

Kingdom Health & Wellness: Q&A

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Q: What are some examples in Scripture where Jesus, apostles, prophets, etc. were encouraged to focus on their physical well-being?

A: The short answer is that God never said, via His prophets, apostles, or Jesus to focus on physical well-being. But the wisdom of this is all throughout Scripture.

I'd like to answer this in 4 ways.

1. LOOKING AT THE TOTALITY OF SCRIPTURE

It's important to look at the totality of Scripture to answer this question. That includes factoring in Mosaic and Levitical Law. These were laws set in place by a good and loving God to protect His chosen people, Israel, from the corrupt culture of ancient Egypt and diseases brought on by diet and lifestyle. These laws provided instruction for economics, law, government, interpersonal relationships, nutrition, and health. If you were to dig into them you'd discover that they are perfectly in line with science. Because Science reflects the thoughts and intelligence of Creator God. (Ex. don't eat the hard fat of animals, drain the blood before eating. Why? Because that is where toxins are stored and carried. Of which can make us sick.)

The sacrifice of Jesus for our sins does not cancel out the wisdom in these other teachings. All of Scripture is God breathed. What did Jesus say in **Matthew 5:17** "Do not think that I have come to abolish Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.". Meaning, in Jesus, we are spiritually secure. We no longer are bound to these laws to keep covenant, hence the NEW covenant put into effect through the death and resurrection of Jesus. The law can not bring us life, nor save us. (Romans 8:3) But a good God, from the beginning of Creation created a perfectly designed health regimine that would promote life (and not death) for those He loves. To dismiss His design in the garden and His design to bless and protect Israel is to essentially say, "I'll do it my way". God still loves us, uses us, pours out good gifts. He is merciful and kind. We just miss out on good health that comes through wisely aligning ourselves with divine design. Paul says, "everything is permissible but not everything is beneficial." (1Cor 10:23)

2. CONSIDER THE TEMPLE

Another point worth making is that the temple building of the Old Covenant becomes the body of the New Covenant. If detailed instruction for the care of OT temple was given by God, to me that implies that we ought to consider doing likewise with this NT temple, our body. (I Corinthians 6:19-20)

3. FACTORING IDOLATRY (Flesh vs. Spirit)

I Cor 6:12 "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything." And, "You shall have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3) When we become physically dependent on a substance, food

or drink or exercise or entertainment, others' opinions, (literally anything), it is an indication that our spirits are not free either. We are bound. It means we've put something or someone else in God's place. Anything we obsess about can become a god (even good things like ministry). It's a way of saving ourselves, often driven by deep unattended brokenness.

Jesus cares about freedom as was prophesied of him in Isaiah 61. I care about freedom too. Health is a manifestation of an inside out work of freedom from idolatry, initiated and carried out through the Holy Spirit.

“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,” Romans 14:17

Food is a gift and is meant to be stewarded wisely. Food is not the point of the kingdom. Like money (or any gift God gives), when we use it wisely based on God's intentions we benefit.

4. A SHORT LIST OF BIBLE REFERENCE TO FOOD & HEALTH

- The Bible opens up with food (Creation) and ends with food (wedding feast of the Lamb)
- Jesus is often found eating with his disciples around a table (likely Mediterranean, what would be typical during the 1st century for a Jewish person to eat legumes such as fava beans, lentils, and chickpeas. Fruits were also consumed including figs, dates, pomegranates, and grapes. As for meat products, those that were often consumed were goats and sheep, as well as fish.)
- Jesus modeled a healthy rhythm. He walked. He slept. He reclined with friends. He prayed alone. He prayed with people. One worth emulating.
- Daniel - refused to eat the royal food. “At the end of the 10 day fast they (Daniel and his friends) looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who ate the royal food.” It even references their intelligence as a result.
- Jesus was often concerned for people's hunger and well-being. (fish and loaves miracle)
- What was Jesus doing after his resurrection when he appeared to some disciples (Peter being one)...cooking breakfast (fish and bread) over a charcoal fire. Right before having a serious conversation with Peter about his purpose to feed His lambs and sheep. Jesus cares what's being fed, spiritually and physically.
- Paul said, “he beats his body and makes it his slave”
- To Timothy Paul says, “For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” 1 Tim 4:8
- 7 Biblical Feasts that point towards Christ (God loves a good celebration and food is part of that. We can assume the food used to celebrate both now and the the wedding feast of the Lamb is nutritious and delicious. God made vs man made.)
- Elijah, upon the heels of a major miracle (the prophets of Baal) and running for his life from a woman, he finds refuge under a broom tree. What God does first do to restore weary Elijah after a long nap? He feeds him bread. A bread made of sprouted grains

and legumes, including wheat, millet, barley, spelt, soybeans and lentils. The nutrient density of this bread is relevant to his healing after this burnout moment.

- Inspired by the Holy Spirit John, closest friend to Jesus, opens his letter in 3John by saying, "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well." This simple greeting reflects the heart of Christ, with whom John was so intimately connected to.

Q: You mentioned shame...and how shame can be put on you. How does culture put shame on us without us even realizing/asking for it?

