

Native New Day

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Prospering in Health

One trait of our Native culture has amazed the world for hundreds of years—our resourcefulness in living in remote areas of wilderness, deserts, and frozen tundra.

Politicians and explorers of the past were hesitant to claim or even explore some of the country where Native people live. They thought no one could possibly exist in these places. They wondered how Native people could ever farm these areas or even find anything to eat.

For some time now the military has done in-depth studies on how Native people fare so well in these bleak areas of the world. One principle of Native existence, they discovered, is that our people simply eat the best food that is available to them and stay away from anything that is harmful or could eventually destroy them. A basic fundamental principle of Christian living is similar—we should only eat and drink the best food possible under the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

We have seen in these study guides that God wants only the best for us in all things. He is the Creator. He designed our bodies and gave us life. As the One who made us, He knows what we should eat and drink in order to have healthy bodies.

Our people historically were skillful farmers. Through unique techniques they developed corn and other vegetables that can grow in various climates and soils. They developed more than 250 types of potatoes. Our Native people were the first to introduce squash and diverse types of gourd plants to the rest of the world.

In-depth studies on how Native people have fared so well in wilderness areas have shown that we simply eat the best food available and stay away from anything harmful.

Few people know that many of the world's medicines in common use today, such as aspirin and other pain-relieving remedies, came from our ancestors. Whole systems of modern medicine find their source of cures from roots and herbs that our Native women still grow and gather. As the result of Native concern about health, diseases were minimal until the Europeans introduced new diseases for which our people had no defense.

Key Thought: Healthful living includes eating the best food possible and staying away from foods that will



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destroy us or make us sick. One reason God wants us to practice healthful living is that He wants to do a work of transforming our lives and thoughts in preparation for our heavenly home.

In order for the Holy Spirit to work effectively in us, we must have an alert, healthy mind. We all know that when we are sick it is hard to concentrate on things that take serious thinking, let alone have a positive attitude toward life. God wants us to be healthy and alert, so that He can more easily speak to our conscience. This allows Him to lead us into a happier lifestyle that is better than we ever thought possible.

The more we study the Bible, the more we see that God is interested in all aspects of our lifestyle. He tells us how we should take care of our health. Unfortunately, many people today go through life at half the speed and alertness that they could have. Often it is because what they are eating and drinking is damaging them and slowing

Native people were the first to introduce squash and diverse gourd plants to the rest of the world. They developed several hybrids of corn and more than 250 types of potatoes. These techniques have been copied around the world.

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God wants us to take care of our bodies
so our minds will be open and alert.

down their bodies and minds. If we will just follow God's rules of health and practice the principle of eating the best food available, we will realize a more vibrant health for ourselves and for our children.

BIBLE ANSWERS

1. What is God's wish for us regarding health? 3 John

2. "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in _____, just as your soul prospers." *(All quotations from the Bible in these lessons are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) unless otherwise noted.)*

Note. God wants us to physically "be in health," as well as He wants our soul to prosper. When we are healthy and alert, God is able to direct our inmost thinking quickly to better things. It is easy to see how our spiritual life is connected to a healthy lifestyle.

2. The Bible tells us that our bodies are the dwelling place of Whom? 1 Corinthians 6:19–20. *Circle one:* (1) The Holy Spirit. (2) Angels. (3) Evil spirits.

Note. The Holy Spirit works through our minds and thoughts to guide us. All of us realize that it is difficult for our minds to function properly and respond to His leading if we are sick and diseased. For this reason God wants us to take care of our bodies and minds.

3. How should we eat and drink? 1 Corinthians 10:31. “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the _____ of God.”

Note. To eat and drink to the glory of God simply means that we do all we can to take care of our bodies and minds. We actually honor God by eating and drinking properly. Jesus’ interest in our lives is like that of loving parents who enjoy the happiness of their child when he or she is healthy and truly happy.

4. What did God originally intend for human beings to eat? Genesis 1:29-30. *Circle one:* (1) Fruit. (2) Nuts. (3) Grain. (4) Vegetables. (5) All of these.

Note. God’s original diet for human beings was a vegetarian diet—fruit, nuts, grains, and vegetables. Since animals didn’t die before sin entered the world, meat was not part of God’s original diet for men and women.



And God knew that a vegetarian diet was actually the most healthful diet for the humans he had created. Later, after sin, God permitted humans to eat the meat of certain animals.

5. What animals did God permit His chosen people to eat? Leviticus 11:2–3. “These are the

animals which you may eat . . . : whatever divides the hoof, having _____ and _____—that you may eat.”

Note. God allowed only certain animals as food. The animals God said we could use as food were to have a split hoof, like caribou, reindeer, moose, sheep, and goats. They also must chew the cud. Animals that have a divided hoof and also chew the cud are called clean by the Bible and can be used for food.

6. What animals does the Bible say God’s people should not eat? Deuteronomy 14:7-8. (*Circle one*) (1) Camel. (2) Hare (rabbit). (3) Rock hyrax. (4) Swine (pig). (5) All four. (See also Leviticus 11:4–8.)

Note. The meat of the pig may taste good to some, but God said pork is not to be eaten. God created the pig, and He knows that lard, bacon, and ham are not good for our bodies. Many doctors today warn people about eating the fat in meat, since it tends to cause heart disease. There are also certain diseases such as trichinosis that are found in pork. God knows these things, and that is why He warned us against its use as food. When we eat pork, we risk getting these diseases that are in the meat.



Rabbits are also unclean animals. (Leviticus 11:6.) They don’t have the split hoof though they do chew the cud. We shouldn’t use them for food, because of the diseases they often carry.

7. What kind of fish did God say could be eaten? Leviticus 11:9. “These you may eat of all that are in the water: whatever in the water has _____ and _____.”

Note. This verse is very plain. It needs little explanation. Only fish that have both fins and scales are to be considered suitable for food. Sea animals such as eels, crabs, lobsters, and clams, however, were excluded. One reason is that they often harbor diseases which they can't get rid of like fish do. You will notice that most of the unclean water life are scavengers.

Often people don't realize what they are eating and drinking is damaging their bodies and minds.

How about birds? God's people were to stay away from the scavengers, such as ravens, vultures, and sea gulls (Leviticus 11:13-19). Interestingly, these birds don't have gizzards to process foods they eat, as do the clean birds. Again, the principle is that we should eat the best food available to experience the best health.

8. What will we be doing if we have the “hope” of Jesus' coming in our hearts? 1 John 3:3. “And everyone who has this hope in Him _____ himself, just as He [Jesus] is pure.”

Note. When parents have been separated from their children, there's nothing that thrills the heart of a father

or a mother more than to return home and find the children healthy and happy. We know that if our children are healthy and happy, they will be more open and sensitive to our love. Life with them can be one of our greatest joys. Many parents know that one of the saddest and most discouraging things is to see their children destroying their health by living a lifestyle which takes them downhill physically and mentally.

Our heavenly Father wishes us to understand that He wants to make His children the head and not the tail in this world when it comes to a healthy lifestyle. Those who are truly preparing for a better life in heaven will be the kind of people who are doing all they can to live as healthfully as possible. God wants us to have healthy minds and bodies that He can use to bless both ourselves and others. Aren't you thankful for a God who loves us this way?

Next Lesson. “The Stinging Serpents” is the title of our next study. It deals with such things as alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse. These are things that have affected some of us in one way or another. Those of us who know the effects of these addictions often ask, “What is God’s plan to deliver us from these habits which have hurt and destroyed so many of our family members and friends?”



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