

Health and Healing
Integrity: Wholeness and Holiness

Lesson #10 for June 5, 2010

Scriptures: Genesis 39:6-12; 1 Samuel 24:1-10; Daniel 6:1-10; Matthew 4:1-11; Romans 1:24-27; Ephesians 3:14-21.

1. What do wholeness and holiness have to do with health? Is integrity important to our health? Our focus will be on stories from the Bible which give us sterling examples of integrity. We think of Joseph and Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39:6-12. If Potiphar had really believed his wife, Joseph would probably have lost his head!); David in his treatment of Saul (1 Samuel 24:1-10); and Daniel when threatened with the lion's den (Daniel 6:1-10. Was Daniel being presumptuous?). Jesus Himself gave an excellent example of moral integrity in His dealing with Satan in the wilderness of temptation. (Matthew 4:1-11)
2. But most of our world is better described by Romans 1:24-31. What would Paul say about our world today? To avoid such a catastrophe in our own lives, we must be rooted and grounded in our love for God. (Ephesians 3:14-21) We can choose to be Godlike or choose to be world-loving sinners bound for destruction.
3. In our day, it is considered best to be civil and politically correct and not to be so concerned about moral integrity. We may go to work with a terrible headache and be feeling awful, but when we greet people in the hall and they ask us how we are doing, we say, "Fine!" That is a lie! Is that morally wrong? How many other conventions of our society force us to make statements that are not completely true? What about cultures where the accepted norm is to tell a person only what one thinks that person wants to hear?
4. How often during our workday do we fail to tell the whole truth? It is so easy to gradually compromise our moral standards. And just as suggested in Scripture (Exodus 20:4-6), parents pass along their weakened moral standings to their children who weaken them even further.
5. And when we face those who believe they are standing up for biblical principles, we call them straightlaced or fanatical. We are not rigid like those folks!
6. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How many of the sins with which Christ was tempted would be a temptation to you? You could not turn a stone into bread even if you wanted to! If placed on the top of the pinnacle of the temple, most of us would hold on for dear life! Most of us would be scared to death if someone offered us a city to be responsible for, let alone the whole world! No doubt, Satan worked for a long period of time on the temptations with which he was going to approach Christ. Satan believed that under the circumstances, he would have the upper hand. Almost universally, human beings give in to the temptations of appetite, pride, presumption, and taking the easy way out. How can we avoid such personal compromise?
7. We live in an age when Americans particularly are fiercely protective of their privacy. Is that partly because they are doing things which are immoral, cheating, and/or illegal? When tempted or in association with our friends, how often do we stand up for godly integrity and sexual purity? Do we ever tell off-color jokes, etc? How can we avoid sliding into this slippery pit?
8. In previous lessons we have spoken about whether we should be Spirit-controlled or self-controlled. As we approach the end of this earth's history, our only real safety is to have

that level of moral integrity that will lead us to do what is right because it is right—having been instructed by the Holy Spirit and under the ultimate in strict self-control. Any time we give an opening to outside influences in our lives, we are giving an opening to the influence of Satan. And we can be certain that if it is at all possible, Satan will find ways to manipulate circumstances to control us. (Revelation 13) In the last days, this will undoubtedly be a modern form of demon possession. The whole world will be “demon-possessed”!

9. But we know that we are spiritual, mental, physical, and social beings belonging entirely to God not only by creation but by redemption. (1 Corinthians 6:19,20) We have seen that He has given us clear guiding principles in Scripture, and we must not violate those principles. We cannot afford to compromise mental, spiritual, physical, or social purity.
10. How often have you, or others that you know, padded your expense account or cheated on your income tax or sneaked a look at Internet pornography? Are we teaching our children to lie to their parents or teachers? Do they find it easy to cheat in school? Review the stories of Joseph, David, and Daniel as presented earlier in this lesson. How many historical figures or contemporary figures even among your friends do you know who you really believe would stand up as those Bible heroes did under similar circumstances?
11. Television has become the new parent in our homes. What can we expect of our children when almost every television program about romance shows the actors ending up in bed on their first date! Even when you are in line at the supermarket checkout stand, the display is full of trashy magazines and newspapers shouting the immoralities, inconsistencies, and moral perversities of well-known figures. Almost everything is sold using sex appeal. Entire films which are touted as comedy are based on the terrible situations that people get themselves into by lying and having to lie again to cover up the first lie. How do we convince our children that this is not the way to live?
12. Some professions are particularly noted for their lack of integrity. Used car salesman come to mind almost immediately. Lack of integrity has become such a problem that a well-known polling organization does a study every year to find out which professions are the most trusted and which are least trusted. The Congress of the United States has an approval rating of 19%! They believe that if it is popular, it must be true!
13. Living in such a world, what can we possibly do to maintain our moral integrity? Read Ephesians 3:14-21. What does it mean to be filled with all the fullness of God? What are our minds full of? In our day, is it really possible to be all that God wants us to be? We all recognize that the transformation which is needed is not a superficial external decoration. God requires a complete moral change from the inside out. How does God bring about such a transformation? What do we have to do to allow Him permission to do that?
14. When faced with moral questions, how often do we find it easier to rationalize or blame others? Certainly, Jesus had every excuse in the world not to go through all that He went through, but He is our greatest Example. Could we really learn to be like Him? We sometimes look at the story of Daniel in the lion's den and wonder why Daniel had to be so rigid! There were so many ways he could have been just a little bit less showy with his religion! Do you know anyone who, like Joseph or Daniel, would rather die than compromise their integrity or tell a lie?
15. Read Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:15-18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Jude 7. What does it mean to exchange the truth about God for a lie? How many commonly-believed Christian

