization of a desirable quality of life. This outcome may broadly and generally be defined as wellness. According to the WHO,

“Wellness is the optimal state of health of individuals and groups. There are two focal concerns: the realization of the fullest potential of an individual physically, psychologically, socially, spiritually, and economically, and the fulfilment of one’s roles and expectations in the family, community, place of worship, and other settings.” Ideally, we maintain health by practicing a healthy lifestyle. One of the important components of a healthy lifestyle is eating a balanced and nutritious diet from as many natural sources as possible.²

Good health is a resource that is available to us but it is contingent on healthy choices. Wellness is an end it is to be sought through good and healthy practices.

¹ Source: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/150999#types> accessed on September 5, 2021.

² Source: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/150999#preserving-health> accessed on September 5, 2021.

Consequences of failure to care for the body

Based on the conclusion that healthy eating is an important component of a healthy lifestyle, here are some important facts about poor eating habits:

- Unhealthy diet is the leading cause of premature death and disability.
- We eat more than twice the amount of salt that is good for us. Excess salt leads to high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke.
- Many persons consume foods high in sugar, high in salt and high in fat, especially from ultra-processed foods.
- Poor diet can lead to obesity and other nutritional deficiencies.

Video (10 minutes)

What does it mean to be in good health? What are the main causes of death in Jamaica? What are most common risk factors for these conditions? How are they linked to food?

Activity

The figures below show the consequences of obesity which is primarily caused by poor diet and hypertension which is often linked to excess salt consumption. Take a few minutes to examine the diagrams below which show us what happens when we do not treasure our body as God's temple. For each of the diseases mentioned on the chart, use google to help you identify which organ of part of the body is involved.

Figure 1: Complications of obesity.

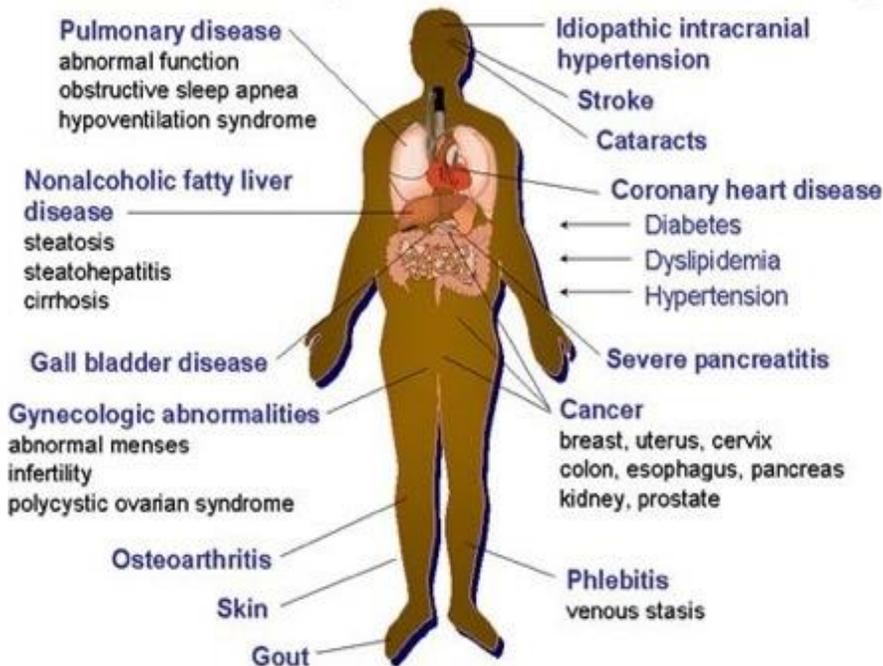
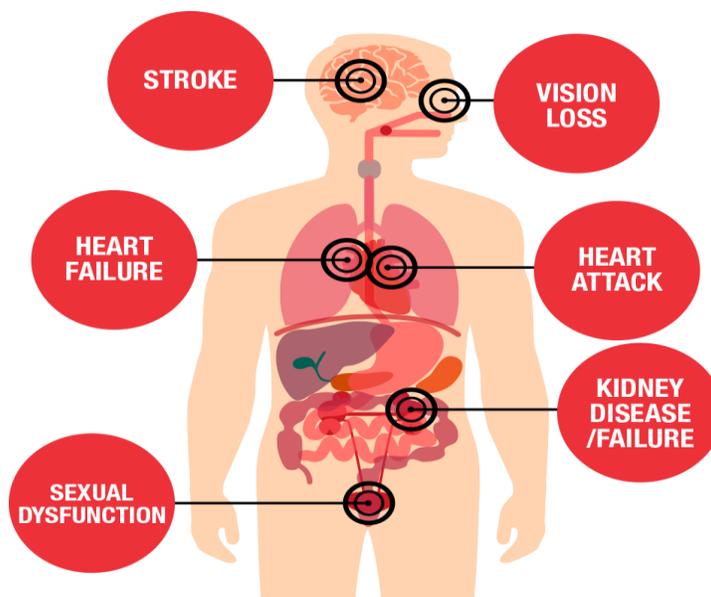


Figure 2: Complications of hypertension.

Source: American Heart Association: <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/health-threats-from-high-blood-pressure>



Health activity: Questions for Brainstorming

1. What are some ways we can protect our temple to prevent the development of obesity?
2. What are some ways we can protect our temple to prevent the development of hypertension?

Instructions for Brainstorm

The purpose of a brainstorm is to allow us to share as many ideas about a topic as possible in the quickest way possible. To do this, we follow these guidelines:

- i. Anyone can share.
- ii. No commenting about others' ideas, negative or positive during brainstorm. No laughing at or degrading others' ideas.
- iii. No questions until after the brainstorm.
- iv. Clarification waits until after: When all the ideas are out, go over/ask about anything that needs clarification. Here facilitators can correct erroneous ideas if needed.

Conclusions

Jesus commanded us to “Love your neighbour *as yourself*” (Mark 12:31). This command implies self-love that is not narcissistic or egotistic but reasonable, balanced and wise. We must prioritise care for ourselves as an important step in our acknowledgement of God’s presence in our lives. It is a good reflection of our submission to God’s sovereign power and our embrace of God’s will for abundant living.

Closing Ritual

Prayer

*Loving Lord, we thank you for your care and provision for our daily lives. Help us to acknowledge your presence in our lives and therefore to be careful to honour you in all we do. May we do so as we embrace the healthy lifestyles which will help us to obtain the quality of life you intend for us. In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.*