

Being Healthy (What? Why? How?)

What Is Health?

Health is a wonderful gift for which we can thank God. But what is health?

Think of the difference between having a toothache and having healthy teeth that do not hurt? Think of the difference between having a miserable cold and being healthy. Is there a difference between having a cut (an open wound) that hurts and having skin that is whole and healthy? Think of the difference between having a fever of 102 degrees and feeling normal. Is there a difference between feeling like you are going to throw up and feeling fine?

Is Good Health More Than Not Being Sick?

What is good health? Is there more to health than just not being sick? Can a person who is not sick be unhealthy?

Let's think about some of the things that describe a healthy person:

A healthy person is one who has plenty of energy for living and thinking. This is the person who has that "get up and go" kind of energy.

A healthy person has a strong, able body for running, hiking, climbing, swimming, shoveling snow, etc.

A healthy person strives to make full use of his body and soul and gets full use from his body and soul.

A healthy person is able to enter into the enjoyment of life. A healthy person is one who is able to live successfully and who has the resources to conquer those things that are hard.

Let's think about things that are hard. Which is harder? To go up steps (stairs) or to come down steps? Would you rather walk up the Statue of Liberty or walk down? Which is easier—falling out of a window or climbing to where the window is? Going forward is harder than going backwards. [Think of swimming up a stream.] Why is this so?

Healthy Bodies and Healthy Minds and the Prevention of Illness

No one wants to be ill. How can we prevent illness? How can we keep ourselves from getting sick more than is necessary? Everyone gets sick from time to time, but is there anything we can do to help ourselves stay as healthy as possible and as free from sickness as possible?

More often than not, healthy children will grow up to be healthy adults. If we can learn the rules of health when we are young, then usually we will keep following these rules when we are older.

Think about the physical part of you: your body, brain, blood, and bones. What does the body need in order to stay healthy? Here are four things that are needed for physical health:

Food. What happens if a person does not eat? (Some people have even gone on hunger strikes and starved themselves to death.) What happens if a person does not eat the right kinds of food? What kinds of food are healthy? What kinds of foods are not as healthy?

Exercise. What happens if the body does not get enough exercise? What are things that you do for exercise? What are activities that you do that might hinder exercise? Which exercises your body more—playing a game on the computer or taking a walk through the woods?

Good habits of cleanliness.

Rest. What happens if a person does not get enough rest? Do you get enough rest? Why do we sometimes stay up at night longer than we should? Why do we sometimes have trouble falling asleep?

What are some things that harm the body? (Two examples are given.)

Smoking _____

Worry _____

When we think about the body, every believer should remember 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. According to these verses, what is the believer's body?

_____ Who lives in this body?

_____ Who does this body belong to? _____

Why does it belong to Him?

_____ How can we glorify God in our bodies?

What are some things that harm the mind and that make the mind unhealthy? (One example is given.)

Swearing _____

What Does God's Word Say About Food?

What kinds of food did God say man could eat after the flood (Genesis 9:2-3)?

_____ According to 1 Timothy 4:3-5, what has God given to man to eat?

_____ How should this food be received, with complaining or with thanksgiving? _____

Why do we pray before eating? It is impossible to eat food that is perfectly clean—there are germs all around us and all around our food. But God is able to take care of any germs or impurities that might still be in the food. This is why we pray and ask God to set the food apart. Paul was careful to give thanks to God before eating (Acts 27:35)! Do you give thanks to God before you eat?

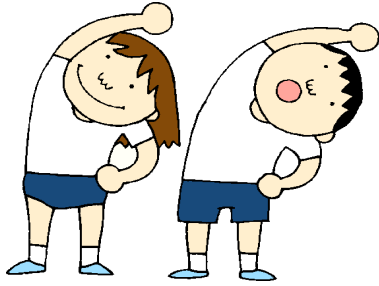
God made our bodies and He made us so that we need food ("our daily bread"). But if we only have food, we are missing something very important. Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread

_____, but by

_____ (Matthew 4:4). What

was Jesus' meat (food) (John 4:34)? _____ There is more to life than just eating and or drinking. To have real life we need to feed on God's Word (John 6:63) and do His will.

