

## The Gospel and the Productive Life Student Manual Religion 150 - Chapter 12 - Observing the Laws of Physical Health

Talks about these important

“Principles to Understand

- Good health habits are important in living the gospel.
- The Word of Wisdom is an important part of the Lord’s law of health. • Proper diet, rest, and exercise provide significant health benefits. • We must avoid substances and practices that are harmful to our bodies and minds.”

While going over these questions, that Micah laid out, these would be good principles to evaluate in our own lives and how were are applying these principles.

### 1. What is the Word of Wisdom, or the Lord's Law of Health? Why does the Lord always have one- on what doctrinally basis?

#### 1 Corinthians 3:16–17

New Testament

**16** Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

**17** If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

#### 1 Corinthians 6:19–20

**19** What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

**20** For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.

#### Doctrine and Covenants 29:35

**35** Behold, I gave unto him that he should be an agent unto himself; and I gave unto him commandment, but no temporal commandment gave I unto him, for my commandments are spiritual; they are not natural nor temporal, neither carnal nor sensual.

#### Doctrine and Covenants 93:33–35

**33** For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy;

**34** And when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy.

**35** The elements are the tabernacle of God; yea, man is the tabernacle of God, even temples; and whatsoever temple is defiled, God shall destroy that temple.

**“Word of Wisdom OVERVIEW on the Church’s Website:**

God has revealed the Word of Wisdom as a commandment for the physical and spiritual benefit of His children.

The Prophet Joseph Smith received this revelation on February 27, 1833, and it is now recorded in section 89 of the Doctrine and Covenants. In the revelation, the Lord teaches healthy practices. He also prohibits some substances that are not good for the human body.”

**President David O. McKay (1873–1970):**

“The healthy man, who takes care of his physical being, has strength and vitality; his temple is a fit place for his spirit to reside. ...

“ ... Bodily ailments deprive us of the full exercise of our faculties and privileges and sometimes of life itself. It is necessary, therefore, to care for our physical bodies, and to observe the laws of physical health and happiness” (“The ‘Whole’ Man,” *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1952, 221).

**President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008):** “The body is the temple of the Spirit. The body is sacred. It was created in the image of God. It is something to be cared for and used for good purposes. It ought to be taken care of, and this thing which we call the Word of Wisdom, which is a code of health, is most helpful in doing that” (“This Thing Was Not Done in a Corner,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 49).

**Boyd K. Packer** - “The Word of Wisdom was ‘given for a principle with promise’ (D&C 89:3). That word *principle* in the revelation is a very important one. A principle is an enduring truth, a law, a rule you can adopt to guide you in making decisions. Generally principles are not spelled out in detail. That leaves you free to find your way with an enduring truth, a principle, as your anchor

Members write in asking if this thing or that is against the Word of Wisdom. It’s well known that tea, coffee, liquor, and tobacco are against it. It has not been spelled out in more detail. Rather, we teach the principle together with the promised blessings. There are many habit-forming, addictive things that one can drink or chew or inhale or inject which injure both body and spirit which are not mentioned in the revelation. Everything harmful is not specifically listed; arsenic, for instance—certainly bad, but not habit-forming! He who must be commanded in all things, the Lord said, “is a slothful and not a wise servant” (D&C 58:26).

The Word of Wisdom does not promise you perfect health, but it teaches how to keep the body you were born with in the best condition and your mind alert to delicate spiritual promptings.

I remember a blessing I received when I was serving in the military. It included counsel that's good for every young person: "You have been given a body of such physical proportions and fitness as to enable your spirit to function through it. ... You should cherish this as a great heritage. Guard [it] and protect it. Take nothing into it that shall harm the organs thereof because it is sacred. It is the instrument of your mind and [the] foundation of your character." That counsel had great influence on me. The promise of health for living the standard of the revelation is not limited to members of the Church. Tell your nonmember friends about the Word of Wisdom and urge them to live it. And then there is a greater blessing promised in the Word of Wisdom. Those who obey it are promised that they "shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures" (D&C 89:19). This is the personal revelation through which you can detect invisible crocodiles or hidden mines or other dangers.

When you were confirmed a member of the Church, you had conferred upon you the gift of the Holy Ghost. "Know ye not," Paul wrote, "that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you ... ?" (1 Cor. 6:19).

