

# Lesson 5

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## Caring for Our Bodies

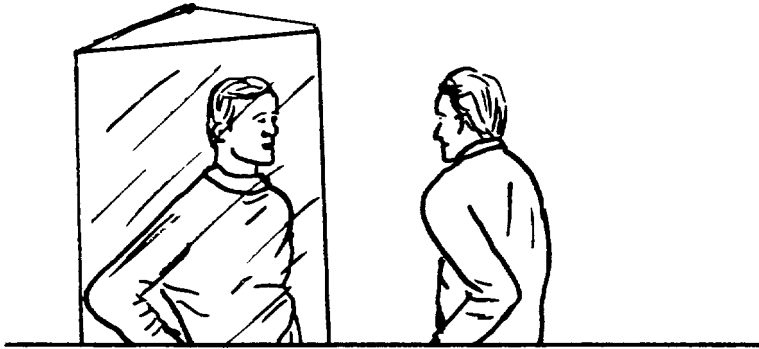
What would you think of someone who had fine furniture but kept it in a shabby house? Wouldn't that seem to be unreasonable? But that is like the way some people behave. They take care of their personality, but they neglect their body.

No doubt you realize that your personality is only one part of your being. The other part is your body. And while it is very important for you to develop and care for your personality, as you learned in the previous lesson, you also need to be a good steward of your body.

This lesson has been written with the specific purpose of helping you to exercise stewardship over your body. In it you will find useful instructions on how to use your body for God's glory, keep it in good condition, and present it in an appropriate way in front of others.

### **lesson outline**

Live a Moral Life  
Maintain Your Health  
Show a Good Appearance



## lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

- Explain what it means to be a steward of your body.
- Describe several ways to maintain your health.
- Apply to your life the principles of the Bible that concern the way a believer should dress.

## learning activities

1. Continue your study. Read the lesson development carefully, being sure to answer all the study questions *before* you look at the answers. Find and read in your Bible each Bible verse that is mentioned. Study the definitions of the key words in the glossary at the back of the study guide.
2. After you have completed the lesson, review it, then take the self-test. Check the answers you gave with those at the back of the study guide.

## key words

incontinence  
obscene  
principle  
profane

propriety  
sacrilege  
sanctuary

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**lesson development**


Temples are considered to be sacred places by the followers of the various religions in the world. Accordingly, they are treated with a great deal of reverence. Whatever can profane them is not permitted.

According to the Bible, our body is a temple too. It is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). As God's sanctuary, our body belongs to God, not to us.

As far as we are concerned, we are only stewards of our bodies; that is to say, we are like guardians. Our responsibility consists in caring for our bodies, seeing to it that nothing harms or profanes them. Below you will find some instructions that will help you to carry out this responsibility well.

**1** What is the basis for the claim that our bodies belong to God?

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## **LIVE A MORAL LIFE**

### **Put Your Body Under Control**

**Objective 1.** *Identify the reason why a believer is able to control his body and a nonbeliever is not able to.*

Everyone who hasn't yet recognized God as his owner and Lord lives in a state of confusion. Sin is his master; but he thinks that he is the master of himself. Thinking this, and being convinced of it, he gives his body over to sin (Ephesians 4:19) until he becomes depraved (Romans 1:24, 26-27). Though at

times his intellect may be aware of this slavery, his will is still unable to control the sinful desires of his body (Romans 7:23-24).

The condition of the believer is very different. God is his owner, Christ is his Lord, and the Holy Spirit lives in his body (1 Corinthians 3:16). This means that sin is not his master any more, because the Holy Spirit has freed him from its dominion (Romans 8:2). Now he is empowered to be the master instead of the slave of his body. For this reason he should not allow sin to rule over him through his bodily passions (Romans 6:12, 14; 1 Peter 2:11). On the contrary, he must put his body under complete control (1 Corinthians 9:27). This is one of his responsibilities as a steward.

**2** Which description gives the reason for the difference between the believer's and the nonbeliever's ability to control his body?

- a) The nonbeliever can't control his body because he is not aware of his own slavery to sin. The believer can because God has freed him to be the owner of his own body.
- b) The nonbeliever can't control his body because he is actually a slave to sin. The believer can because the Holy Spirit has released him from being under sin's power.

