

## Bible Study 9

Topic: **Taking Care of God's Temple**

### Transitioning from the Sermon

#### A. The Main Points of the Sermon

1. Consume foods that are good for the body
2. Consume food in ways that are good for the conscience
3. Consume food that is good for the health of the human spirit

#### B. Conclusions of the Sermon

The responsible Christian will be careful to watch what she or he consumes. Their consumption pattern will be one that enhances and ensures good health. This is the pattern in which food is consumed that is good for the body. Irresponsible and unwise eating habits will be rejected and good and healthy choices will be made. Further, the responsible Christian will consume foods in ways that are good for the conscience. We avoid feelings of guilt and shame when we seek to do all things to the glory of God. Finally, the responsible Christian will consume food that is good for the soul.

### Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:31

“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

### Learning Objectives

The congregation will be able to:

1. Describe the medicinal activities of some foods
2. Describe ways to love your body through physical activity

### Material Needed

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

## Introduction

The need for self-care is a growing concern in our world. The exigencies of the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated previous challenges and have given prominence to many existential issues. One of the results of this is that the concern that has arisen regarding the state of health of our people as a whole, and the way we navigate the present challenges as families and individuals. Recent studies have shown that the affordability and availability of good and nutritious meals have steadily moved out of the reach of many persons. While governmental and non-governmental organizations must ramp up their support systems for these persons who are at risk, renewed activism on personal health must also take centre-stage. Physical, psychological and spiritual well-being are of critical importance and demand our full attention. The care for the temple is a duty to which we are all called. We do this by consuming healthy foods, maintaining a balanced diet and adopting a healthy lifestyle. This lesson will focus on the care of the body against the biblical understanding of its designation as the temple of the Lord.

## Exposition of the text

The discussion in the text in which our chosen verse is located is an interesting one. It raises questions of freedom and conscience and proposes to provide a balanced approach to the sensibilities which accompany religious practices. In other words, Paul was trying to encourage the Corinthian church to avoid situations that can cause confusion and offense, even when they were exercising their right and freedom to choose. The imperative is that we glorify God in all of our activities, whether we are eating or drinking.

## Focus on the Main Point

The command “to glorify God” requires that we examine the ways in which this is possible, both generally in our lives but more particularly in our eating or drinking. We must discover God’s way of living and being in order to please and bring glory to God. This is the honour and reverence which is given to God, by us as well as others who become aware of our godly lives and actions.

## Application

### Consume food that is good for the body

Our Public Health experts tell us that the Caribbean has a high prevalence of and rate of premature mortality due to Non-Communicable Diseases, with unhealthy diets and obesity being the leading risk factors. We simply consume too many things that are not good for us. Our diets contain high levels of sugar, salt and fats, all items which can lead to ill-health when consumed indiscriminately. But there are alternatives. There are available, nutritious, cost-effective and reliable supplies of foods that will help to reverse these trends. We have abundant supplies of fruit, herbs and seasonally available

vegetables which have the potential to transform our bodies and health and reverse negative and unhealthy conditions.

Have a look at slides 26-35 in the “Food4Change Caribbean” PowerPoint presentation.

### Consuming food in ways that are good for the conscience

How does our freedom affect the sensibilities of others? Paul seems to suggest that we glorify God when we seek to act in ways that respect the consciences of others. So, we are free to eat and drink as we like, but the text raises the consumption of food and drink to a higher plane; to the level of conscientious regard for others. It appears that the best way to meet this demand, is to find out what will bring God glory. Two such means are the principles of abstinence and, moderation/self-control. Once we follow these moral and ethical principles when needed, we are likely to reduce or at least minimize the possibility causing offence to others.

Let us explore the principles of abstinence, moderation, modesty and self-control (temperance).

Abstinence (definition: the practice of restraining oneself from indulging in something). Discuss the view that there may be occasions when we may be called upon to avoid indulging in a particular food or substance, because of the weakness of the conscience (or the strength of the conviction) of those around us.

Moderation/self-control (definition: the avoidance of excess or extremes)

Discuss the ways in which this principle may be applied to the consumption of food and drink.

### Consume food that is good for the spirit

When we pay attention to and satisfy our need for spiritual food, we build up spiritual health which helps us to deal with the life in the flesh which taxes body, mind and spirit. When we desire to flourish and grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, we set up reservoirs of strength which will redound to the eternal benefit of our souls and those of others around us. Indeed, even when the physical body is unwell, the resources of spiritual strength can support well-being and recovery. So, we ought to develop an appetite for spiritual food. We can consume it in scripture readings and meditations, singing and listening to spiritual songs and hymns, offering prayers for ourselves and others and engaging the sermons and in Bible Studies which are prepared and presented by the shepherds and servants of God.

## Videos

Medicinal benefits of some foods- eg. ginger and nausea, blood pressure lowering foods etc. benefits of exercise to the temple. Different types of exercise- strength training, aerobic activity and flexibility exercises.

## Activities

### Activity 1 – Brainstorm

Let's do a brainstorm. Physical activity is very beneficial but many of us do not do enough. Let us consider together, what are some of the barriers to physical activity?

**Reminder of Brainstorming rules:** 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:

1. Anyone can share
2. No commenting about others' ideas, negative or positive during brainstorm. No laughing at or degrading others' ideas.
3. No questions until after the brainstorm.
4. 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.

### Activity 2 – Problem-solving

Having presented many of the barriers to physical activity let us perform an exercise where we choose two of the barriers listed above and provide at least four solutions for each of them. Persons within the group who are experiencing one of these barriers can indicate which solution will work best for them and on a scale of 1 to 10 how much confidence they have in being able to use the solution to overcome the barrier.

### Activity 3 - Open discussion

Discuss some of the ways that communities of faith can provide support for each member of the community who wishes to make lasting lifestyle changes.

## Conclusions

There are some conclusions which we may draw from this Bible Study.

- We must feed our bodies with good and healthy food.
- We deprive ourselves of the best of life when we consume unhealthy food.
- We dishonour God when we abuse our bodies by filling it with bad food and drink
- We glorify God in being responsible and conscientious in our food consumption.
- We must endeavor to satisfy our spiritual needs

## Closing Ritual

*Loving Lord and God,*

*Thank you for the creation which contains in it all that we need for healthy living. Thank you for good and nutritious food and the abundance of these foods which we have in their respective seasons. Thank you for the bread of life, your word which nourishes our spirits. May we be grateful in our appreciation and acceptance of your gifts and responsible in our use and consumption.*

*Amen.*