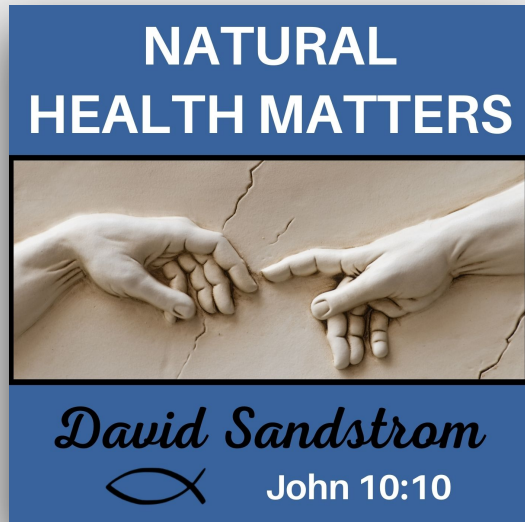


## NHM - 54 The Spiritual Health Part 2 Spirit-mind-body Relationship & God Wants us Healthy



David Sandstrom 0:00

Here's a sample of what you'll hear on this episode of natural health matters. Our brains don't create thoughts, they respond to them. Some would argue that human beings are purely physical. This view would deny or dismiss the existence of the Spirit. Proponents of this theory suggests that our brains create thoughts through chemical reactions. This view is widely popular and is often the reason for the over reliance on drugs to, quote fix our mental issues. This view is reductionist and overly simplistic. I disagree with a materialistic reductionist view of the human condition. To hold this

view is to remove personal responsibility for our thoughts, speech and actions. I'm not saying that there isn't a time and a place for drugs to address some mental health issues. In some instances, they may help, although they should never be the front line or the only treatment for mental health issues. Welcome to the Natural Health Matters podcast where it's all about maximizing your health potential, so that you can pursue the abundant life more effectively. I'm your host, David Sandstrom, naturopathic doctor, and biblical health coach, and this is episode number 54.

David Sandstrom 1:22

Well, if you joined in last week, you know that I started a series on the spiritual component to health. And this episode is the second part in a multi part series on how our spiritual health impacts our physical vitality. I'm not quite sure. But as far as I can see, virtually no one is talking about this. I've been attending church since I was a kid. And I have yet to hear a sermon preached from a pulpit on this topic. And I consider this topic foundational to whole person health. As I said, last week, I'm going to be leaning heavily on my book, the Christians guide to holistic health, specifically the section on the spirit. Now there's going to be content on the podcast that's not in the book is also going to be content in the book, this not in the podcast. So if you want the whole picture, listen to the podcast, and pick up a copy of the book. It's called the Christians guide to holistic health. It's available through my website, [DavidSandstrom.com](http://DavidSandstrom.com), forward slash resources. And you'll see in the top of that page, you'll see the book you

can pick up a copy. It's available from Amazon, in Kindle, paperback and audible. Proverbs chapter nine, verses 10. And 11 says knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me, your days will be multiplied, and years of your life will be added to you. If you want to age gracefully, align your life more fully with God's design for spirit, mind and body, which starts by nurturing your love relationship with God, that's our foundation for a naturopathic lifestyle. Now, whenever you get into biblical teaching, there's probably going to come a time where you're going to hear something you just can't buy into at the moment. That's okay, keep listening. If you were enjoying a good piece of fish at a seafood restaurant, and you came across a bone, you wouldn't throw the whole piece of fish out, you'd pull the bone out, you continue eating? Well, I suggest you do the same thing here. If you hear something you just can't buy into at that moment in time. Keep listening, there's plenty of information here that you will agree with. We're going to continue to drill down on this topic of the spiritual component to health, and I want to connect the dots. Nobody seems to be doing that. But I want to connect the dots for you the natural nation, and help this picture of spiritual health become more clear. In this episode, we're going to continue to set the stage for understanding spiritual health and how it significantly impacts our physical vitality. I want to start off by clearly defining spirit, mind and body. And then we're going to dive in a little deeper into the relationship between spirit, mind and body. And we're going to be talking about the autonomic nervous system a little bit because that's essential. And then we're going to address the elephant in the room. And that is this. Does God actually want us healthy? Because that's a that's something that some people think about. Hebrews chapter four, verse 12, says this, for the Word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit between joints and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. So the Bible makes a clear distinction between our spirit, our soul or our minds. And by the way, when the Bible uses the term soul, it's referring to our minds are thought lives. So soul in mind can be used interchangeably. They mean the same thing. In this passage, talks about joints and marrow, which of course is referring to our body Now, let's take a look at each one. We need to consider how we understand body, mind and spirit. At first, it may seem basic, but a thorough understanding of our trichotomy fists or three part nature has eluded philosophers and theologians for centuries.