What Does God's Word Say About Exercise and Playing Sports?



Exercise is important for health. What would happen to our arm muscles if we never used them? What would happen to our ability to multiply if we never practiced multiplication? If we never multiplied, then we would soon forget how to do it! Bodily exercise is profitable, and spiritual exercise is much more profitable (1 Timothy 4:8). Physical exercise takes place when we use our muscles. Spiritual exercise takes place when we use God's Word, and work with God's Word so that we follow what is good and avoid what is evil (see Hebrews 5:14).

Exercise is a healthy thing for young people. We all need to move around and run around and engage ourselves in different sports and games.

Certain supplies and equipment are needed to play certain sports and games. Can you name some?

How do these kinds of activities help your body? What is the difference between you playing catch with a ball and a New York Yankee or a Boston Red Sox player having a part in a major league ball game? Why do you play ball? Why does he play ball? Who does it for fun and enjoyment? Should you play just for fun and enjoyment? Do you play just for fun and enjoyment?

Do you need to be a star performer? Do you need to be the best? Why? Why not? We should always do our best and try our hardest, but this does not mean we are going to be the best player.

What happens to all our games and sports? Think about some of the great superstars in the world of sports today. When they grow older are they going to be able to play as well? Will there come a day when they will not be able to play at all? Then what? Is life more than sports? What is God's purpose? What happens to this body? Why?

The Bible speaks of a special kind of strength that is better than the strength any young athlete has. Read Isaiah 40:26-31. Who is the One who is really strong (verse 26)? _____ Does He ever get weary or tired (verse 28)? _____ What is He able to do for us (verse 29)?

_____ What will happen to even the greatest of athletes (verse 30)?

_____ What is God able to do for us (verse 31)?

What Does the Bible Say About Cleanliness?



Cleanliness (keeping clean) is very important. The doctors and nurses and other people who work in a hospital try to keep everything as clean as possible. Doctors are very careful about washing their hands before they see a patient. Would you want a doctor with dirty hands to operate on you? Is it important to keep your hands clean?

We should seek to keep ourselves clean in every way possible, but we should also remember that God has ways of taking care of germs. The human body is wonderfully made and even though germs enter the body in different ways, God has made the body so that it fights germs and fights infections. Some people are overly worried about germs. Instead they need to relax and trust God. We do our part by keeping ourselves clean; God does His part in taking care of us as only He can.

God wants people to be clean and healthy, not only on the outside, but also on the inside, because He is clean: "Be ye holy; for am _____" (1 Peter 1:16). "God is _____ and in Him is no _____ at all" (1 John 1:5). God is pure and clean and holy! There is no pollution with God! Throughout the Bible we see that God has been teaching His people that there is a difference between what is clean and what is not clean! For example, in Leviticus chapter 11 God gave the children of Israel a whole list of animals that were clean (and could be eaten) and animals that were unclean (and could not be eaten). Today we know that God allows us to eat any animal (1 Timothy 4:4). Why did God have this list of clean and unclean animals for the children of Israel?

The answer is found at the end of Leviticus chapter 11. In Leviticus 11:44 God says, "ye shall be H _____; for I am _____." Does He say the same thing in verse 45? _____ Why did God do all this? Verse 47 gives the answer: "to make a difference between the _____ and the _____." God is clean and holy and God wants His people to be clean and holy! God does not want His people to be all filthy with sin like the peoples of the other nations. The children of Israel needed to know that there was a difference between clean and unclean and that God wanted them to be clean (and not polluted with sin).

