

Getting to the Big Picture

The Stewardship of Wellness

We often only think of our health and wellness in times of injury, sickness or stress. God wants to heal and prevent illness and disease. Fully one third of the Gospel narratives tell us about Jesus healing and helping people. In fact, I can't remember him turning down anyone who came to Him seeking relief from a physical ailment or need for healing. When love encounters illness or suffering, it seeks to relieve it. That, in fact, is the definition of mercy - love's response to other's needs for help and healing.

The concept of "Wellness" certainly includes healing; however, it is about much more than that. We are "Stewards" of our own well-being, including our physical, mental, and spiritual health. We all can remember hearing someone say "your body is a temple", which comes from 1 Corinthians 6:19-20:

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

And Jesus says in John 10:10 that he came that we might have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance. I believe that God has more in store for us in this life than we can imagine in all departments, including physical health and wellness. Should we pray for this? Absolutely. God is a loving Father who is determined to give good things to his children, and we should ask for his help. But we also need to do what we can within our power to optimize our physical and mental health. In other words, we have a responsibility to ourselves.

Stewardship means that what we possess has been entrusted to us by God, and we need to manage it wisely and profitably for Him. Time, talent, and treasure, yes, but also our bodies so we can do everything in our power to live productive lives to God's glory and have the greatest opportunity to give back to others.

If we think of Wellness as a wheel, its spokes could be thought of as:

- **Spiritual Life:** knowing God, and that he is there to guide us, saved by grace for good work, and true to being created in His image
- **Relationships:** compassion, forgiveness, loving my neighbor as myself, being at peace with myself and others
- **Outlook:** being optimistic and able to cope when "life happens," a positive outlook on life
- **Nourishment:** consuming what my body needs for good nutrition, but not wasting, so as to assure a healthy environment able to sustain for the future
- **Activity:** fun and exercise, developing mind and body
- **Rest:** sufficient sleep and relaxation, renewing my mind and my body as needed

If your spokes are in balance, the wheel of your life rolls along smoothly. If one or more of the spokes of your wheel are short or missing, you will have a bumpy ride!

For those looking to start out on what they might think is a very difficult physical goal, or any goal, the following quote hopefully will provide help and inspiration:

There are three stages in the work of God: Impossible; Difficult; and Done. - Hudson Taylor

And we should all keep in mind:

A cheerful heart does good like medicine, but a broken spirit makes one sick. Proverbs 17:22