doctrines are not true? How would you respond to those who say there is no more use for religion? What kind of people worship the creature instead of their Creator? Is this talking about evolution? The scientific community believes that evolution is the “gospel truth”! Would the people of Sodom and Gomorrah blush if they could see what is going on in our world today? Look around our world. Whole generations are being wiped out in Africa and Southeast Asia where sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS are rampant and treatments are too expensive for most people to afford.

16. One of the major sins mentioned in Romans 1 is homosexuality. Homosexuality is an incredibly complex issue. While some people seem to be born with a tendency toward homosexuality, many others seem to choose it as a lifestyle. Why do you think the Bible speaks so harshly against that lifestyle or sexual orientation? (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:27; 1 Corinthians 6:9) Is there something about homosexuality that makes such people unsavable? How many men and women today are perverting God’s design for their sexuality? But what about Romans 2? Could the “saints” really be worse sinners than the people in Romans 1?
17. Internet pornography has exploded. Internet providers repeatedly report that sexually explicit material is the most widely sought-after material on the Internet. What is that telling us about the final generations to live on this world?
18. Read Romans 12:1,2. In this passage Paul suggested that spiritual wholeness or integrity is the true, rational, spiritual worship that God requests of us. Notice that this verse includes the physical, spiritual, and the mental aspects of our lives.
19. We have all heard the expression, “Do as I say, and not as I do.” How often do our actions nullify our Christian witness? Does James have a real point in James 1:22?
20. Look at some of the ways in which our lives and actions are subtle compromises of true integrity. Integrity really requires that our actions and our beliefs match. We believe that exercise is important for the body. Do we do it? Are we getting an adequate supply of fresh, pure water and drinking enough of it every day? We know that sunshine is beneficial in moderate amounts. Do we get some every day?
21. Obesity is one of the spreading epidemics of our time. Are we avoiding the dangers of gluttony? Are we filling our plates with fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and nuts? All around us are people destroying their lives and their health with tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, and other such drugs! What are we doing to help them recognize the advantages of a healthy vegetarian diet and avoid dangerous and addictive substances?
22. True religion and the laws of health go hand in hand. It is impossible to work for the salvation of men and women without presenting to them the need of breaking away from sinful gratifications, which destroy the health, debase the soul, and prevent divine truth from impressing the mind. Men and women must be taught to take a careful view of every habit and every practice and at once put away those things that cause an unhealthy condition of the body, and thus cast a dark shadow over the mind. God desires His light bearers ever to keep a high standard before them. By precept and example they must hold their perfect standard high above Satan's false standard, which, if followed, will lead to misery, degradation, disease, and death for both body and soul. Let those who have obtained a knowledge of how to eat and drink and dress so as to preserve health, impart this knowledge to others. Let the poor have the gospel of health preached unto them from a practical point of

view, that they may know how to care properly for the body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit.—Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 480

23. Would it be well for us to review our personal health habits? Are we living up to what we know and believe?
24. Daily, in newspapers and magazines, we see people whose duplicitous lives have been exposed. Are we living duplicitous lives if we are saying one thing and actually doing something else? Are we being spiritually honest?
25. The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.—Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 57. [Is this being politically correct?]
26. Our danger is not from scarcity, but from abundance. We are constantly tempted to excess. Those who would preserve their powers unimpaired for the service of God, must observe strict temperance in the use of His bounties, as well as total abstinence from every injurious or debasing indulgence.—Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 29.
27. No one can deny that this is a soul-searching lesson. The issues we have spoken about touch all of our lives. We may not have the same problems that our neighbor has, but we all do have problems. Do we clearly understand how having a right relationship with God and experiencing true friendship with Him can protect us from all those evils? Is our church preparing a group of people who are morally upright and exercise spiritual integrity on a daily basis? Are we ready for Jesus to come? If not, when will we get ready?
28. We have seen that Joseph, Daniel, and Jesus lived exemplary lives in spite of very evil settings. Our world has become so full of evil that it is hard to avoid it on a daily basis. Are we becoming the kind of “friends” of God that will be able to withstand this tide of evil at the end of this world’s history? How do we buck the very serious downward trend? God will only save righteous people, not “nice” or “politically-correct” people.

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