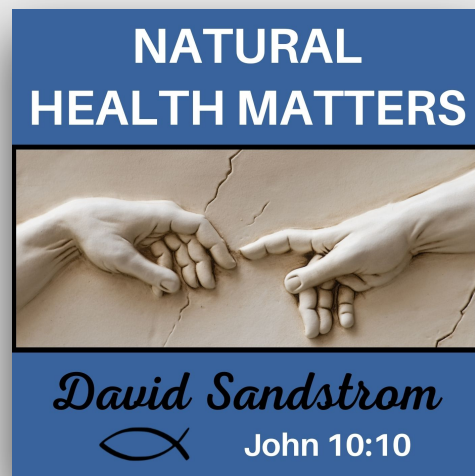


(NHM - 60) Spiritual Health part 7 The Power of Love



David Sandstrom 0:06

Here's a sample of what you'll hear on this episode of natural health matters. Finally, at the top position of God's hierarchy of relationship, we're referred to as God's lovers. Deuteronomy Six, five. Yes, the most intimate encounter between two human beings is used to describe God's love relationship with his people. That's literally what it means to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice. Romans 12 one.

David Sandstrom 0:36

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 60.

David Sandstrom 0:57

This episode is my favorite topic when it comes to talking about the spiritual component of health. Today, we're going to be talking about the power of love, specifically, wrapping our minds around God's style of love, and embracing that love in our lives. Embracing God's love is the essence or the foundation of the spiritual component to health. Now, if you've been following along in this series, you know that I'm leaning heavily on my book the Christians guide to holistic health. This episode is based on chapter 35. The power of love.

David Sandstrom 1:31

Understanding and walking in God's love has vast implications. It quite literally affects every area of our lives, including marriage, parenting, career, finances, and not the least of which our health.

David Sandstrom 1:48

In numerous studies, religious practices and church attendance has been shown to enhance health and well being and extend life expectancy. I would suggest that it's not about walking through the doors of a church that provides these protective benefits, but inner peace that follows surrendering to God's goodness and his love.

David Sandstrom 2:12

A recurring theme throughout the podcast is stress reduction. We talk about that a lot. When we willingly surrender to God's love, we can dramatically reduce the chronic stress we're living under. I hope you know by now that chronic stress is hazardous to our health. We talked about the stress connection in the first episode in this series on spiritual health. That's episode number 53. If you want to review as a quick review, imagine you're going to do a five mile hike. And I slipped a 45 pound barbell plate into your backpack, and I made you wear it for the entire hike. Could you do it? Probably. But it would certainly slow you down right? It would also put extra stress on your spine and your joints, you've probably experienced some pain. Well, reducing our chronic stress load would be like removing that 45 pound plate from your backpack, your total load would be lighter and you'd be a lot happier. In the same fashion. We can really reduce the amount of stress our bodies have to deal with on a daily basis if we cease trying to do life on our own. Instead, we embrace God's love and walk with Him. Micah six eight says in what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. Again, the spiritual component to health is all about loving relationships, our love relationship with God, our love for others, and love for ourselves. There is no greater power to heal than the power of love. And there is no higher love than the love of God. However, getting our minds around the kind of love God offers is no easy task. We tend to look at love through the eyes of our society which leans toward us sensual, lust filled, get my needs met kind of love.

David Sandstrom 4:14

Many of us had imperfect parents that didn't do such a great job in loving us the way they should have. As a result, we have trouble seeing God as a loving father, and we resist submitting to his love. God's love is altogether different. The Bible uses several metaphors to describe our relationship with God. Those metaphors follow a bit of a hierarchy. At the bottom of the pecking order, he's the potter in where the clay Isaiah 64 eight. Thinking to myself as a lump of clay is well. Not very flattering. Next, he's the shepherd where his sheep John 10:11 sheep are pretty dumb animals. Again, I'm not inspired by thinking of myself as a dumb animal. moving up the ladder, he's the master, and we're His servants. Titus, one one. Most church members of Christians are stuck at this level. Next, he's the father in we are His children, John 1:12. Now we're getting somewhere. As children, we have a place to belong, and where heirs with an inheritance. Next, were referred to as friends of God, John 15:15. as friends, we have a relationship. This is significant. In relationship we find a solution to our oneliness. Not only that, we have somebody to turn to when we need a helping hand. And finally, at the top position of God's hierarchy of relationship, were referred to as God's lovers, Deuteronomy Six, five. Yes, the most intimate encounter between two human beings is used to describe God's love relationship with his people. That's literally what it means to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice. Romans 12