**3** Suppose you were telling someone that as believers we have the power to, control our bodies. What Bible verse would you use to show *why* we have this power?

- a) Romans 1:24
- b) Romans 8:2
- c) 1 Corinthians 9:27
- d) 1 Peter 2:11

### **Use Your Body for God's Glory**

**Objective 2.** *Match Bible verses to the names for the part of the body they mention and summarize what each verse says about how that part can be used for God's glory.*

People who have not recognized God's ownership in their lives misuse the members of their bodies. The Bible is very descriptive of this misuse of the body in Romans 3:13-15, James 3:6-8, and 2 Peter 2:14.

You, in contrast, have already recognized God as the owner of your body. You know also that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, you are not supposed to use your body to do sinful things. That would be a sacrilege! You are not to use your hands to steal or strike your neighbor (Ephesians 4:28), your feet to go to questionable places, nor your mouth to lie and speak harmful and obscene words (Ephesians 4:25, 29; 5:4). You are not to use your eyes to gaze at indecent things or to look at a woman with a wicked purpose in your heart (Matthew 5:28); you are not to use your body for sexual immoralities (1 Corinthians 6:13, 18).

However, the best way of recognizing God's ownership of our bodies is to dedicate them to Him (Romans 6:13; 12:1). This dedication involves using the members of our bodies for God's worship and service (Romans 6:19, 1 Corinthians 6:20).



**4** Each Bible verse given below tells how a certain part of our body can be used to give God glory. Follow these directions to complete the chart: 1) Find and read in your Bible each verse. 2) Beside the part of the body the verse names or has to do with, write the reference. 3) In the space next to the reference, write what the verse says about how the part can be used for God's glory. The first one is written in to show you an example. Use all the verses. More than one verse may go with each part

Proverbs 31:20	Acts 19:6	1 Timothy 2:8
Matthew 13:9	Romans 10:9-10	Hebrews 13:15
Mark 16:18	Romans 10:15	James 3:9
Acts 2:4	Galatians 6:11	Revelation 2:7
Acts 10:46	Ephesians 4:28	

Part	References	How it can be used for God's glory
Ears	<i>Matthew 13:9</i> <i>Revelation 2:7</i>	<i>Hear what Jesus and the Spirit say</i>
Tongue, Lips, or Mouth		
Hands		
Feet		

You can use the members of your body in the same way for righteous purposes so that God may be glorified. And please give attention to this: If you use your body to serve the Lord, He will provide for your body (1 Corinthians 6:13). This means that God will supply the physical needs of those who dedicate their bodies to Him. He will renew their strength (Isaiah 40:29, 31), give them food and clothing (Matthew 6:31-33), and keep them in good health (Exodus 15:26).

## MAINTAIN YOUR HEALTH

**Objective 3.** *Select examples of people who are following the rules for maintaining good health.*

### Follow the Rules of Good Health

A healthy body brings honor and glory to God and is in a better condition to be used in His service. God has promised to heal our diseases (Psalm 103:3); but He has also made us responsible to care for our health. Here are some simple rules that will help you to enjoy good health.

1. *Eat well.* This doesn't mean that you need to eat a lot, but rather that you need to maintain a balanced diet. Food has certain substances, called vitamins, which are essential for a

person to have in order to stay healthy. If you eat a lot of certain kinds of foods and little or nothing of others, your body will lack certain vitamins. As a result, your health will suffer.

2. *Exercise.* Lack of exercise can lead to being overweight, and this is harmful to one's health. For that "reason one needs to exercise. Of course the best exercise for the body is physical work. But if your work is mental for the most part or if you spend most of the day sitting down, you need to do physical activity, get involved in some kind of sports, or just spend time walking.

3. *Get enough rest.* Excessive work, whether it be physical or mental, will inevitably have a bad effect on your health. Your body needs rest. Jesus wasn't just saying empty words when He declared that the day of rest was made for man's welfare (Mark 2:27). Accordingly, a person should work only a certain number of hours, then get about eight hours of sleep.

4. *Practice cleanliness.* It is worth noting how in the book of Leviticus God set up detailed rules for the cleanliness of the Israelites. They had to bathe frequently, wash their clothes, clean their houses, eat clean food, and keep the place where they camped clean as well. Although desert life didn't offer the best in sanitary conditions, the Israelites stayed healthy (Psalm 105:37). There is no doubt that if each believer would follow similar rules today, he or she would also enjoy excellent health.

