The Bible, Health and Healing

The first radio broadcast on this series talked about just who was Dr. Luke. We learned he was a man who had lived about 2,000 years ago in what is present day Israel. He was a doctor who understood both eastern and western cultures. He also wrote two books about the man named Jesus who did a lot of health and healing. However, what is also important is that Dr. Luke's writings are not in separate books, but rather they are included in a larger book called the Bible. But what makes this important?

The Bible is a book that was written over 1500 hundred years by many different authors in many different cultures and countries. People who had both an eastern and western understanding of life wrote it. Further people of different racial and language groups wrote it. Thus it cannot be considered either eastern or western. Rather it is both. What does the Bible though have to say about 'Health and Healing' as this radio series is about health and healing? Is the Bible a medical textbook, no. But it does have parts of it, which discuss health. Why is this important? Because the author of the Bible is God Himself and thus this shows that God is very interested in our health. That is that we have good health.

Let us look in the Bible and see what it has to say about Health and Healing. First, is the fact that the Bible says that God created us, that is human beings, just after he created the world. Besides Dr. Luke's two books the Bible has 64 other books. The first book written was called Genesis and it was written about 3500 years ago. The word 'Genesis' means beginning or the origins of history.

Early in the book of Genesis it states that 'the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living being.' What does all of this mean? First, God created man. Man did not just happen or evolve. Second, even though man had a heart, lungs and a brain he did not become alive until God himself breathed into him the breath of life. Thus man is not only a **physical body** he is also a '**spiritual person'** because man has the breath of God in him to allow him to be alive. Man also has a **mind** to think with. In fact in another book in the Bible called Isaiah God tells man 'come let us reason together.'

Finally though man is a **social being** that is God created him to live in harmony and a relationship with others. Also in the book of Genesis it says 'But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, He (that is God) took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, 'this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man.' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh.'

This passage says that man was created to live with others and especially in the relationship of marriage. Thus man is a created person with a physical, spiritual, mental and social side in all he does. When there is trouble in one of these areas there are also problems in areas which can

affect our health. For example when we have physical troubles we have diseases. When we have spiritual problems we have a poor relationship with God, this can cause, for example loneliness. When we have problems with our minds we can have mental problems, like depression. Finally when we have social problems we can have fear or distrust.

You can already see how these problems can affect other areas. For example if we have a disease, we may not feel well and thus we may get depressed. Then we may not want to be with other people and this causes a sense of being isolated. One factor affects the other. On the other hand many people are depressed because they stole or lied and did not tell the truth. That depression can lead to physical problems like heart or stroke problems. Thus the areas of life are related, that is a problem in one area of life affects other areas of my life and other people.

You are probably already thinking did God create man and woman to have problems? No in fact he created them to live in a place where there were no physical, spiritual, mental or social problems. If that is the case then how did these problems start in the world and secondly can they be eliminated? It started when the man and woman decided to things their own way rather than the way God had created them to do things. What was it that they did? God had instructed them to eat everything they wanted but not of one particular tree. They disobeyed him. Before they ate the fruit from this tree God had told them there would be a consequence of death so they knew what would happen. But they were tempted and they ate of this tree they were told not to eat from. What then happened?

God threw them out of the Garden of Paradise as a result of this wrongdoing or 'Sin.' Just what is sin? Sin is going against what God would have us do. The consequence is physical, spiritual, mental and social illness. Thus all of the illnesses of the world can be traced to man's disobedience to God. Man continues to disobey even today. Thus he still has physical, spiritual, mental and social illnesses.

You may ask, is there a way though to not have physical, spiritual, mental or social diseases? Yes as a matter of fact there are. I am glad you asked. However, I would also mention and restate what was just mentioned. When man sinned initially he would die. God will keep that promise to every person born today. However, God also mentioned in another book in the Bible called Romans that 'the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Thus we may die physically on this earth but God through Jesus Christ can give us, after we die, eternal life and not eternal death. The book of Romans was written in the current day city of Rome about 2000 years ago. This is a great source of comfort because it says that no matter what happens on this earth we can have eternal life with Jesus Christ who overcame death.

