

Lifting Up Jesus

#24

THE CHRISTIAN AND PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH

When we accept Christ by faith, we experience the new birth. We accept a new life and become inhabited by the Holy Spirit. New thoughts, new ideas, new desires and new burdens appear. We trade in our old 'mind set' for another designed by God. Not only does God recreate our minds but He also is the designer of our bodies. Moreover, because he now "dwells" within us it is important to maintain the body He has created for us. Once again, we turn to the Bible for guidance in maintaining a healthy body.

1. What did God ask the Israelites to do in order to avoid disease? Exodus 23:25

2. What blessings would Israel have if she followed God's counsel? Deut. 7:15

Note: None of the diseases would touch them because by following God's instructions they would maintain good health as well as receiving all other blessings. God is concerned about the health of His people.

3. Why should we be careful in caring for our bodies? 1 Cor. 3:16–20

Note: God's wisdom in how to care for our bodies does not compare with the "wisdom of this world". Since He designed our bodies, He knows best on how to maintain them.

4. What food did the Creator originally give man to eat? Gen. 1:29

Note: This diet included grains, nuts, fruits and herbs vegetables. Meat was not included in man's diet until after the Flood.

5. Into what two classifications did God divide the animals when He sent them into Noah's ark? Genesis 7:1, 2

*Note: God made plants and animals that man could use for food. However, He did not make **all** plants and **all** animals for food. Did you know that God gives a complete classification of the animals which are considered "clean and unclean" for food?*

6. Which animals does God say are “clean” and good for food? Deut. 14:3–5

Note: After the Flood God allowed man to eat meat but He was particular which animals should be eaten.

7. How can we determine if an animal is clean or unclean? Verse 6

8. What specific animals does God list as unfit for food? Verses 7, 8

9. What fish are considered by God to be good for food? Verses 9, 10

Note: Most of the sea animals that are prohibited are the garbage eaters or scavengers of the ocean. Pigs are scavengers also. In fact, a high percentage of human bodies autopsied are infected with trichinae.

When the SDA church first began in the mid 1850's their workers were often getting sick and dying young. The diet in general back in those days was pretty bad. While in prayer, God seemed to be directing them to the health principles that were in the Bible. As a result, the church today operates the largest hospital health care system in the world. When compared to the rest of the Christian community, results show that Adventist men live 8.9 years longer and women 7.5 years longer. Approximately half are vegetarian. It is always wise to follow God's principles for living a more abundant and healthy life.

10. What does the Bible teach about alcoholic beverages? Proverbs 20:1; 23:29–33

Note: Research has clearly demonstrated that even “moderate” drinking destroys thousands of brain cells. It affects conscience, reason and judgment and we need to keep it clear for it is through our mind that God speaks to us.

11. What principle may be applied in all matters of health and Christian living? 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 10:31

12. What mistake did the Pharisees make regarding health practices and customs? Matthew 23:23, 24

*Note: They were **more** concerned with these outward practices than with their relationship to God and to others. They would meticulously ‘strain out a gnat’ in their food to avoid eating it but Jesus considered their sinful, prideful ways as likened to ‘swallowing a camel’.*

Conclusion: There are two principles here. One is that whatever you do you do it for the glory of God. The other is falling into the trap of concentrating on external habits and

practices to the exclusion of “heart matters”. God will continue to convict and guide you in your relationship with Him. Your part is to allow Him to lead.¹

¹ Lewis, K. A. (2010). *Lifting up Jesus: Bible Study Lessons*. Walla Walla, WA: Karen Ann Lewis.