

PRESCRIPTION FOR SPIRITUAL HEALTH

3John 1:2

INTRODUCTION

- A. What kind of physical health would you have if it were the same as your spiritual health
- B. In 3Jhn 1:2 John expresses his concern for Gaius' physical well-being and implied is the excellent status of Gaius' spiritual well-being
- C. Spiritual vitality and strength are attained only through effort just like physical health requires a proactive approach to wellness
- D. What is needed to maintain a good level of spiritual health?
- E. Let's take a look at the Great Physician's "PDR" (physician's desk reference, i.e., the Bible) to see if we can't come up with a Prescription For Spiritual Health"

DISCUSSION:

I. A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM

- A. To ward off disease
 - 1. Without a healthy immune system, relatively small threats can be deadly
 - 2. Spiritually, how strong is our ability to withstand threats like: Temptation? - False teaching? - Persecution?
- B. To face the inevitable - temptation and spiritual hardships are inevitable - we can't live in a bubble
 - 1. Going out of the world to avoid all contact with temptation is not possible Jhn 17:15; 1Cor 5:9,10; 1Jhn 5:18
 - 2. Spiritually, we need to build up our resistance Jas 4:7
- C. With a strong immune system we will be able to:
 - 1. Take heed, lest we fall 1Cor 10:12
 - 2. Live circumspectly Eph 5:15-17
 - 3. Withstand the wiles of the devil Eph 6:10,11

II. REGULAR EXERCISE

- A. We thrive only when active
 - 1. True spiritually as well as physically
 - 2. Danger of becoming spiritually "sluggish" Heb 6:11,12
- B. Spiritual activity is necessary
 - 1. We have been created to walk in good works Eph 2:10
 - a. There is work to be done Tit 3:8,14
 - b. We have been saved in order to serve Matt 20:27,28
 - 2. Each individual has work to do 1Cor 12:6,7,18; 2Tim 2:20,21
 - a. Exercise ourselves unto godliness 1Tim 4:7,8
 - b. Work while there is time and opportunity Gal 6:9; Jhn 9:4
 - 3. Work within framework of the local congregation!
 - a. Fulfilling roles in evangelism, edification, benevolence
 - b. Personal work, teaching Bible classes, ministering to sick

III. PERIODIC REST

- A. Energies and resources need replenishing
 - 1. When work has been done, we need rejuvenation to continue

- a. We must stop and sharpen the saw
- b. Otherwise we become exhausted, and suffer "burnout"
- 2. Periods of retreat characterized Lord's ministry Mk 6:30-31
 - a. We are made such that we need some downtime
 - b. Value in periodic solitude, to meditate, reflect, rest
- B. We function best alternating work and rest
 - 1. Spiritually, as well as physically, the Lord designed us to function best within the round of cycles and seasons that alternate between work and rest
 - 2. Lord Himself took time to be alone, to pray Mk 1:35; Lk 5:16
- C. Spiritual rest doesn't mean doing nothing
 - 1. It means doing something different that will refresh and restore our energy for work
 - 2. It allows time for quiet prayer and Bible study
 - a. Releasing anxiety and enjoying Lord's peace Phil 4:6-7
 - b. Feed minds with things of virtue & good report Phil 4:8-9
- D. Whatever the content of our usual activities, we simply cannot remain spiritually strong without significant periods of restful change. Not only for ourselves, but do we also appreciate the need for our brethren to "take a break"?

IV. A HEALTHY DIET

- A. Providing spiritual nourishment
 - 1. Don't live by bread alone, but by the Word of God Matt 4:4
 - 2. The Lord's words are the words of life Jhn 6:63,68
 - 3. We grow by virtue of the pure milk of the word 1Pet 2:2-3
- B. Avoiding spiritual junk food
 - 1. Bible refers to "sound doctrine" (lit., healthy teaching) Tit 2:1
 - a. Opposite of "sound doctrine" anything which teaches contrary to the gospel 1Tim 1:9-11
 - b. Appealing to those with "itching ears" 2Tim 4:2-4
- C. Health-giving nourishment involves both the assimilation of nutritious food, and the avoidance of toxic substances!

CONCLUSION:

- A. The "Prescription For Spiritual Health" is a simple one
 - 1. A Healthy Diet (begins before birth)
 - 2. Periodic Rest (begins before birth)
 - 3. Regular Exercise (begins before birth)
 - 4. Which together builds a Strong Immune System
- B. If we follow this prescription, our spiritual health and progress will be evident 1Tim 4:11-16 - Saving not only ourselves, but blessing those around us as well (infecting them with good health!)
- C. If we are not as spiritually healthy as we know we should be, then follow the Great Physician's "Prescription For Spiritual Health". If we are overcome by the disease of sin, then look to Him who provides spiritual healing and renewal: Psa 103:1-5