A: Shame is put on us by someone initially...usually in childhood. When shame comes at us through culture or others later in life it will only stick if it has a landing pad (shame wound). Getting free of shame makes culture shame acute. When our identity heals, this frees us of living under chronic shame. Which is why a spirit of sonship vs a spirit of an orphan matters. (Romans 8)

We live in a shame culture. It's the air we breathe. As it specifically relates to our bodies we are constantly being fed lies that our bodies are not good unless they achieve a status symbol or perform and achieve. **A kingdom health perspective doesn't obsess or neglect the body.** We are, after all, made in the image of God. That includes the body. But in a culture where we are told that the body is the point of our innate worth and value (cue idolatry), we find ourselves worshipping at the altar of beautiful bodies. But God looks at the heart. How this creates an over compensation/pendulum swing in the church is to simply ignore the body altogether in a spirit of believing that's a worldly and vain perspective. But, the Body of Christ isn't served well with this shaky theology. As Believers we have to work to put shame off of both ourselves and others and come home to the truth that our bodies are good, made by God and created in His image, and therefore worth the care and effort.

We need to be diligent to realize when we're putting shame on others. (Parents, we do this to our children without realizing it.) Because when you (or I) live with a burden of shame we, by nature, will shame others. Being delivered of shame and healing the root wound of this needs to be primary in our whole body-soul healing. If not, it bleeds into everything.

It's important to define shame:

Toxic shame is essentially self-rejection and shuts the door to getting needs met. Neither of which is humble or helpful. It's an outright rejection of one's own heart and body. It's a belief that we should hide who we are and dismiss our own needs, desires, dreams, hopes, and emotions. It denies our humanity. It also shuts down our capacity to reach out to others for help or even build thriving relationships. Shame leaves you hiding and unable to experience freedom. This almost always is the result of someone who had influence over your heart placing shame on you and inflicting a great wound. You, not knowing what to do with it, left it to grow. It's the worst of all weeds.

Shame can manifest in many ways but here are a few examples, especially as it relates to health.

- Over apologizing
- Feeling responsible for another person's emotions
- Comparing and despairing

- Never having an opinion
- Ignoring body pain through medicating
- Regular negative thoughts of oneself
- Embarrassed often
- Not investing in self care
- Caring little, in not at all, for what goes in your mouth
- Removing yourself from community
- Unable to be vulnerable with safe people
- The smallest mistakes become a weapon of self-destruction
- Not voicing (or perhaps not even knowing) what your own needs are
- Don't have any personal hopes and dreams
- Unable to have honest conversations
- Scarcity mindset
- Difficulty receiving love
- Believing you're value is dependent on what you do to make others happy
- Feeling ruined beyond repair by something said or done (that may not have had any moral consequence)
- Being overly responsible/unable to say no
- Self-hatred

Q: What books would you recommend for taking better care of your mitochondria?

A:

- ["Your Mitochondria: Key to Health and Longevity" by Warren L. Cargal](#)
- ["Mitochondrial Dysfunction: A Functional Medicine Approach to Diagnosis and Treatment: Get Rid of Fat, Fatigue, and Brain Fog" Michael T. Chang](#)

Q: How do I balance health with life like school and stress?

A: I'm not sure it's an issue of balance but that of obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit. It can get overwhelming when we start trying in our own strength to balance everything. I would have gone insane as a young mother of 4 to try and balance it all. In light of my desire to pursue His best I'd ask Him, "What do I need to obey you today in as it relates to stewarding my health? I could sense when change in an area needed to happen (like drink more water, Sabbath rest, better sleep, less sugar, more veggies, better movement, more fun). I'd pray about it then prepare for that change by getting a vision, gathering resources, and giving myself space to not do it perfectly. To make sustainable changes resulting in a new normal means we look at one thing and seek to consistently implement that change. Health is built one brick at a time. However, practically speaking, from my own life, I plan for health when I plan my week and life. I write about it in my journal. I look at my week and consider when I'll move my body, take a hike or a bike ride, plan my meals and shopping, place online orders for health related things, set simple attainable goals (like drink ___ amount of water each day), and so on.

Q: What has building a health culture in your home looked like?

A long slow journey. :)

Parents and care-takers are in a powerful position to change culture. Church and community culture is changed because of what happens at home. If you have a vision for a healthy home then be prepared to let God show the way and you follow. What that looked like for us...

1. Establishing a conviction around the belief that healthful food and activity was God's way of showing us His love and goodness. We wanted to consider how best to achieve that first with us at home.
2. Being willing to let go of childhood foods, habits, and belief systems that didn't align with this conviction.
3. Investing time, money, energy in things that support health. Meaning we also had to say no to other things. When we did this we functioned at a much richer and balanced level.
4. When stressful and busy seasons happened we'd do the best we could but it's ok that ideals fell by the wayside. No shame. Just grace. The moment we could we got back on and kept moving forward.
5. Holding a freedom perspective. Not making certain things an issue of law. Not nagging or shaming for not eating their greens, etc. I still bake and eat cookies occasionally. We enjoy ordering pizza. But these things don't master us.
6. Building a lifestyle of enjoying nature and movement together. We started a farm for that reason. We went on walks in the woods and down the road almost daily. We'd plan vacations based on outdoor activity.
7. Crowding out: this means we would slowly over time just stop buying things like chips, sugar cereal, cookies. One small no at a time meant that we made more and more room for healthy food.

Final Point I Didn't Get To In My Talk:

A health revolution begins with me.

That happens by...

1. *Praying the prayer of faith.*
2. *Accepting His love for you.*
3. *Making one small decision at a time.*