## **Ensure Your Safety**

Accidents can cause serious harm to your body and make it useless for the Lord's service. It is important, then, to do everything possible to avoid them. To do this you need to take the steps that are necessary to ensure your safety in your home as well as on the street and at the place where you work. Some people are "accident prone." That is, they seem to have more accidents than most people. If you have a tendency to be accident prone, submit this to the Lord and ask for His healing in your life in this matter.

**5** Circle the letter in front of each example of a person who is following the rules of good health.

- a) John is a student in Bible school, but he takes time out each day from his studies to get some kind of physical exercise.
- b) Bill likes to eat bread and cheese. These foods are not expensive for him and easy to fix, so he eats little else.
- c) Sara is busy helping his pastor. He seldom gets more than five hours of sleep a night because there is so much to do.
- d) Mary takes time to wash her clothes and keep her house clean, even though very few of her neighbors do the same.



### Keep Free From Bad Habits

**Objective 4.** *Identify reasons why believers should keep from harmful habits and feelings.*

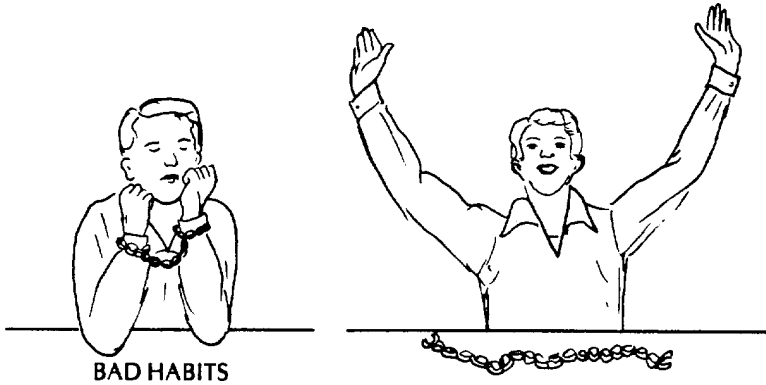
As the temple of the Holy Spirit our body needs to be kept healthy and holy. To put into it things that will harm, dishonor, or destroy it is to profane it. And God deals very severely with those who profane His temple (1 Corinthians 3:17). This is why believers keep away from habits such as smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, or taking drugs. In some cases propaganda and advertising present them as good habits. However, their destructive effects on the human organism are obvious.

Another reason not to form harmful habits is because Christ is our Lord or Master. If we allow these habits to form, they may become our masters. But Jesus clearly said that “no one can be a slave of two masters” (Matthew 6:24). How pathetic is the condition of those who live their lives ruled by the habits mentioned above! They want to quit, but they have found that they can’t. If you have one of these habits, now is the time to break it. Allow the Holy Spirit to govern your life. He will help you to have self-control (Galatians 5:23, 25). Then you too will



be able to say as the apostle Paul did: “I am not going to let anything make me its slave” (1 Corinthians 6:12).

As stewards of their bodies, believers should also control their normal physical appetites. If we don’t control these, even they can turn into harmful habits and become our masters. The believers should not be a slave of gluttony (Isaiah 56:11) or incontinence (1 Corinthians 7:1-5).



### **Keep From Harmful Feelings**

There are evidently some emotions that are harmful to one’s health. For example, anger produces disorder of the nerves; anxiety gives rise to stomach ulcers; and holding grudges or harboring ill will affects the liver. We should therefore avoid these emotions and others such as anguish and fear. On the contrary, let us allow the Holy Spirit to produce His plentiful and mature “fruit” in our lives, as we studied in Lesson 4. The result will be a healthy body which will bring honor and glory to its owner.

**6** Circle the letter in front of each statement that gives a reason why believers should keep from harmful habits.

- a) Bad habits injure the body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit.
- b) It is not good for a person to form any kind of habits at all.
- c) Once a person has formed a habit, it is not possible to break it.
- d) Bad habits can become a person’s master, and only Christ should be a believer’s master.

