

The Life Changer

Study Series

Christian Health

So far we have seen that God cares very much about our spiritual lives. We have studied how He doesn't want us to suffer the penalty of eternal death for our sins. His desire is that we repent and freely receive the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ, which is eternal life. Spiritually, He wants us to be free from the deceptions of Satan and the vicious cycle of sin and suffering that destroys us. He longs for us to have new lives, led by the Holy Spirit and centered in His love. In short, God wants us to be spiritually victorious. Because God cares so much about our spiritual lives, it isn't hard to believe that He also cares about our physical lives!

We know that sickness, death, and suffering are not God's will. He doesn't wish any of these things on anyone because they are contrary to His nature of love, which was on full display in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. There are so many examples of Jesus healing people from blindness, handicaps, and even demon possession that



Lesson 24

thoughts of God writing these conditions into someone's fate are completely wrong. In short, God not only wants to heal us spiritually, He wants to heal us physically and keep us healthy. A major part of that process, is making good choices about what we put into our bodies, namely food, drink, and drugs. Let's examine the Bible to learn God's standards for healthful living and the reasons why He wants us to live not only spiritually healthy lives, but also physically healthy lives. You may be surprised to learn that healthful living plays a major role in preparing for Christ's return.

① Q1. What did John wish for the believers? Read 3 John 2.

A. _____

John wished that the believers would live healthy lives. Let's find out why.

② Q2. What are our bodies? Read 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.

A. _____

John wished that we would be healthy because he knew that our bodies were temples.

③ Q3. Why is the body a temple? Read John 14:16, 17, 23.

A. _____

Our bodies are temples because it is where the Holy Spirit dwells. Yes, the Bible says that the Spirit of Jesus is actually living in the believer teaching us the difference between righteousness and sin and reminding us of the judgment to come. Therefore, God is very much concerned about our physical lives.

④ Q4. In light of this truth, why should we want to live healthy lives?

A. _____

① Q5. What has God chosen us to be? Read Deuteronomy 7:6, 7.

A. _____

God has called us to be a holy people. So how should holy people live? To answer that question, let's go back to the creation of humanity. We know that when God created Adam, he was a pure, sinless person. God gave him some simple instructions that if followed would allow him to live forever. One of those pertained to diet.

① Q6. What did God give Adam and Eve to eat in the Garden of Eden? Read Genesis 1:29.

A. _____

In the beginning, God gave the first couple fruits, grains, and nuts to eat. There is no mention of milk, eggs, or meat eating. In fact they couldn't eat meat because that requires the death of an animal, and before sin there was no death. The first physical death was the animal that was killed as a sacrifice for Adam and Eve's sin (Genesis 3:21). Of course, after sin came into the world people started eating things other than that which had been ordained by God.

If God created Adam and Eve as vegetarians, and would prefer for us to have the same diet as them while we wait for Jesus' return, was there ever a time when He actually permitted man to eat meat? Yes, God permitted Noah and his descendants to eat meat after the flood because the whole world had been destroyed and it would take time to rebuild it. There weren't any gardens, orchards, or vineyards. It is interesting to note though that the average age of man also began to dwindle (Notice the difference in age of death for Adam (930 years) and Abraham (178 years): Genesis 5:5, 8, 11, 17; 11:31, 32; 23:1; 25:7, 8). So because God allows us to eat meat, does it mean we can eat any kind? Let's see what the Bible says.

- Q7. Two classes of animals are shown in the book of Genesis. What are they? Read Genesis 7:2.

A. _____

God did not want humans to eat meat but He permitted it. At the same time He also regulated it. He did not give permission for every animal to be eaten. Some animals are more suitable to eat than others. The animals suitable for food are called clean animals and the ones that are unsuitable for food are called unclean animals.

- Q8. What distinguishes a clean animal from an unclean one? Read Leviticus 11:1-8, 26.

A. _____

Quite simply, if we want to eat a land animal it must have a split hoof and chew cud. These will include goats, sheep, cows, and most deer-like animals.

- Q9. What are some animals that do not fit this criteria?

A. _____

In our country, there are several animals that fall into the unclean category. Some of them are camels, rabbits, pigs, snakes, horses, and turtles.

- Q10. What distinguishes a clean sea creature from an unclean one? Read Leviticus 11:9-12.

A. _____

A clean sea creature has fins and scales.

- Q11. Can you name some clean sea creatures that have fins and scales?

A. _____

There are several varieties of fish that we harvest from the seas surrounding our country that are good for food. Some common examples are sea bass, anchovies, sardines, gilt headed bream (çipura), and Atlantic bonito (palamut).

① Q12. What are some examples of sea animals that do not fit this criteria?

A. _____

The most common ones that we find in our markets are octopus, squid, clams, oysters, crabs, and shrimp. We will discuss shortly why these sea creatures are not suitable for food.