David Sandstrom 5:19

I want to give you the natural nation, my understanding of spirit, mind and body. The Spirit is the highest and most noble part of our being. Our spirits are eternal. It's where we connect with God and experience relationship with him. It's the home of our conscience, in where we discern right from wrong. Our spirits are where we hold our convictions and deepest beliefs. Our sense of identity and self worth are found in our spirits. Our spirits are to yield to or submit to God,

our spirits animate, and bring our minds to life. As such, it's our spirits that motivate and direct our thoughts. If our spirits are wholly submitted to God, they'll animate our minds in healthy ways. The mind includes our intellect, thoughts, emotions, and will. It's the voice inside our heads or our thought lives. Our minds are connected to both our spirits and our bodies, and they act as a bridge between them.

David Sandstrom 6:20

Our minds are intangible, and they're submissive to our spirits. Our minds animate our bodies through our brains, our brains are physical organs, and direct our bodily functions. Therefore, when our minds are healthier, so is our physical vitality.

David Sandstrom 6:41

The body a little bit more straightforward. It's what we can see touch and feel. It's how we contact the material world through our five senses. Our bodies are made up of groups of cells, groups of cells make up tissues, groups of tissues, makeup, organs, groups of organs, makeup systems, and groups of systems make up our entire body. Our bodies are temporary vessels that house our minds and spirits, our bodies are submissive to and yield to our minds. This takes place at both conscious and subconscious levels. Sometimes we're aware of the connection, sometimes we're not. In addition, God has programmed our bodies with built in innate intelligence, and health is our default setting.

David Sandstrom 7:33

Now, as I mentioned on last episode, the three components to a person, spirit, mind and body have an interdependent relationship, which means what affects one will by necessity, all to the others for good or bad. In addition, there's a hierarchy, our spirit is designed to be submitted to God. Our minds should be submitted to our spirit, our brains submit to our minds, in our brains run our bodies. Now, that's an oversimplification. There's more to the interdependent relationship than that. But understand this, our brains do a bit of balancing act between our God given built in intelligence in our minds, there is a portion of our brains that does operate in the background seemingly on an autopilot. It's called the autonomic nervous system. And I'm gonna get into that in a minute. Now, when I say our spirit is designed to be submitted to an animated by God, I don't mean that we're just puppets on a string with God as the puppet master. We have freewill were created in God's image, Genesis 1:26, with the unique ability to step outside ourselves, and analyze our thoughts. This is how we're given the opportunity to rise above the animals. Animals act on their strongest urge at the moment, we get to choose what we believe, think, say and do. freewill is at the essence of what it is to be human. God didn't create a says robots that merely respond to some predetermined programming. God's not a chess player playing

both sides of the board. We have a role to play. God wants us to exercise our free wills and make good choices. He's not looking for robots. He's looking for lovers. Deuteronomy six five says, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. Real love cannot be coerced or taken. It must be freely given, or it's not real love. Therefore, God preserves our freewill. God gave us the ability to interpret events, discern right from wrong, and choose our responses. What does all this mean and what does it have to do with health? It means we have a role to play. God does his part and we need to do ours. We need to exercise some personal responsibility over the condition of our spirit, mind and body. computer programmers have a term they call Gigo G-I-G-O, it's garbage in, garbage out. If you write a computer program with a faulty line of code, if you put garbage instructions in, you're going to get a garbage product out. So the same is true with the spirit Mind Body relationship.