one. Sometimes God sounds like a wounded lover, grieving over the betrayal of his beloved Jeremiah chapter two verses 20 through 23. We find this for on every high hill and under every green tree you have laying down as a harlot. Look at your way in the valley, know what you have done. You are a swift, young camel, entangled in her ways, a wild donkey accustomed to the wilderness that sniffs the wind in her passion, and the time of her heat, who can turn her away? All who seeker will not become weary, in her month, they will find her. And then we see in Jeremiah chapter three, verse 20, surely as a woman treacherously departs from her lover, so you have dealt treacherously with me, oh house of Israel declares the Lord. Even after the betrayal, God stands ready to forgive and take his bride back. Jeremiah 3:12, says this return faithless Israel declares the Lord, I will not look upon you and anger for I am gracious declares the Lord, I will not be angry forever. The point is this, we're created to be the objects of God's love and affection. Each of us is the apple of his eye. And we're designed to be in an intimate love relationship with him. Because this is our design, life is more natural and effortless. When we get this love relationship, right? If we fail to surrender to God's love, it's like swimming upstream, we can make some progress, but with a great deal more effort than swimming with the flow.

David Sandstrom 8:07

If we sincerely want to embrace holistic health, God's love is a topic worth exploring. Again, it's worth repeating. we maximize our health potential by aligning our lives more fully with God's natural design for spirit, mind and body. That design includes loving relationships. we're hardwired for loving relationships. God is omniscient, all knowing. But the Bible doesn't say God is knowledge. God is omnipotent, all powerful. But the Bible doesn't say that God is power. However, the Bible does declare, God is love in more than one place. First, john four, eight and 4:16. Love is the very nature of God's being. It's what he is through and through. When he loves. He's doing what's consistent with his character in nature.

David Sandstrom 9:05

The Greek language has three different words for love. One is phileo, which means brotherly love. That's where Philadelphia gets its name as the City of Brotherly Love. Then there's eros, which is of a sexual nature. This is where we get our word erotic. Then there's agape, which is the highest and most noble form of love. Agape love is a sacrificial, selfless servant love that seeks to lift up the well being of others. Agape love is of course what God shows toward us. And our right response is to return agape love back to him and love others the same way. This is the way God's love is designed to work. God initiates we respond. People are blessed. Peace and relational heart. harmony ensue. The Lord appeared to him from afar, saying, I have loved you with an everlasting love. Therefore, I have drawn you with loving kindness. Jeremiah 31 three, a new

commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. JOHN 13:34. Hatred stirs up strife. But love covers all transgressions, Proverbs 10:12.

David Sandstrom 10:33

I want to share an insight that not only has enormous implications for our health and well being, but for success in all areas of life. The idea starts with the notion that we can look to nature or God's creation, to learn something about him. Many of the great scientists, including Galileo, Aristotle, and Leonardo da Vinci believed that God gave us two books to understand him, the Bible, and nature. These great thinkers were motivated to study nature to learn more about God. Since God is the author of both the created universe and the Bible, what we learn from nature should be in harmony with biblical truth, we would do well to follow these great minds, and look to nature to learn more about God's attributes. In fact, we're instructed to do just that. Romans 1:20 says, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made. Psalm 19, verses one and two says this. The heavens are telling of the glory of God, and their expanse is declaring the work of his hands. Day today pours forth speech, and night tonight reveals knowledge.

David Sandstrom 11:56

Can we learn something about God's love by looking at nature? I believe we can. By looking at nature, we can clearly see that God has a thing with beauty, and romance. We can also observe that he's a master mathematician and architect. He has a scientific mind and pays attention to detail. A Christian author I've really enjoyed reading over the years is Dr. Timothy Jennings. I want to do my best to get him on the podcast one day because I think it'd be a great interview. Dr. Jennings, in his book, The God shaped brain, describes what he calls God's circle of love. I prefer to use the term God's circuit of love. Since God is love, and he made the universe, his fingerprints are all over creation, and God's seems to assign his signature with his circuit of love. It's as if God wanted to make sure we got this one right. So he gave us example after example in nature to illustrate the way his love works. For electricity or power to flow, there must be a complete circuit. electrical wires can receive energy, but that energy needs someplace to go, or the power can't flow and the circuit is useless. In the same fashion, for God's circuit of love to be complete, God's love must flow through us to others.

