



Lesson 5 Discipling the Sick

SABBATH

Then great multitudes came to Him, having with them the lame, blind, mute, maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them. ³¹ So the multitude marveled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel. Matthew 15: 30-31.

If Christ's mission on Earth was to render a payment to His father, or the Law, or why didn't he go about paying everyone's governmental fines?

How did Jesus heal the sick, blind, deaf, mute, lame, paralyzed, leprosy, etc?
How does a modern physician restore health?

Many persons bring disease upon themselves by their self-indulgence. They have not lived in accordance with natural law or the principles of strict purity. Others have disregarded the laws of health in their habits of eating and drinking, dressing, or working. Often some form of vice is the cause of feebleness of mind or body. Should these persons gain the blessing of health, many of them would continue to pursue the same course of heedless transgression of God's natural and spiritual laws, reasoning that if God heals them in answer to prayer, they are at liberty to continue their unhealthful practices and to indulge perverted appetite without restraint. If God were to work a miracle in restoring these persons to health, He would be encouraging sin. {MH 227.3}

It is labor lost to teach people to look to God as a healer of their infirmities, unless they are taught also to lay aside unhealthful practices. In order to receive His blessing in answer to prayer, they must cease to do evil and learn to do well. Their surroundings must be sanitary, their habits of life correct. They must live in harmony with the law of God, both natural and spiritual. {MH 227.4}

SUNDAY

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. Isa. 53:4.

...that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying; He himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses." Matt. 8:17.

Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

³ Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. John 9:1-3.



From the Lesson:

“In antiquity, sickness was considered the result of sinful actions. (And even today, who hasn’t at times—even if only for a moment—wondered if illness, either their own or that of a loved one, wasn’t brought on as a punishment for sin?) In the book of Job, his friends suggested that his misfortunes, which included personal illness, resulted from hidden faults; the implication was that somehow his sinfulness caused his predicament. Similarly, Christ’s disciples understood blindness as punishment for someone’s sinfulness. **This suggests that sickness required not diagnosis or medication but atonement.** Matthew references Isaiah’s Messianic prophecy, stating that Christ fulfilled this prediction and that healing can be found in Him.” Emphasis added.

Do we not hear the same argument from most of Christianity today?? Most of Adventism??

MONDAY

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

² And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. ³ And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. ⁴ And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. ⁵ And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” ⁶ Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷ “Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” ⁸ And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “Why do you question these things in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” ¹² And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!” Mark 2: 1-12.

What is Jesus telling us?? Is there some relationship between forgiveness of sin, physical healing, and the “gospel”?? Why didn’t Jesus tell the paralytic, “Your fine will be paid soon. Sorry about the paralysis.”??

TUESDAY

We, in this class, have unique insights as to the mind/body connection and how it relates to health [for more information see the most recent DVD series – The God Shaped Brain, Designer vs Dictator, and



Buddha vs Jesus]. Science is only now scratching the surface of the relationship of the brain and other systems.

What does it mean to “heal” the mind?

The following is from Dr. Tim Jennings’ blog dated: 27 July, 2012.

10 Simple Steps to a Healthy Brain

1. Regular Sleep

Approximately one in three Americans is chronically sleep deprived, sleeping less than seven hours per night. Sleep is one of four physical requirements for life, along with air, water, and food. Yet far too many people fail to provide their brain and body with adequate sleep.

Chronic sleep deprivation is devastating to brain health. Without regular adequate sleep brain function is impaired, particularly the part of the brain in which we attend, focus, organize, plan, self-restrain, calm self and modulate mood.

Chronic sleep deprivation results in higher activation of the brain stress circuits, with subsequent increase in inflammation and oxidative stress – cellular damage to body and brain. This increases the risk for illness of brain and body such as, diabetes, obesity, depression and dementia.

A healthy brain requires regular sleep.

2. Regular Exercise (Both Physical & Mental)

According to the Centers for Disease Control, more than one third of US adults (35.7%) are obese.

Obesity is a high inflammatory state that reduces quality and length of life and results in accelerated aging and loss of brain tissue. A combination of a high sugar, high saturated fat diet and lack of regular exercise are primary contributing factors to obesity.

Regular exercise not only results in better physical health, and generally better weight profile, but also causes a cascade of beneficial events for the brain. Regular exercise causes the muscles to produce powerful anti-inflammatory cytokines that reduce inflammation. Exercise increases blood vessel growth in the brain improving oxygenation. Additionally, regular exercise causes the brain to produce proteins that stimulate the brain to make new neurons and increase the growth neuron-to-neuron connections. People who exercise regularly are at lower risk for dementia. Finally, exercising the brain itself by engaging in mentally stimulating activities, puzzles, Bible study, learning a new language etc. activates growth factors that promote brain health. If you don’t use it, you will lose it – so exercise regularly!



3. Hydration

Water is the single largest component of your body comprising well more than half of your body weight. Every cell of the body requires water. Water is essential for the functioning of our cells and the removal of waste products of metabolism.

Dehydration shrinks the cells of the body and their function becomes impaired. This results in increased oxidative stress and inability to clear toxins, which results in greater damage to our cells, including our brain. Concentration, memory and general alertness can be negatively affected by dehydration.

An average adult should drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water each day, and more if exercising vigorously, or working in hot humid environments in which sweating profusely.

4. Healthy Diet

You have probably heard the old adage we are what we eat. Well there is much truth in this saying. What we eat provides the nutrients and building blocks from which the tissues of our bodies are made.