And the Lord said, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

There's a final promise in the revelation. Speaking again of those who keep and do and obey these commandments, the Lord said, "I ... give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them" (D&C 89:21). That is a remarkable promise.

To understand it, we must turn to the time of Moses. The Israelites had been enslaved for 400 years. Moses came as their deliverer. He called forth plagues upon Egypt. The Pharaoh agreed each time to free the Israelites, but each time he reneged on his promise. Finally, "the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go. ... All the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die" (Ex. 11:1, 5).

Moses told the Israelites to "take ... a lamb ... without blemish, a male of the first year. ... Neither shall ye break a bone thereof" (Ex. 12:3, 5, 46; see also John 19:33). They were to prepare the lamb as a feast and "take of the blood, and strike it on the ... door post of the houses. ... For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land ... : and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you. ... And this day ... ye shall keep ... by an ordinance for ever" (Ex. 12:7, 12–14). "When your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this ... ? ... ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover" (Ex. 12:26–27).

Surely, young people, you see the prophetic symbolism in the Passover. Christ was "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29, 36), the firstborn, male, without blemish. He was slain without breaking his bones, even though the soldiers were sent to do it.

But it is not from mortal death that we shall be spared in such a passover if we walk in obedience to these commandments, for each of us in time shall die. But there is spiritual death which you need not suffer. If you are obedient, that spiritual death will pass over you, for "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," the revelation teaches (1 Cor. 5:7).

While the Word of Wisdom requires strict obedience, in return it promises health, great treasures of knowledge, and that redemption bought for us by the Lamb of God, who was slain that we might be redeemed.

The law of sacrifice was fulfilled with the Crucifixion. The Lord instituted the sacrament in its place. That is the ordinance we shall keep forever! Young people, attend your meetings and partake of the sacrament.

Surely the Word of Wisdom was given so that you may keep the delicate, sensitive, spiritual part of your nature on proper alert. Learn to “listen” to your feelings. You will be guided and warned and taught and blessed.

Even though young life is always filled with uncertainties, young people, do not fear the future!

Your young dreams can be realized. All of your worthy, natural physical and emotional desires can be satisfied. You can find a companion to whom you can offer a body free from addiction, from depressants, from stimulants, and a mind sensitive to spiritual guidance and impressions.

You can be sealed together for time and for all eternity in a marriage covenant and express that love freely, which has as its consummate purpose the begetting of life, of children, of family, of happiness.

If you are one who’s been wandering off course, now is the time to return. You can, you know. Young people, go forward with faith. You’ll be led by the Spirit as was Nephi, “not knowing beforehand the things which [he] should do” (1 Ne. 4:6).

Keep the Word of Wisdom. Seek worthy companions. Attend church faithfully. Never fail daily to seek for help through prayer. And I promise you that the way will be easier and you shall have a composure of mind and a confident attitude toward life and the future. You shall be warned of dangers and shall be guided through the whisperings of the Holy Spirit.

(“The Word of Wisdom: The Principle and the Promises,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 17).

## **2. What are the "do-nots"? Why is important to not expand this into realms and speculations not currently specified by the keys and proclaim it as "doctrine"? What are some areas of this that we might be overlooking found either declared in the revelation or specified by the keys?**

President Russell M Nelson: “Addiction to ANY substance enslaves not only the physical body but the spirit as well” (“Addiction or Freedom,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 6–8).

“Our physical body is the instrument of our spirit. In that marvelous revelation the Word of Wisdom, we are told how to keep our bodies free from impurities which might dull,

even destroy, those delicate physical senses which have to do with spiritual communication. The Word of Wisdom is a key to individual revelation” (President Boyd K. Packer in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 16; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 14).

### **Word of Wisdom OVERVIEW on the Church’s Website:**

“The Lord revealed in the Word of Wisdom that the following substances are harmful: • Alcoholic drinks (see [Doctrine and Covenants 89:5–7](#)).

- Tobacco (see [Doctrine and Covenants 89:8](#)).
- Tea and coffee (see *Doctrine and Covenants 89:9*; latter-day prophets have taught that the term “hot drinks,” as written in this verse, refers to tea and coffee).