The Pharisees thought that they were clean and pleasing to God because they washed their hands in a special way and because they did this often (Mark 7:1-5). But the Lord Jesus knew that they were not clean at all! He knew that their hearts were unclean and filthy (Mark 7:20-23). They were very concerned about outer pollution but their real problem was the inner pollution of the heart. Often we try to blame everything else for our problems (we blame our school or our parents or our friends, etc.), when the real problem is our own sinful heart.

When a person believes on Christ and receives Him as Saviour, he is made clean (cleansed from all his sins). The Bible talks about this wonderful cleansing in John 13:10. ("Ye are clean!") As the saved person walks in this world he can still become polluted with sin, and therefore he daily needs to come to God for cleansing. This cleansing is described in 1 John 1:9. What must the believer do to be clean, according to this verse? _____ What does God promise to do?

What Does The Bible Say About Disease?

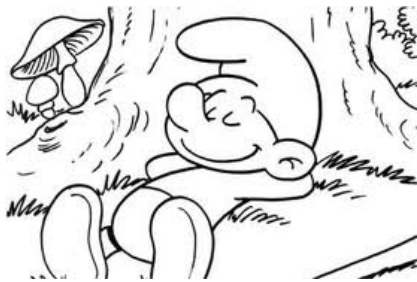
What is a contagious disease? Contagious means something that another person can catch. A contagious disease is something that can go from one person to another person. Sometimes we call this an infectious disease. This means that the disease is easily spread. Can you think of some contagious diseases?

The Bible talks about contagious diseases, especially the terrible disease called leprosy. We learn what to do about this disease in Leviticus chapters 13-14. The person with this disease is pronounced unclean (Leviticus 13:3,44). This person is then isolated and kept away from other people so that the disease will not spread or be caught by others (Leviticus 13:5,46). Clothes must be washed (Leviticus 13:6) and if the disease is still in the garments they must be burned (Leviticus 13:52). When the man is healed he must be washed and his clothes must be washed (Leviticus 14:8). When the disease has contaminated a house, the house must be broken down and carried away (Leviticus 14:45). All of these rules were given by God to protect people from this terrible disease.

Today doctors have different rules so that diseases and germs do not spread. Everything in the hospital must be kept clean: clothes must be washed, beds must be changed and clean sheets put on, towels must be cleaned, etc. Everything must be disinfected. Even in our homes we have bottles and spray cans that disinfect and kill germs. Can you think of some things in your home that your family uses to kill germs (disinfect)? When do they use these things? For what do they use them?

The living God is the great Physician (Doctor)! He also has certain rules which are given to protect man from the greatest disease of all — the disease of sin! God does not want sin to keep spreading! God has given us instructions on how to get rid of sin, how to stay away from sin, how to prevent sin and what to do about sin when we get infected with it. What are some of these instructions? The Great Physician (Doctor) has the perfect remedy for our health and for our healing.

The Importance of Rest



Many people don't get the rest their bodies need. Can you think of ways this can harm them? How can lack of sleep affect others? (Traffic accidents, etc.)

Can you think of times when you didn't get enough sleep? How did you feel the next day?

Sometimes young people stay up too late at night watching TV or spending time on the computer or doing other things. Can we be alert in school and at home and learn everything God has for us if we are half asleep? _____

Sometimes people are fearful at night. Does God ever sleep (Psalm 121:4)? _____ He is always watching over us while we are asleep. David had many enemies who wanted to kill him, but he could say "I will both lay me down in peace, and _____: for Thou, LORD, only makest me

_____ in _____ " (Psalm 4:8). Restful sleep comes from the Lord: "He
_____ His beloved _____" (Psalm 127:4).

God also gives a wonderful rest of spirit to those who trust in Him. No matter how many problems we have, we can take them to God, knowing He will take care of them, and we can let our minds be at rest. "There remaineth therefore a _____ to the _____ of God (Hebrews 4:9).

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May God help us to be the healthy and strong young people He wants us to be, as we honor His principles of proper eating, exercise, cleanliness and rest--each and every day of our lives!