Diets high in sugar and saturated fats increase inflammation and oxidative stress accelerating the aging process and decline in brain function. Conversely, diets high in fruits, nuts, grains, vegetables, cold-water fish, olive oil, provide antioxidants, which reduce inflammation and slow the aging process.

In general, the more highly processed the food the less healthy and more damaging to body and brain. The less processed the food the healthier for body and brain.

5. Avoid Toxins

It doesn't take much brain power to figure out that tobacco, heavy alcohol use, and illegal drugs are damaging to body and brain and accelerate the aging process. But one toxin often missed is high caffeine use. While one or two caffeinated beverages may not confer great risk, higher amounts do increase inflammation, interfere with sleep, reduce blood flow to the brain and increase oxidative stress on the brain.

Other potential toxins, for which we have concern, but not solid evidence, include the myriad of man-made chemicals infused into our society. Read the labels on many household items and you will discover a long list of man-made chemicals, to which we are daily exposed. Only time and research will tell the full impact on physical and mental health these substances are having.

6. Forgive

Grudge holding, bitterness, resentment are toxic emotions that activate the brain's stress pathways causing activation of inflammatory factors. Failure to resolve such feelings results in increased oxidative stress and damage to physical, mental and relational health. Forgiving those who have offended us does not mean what they did was okay, but relieves us of carrying the toxic emotions of anger and resentment everywhere we go and over time ruining our own health.



7. Develop Healthy Relationships

Relationship conflict activates the brain's stress circuits, which turns on the immune system causing increase levels of inflammatory factors. Chronic relationship conflict also interferes with regular sleep. The combined effect of increased inflammation and sleep deprivation accelerate aging and undermine brain health. People with chronic relationship problems have higher rates of mental and physical health problems.

Conversely, healthy relationships are protective and reduce the incidence of both physical and mental health problems. Adolescents who grow up in homes in which they have one adult who is a close confidant perform better in school, get more awards, have less depression and lower rates of drug problems.

8. Be a Giver

Multiple studies have demonstrated that persons who are involved in any form of regular volunteerism have better physical health, lower blood pressure, are on less medicines, maintain independence longer in life and have lower rates of dementia.

Loving other people is healthy for the brain.

9. Minimize Theatrical Entertainment

Brain research has demonstrated that theatrical entertainment (but not education programming) alters the brain structure, resulting in decreased development of the prefrontal cortex (higher brain where we plan, organize, self-restrain, attend, have good judgment), and over development of the limbic system (lower brain where we experience fear and irritability). This occurs in a dose dependent fashion, meaning the more TV watched the more damaged done. This imbalance increases the risk for attention problems as well as anxiety and mood problems.

Minimizing theatrical entertainment is protective for the brain.

10. Build relationship with God of Love

Individuals with a healthy spirituality, focusing on a God of love, have reduced anxiety, stress and overall more meaningful and satisfied life. Research shows healthy spirituality reduces rates of suicide, increases life satisfaction scores, and general results in healthier relationships and lifestyle.

Conversely, God constructs that incite fear are associated with increased anxiety, dread, worry, relationship conflict and a general sense of life dissatisfaction, all of which increase inflammation and are unhealthy for the brain.



WEDNESDAY

The lesson suggests that “eternal life in a new world” is what Jesus has to “offer” us. Is that accurate?? Is that all?? See John 17:3.

As far as we know, the Centurion’s servant, the Widow’s son, and Lazarus all went back to “sleep” or died. What was Christ telling us in the raising them from the dead the first time?

Have you ever thanked God for the sleep we know as death?? If you’ve ever lost a loved one, did it make you yearn for something better; an existence without damage, disease, and death?? Consider, for a moment, if God had allowed humanity access to the Tree of Life and there was no death. What would this world look like?? The avenue for the Messiah narrowed down to ONE man just a few generations after Creation even with death in the picture. The entire world would have been overrun with evil if mankind had been allowed access to the Tree of Life. It is Grace and Mercy that allow humans to “sleep” in death.

“In order to possess an endless existence, man must continue to partake of the tree of life. Deprived of this, his vitality would gradually diminish until life should become extinct. It was Satan’s plan that Adam and Eve should by disobedience incur God’s displeasure; and then, if they failed to obtain forgiveness, he hoped that they would eat of the tree of life, and thus perpetuate an existence of sin and misery. But after man’s fall, holy angels were immediately commissioned to guard the tree of life. Around these angels flashed beams of light having the appearance of a glittering sword. None of the family of Adam were permitted to pass the barrier to partake of the life-giving fruit; hence there is not an immortal sinner.” PP 60.

THURSDAY

First-century disciples witnessed firsthand Christ’s promise of seeing “greater things than these” fulfilled (*John 1:50, compare John 5:20, 14:12*). Miraculous healings and resurrections attended the ministries of early Christianity’s most prominent disciples: Peter and Paul. These events figured significantly in the early church’s growth. God’s eternal presence, signified by miraculous healing, influenced thousands of religious leaders to accept Christ. Their flocks often followed.

What did Christ mean by “greater things than these” in John 14:12? Were the miracles of the Apostles any more fantastic than Christ’s?? Did the people raised from the dead by the Apostles die again sooner than did those raised by Christ??

Christ never had to ***transform*** his character. He developed it – perfectly, but he never had to transform it. The Apostles, and all true Christians, since, have experienced character ***transformation*** which, in my opinion, is the greatest miracle ever performed, and the greatest evidence of the Truth of Christ’s mission of healing.