Since its introduction, prophets have taught about the importance of following the Word of Wisdom. In addition, they have taught Church members to avoid substances that impair judgment or are harmful or highly addictive, whether legal or illegal. For example, vaping, the misuse of prescription drugs, and the recreational use of marijuana violate Church teachings (see *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [2020], 38.7.8; “Statement on the Word of Wisdom,” Aug. 15, 2019, [newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](#)).

### **Temptation OVERVIEW on the Church’s Website -**

Temptation is a test of a person’s ability to choose good instead of evil. It is an enticement to sin and follow Satan instead of God. Part of the experience of this life is to learn to overcome temptation and to choose right over wrong. Modern revelation indicates that Satan does not have power to tempt little children until they begin to be accountable for their actions (see *Doctrine and Covenants 29:47*).

### **GOSPEL PRINCIPLES - Chapter 29: The Lord’s Law of Health**

“We should not use drugs except when they are necessary as medicine. Some drugs are even more harmful than alcohol and tobacco (which are also drugs). Those who misuse drugs need to seek help, pray for strength, and counsel with their bishop so they can fully repent and become clean.

We should avoid anything that we know is harmful to our bodies. We should not use any substance that is habit forming. We should also avoid overeating.”

### **Doctrine and Covenants 88:124**

**124** Cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; cease to find fault one with another; cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated.

**President Gordon B Hinckley** - “I recall a bishop telling me of a woman who came to get a recommend. When asked if she observed the Word of Wisdom, she said that she occasionally drank a cup of coffee. She said, ‘Now, bishop, you’re not going to let that keep me from going to the temple, are you?’ To which he replied, ‘Sister, surely *you* will not let a cup of coffee stand between you and

the house of the Lord” (“Keeping the Temple Holy,” *Ensign*, May 1990, 51).

### **What addictions are we letting stand between us and the Lord?**

**President Gordon B. Hinckley:** “Alma taught the people of Zarahemla: The Lord ‘doth not dwell in unholy temples; neither can filthiness or anything which is unclean be received into the kingdom of God’ (Alma 7:21). Can anyone doubt that the taking of these mind- and body-destroying drugs is an act of unholiness? Does anyone think that the Spirit of God can dwell in the temple of the body when that body is defiled by these destructive elements? If any of you are tampering with these things, resolve forthwith, and with the strongest determination of which you are capable, that you will never touch them again” (“A Plague on the World,” *New Era*, July 1990, 6; see also “The Scourge of Illicit Drugs,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 50).

### **3. What are the "do's"? Why is important to not expand this into realms and speculations not currently specified by the keys and proclaim it as "doctrine"? What are some areas of this that we might be overlooking found either declared in the revelation or specified by the keys?**

#### **Word of Wisdom OVERVIEW on the Church’s Website:**

“In the Word of Wisdom, the Lord declared that the following foods are good: • Fruits and wholesome herbs, including vegetables, which should be used “with prudence and thanksgiving” (see Doctrine and Covenants 89:10–11). • The flesh “of beasts and of the fowls of the air,” which is “to be used sparingly” (see Doctrine and Covenants 89:12–13).

#### **Doctrine and Covenants 49:18**

**18 And whoso forbiddeth to abstain from meats, that man should not eat the same, is not ordained of God;**

#### **Doctrine and Covenants 89:12**

**12 Yea, flesh also of beasts and of the fowls of the air, I, the Lord, have ordained for the use of man with thanksgiving; nevertheless they are to be used sparingly;**

- Grains such as wheat, rice, and oats, which are “the staff of life” (see Doctrine and Covenants 89:14–17).

Prophets have taught that we should also follow healthy practices such as nutritious eating, regular exercise, proper hygiene, and getting sufficient rest.”

“Nutritious meals, regular exercise, and appropriate sleep are necessary for a strong body, just as consistent scripture study and prayer strengthen the mind and spirit”

(Thomas S. Monson, in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 60; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 46).

### **Exodus 20:9**

9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

### **Doctrine and Covenants 10:4**

4 Do not run faster or labor more than you have strength and means provided to enable you to translate; but be *diligent* unto the end.

**President Gordon B. Hinckley:** “Look upon the Word of Wisdom as more than a commonplace thing. I regard it as the most remarkable document on health of which I know. It came to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1833, when relatively little was known of dietary matters. Now the greater the scientific research, the more certain becomes the proof of Word of Wisdom principles” (“Living Worthy of the Girl You Will Someday Marry,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 49).

