

Sister Barbara B. Smith

Robert Browning's joyful line, "God's in his heaven—all's right with the world!" (*Pippa Passes: A Drama*, part 1, lines 227-28), is more easily expressed when our body is functioning at its optimum—a blessing we all earnestly desire.

Good health

The state of our health affects every facet of our life—our feeling of personal well-being, our approach to work, our social interactions—even our service to the Lord.

Physical ills are a reality of life, but in spite of them the scriptures declare, "Men are, that they might have joy" (2 Ne. 2:25). The Lord has affirmed this statement by providing us with revealed instructions concerning our health, which, if followed, will increase both the length of our life and our joy in it.

Among the most familiar of the health scriptures is the eighty-ninth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, wherein the Lord specifies both substances that are for our use and those which are detrimental to us.

Scientific research has verified the harmful effects of tea, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol—even upon the development of an unborn child.

We have been warned both by our prophets and by science of the dangers in the improper and indiscriminate use of drugs, including "over-the-counter drugs." Helpful as these remedies are in times of illness, some contain ingredients that if used to excess or in combination with other substances can have dangerous side effects—even dependency or addiction.

Word of Wisdom

A large portion of the Word of Wisdom is devoted specifically to the wholesome foods that are "ordained for . . . [the] use of man" (D&C 89:10).

Relief Society miniclasses can teach women how to prepare and serve wholesome food in appealing ways.

A friend of mine once told me that after she had served a dinner featuring vegetables, a young guest said, "I thought I didn't like spinach, but that creamed spinach was delicious!" Like many of us, my friend took seriously President Kimball's counsel to garden. Now she grows her own vegetables. She prepares and serves them with great culinary skill. Guests leave her table with increased appreciation for good, healthful foods.

The Lord promises that if we keep these commandments we "shall *run* and not be weary, and shall *walk* and not faint" (D&C 89:20; italics added).

The Lord *might* be making us aware of another law of health—the need of proper exercise. Exercise such as walking and running and other forms of rhythmic action is important in maintaining cardiovascular fitness.

In our busy lives sometimes we are prone to excuse ourselves for not getting proper exercise by saying that we have neither the time nor opportunity. I know a busy young woman who exercises while listening to self-improvement tapes or memorizing scriptures. Almost anyone can do that.

We are also counseled to retire early, that we may not be weary and arise early that our bodies and minds may be invigorated (see D&C 88:124).

In that same passage we are reminded to "cease to be unclean" (D&C 88:124). This should be applied to our bodies, to our homes, and to our neighborhoods. For example, we should have clean hands and clean surfaces where foods are prepared and served.

In the fifty-ninth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord states that the foods of the earth are "to be used, with judgment, not to excess" (D&C 59:20). Health experts say that obesity constitutes a major health prob-

lem. Being overweight increases the risk of many diseases and creates physical discomfort as well as psychological burdens.

We should be grateful that scientific research and medical practice have resulted in longer life spans, greater health and vitality, and reduction in deaths among babies and small children. One of the touching parts of our past history is the great longing mothers and fathers felt for something to help their sick children get well.

Today, immunization against disease is a great blessing. Some of the most hazardous diseases are now almost totally under control because of immunization.

Home nursing courses, first aid, and other home health skills are taught in Relief Society.

In this day of high medical costs, it would also be helpful if women are taught the value of good medical health insurance. This is essential for both physical health and financial management.

Physical health goals

In summary, our physical health goals should be—

1. To obey the Word of Wisdom;
2. To maintain proper weight and endurance through regular exercise, adequate rest, and a balanced diet;
3. To improve or maintain personal and home sanitation;
4. To practice preventative measures to preserve good health;
5. To learn and practice home health skills.

May the application of these principles help each of us live joyously, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Bishop J. Richard Clarke, second counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, will now speak to us. After he is finished, we would like all to stand and join in singing, "Do What Is Right," led by Brother Donald Ripplinger.

Bishop J. Richard Clarke

Brothers and sisters, I am so thankful to be involved in the great welfare plan of the Church. I testify from the depths of my soul that this great movement was revealed by Almighty God to his latter-day prophets.

We have come a long way since the early days of welfare, but we have an enormous distance yet to travel. With the great expansion of missionary work throughout the earth, the ministering to temporal needs will likewise expand. To meet this magnificent challenge successfully, we must be wise and faithful stewards.

Stewardship

Modern scripture reminds us that

all things belong to the Lord. He declared, "I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine, . . . all these properties. . . .

"And if the properties are mine, then ye are stewards." (D&C 104:14, 55-56.)

The lessons of stewardship are vividly taught in the parable of the talents (see Matt. 25:14-30). To be profitable servants, we must improve that which the Lord has entrusted to us. Stewards are managers, and sound management reduces waste and ensures an appropriate return on invested resources. How happy were the servants who could report to their lord that they had done all that was expected of them and were