① Q13. What birds did God say were not clean for food? What do these birds do? Read Leviticus 11:13-20.

A. _____

① Q14. In light of this, what kinds of birds are suitable for food?

A. _____

① Q15. If you were in a survival situation, what kind of insects could you eat? Read Leviticus 11:21-23.

A. _____

Down to the tiniest creatures we see that God is very concerned about what goes into our bodies. It is for this reason that God distinguishes, and makes known to us, what we types of “meat” we can eat. Of course, He has a good reason too. He doesn’t want us to get sick or suffer from repulsive diseases. All of the animals that God calls unclean have biological properties that are harmful for us or serve as the earth’s cleaning system. For example, rabbits eat their own feces causing a

build-up of harmful toxins in the meat. Pigs don't sweat which also causes a build-up of toxins. In addition, they typically live in mud mixed with their own feces, and their bodies are filled with small worms called *Trichina*. As for shellfish, like clams, shrimp, and oysters, they live on the bottom of the sea and filter the filth from the water. They are some of the most toxic creatures in the sea. There should be no doubt that God knows what He is talking about. The fact that He tells us to avoid these things shows how much He loves us.

① Q16. What does God call those who live according to their own ideas and not God's? Read Isaiah 65:2-5.

A. _____

God says that those type of people are rebellious. Do we want to be rebellious? Do we want to live contrary to God's instructions? No way! Unfortunately, there are those who promote standards that are not in line with what God says (Read Ezekiel 22:24-26). It is for this reason that we need to be careful. What better way to be careful than to not cloud our minds with any substance that would hinder our ability to understand and make good choices.



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



“Are there any questions or comments about what we have been reading?” Fatma asked. There was a silence and then she said, “Reşat, what is wrong? You look like you are wrestling with something.”

“Is it that obvious?” Reşat inquired. “I don't know if I want to talk about it right now.”

“Why not? You know there aren't any secrets among us.” Mehmet stated.

“What's wrong honey?” Afife asked.

“Alright, alright. It is obvious that you all aren’t going to let me sit here and sulk,” Reşat admitted. “Up until now, except for the tithing, I have accepted everything we have learned as truth. But I think we are going a little overboard now. I mean, I have already changed my religion. I have held my tongue when I wanted to argue with people or tell them how I really felt. I will admit that at first I wasn’t into the tithing principle. But I understand its purpose, at least in theory. Now you are telling me that I can’t eat certain foods.”

“I’m not telling you. The Bible is telling us. It is pretty obvious. Of course, that doesn’t mean that it will be comfortable. We have all had to think hard and weigh the costs of choosing to live out what the Bible teaches,” Fatma said on behalf of the whole group.

“Okay, okay, you aren’t telling me.”

“Why is this so hard for you dear?” Afife asked.

“Dear, you know I eat seafood with my friends every Saturday night. I like, no I love, squid and octopus. And in the summers, when we walk along the seashore, oh, oh, oh, I love eating steamed clams. Don’t you get it. These verses are saying I can’t do that anymore. What’s next, rakı?”

The group just sat there for a moment. Then Mert said, “Let’s find out.” (To be Continued)

⑦ Q17. What does the person who pursues alcohol not do? Read Isaiah 5:11, 12.

A. _____

The person who drinks alcohol and parties isn’t concerned with the work of God and spiritual things. They are focused on worldly things which don’t lead to wisdom and holiness (Read Proverbs 20:1). Moreover, they suffer.

① Q18. What does alcohol do to us physically and emotionally? Read Proverbs 23:29-32.

A. _____

No one can deny the harmful effects of alcohol. Not only do people hurt themselves, they hurt others. Did you know that 4% of deaths worldwide are linked to alcohol? In 2011 alone, 320,000 young people died as a result of alcohol consumption.

① Q19. What is alcohol like? Reread Proverbs 23:32.

A. _____

Could there be a better symbol of alcohol's effect on a person than the poisonous bite of a snake? As believers should we want anything to do with something that is characterized as a snake, just like Satan?

① Q20. What do we see and say when under the influence of alcohol? Read Proverbs 23:33.

A. _____

① Q21. Why shouldn't kings drink alcohol? Read Proverbs 31:4, 5.

A. _____

① Q22. Did the priests in the desert sanctuary and temple of Jerusalem drink alcohol? Read Leviticus 10:8-11.

A. _____

The basic principle behind God's not wanting kings and priests to drink alcohol is so they could distinguish from right and wrong and govern the people righteously. He wanted them to think clearly and be focused on what He had called them to do. He wanted them to think before they spoke and they needed to speak with His authority.