David Sandstrom 10:26

Our brains don't create thoughts, they respond to them. Some would argue that human beings are purely physical. This view would deny or dismiss the existence of the Spirit. Proponents of this theory suggests that our brains create thoughts through chemical reactions. This leads to the faulty conclusion that our brains a physical organ, are in charge of our thoughts. Therefore, we're not responsible. This view is widely popular and is often the reason for the over reliance on drugs to, quote fix our mental issues. If we are to believe that the chemicals in our brains create thoughts, it's going to take us down a very unhealthy path. Simply put, it's not your fault. You just have a chemical imbalance. The answer is to correct your imbalance with the right drugs, more chemicals. As we all know, drugs come with side effects and cause even more problems. This view is reductionist and overly simplistic. I disagree with a materialistic reductionist view of the human condition. To hold this view is to remove personal responsibility for our thoughts, speech and actions. I'm not saying that there isn't a time and a place for drugs to address some mental health issues. In some instances, they may help, although they should never be the front line or the only treatment for mental health issues. The truth is, human beings are far more than merely a collection of chemicals, atoms and molecules. We are spirit, we have a soul, and we live in a body. We must understand that through the Spirit Mind Body connection, the activity of the spirit and the mind profoundly affect our physical well being for good or bad.

David Sandstrom 12:16

You see, our thoughts, many of which originate at the spiritual level from our most deeply held convictions and beliefs have the power to build health and well being or destroy it. on a physical level, our thoughts have a relentless nature to them because they're ever present. Negative thoughts act a lot like a dripping faucet. A dripping faucet that leads to one drop of water per second, would pour

over 2000 gallons of water down the drain in a year's time. You know, this dripping metaphor is not a bad way of looking at it because stressful thoughts create what's called a cortisol drip in our bodies. Cortisol is of course one of our primary stress hormones. Negative thinking causes our bodies to slowly but continuously release stress hormones and neurotransmitters that damage our systems. Over time, the damage can be devastating.

David Sandstrom 13:12

In order to fully appreciate how our spiritual condition impacts our physical vitality, we must understand how our nervous systems operate. Much of what our nervous systems do, they do without our conscious control. This is called the autonomic portion of our nervous systems. The autonomic nervous system is further categorized into two divisions, the sympathetic fight or flight or the stress response, and the parasympathetic, the rest and digest or relaxation response. These two divisions work in tandem in a seesaw like fashion. When one is up, the other is down. They can both be up or down at the same time. When we're in danger, our sympathetic nervous system kicks into gear, our heart rate increases, our blood pressure rises, our pupils dilate, our alertness is heightened and blood flow and available metabolic energy is redirected away from non essential tasks like digesting food and towards the large muscle groups like the legs that help us run away from the proverbial lion. This is a perfectly appropriate response when we're in danger. The trouble is today, most of us are not encountering lions in the wild. Now, a couple of weeks ago, I was out in Yellowstone, we actually came in contact with a lot of wild animals on some hiking adventures we went on, we saw wild moose, we saw bison, we saw antelope we saw bears. So actually what was going through my mind is I might have a chance to actually do that. It's right. Use my sympathetic nervous system and run away from a wild animal for you know, but that happens once in you know, every 10 years maybe. So anyway, our bodies are designed to present a stress when necessary, but it should only be temporary. Chronic activation of sympathetic nervous system where our fight or flight reflex will cause all kinds of health issues down the road. You know, another example is as pilots, if we have a real life emergency in an aircraft, we have to do an aborted takeoff or we have an engine failure or cargo fire or something like that we have to declare an emergency. When we get the airplane on the ground, we have to call somebody at the company. And they're specially trained to ask us a few questions and they want to know, has this pilot's ability to function safely been impaired by these high adrenaline levels caused by the emergency? And generally the answer to that is yes. So when you have a real life emergency online and as a pilot, when the emergency is over, you're going to the hospital because the high levels of stress hormones and neurotransmitters will impair your ability to function normally. And the same is true with a cortisol drip when we're experiencing stress, it will impair our body's ability to function normally in a healthful fashion.