The Bible also tells us though that in this life we can have less physical, spiritual, mental and social problems and diseases. This is certainly good new, isn't it? How is this done? First, it is important to realize the bad things **we do** which can cause problems for us. The Bible in another book called Corinthians says 'our body is a temple of God.' That is the God wants us to take care of our bodies. Corinth was a city in what is modern day Greece and this book was written about 2000 years ago just after the time Dr. Luke wrote his books. First, let us look at **physical things we do** to ourselves which cause health problems. For example smoking which can cause

lung cancer or heart disease; this is very clear to understand. Another example is drinking of alcohol. Actually one to two ounces of red wine has proved to be very good for your health in preventing heart disease. However, more than that and especially large amounts can cause significant health problems, especially liver disease and can also make heart disease worse.

Second, are **spiritual things we do** which cause us health problems. The Bible says that apart from God we can do nothing. We are helpless. Helplessness causes fear. Certainly having constant fear is not good.

Thirdly, are **mental things we do** which cause which cause us problems. Have you ever been depressed because of something that happened to you? For example you made a bad grade in school or got fired from your job or lost your job? If this depression lasted for long then the depression could become a habit and hard to break. You could have not studied hard for the test or lied or cheated at work and got fired. Certainly this would have been your fault.

Finally, **social things we do** which cause us health problems. Have you ever gotten made at someone you know who is a friend because they did something you did not like? It actually may not have been a big deal but you got mad and later angry and then bitter and that friendship is now ruined. That loss of the friendship can cause hurt and pain as real as any physical disease, can't it?

Notice one thing all of the above four things we do have in common. They are things we should not do but we do nevertheless. In fact doesn't that happen all of the time? We say 'I will not do that again, I will not drink alcohol, or smoke, or get mad or cheat,' but we do it anyway. Why is that? Why can't we control what we want to do? The Bible says it is because we are 'slaves to sin.' What does that mean? It means that though we want to stop doing wrong or sinning against God, we cannot. Sin or wrong doing against God, is our master. We are in actual fact not our own master's but Sin controls us.

What can be done about this? The Bible says that through Jesus Christ we can overcome these harmful desires. But only after we have committed our lives to Jesus Christ do we have the power to overcome these harmful desires. Only after we commit our lives to Jesus Christ do we have the power to stop drinking large amounts of harmful alcohol, or smoking cigarettes or saying harmful things to friends or lying or cheating.

These are things **we do** which are harmful. What about doing things, which can help our health. What does the Bible have to say about that? It has a lot of things to say. First, it does say that in the world we live in we all will experience death and suffering. That cannot be avoided. The reason is that the sins of others and our sins hurt our self and other people. For example in war many innocent people suffer. Also in famines many innocent people suffer, especially women and children suffer. Often wars are caused by a person's greed and famines the same. Second, it is important to realize in two ancient books in the Bible it says that how we act is very important. The ancient book of Exodus and Leviticus in the Bible talks about washing hands and how to prepare foods so we will not get sick and rotating crops so the soil will not get depleted of nutrients and many other health items. It also talks about not wanting or

coveting what your neighbor has. What difference does this make? Well coveting or wanting what you neighbor has leads to jealousy. Jealousy can lead to other physical health problems.

Several decades ago Dr. Hans Selye of Toronto, Canada did extensive studies on the effects of stress on the body. He found that external and internal stress factors act on the adrenal glands. These chemicals released by the adrenal glands are for emergency situations. However, he found that constant release of these chemicals from such factors as anger, fear or jealousy caused chronic weakness or stomach problems. These then could lead to more severe problems like high blood pressure or stomach ulcers.

Thus what we do is as important as what we do not do. Not only should we avoid harmful behaviors but also we should have good habits of exercise and have a peaceful mind. One may ask, 'How do I have a peaceful mind.' This is so important because a mind at peace does not have anger, rage, slander, jealousy and so on. The Bible again has an answer. It says, 'Therefore since we have been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' What does this mean? Jesus died on the Cross for our sins. He took the penalty of our sins, which we should have to bear on himself so we can come to God in peace. Thus we have peace in our hearts and minds. As a result we cannot have fear or jealousy or other things, which can hurt our health. Also we can have the power to live good healthy lives.

Would you like to have peace with God and better health as a result? All you need to do is pray the following prayer:

'Lord I have sinned and done wrong. I deserve to be punished for my sin. I believe though that Jesus died for me on the Cross in my place and took my sins on Himself. I believe he then was buried and raised from the dead for me to have new life.' If you prayed this prayer you now have new life in Jesus Christ both now and forever more.