Unfortunately, they didn't always obey God (Read Isaiah 28:7). Do you know anyone who has said foolish things while drunk? Is there any doubt that drinking alcohol while performing a job can inhibit your thinking and performance? Of course not! So how does this apply to us? The same rule applies for us because in Christ we too are kings and priests. Did you know that we will rule as kings with Jesus in heaven? (Read Revelation 20:4). Did you know that we are priests? (Read 1 Peter 2: 9 and Revelation 1:4-6).

② Q23. Is it okay for us to give alcohol to our friends? Read Habakkuk 2:15.

A. _____

The fact of the matter is this, God wants us to stay away from alcohol. He doesn't want us to drink it, give it to our friends, or even have it in our homes. He wants us to have a clear mind filled with holy thoughts.

Although the Bible doesn't mention every substance that could be harmful to us, it does give us some basic principles that we can organize our lives around.



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



“I don't know. This is making me reconsider everything. I mean, I was never happy before because of all the rules in our society. I have to do this or else, don't do that or else, if this happens, do this, if you want this to happen go here. Come on! Why does religion have to be so full of rules? Why can't we just live good lives, treat others with respect and love, and eat whatever we want?”

“Reşat, do you remember how I felt when we learned about tithing? At least your wife is here to support you. In my family, I have no one. No one!” Mehmet said with intensity. “And the things I choose to do, or not do, involve my wife, even though she doesn't agree with me. I

know how you are feeling. But let's put this in perspective. Would you will be willing to give up all that you have gained: eternal life, real love and acceptance, the surety of salvation, freedom from fear, and us, just so you could eat some squid and clams? In my opinion, that doesn't make any sense."

"Let's finish up." Fatma said. (To be Continued)

② Q24. According to Paul how are we to run the race of life? Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

A. _____

② Q25. Why are we to be temperate in all things?

A. _____

Paul likened the spiritual journey with Christ to a race. Just as athletes control what they put into their bodies, we too should have control over our passions, desires, and health habits. If athletes do all of this to receive a medal (in ancient times they received a wreath crown) which is meaningless when they die, shouldn't we be much more serious about receiving the gift of eternal life!

② Q26. How can we apply this principle to our daily lives?

A. _____

If we are temperate in all things and striving to lead healthy lives, we should be exercising on a daily basis. This could be as simple as walking and stretching. We should also be temperate in what and how much we eat. Eating a lot of sweets, eating until our stomachs are bloated, consuming too much fat, drinking a lot of tea and coffee will most certainly not help us be healthy.

② Q27. Is cigarette smoking healthy? Why?

A. _____

You would be very hard pressed to find a serious athlete that smokes cigarettes. If our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and God wants us to live long, healthy lives, should we be smoking? Of course not! Almost 60% of our people are killing themselves by smoking cigarettes. On average 100,000 Turks die every year from complications related to cigarette smoking. Does this glorify God?

② Q28. What are we to glorify God with? Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.

A. _____

We glorify God through what we eat, drink, and do. We can't glorify God if we are eating unclean meats, drinking alcohol, and smoking cigarettes. We can't glorify God if we are overeating, using drugs, and not taking care of our bodies. But we can glorify God if we do the opposite. Plus, we will live longer, happier, and healthier lives, which is what God wants.

Right now we are living in the last days of our earth's history. The people of the world have been deceived into believing that the main focus of life is pleasure. According to them, we should "eat, drink, and be merry." But God is telling us the opposite. He doesn't want us to be deceived. He wants us to have control over our appetites and desires. He wants our minds to be clear and our thoughts to be pure so that we can make good decisions about faith and family. In short, He wants us to be ready for Jesus' return, and He knows that what we put into our bodies can hinder our focus and preparation. Let's not fall for the trickery that all foods are good and that smoking and alcohol don't affect us spiritually or physically. Let's move forward and live everyday with this thought in our minds. Let's be like Daniel and his three friends.

It is interesting to note that the very first account registered in the book of Daniel involved decisions about food. Daniel and his

three friends were faced with a major dilemma. Would they stay true to God's instructions about food or would they eat whatever was placed before them? It is as if God was testing Daniel and his friends to see if they were worthy to represent Him through the trials that would unfold and interpret the prophecies He would reveal.

It is easy to conclude that God is also testing us. If we want to understand the prophecies of the Bible, be prepared for Jesus' return, and lessen the chances of being deceived, we need to be healthy, have clear minds, and not poison ourselves with the delicacies of this world. If eating simple, healthy, and clean foods prepared Daniel and his three friends for the rise and fall of earthly kingdoms, how much more do you think it will help us to prepare for an eternal one?



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



“So, what do you all say? Should we make a commitment with each other right now?” Türkan asked.

They all just sat there for a few seconds and then Reşat spoke up.

“I need some more time. I need to think this through. I can't commit to something that I don't even know if I accept.”

“What do you mean, you can't accept?” Afife chimed in. “The health principles in this lesson are as plain as the nose on your face. If we can trust the Bible about everything else we have learned, why can't we trust it on this subject?”