David Sandstrom 15:55

An important point to understand is that our bodies prefer to do repair and rebuilding functions. When the parasympathetic, the rest and digest or relaxation response is dominant. When we're stressed, we inhibit functions such as immune, detoxification, cellular, autophagy, which is the replacement of old worn out cells. When this becomes chronic, we experienced system breakdown our beliefs, thoughts, expectations and emotions exert a powerful influence over how our autonomic nervous system behaves. This is why the spirit Mind Body relationship becomes so important and is a critical component of a holistic health building regimen. So what we believe becomes super important because what we believe determines what we think. And stressful thoughts produce a stress response in our bodies. When it comes to our health and well being. It's peace, we're after non stress. Which brings us right back to the spiritual component to health. Because Jesus said He came to bring us supernatural peace. JOHN, Chapter 14, verse 27, we see Jesus saying this Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor Let it be fearful.

David Sandstrom 17:20

What we believe matters. And what we believe about God's intentions toward our health and well being is one of the most important, if not the most essential belief we can hold. I contend that God's desire for us is extraordinary physical health and well being. However, suggesting that God wants us healthy is sometimes seen as a form of pride or even arrogance. Some would say, Who are we to assume excellent physical health is somehow our birthright. After all, God is sovereign and it control over all creation. And he answers to no one. Just read Job chapter four, when God asked job, where were you and I laid the foundations of the earth? Sure, everyone wants good health, but maybe that's not God's will for your life. Jesus Himself said, If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Matthew 16:24. Shouldn't we accept the fact that God's ways are not our ways, Isaiah 58:8. God promises to work all things together for our good Romans 8:28. He can sometimes use our afflictions to help us grow and become more spiritually mature. These are all valid points, and I agree with them. God doesn't impose suffering, but he does permit it. For some are physical trial is just what the great physician wants to use to get their attention. CS Lewis said, "pain insist upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts at our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world." No one asked for a physical trial. But sometimes graciously accepting a trial with peace and patience is the path to greater spiritual maturity. Again, God doesn't bring trials, but he does permit them. Just as any loving parent would prefer their kids learn our lessons without suffering negative consequences. God

would prefer that we learn life lessons without the trial. Even though God can use health challenges for our growth, we should do everything in our power to eliminate unhealthy lifestyle choices that could impede our health. Let's not let our choices bring us harm that God would prefer to spare us from.

David Sandstrom 19:45

Now, I suggest not getting out of balance with our theology. We can't just lock onto a couple of verses that fit our way of thinking and build our theology around that. That can lead us into some seriously cooky thinking. And crazy stuff like bringing poisonous snakes into a church service. We're not going to do that here. Before we draw any conclusions about what God's desire toward our physical health and well being is, let's look at scripture, reason and science together. If we really have the truth, then scripture reason and science should all be in harmony.

David Sandstrom 20:23

So what are the key biblical passages regarding fiscal well being, we have some pretty encouraging words. "The Lord will remove from you all sickness, and he will not put on you any of the harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known." Deuteronomy 7:15. "Bless the Lord, oh, my soul, and forget none of his benefits, who pardons all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle, Psalm 103:2-5 "Do not be wise in your own eyes, fear of the Lord and turn away from evil, you will be healing to your body, and refreshment to your bones." that's found in Proverbs three, seven and eight. "My son, give attention to my words, incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight. Keep them in the midst of your heart, for their life to those who find them, and health to all their body." Proverbs 4:20 through 22. "Beloved, I pray that in all respects, you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers." Third, john, one two, "Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, in healing, every kind of disease, and every kind of sickness." that's found in Matthew 9:35. "And he's sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God, and to perform healing." Luke nine two, we see good health being addressed in the Old Testament law and poetry books. We see it being addressed in the New Testament epistles, we see it being discussed in the gospels with Jesus performing all kinds of healing miracles. And we see Jesus teaching the disciples to do the same thing. It's pretty clear from Scripture, God does care about our health, and he's given us a prescription to follow to get there. God's prescription for health is relational connectedness, and righteous living.

