

Key Scripture:

**Genesis 1:26–31 (NLT)**

*26 Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”*

*27 So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

*28 Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”*

*29 Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. 30 And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life.” And that is what happened.*

*31 Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.*

**1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NLT)**

*19 Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, 20 for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.*

**Galatians 5:22–23 (NLT)**

*22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!*

**Ecclesiastes 5:12 (NLT)**

Start **talking**. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being Mr. Universe and 1 being you're on life support, how healthy is your body right now? What one change could you make this year to move your number up a point?

Start **sharing**. These questions are to help get your group thinking and to create openness.

- You're going to get a new resurrection body, why should you care for this one?
- **Read Genesis 1:26-31.** After God made our bodies and the rest of creation, he declared that it was “very good.” How does God's opinion of your body change the way you think about it?
- **Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.** Discuss the context of this verse. What were the Corinthians doing to God's temple? How do we neglect God's temple today?
- **Read Galatians 5:22-23.** Which fruit of the Holy Spirit will help us in our quest to be physically healthy? Can you think of a time recently when the power of the Spirit helped you to have self control?
- We are the average of our 5 best friends. Are your friends in this small group helping you or hurting you to be physically healthy? How can we make each other better?
- **Read Ecclesiastes 5:12.** Why does the laborer usually sleep better than the rich man with a full stomach? What can you do to improve your sleep?
- When's the last time you had a belly laugh? According to **Proverbs 17:22**, what happens when we laugh?
- According to **Psalms 32:3-5**, what happens to us physically when we harbor sin in our hearts? Is there anything you need to confess to find freedom and spiritual and physical health?

Start **doing**. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Identify and implement one activity to improve your health this week.

Start **praying**. Be bold and pray with power.

- Praise and thank God for His presence in your life. Ask for help in honoring Him with your body, which is a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Confess where you fall short and ask for His help to repent, stepping more fully into obedience with how you care for your body.

**Question: "What does the Bible say about health?"**

**Answer:** Good health is something we take for granted—until we start to lose it. When our health takes a downturn, we quickly begin to question our habits and diet. God has designed the human body so that it is a finely tuned instrument that is the most resilient on earth. It can endure fractures and adhesions, constant pain, and great stretches of tedium.

However, it is a fragile instrument because it is not built to handle excess, whether in the form of nourishment, fuel, or additives. Unlike machines, it chokes on poisons when ingested in unending doses and mistaken for fuel. Though it has moving, feeling, and thinking parts, they can be misused. God has provided us with an “owner’s manual” that tells us how to operate the human body. That manual is the Bible, a book that contains instructions for proper maintenance. Although it isn’t a medical text, it is God’s Word, and in its pages He reveals many basic principles for good physical, mental, and spiritual health.

A major part of the Bible’s health instruction dates back to the time of Moses. Yet in our day, many researchers and medical doctors are stunned at the accuracy and effectiveness of its many provisions. The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia tells us that the laws given by God to Moses contain remarkable rules pertaining to public health which concerns us even today: water and food contamination, sewage disposal, infectious diseases, and health education. These issues were all dealt with in the Mosaic health laws.

The Bible gives us the foundational key to physical and mental health. That key is simply this: “My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity . . . This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones” (Proverbs 3:1-2, 8). It should not surprise us that obedience to God’s commandments and other laws would promote health. When we obey them, we operate in accordance with His instructions. As our Creator, He knows what’s best for us: “Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

Some biblical statements about health are specific, such as: “If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you” (Exodus 15:26). The ancient Egyptians suffered from the kinds of diseases that have ravaged mankind throughout history. Autopsies on Egyptian mummies have revealed evidence of cancer, arteriosclerosis, arthritis, tuberculosis, gallstones, bladder stones, parasitic diseases, and smallpox. They suffered many diseases because they did not understand the health principles God gave to Moses.

The biblical instructions regarding health, maintenance, and recovery from illness involve application of cause-and-effect principles—based on true science—that were given thousands of years before scientists developed the technology that enabled them to discover germs, bacteria, viruses, genes, and the like. Modern medical science has discovered many principles of good health, but they originated with God who designed and created the miracle that is the human body.

What the Bible says about health is that those who follow God will generally be healthy. That does not necessarily mean that those who don’t follow God will always be sick. Nor does it mean that God’s people will be absolutely free of disease. The Bible says, “I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well” (3 John 1:2). Obviously, God is more interested in our spiritual health than our physical well-being, but He does want us to be physically healthy as well. On the other hand, disease is a result of Adam’s sin, and even the most righteous may suffer. After all, Job was righteous, but God allowed him to suffer disease and hardship.

It was not until the modern era that men obtained detailed knowledge of human physiology and medicine. Yet the Creator God, who is sometimes called the Great Physician, knows everything about us, and He’s provided the necessary keys to good health. The choice to obey the Lord and reap the resulting benefits is ours to make.