“That is easy for you to say. You just accept everything without a question. But you already don't eat these things. You also don't drink. But I like doing those things, and I like doing them with my friends. I might as well stop seeing them too!”

In a reassuring voice, Mert spoke up, “Reşat Abi, I have actually had to

do that, that is, stop hanging out with some of my friends. It isn't easy, but it isn't hard either. You just have to choose. Who knows, maybe eventually you can go out with them again one day when you won't be tempted to eat those things. Then, when they ask why you aren't eating and drinking you can tell them that you have chosen to live healthier."

"Mom, I think we should pray for strength," Gül suggested.

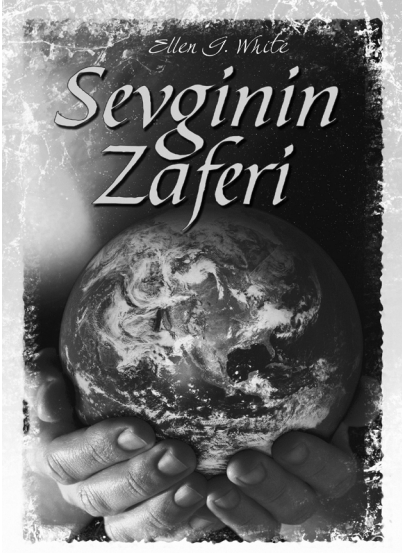
"Good idea, let's close with a prayer."

Call to commitment through prayer.

For further study read:

Psalms 139:17, 18 (God's thoughts about us are good); Ecclesiastes. 7:16 (why would we want to destroy ourselves) and 1 Corinthians 3:17 (don't defile the temple).

SEVGİNİN ZAFERİ



Kötülüğün kaynağı, henüz çözülememiş bir sırdır. Neden kötülük var? Nereden geliyor? Kötülüğün bir sonu olacak mı? Bunlar yanıtlanması gereken çok önemli sorulardır.

Büyük mücadele, görünen dünyayı, görünmeyen dünyadan ayıran perdeyi aralamakta ve bu dünyanın tüm sakinlerinin dahil olduğu doğüstü savaşı gözler önüne ermektedir.

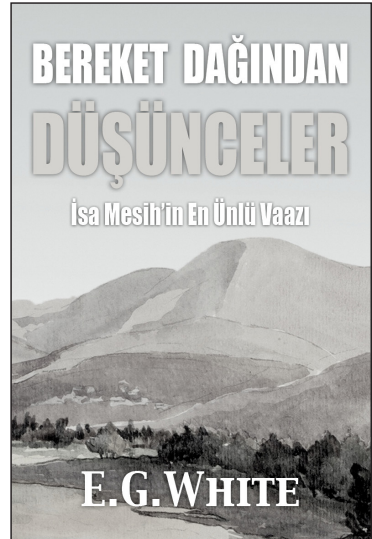
Kitap, uğrunda savaştıkları şey için çok önemli olan iki tarafın, iyinin ve kötünün arasında geçen evrensel savaşın nasıl başladığından ve nasıl sonlandırılacağından bahsetmektedir. Geçmişten, şimdiki zamandan ve gelecekte söz etmekte, çok dokunaklı bir ricayla ve ciddi bir uyarıyla sona ermektedir. Bu kitabı okurken, sanki Tanrı ile röportaj yapıyormuş hissine kapılacaksınız.

Güzel olduğu kadar şok edici bir yolculuğa çıkmaya hazırlanın. Okuduktan sonra artık aynı kişi olmayacaksınız.

BEREKET DAĞI'NDAN DÜŞÜNCELER

İncil'de imanın temel değerlerini oluşturan ve özetleyen iki klasik kabul edilebilecek metin vardır. Dağdaki Vaaz ve Rabb'in Duası olarak bilinen bu metinlerin ikisi de Matta İncili'nin başlarında bulunur. "Sağ yanağına tokat atana sol yanağını da çevir," "Düşmanlarınızı sevin, size zulmedenler için dua edin" gibi sarsıcı ve dünyevi değerlere ve durumlara ters düşen öğretiler İsa Mesih tarafından Dağdaki Vaaz'da dile getirilmiştir.

Günlük hayatta, edebiyat eserlerinde, filmlerde sıkça karşımıza çıkan Dağdaki Vaaz ve Rabb'in Duası, Ellen G. White'in kaleme aldığı Bereket Dağı'ndan Düşünceler adlı bu kitapta detaylı bir şekilde açıklanıyor. Bu kitabı okuduktan sonra Dağdaki Vaaz ve Rabb'in Duası'nı anlamakla kalmayacak aynı zamanda Rabb'in Sözü'nü temel değerlerini de kavramış olacaksınız.





Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:1-5)



©2017

www.kaderidegistiren.com

This study series is a continuation of the Fate Changer series
and a product of Istiridye Medya.