David Sandstrom 22:34

Can we justify that God's desire for us his exceptional health and well being from reason? I believe we can. God is a God of order and purpose. First Corinthians 14:33. God didn't create human beings haphazardly. We have been designed and built with a goal in mind. We are His workmanship. And God doesn't make junk. Ephesians chapter two, verse 10 says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we would walk in them." God would not create us for good works and not equip us to accomplish those works. That would be logical. In fact, the Bible teaches that God wants us to be, quote, "thoroughly equipped for every good work." Second Timothy 3:17. To be fair, in context, Second Timothy chapter three is saying it's the Word of God that equips us for good works. However, the principle remains, God desires that we be capable of accomplishing our missions. We see this as well. "He will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the master prepared for every good work." Second Timothy chapter two, verse 21. In order to be useful to God, we must do as he says, Therefore, as we're gonna see, but here it's to the Word of God promotes better health and well being. Proverbs chapter nine verses 10 and 11 says this, "and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me, your days will be multiplied, and years of life will be added to you." You want to know how to age gracefully, embrace a naturopathic lifestyle, and that starts with acknowledging your spiritual condition in your relationship with God.

David Sandstrom 24:29

As individuals, each of us has given specific gifts, talents, and abilities to advance God's kingdom, and the building up of the church body. God expects us to use what we've been given. Romans 12 six says, "Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly. Each of us has given a unique role or position to fill in God's kingdom "and he gave some apostles in some, prophets, and some as evangelists and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ." that's found in Ephesians chapter four verses 11 and 12. Here's another great verse. "God has even appointed a specific time and place for our lives. Any made from one man, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation." acts 17:26. God knows your address. He knows where you're going to be living tomorrow. He knows where you're going to be living 10 years from now, with this kind of exquisite precision and forethought, would God give us assignments and not empower us to fulfill our purpose? Would he ask us to make bricks without straw? I would suggest that compromise health is a significant stumbling block in carrying out our assignments and fulfilling our unique mission. Would he intentionally put stumbling blocks in our way to prevent us from fulfilling our mission? Again, he desires that we be thoroughly equipped for every good work.



David Sandstrom 26:15

My MBA program taught me that the worst form of stress in the workplace is responsibility without authority. A supervisor should never assign a task that the individual is not empowered to perform, or hold someone accountable for outcomes they are powerless to influence. In the same way, God would never give us assignments or expect us to execute good works, without empowering us to use our God given resources to affect his desired outcome. God doesn't put stumbling blocks in our paths, the enemy does that, not God. This is the reason why Jesus spent so much time feeding and healing people. Jesus had a message, his message was going to save the human race from destruction, Romans 6:23 he knew that if physical concerns were dominating your thinking and desires, people would not be able to move on to the more crucial spiritual message he had for them, the salvation of their souls, and a new life in Christ. compromised health hinders our productivity, like a ball and chain attached to our ankles or boat dragging an anchor. poor health slows us down. Personally, I know that when I was suffering from the ravages of Lyme disease, I didn't have the mental fortitude to meditate and consider noble things such as purpose and calling. I didn't have the energy to serve others effectively. I was more concerned with getting through the day that I was about leaving a legacy for our children or advancing God's kingdom. Yes, it stands to reason. God wants us healthy, so that we can be more effective with our God given missions. And that's why I start off each episode with where it's all about maximizing your health potential, so that you can pursue the abundant life more effectively. Were to operate hand in hand with our design with our Creator.