## SHOW A GOOD APPEARANCE

**Objective 5.** *Match the principles that govern the way a believer should dress to situations in which they should be applied.*

Why should we show a good outward appearance if, after all, God looks at the heart? (1 Samuel 16:7). Precisely because, in contrast to the Lord, people don't look at the heart but at appearances. If the temple of the Holy Spirit—a person's body—looks as if no one cares about it because its steward has neglected it, men will think little of it. And God will be dishonored. So we need to consider how to bring honor to God by means of our outward appearance.

### Keep Your Body Clean

As a steward, the believer is in charge of keeping the temple of the Spirit clean. This means that his body and clothes should be clean. If in your kind of work it is easy for you to get soiled, you should take a bath and change your clothes when you are through working. And there is no excuse for confusing humility with uncleanness! Unfortunately, this has sometimes happened and the result has been a dishonor to God.

### Dress in a Suitable Manner

How should God's stewards dress? In the first church, certain guidelines were given (1 Corinthians 11:2-15, 1 Timothy 2:9, 1 Peter 3:1-3). But if we go back to the beginning of the human race, we find what seems to be a general principle. Indeed in Genesis 3:7 we see the man and the woman trying to dress themselves *as they saw fit*. This didn't please God, though, so He dressed them *as He saw fit* (Genesis 3:21). *We should dress ourselves, then, in a way that will please God*, not ourselves or the world. After all, what we are talking about is covering the temple of God.

In agreement with the principle just mentioned, let us now consider four others that should influence the manner in which believers dress. These principles are distinction, modesty,

simplicity, and propriety. Examples showing how these four principles were applied in the first church are found in the teachings of Peter and Paul the apostle.

### *Distinction*

In Deuteronomy 22:5 we read these words: “Women are not to wear men’s clothing, and men are not to wear women’s clothing; the Lord your God hates people who do such things.” In this Scripture God indicated to the Israelites that there should be a distinction between men and women in the way they dressed. This principle of distinction, together with others, seems to be the one which Paul applied in the situation which arose in the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 11:2-15). As believers today we should also recognize this principle and apply it in a way consistent with our culture and as the Holy Spirit directs us. Since we are stewards of His temple, we must be careful not to treat it in a way that God disapproves.

### *Simplicity*

Simplicity means that believers should dress in a simple manner without excessive ornament or showiness. Notice how Paul and Peter apply this principle to believers in the first church (1 Timothy 2:9, 1 Peter 3:3).

Jesus and James both referred to rich men who wore expensive clothes (Luke 16:19; James 2:2). They don’t seem to find fault with the way they dress. However, the expensive clothes of these rich men are a sharp contrast to the misery of the poor. Their finery shows them to be people who indulge themselves and are inconsiderate of others. This certainly isn’t the way one of God’s stewards should dress.

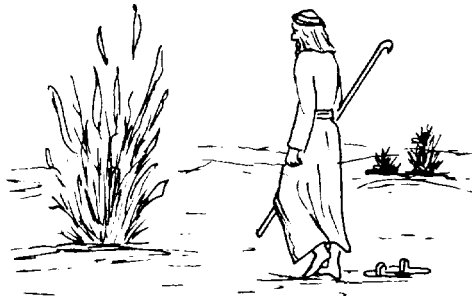
### *Modesty*

Paul clearly indicates that modesty is an important principle to follow (1 Timothy 2:9). This means that believers should not dress with the purpose of showing off their bodies in a sensual

manner. Neither should they imitate those who do so. Christians should keep in mind that their bodies are to be used for the Lord's service (1 Corinthians 6:13). May your body be used for God's glory and not for causing others to stumble (1 Corinthians 10:31-32). So great is the moral decay of the world today that this point cannot be overemphasized.

### *Propriety*

In contrast to the principles already mentioned, that of propriety refers more to cultural, temporal, and local situations. That is, what is proper in one culture, time, or place may be improper in another. In 1 Corinthians 11:13 the apostle Paul referred to the principle of propriety: It was not proper for the Corinthian women to worship the Lord with their heads uncovered.



Sometimes a certain behavior may be improper without necessarily being sinful. For example, it is not wrong to wear sandals, but it was improper for Moses to wear them in God's presence (Exodus 3:5). Even today in some places believers must remove their shoes before entering a church. It is also considered improper for a man to wear a hat when he is inside a church. But, on the contrary, the Jews always wear a cap during their services. In the same way a bathing suit is fine for the beach; but it wouldn't be proper to wear it to church. The Holy Spirit can certainly help the believer to act in the way that is the most appropriate for each situation. By wearing the proper clothing you will please the Lord and be a blessing to others.

