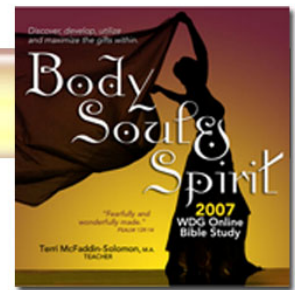


Body Soul & Spirit

I WILL PRAISE YOU FOR I AM FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE. PSALM 139:14



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For I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Psalm 139:14

SERIES: THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF THE BODY

Lesson #7

“WHAT EVERY - BODY NEEDS”

Presented by Terri McFaddin Solomon, M.A.

SCRIPTURE: *Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and stay away from evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones. Proverbs 3:7*

EXERCISE: *She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms. Proverbs 31:17*

Proverbs 31 tells the story of a virtuous woman who made it a point to keep her body strong. If you read this entire passage you will see that she was very industrious. She took care of her family, ran a business and was involved in a ministry to the poor in her community. So what does exercise have to do with this busy woman's lifestyle? Here are the following reasons why it is important to keep physically fit:

SPIRITUAL AND EMOTIONAL LIFE: Psalm 47 says to clap our hands and Psalm 149 tells us to DANCE! When I was young, people in my church would get happy and shout and dance in the aisles. This spiritual expression had many physical benefits. Exercise reduces the effects of stress and depression. It helps your concentration by increasing blood circulation to the brain giving you a mental boost. Exercise will help you to look and feel younger and release tension.

DISEASE PREVENTION: Our bodies were designed for movement and exercise. That is why the Bible tells us to clap our hands and dance. Long walks, or jogging coupled with prayer can promote healing and reduce the potential for heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes and other diseases. Stretching helps to loosen tense muscles and relax the body. It also keeps your bodily movements from looking stiff and guarded like an elderly person.

MUSCLE AND ORGAN STRENGTH: *Psalm 18:29 says – For by my God I can run through a troop and leap over a wall.* There are times when it takes both spiritual and physical strength to serve the Lord. I may have to run through an airport to catch a plane, or stay on my feet for days at a time – all for the work of the Lord. You can certainly serve the Lord with a disability, but if you are blessed with a healthy body, take care of it. Physical inactivity does the same damage as smoking. Without exercise your muscles become flabby and weak. Your heart and lungs won't function well. Your brain slows down. Bones become brittle; joints become stiff and you're more prone to injuries. Exercise helps you to better handle strenuous activities and/or fight off danger.

WEIGHT CONTROL: Hebrews 12:1 says – Let us lay aside every weight that so easily besets us... and run with endurance the race that is set before us. Even though the writer of this passage is speaking in spiritual terms, excessive physical weight can be a hindrance to serving the Lord. Exercise is a key to weight control because it burns calories. If you burn off more calories than you take in, you will lose weight and improve your overall health. A strong, healthy body helps us to serve people more effectively with the gospel.

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686 Arroyo Parkway Suite 174, Pasadena, California 91105
626.794.5402 * Email: wdgstudy@aol.com

QUESTIONS ABOUT EXERCISE:

1. **What type of exercise is best?** Do something that you really enjoy. Try walking, exercise videos, dance class, weight lifting, yoga, golf, or water aerobics. If you pay for a gym membership, use it! If you have health challenges, check with your doctor before exercising.
2. **How often should you exercise?** Start out with at least 3 times a week for one hour and be consistent. Avoid “start-stop” exercising, it doesn’t help your body and can cause injuries. Try using the buddy system. Exercise with your mate, kids, friends or co-workers.

REST: *Matthew 11:28 – Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.* Most of us are so busy with activities that by the end of the day we are exhausted. When we stop to rest we are plagued with guilty reminders of unfinished work. But it was never God’s plan for people to work themselves into a state of fatigue and sickness. On the 7th day of creation even God rested from his work and commanded us to do the same. The following are reasons why rest is critical to our well-being.

REFUEL AND REGROUP: *Psalm 23:2-3 – He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul.* Sleep is necessary for the daily restoration of the body and the brain. Perhaps that is why the Lord “*makes*” us lie down. God designed our bodies in such a way that we are “sleep dependent.” Most muscle repair and growth takes place while we are asleep. If someone says “sleep on it” before making a decision, they’re probably right. Scientists think that during our time of rest, the brain is busy storing information in our memory banks, solving problems and replacing hormones and other chemicals in the body. Most people need 8 hours per night, but a 10 minute nap during the day can refuel the body and brain.

REST AND GOOD HEALTH: *Psalm 127:2b – For so He gives His beloved sleep.* Sleep is essential to good mental and physical health. The inability to rest or sleep can often be the result of a troubled mind. If you are not finding a release in prayer, try talking to a pastor, counselor or a trusted friend. Do all you can to get to the bottom of your fear, hurt or frustrations. When your mind and body are well rested it is easier to fight off disease. While you are sleeping your immune system (blood cells that fight off disease) strengthens your body and fights off bacteria and viruses that can weaken you and lead to colds, infections and other diseases.

REST AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH: *Leviticus 23:12 – Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest...and be refreshed.* When the body and mind are depleted from lack of rest, we open ourselves up to spiritual attacks. In the natural, we become short-tempered, irritable and often make bad decisions. It is during this time that the Enemy is able to launch a spiritual attack and we find ourselves behaving in ways that are displeasing to God. One day out of the week should be spent in worship, prayer and time with family and friends. This will bring about refreshing and restoration to your body, soul and spirit.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SLEEP AND REST:

1. **What can I do to rest better at night?** Discuss and/or pray about things that are bothering you. Don’t eat heavy foods or drink caffeine before going to bed. Check your medications for stimulants (diet pills, sinus medicine, etc.) Take a relaxing bath or shower. Drink herbal teas...especially Valerian Root. If you are a new parent, or a caregiver to a sickly person, take catnaps during the day to make up for loosing sleep at night.

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2. **What if I have bad dreams or feel too restless to sleep?** Start by reading your Bible. Find someone to pray with you. Ask the Lord to show you the reason you are having bad dreams. If you have been involved in a traumatic experience, seek counseling.

OBSERVATIONS AND PERSONALIZATION:

1. **Psalm 23:2-3** The Lord makes us rest. Write down a plan of rest and relaxation for yourself, or a time with family and friends. Be sure to put your plan into practice.

2. **Psalm 127:2** – Write down some of the things that make you feel restless. It might be work, money or a relationship (or lack of a relationship. Find a scripture that comforts you and say it out loud whenever you're having trouble with rest or sleeping.

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