David Sandstrom 28:10

Finally, can we justify God's desire for our health and well being from science? Once again, I believe we can. Remember, we are God's "workmanship" Ephesians 2:10. In architecture, the phrase form follows function was coined by Louis Sullivan. The idea is that the purpose of a building should determine its design. Look in an airplane, airplanes are designed for flight. The ability to get off the ground is built in by design. The human body is built with a purpose in mind. A woman's breasts are designed to feed an infant. Feet are made for balance walking, eyelashes are positioned to keep the dust out of our eyes. Our spinal cords are curved to support body weight and absorb shock. fingernails are hard and durable to protect our fingertips and help us pick up small objects. Form does follow function. Our forming design follows our function. Remember, by design, the human body's default setting is health.

David Sandstrom 29:19

I've gone over the concept of vitality in previous episodes, but real quick, our cells know how to do their jobs. We don't have to teach our cells how to do

what they already know how to do. By looking at our anatomy and physiology we can clearly see that human beings are designed and wired for health. Since God has built health into our physiology as a default setting, then obviously his intention is wellness. We don't have to tell our bodies how to digest food or how to fight off a cold. We don't consciously think about things such as blood sugar levels or temperature regulation or acid alkaline balance. All this takes place automatically by default, our bodies are designed to heal and repair automatically. Health is our default setting. We can see from our anatomy that the way God designed us speaks volumes about his desire for health and well being. Our physical form and design, follow our function and purpose. God created us to enjoy vibrant health because it helps us accomplish our individual missions here on Earth. So we see scripture, reason, and science in perfect harmony, simultaneously testified to the idea that God's desire for us is exceptional health and well being to conclude otherwise would be to suppress the obvious. Yes, we can confidently state that God wants us to enjoy vibrant health.

David Sandstrom 30:52

Alright, so let's do a quick summary to wrap up. We are spirit, we have a mind and we live in a body. Our spirits are designed to be connected to in relationship with God and submitted to him. When they are they'll animate our minds in healthy ways. We're not minds are submitted to a spirit connected to God. They'll send healthy instructions to our brains and our brains, run our bodies. The autonomic nervous system is an important component of the Spirit Mind Body relationship. Because stressful thoughts can produce a chronic stressful condition in our body. And when we have chronically elevated hormones and neurotransmitters are related to that stress. it impedes our body's ability to do the housekeeping functions like detoxification, immune system function, and autophagy, the replacement of old worn out cells. And then finally, the elephant in the room. Does God really want us healthy? We shouldn't be so spiritually minded that we forget about our physical health. God wants us healthy. And we have plenty of glowing promises in Scripture to that effect. We see reason and science all testifying to that effect as well. And we see them in operating in complete harmony. Absolutely, yes, God does want us healthy, because he wants to equip us for good works for the building of the body of Christ. Now, that's the ideal. I'm sure somebody is thinking right about now. Well, yeah, we might be designed for health, but why are we sick? We've got a whole episode devoted to that coming up. So hang in there, we're gonna get there.

David Sandstrom 32:35

Okay, I hope you enjoyed this episode. We haven't gotten down to the specifics yet of what spiritual health looks like we're gonna get there, don't worry. But I wanted to lay this groundwork so that you can appreciate more fully how

important the spiritual component is, and how it relates to our physical vitality. Next week, we're going to be talking about is the good book really good for health? Can the Bible be trusted for health advice. And once again, I want to remind you, the content for these episodes is coming from my book, the Christians guide to holistic health. So if you're enjoying the series, you're really going to enjoy my book because not only do we talk about the spiritual component, we also talk about our minds or the mental emotional component to our health, as well as the physical as well as I have a whole section in the book on motivation and getting a call, I call it getting started. So if you would like to read the book, go to my website, [DavidSandstrom.com](http://DavidSandstrom.com), forward slash resources, and you'll see it at the top of the page. It's available through Amazon in paperback, Kindle, and audible. For more, go to David Sandstrom calm in the show notes for each episode, you'll find links to all the resources that were mentioned, as well as a full transcript with timestamps that you can download for free. In addition, I always include a content upgrade with each show, which is a free download that is designed to help you go deeper with that subject. Once again, thank you for listening, and I'll talk with you next week. Be blessed