**7** Match each situation (left side) with the principle that should be applied to correct it (right side). Write the number of the principle in front of the situation.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>.... <b>a</b> John comes straight to church from a picnic without bothering to put on more suitable clothing</p> | <p>1) Distinction<br/>2) Simplicity<br/>3) Modesty<br/>4) Propriety</p> |
| <p>.... <b>b</b> Jane wears the same kind of short, revealing dresses that her non-Christian friend Sally does.</p> |   |
| <p>.... <b>c</b> Mary buys very expensive jewelry to wear and has nothing to share with others.</p>                 |   |
| <p>.... <b>d</b> Martha follows a custom of wearing clothes that are made for men.</p>                              |   |
| <p>.... <b>e</b> George wears costly suits and expensive shoes to show how rich and prosperous he has become.</p>   |   |

**self-test**

**1** Unlike the nonbeliever, the believer is able to control his body because he

- a) is no longer under the power of sin.
- b) faces different problems than the nonbeliever.
- c) knows he is not the master of his body.

**2** Suppose a friend of yours asks you this question: “What has God promised to do for those who dedicate their bodies to Him?” Circle the letter in front of each verse you could use to answer him.

- a) Exodus 15:26
- b) Proverbs 31:20
- c) Isaiah 40:29, 31
- d) Matthew 6:31-33
- e) Mark 16:18
- f) 1 Corinthians 6:13
- g) James 3:9

**3** Jane wants to follow the first rule of good health, eat well. This means that she should eat

- a) large amounts of food often.
- b) a lot of the foods she likes.
- c) several different kinds of food.

**4** Circle the letter in front of each TRUE statement.

- a** Emotions have very little effect on the body.
- b** Believers don’t really need to be concerned about controlling the normal physical appetites God has given them.
- c** Emotions like anxiety and ill will should be avoided because they are harmful to the health.

**5** The general principle concerning how God’s stewards should dress that we find first in the Bible is that of

- a) being modest.
- b) pleasing God.
- c) making a distinction.
- d) avoiding showiness.
- e) being appropriate.

**6** Suppose you are teaching some young people the principles that influence the way believers should dress. Beside each principle listed below, write the references of the Bible verses you would use to illustrate or teach it. You can use some verses to illustrate more than one principle.

- a) Pleasing God .....
- b) Distinction .....
- c) Simplicity .....
- d) Modesty .....
- e) Propriety .....

### answers to study questions

4 The following is one way you could have completed the chart. You may have listed the Bible verses in a different order beside each part, but they should match the part they speak about.

<i>Ears</i>	Matthew 13:9 Revelation 2:7	Hear what Jesus and the Spirit say
<i>Tongue, Lips, or Mouth</i>	Acts 2:4, 10:46, 19:6 Romans 10:9-10 Hebrews 13:15 James 3:9	Speak by the Spirit Confess that Jesus is Lord Offer praise to God Thank and praise God
<i>Hands</i>	Proverbs 31:20 Mark 16:18 Galatians 6:11 Ephesians 4:28 1 Timothy 2:8	Be generous Place them on sick people Write Bible books Work Lift them up in prayer
<i>Feet</i>	Romans 10:15	Go and preach the Gospel

1 First Corinthians 6:19 says that they are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

5 The examples are a) John and d) Mary.

2 Description b) is the reason. Was it hard to choose? In description a) two things are wrong: 1) A nonbeliever is sometimes aware of his slavery; and 2) God has not freed the believer to be the *owner* of his body, for God is the owner. He has, however, given him power to be its master.

6 Statements a) *Bad habits injure . . .* and d) *Bad habits can become . . .* are the correct reasons. Statement b) would not be a good answer because some habits (such as practicing cleanliness) are helpful. Statement c) would not be good either, because it is possible for a person to break a harmful habit with the help of the Holy Spirit.

3 b) Romans 8:2.



- 7 a** 4) Propriety.
- b** 3) Modesty.
- c** 2) Simplicity.
- d** 1) Distinction.
- e** 2) Simplicity.

**Your Notes**