

# Simplifying the Message of the Connection Between Faith and Health

I've been reflecting on how I might simplify the message I've been writing and speaking about. My thought has been that the more concisely I can articulate this message, the easier it will be to explain to others and for them to understand.

With that in mind, I thought I'd share this condensed version with you:

## **An Inspiring Day**

As I've pulled this together, all my senses have been engaged. I've been sipping on a few cups of great-tasting coffee, listening to the trickling of the water in our small fountain, hearing the birds chirp, listening to a playlist of soft, instrumental Christian music on iTunes, feeling the warm spring air as it wafts through an open window and seeing the bright sun shine on the trees and flowers in the back yard. It's been quite an inspiring morning and early afternoon.

## **Understanding the Faith and Health Connection**

This, I believe, is the essence of the faith and health connection:

God designed us in a marvelous way. Our nervous, endocrine and immune systems are interconnected such that our beliefs, emotions and thinking patterns have a direct impact on our physical health.

Our emotions and thoughts related to life events and our relationships will be either health-enhancing or disease-enhancing.

We all inherited a sinful nature at birth. Apart from God, it's our natural tendency to be selfish and rebellious. How we choose to react to life events and how we live in relationship with God, ourselves and others will have a significant effect on our health.

When we try to cope with the stressors of life and to meet our deepest needs apart from God and by our own resources, it's often in ways that are sinful and unhealthy. These self-sufficient and rebellious attitudes, thinking patterns and behaviors often become habits that have a negative impact on our emotional, spiritual and physical health.

Bitterness, resentment, anger, guilt, shame, insecurity, jealousy, low self-worth, fear, worry and anxiety have to do with our relationship with God, others and ourselves. These beliefs and emotions along with their associated spirit-mind-body interactions can have a negative impact on our health.

The repression of strong negative emotions as well as thinking about the respective painful memories can also have harmful effects on our physical health.

The addictive behaviors and personal habits many of us have in an effort to escape from or cope with these uncomfortable relationship-related issues can also be harmful to our emotional and physical health.

God inspired the writers of the Bible to share His truths with us. By reading the Bible, we can learn about God and how much He loves us. The principles found in the Bible tell us how to have the full life He desires for us. Choosing to believe these principles and live by them can create an environment favorable to good health.

Because God loves us, Jesus died for our sins so we might have a full and eternal life. He came to free us from the self-sufficient and sinful nature that keeps us from experiencing flourishing relationships and a full life.

God's greatest commandment is to love God and to love others as we love ourselves (Mark 12:30-31).

God has given us free will. We can choose whether or not to receive His love and fully live out His greatest commandment and apply the life-giving principles found in the Bible.

As we incorporate the truths of the Bible into our life, live in relationship with Jesus and are dependent on God's Holy Spirit, we can experience love, joy, peace, forgiveness and hope. Love and forgiveness can also be more easily and more fully extended to others and to ourselves. This will promote inner healing, which favors health, wholeness and a full and abundant life.

God also enables us, with the power of His Holy Spirit, to live according to His principles and to make healthy lifestyle-related choices.

Improved health, in general, will better enable us to use the talents and gifts God has given us to serve others and to live out our life purpose.

As we acknowledge the role that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit have played in our lives and enabled us to be healthy, God receives glory.

### **Questions to Reflect On:**

- Are there any relationships in your life that require healing? This includes your relationship with yourself and God as well as with other people.
- Are there principles of the Christian faith that you've neglected and, if practiced, would lead to a more abundant life?
- Have you experienced God's love and forgiveness by accepting Jesus in your heart?

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