**President Russell M. Nelson** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Proper physical conditioning is facilitated by regular exercise, but it should be suited to the abilities and preferences of the individual. ...

“Like many other good things, exercise has benefits when applied wisely and in moderation. But I offer a word of caution regarding excess. It is folly to assume that if a little of anything is good, a lot is therefore better” (“Twenty Questions” [address to Church Educational System religious educators, Sept. 13, 1985], 5).

## **SOME AREAS THAT MIGHT BE OVERLOOKED -**

Thinking of being an example to our children:

### **The Family: A Proclamation to the World**

Nov. 2010

“Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, and to teach them to love and serve one another, observe the commandments of God, and be law-abiding citizens wherever they live.”

### **Teachings of the President - Teachings of John Taylor - Chapter 10 - The Value of Education**

“We are here, as a people, ... not to imitate the world, unless it be in that which is good ... but that we may put ourselves in possession of every truth, of every virtue, of every principle of intelligence known among men, together with those that God has revealed for our special guidance, and apply them to our everyday life, and thus educate ourselves and our children in everything that tends to exalt man. ... We should seek to

know more about ourselves and our bodies, about what is most conducive to health and how to preserve health and how to avoid disease; and to know what to eat and what to drink, and what to abstain from taking into our systems. We should become acquainted with the physiology of the human system, and live in accordance with the laws that govern our bodies, that our days may be long in the land which the Lord our God has given us. And in order to fully comprehend ourselves we must study from the best books, and also by faith. And then let education be fostered and encouraged in our midst.

Train your children to be intelligent and industrious. First teach them the value of healthful bodies, and how to preserve them in soundness and vigor; teach them to entertain the highest regard for virtue and chastity and likewise encourage them to develop the intellectual faculties with which they are endowed. They should also be taught regarding the earth on which they live, its properties, and the laws that govern it; and they ought to be instructed concerning God who made the earth, and His designs and purposes in its creation and the placing of man upon it. ... And whatever labor they pursue they should be taught to do so intelligently; and every incentive, at the command of parents to induce children to labor intelligently and understandingly, should be held out to them. ...”

#### **4. What are the promised blessings tied to keeping the Lord's Law of Health, and why would those be important blessings to try and obtain in our day?**

“If you and I desire the blessings of life, of health, of vigor of body and mind; if we desire the destroying angel to pass us by, as he did in the days of the children of Israel, we must obey the Word of Wisdom; then God is bound, and the blessing shall come to us” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant [2002], 192*).

##### **Word of Wisdom OVERVIEW on the Church's Website:**

“The Lord promises increased health, wisdom, knowledge, and protection to those who obey the Word of Wisdom (see Doctrine and Covenants 89:18–21).”

##### **Obedience Overview on the Church's Website -**

“One reason we are here on the earth is to show our willingness to obey Heavenly Father's commandments. God gives commandments for our benefit. Obedience to the commandments leads to blessings from God and shows our love for Him. Some people feel that the commandments are burdensome and that they limit freedom and personal growth. But the Savior taught that true freedom comes only from following Him: “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31–32). God gives commandments for our

benefit. They are loving instructions for our happiness and for our physical and spiritual well-being.

In the premortal existence, Heavenly Father presided over a great Council in Heaven. There we learned of His plan for our salvation, which included a time of testing on the earth: “We will make an earth whereon these may dwell; and we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abraham 3:24–25). One reason we are here on the earth is to show our willingness to obey Heavenly Father’s commandments.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that obedience to the commandments leads to blessings from God. He said: “There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (Doctrine and Covenants 130:20–21). King Benjamin also taught this principle. “I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God,” he counseled. “For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness. O remember, remember that these things are true; for the Lord God hath spoken it” (Mosiah 2:41).

Our obedience to the commandments is an expression of our love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. The Savior said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). He later declared: “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love” (John 15:10).”

- I invite you to write down what are you doing to stay healthy? • I invite you to write down what improvements you need, if any, in your health habits and what can you do to succeed in changing those habits? • I invite you to write down ways can your physical health affect your spiritual health?
- I invite you to study out in what ways is your body a temple of God? • I invite you write down what can you do to respect and care for this temple?