David Sandstrom 13:26

Let me explain more fully. Nature is full of these kinds of illustrations. The solar system has planets revolving around the sun in a never ending circular pattern, the moon orbits around the Earth. When we look at the tiny atom, we see the same circuit pattern with electrons spinning around the nucleus. The water cycle

also follows a circuit pattern. Water evaporates from the oceans into the air, moisture accumulates and forms clouds and eventually rain. Rain falls to the earth, and collects in lakes and rivers and eventually flows back to the ocean to start the process all over again. And the water cycle or circuit is complete. The water cycle brings life notice, each stage in the process must freely give up its water. Otherwise, the rhythm would stop, the circuit would end and life itself would be impossible. In the same fashion, love is intended to be freely given away. This is a huge point. We must give our love away, or we're not doing love God's way. In the oceans, the tide comes in, the tide goes up. If the current stop moving the tidal flow, the oceans would become dead cesspools where virtually nothing could live. There's even a name for a body of water that doesn't give up its water. It's called the Dead Sea. These ebb and flow are everywhere in nature. The sunrises the sunsets, night gives up its darkness and is replaced by day. Likewise, daylight freely gives away to darkness after sunset. The Seasons come, the seasons go. warm summer breezes give way to cool temperatures and changing leaves in the fall. Fall gives up its colors to blankets of snow and ice. Winter yields to spring flowers. Cool spring gives up its blossoms to the hot temperatures of summer, summer heat yields to cool mornings and falling leaves and the cycle starts all over again. Plants make oxygen and freely give it away for us to breathe. We produce carbon dioxide, and we give it away to be used by plants every time we exhale. What if we were to say it's my cupboard oxide, I'm not giving it away. We would have to stop breathing. And obviously we would die in a matter of minutes. Could all these illustrations in nature be telling us something about the nature of God?

David Sandstrom 16:09

I believe that God's circuit of love is what brings life. Since God is love, and he freely gives his love away demanding nothing in return. Our natural response should be to complete that circuit and return his love back to him in worship and service to his kingdom. When we do we cooperate with our design rather than resist it.

David Sandstrom 16:36

You may be saying this is a little out there for me day if you're starting to sound a little bit new age. I prefer to stick with biblical truths rather than speculate about illustrations from nature. Okay, let me give you a few verses to chew on. For God so loved that he gave john 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. God's love is sacrificial to the point of death. Greater love has no one than this. That one lay down his life for his friends, john 15:13 His love is unconditional. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans five eight. We are to imitate God's example. For those whom he for knew he also predestined to become conformed to the image of his son, Romans 8:29. Do nothing from

selfish ambition or conceit, but with humility of mind, regard one another as more important than your cells do not really look out for your own interest, but also for the interest of others have this attitude in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus Philippians, two, three through five. Sharing love is our appropriate response to God. We love because he first loved us first john 4:19. By giving love to others, we are blessed. It is more blessed to give than to receive Act 20:35. By giving our lives away we find real life. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 16:25 we demonstrate our love for God by serving others. Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to me, Matthew 25:40 Sharing a gob a love is commanded. Husbands love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for her Ephesians 5:25. Jesus commanded His followers to model his love toward others. And this reciprocal love will be the evidence of true discipleship or real followers of Jesus Christ. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. JOHN 13 verses 34 and 35.

David Sandstrom 19:34

God lavishes us with his never ending, unconditional, sacrificial selfless, others centered agape a love. It's who he is. It's what he does. Our reasonable response is to complete the circuit of love by loving him back through worship and service to others. The trouble is selfishness or sin, breaks the circuit of love. This is why we need to pursue righteousness with everything we've got. It's our reasonable act of worship. Completing God's circuit of love is what we're designed and created to do. It's in our DNA. This is how we fulfill our purpose. This cooperation with God brings relational peace with him, others and ourselves. The natural byproduct of that peace is physical health and well being. Love is indeed the greatest healing power in the universe. relational peace with God, others and ourselves is the essence of what it means to maximize our health potential by nurturing the spirit.

David Sandstrom 20:48

This is the way God's circuit of love is supposed to work. God initiates his agape a love toward us because it's in his nature to do that. We're made to be responders and imitators of God's great love. Our appropriate response is to enjoy his love and respond in worship in humble obedience, and then pour our lives out in service to others here on Earth. We are to reflect God's sacrificial, unconditional love to a world that desperately needs it. When we do, we cooperate rather than resist our design. And this is good for our health. This type of humble submission brings supernatural peace. Philippians four seven says, and the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your

hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. This peace is extraordinarily beneficial for our health. Proverbs 14:30 says, a tranquil heart is life to the body. But passion or stress and turmoil is rotteness to the bones.

David Sandstrom 22:03

God had our health and well being in mind when he gave us the command to love one another. JOHN 13:34. And it's heartwarming to see that science is now catching up with this biblical admonition. sharing our love by serving others or volunteerism has been scientifically shown to be beneficial to our health and well being. volunteerism has been shown to extend lifespan provide greater happiness and feelings of well being reduced chronic pain, and even lower cholesterol levels. When we model God's got a love, we become better spouses, better friends, better parents, better employees. The list goes on and on. Enjoying the relational peace that comes from sharing sacrificial love will do wonders for our health. Do you see how far reaching this is?

David Sandstrom 22:57

Let me wrap up with one more illustration. Let's contrast faith in a loving God that created us in His image to the survival of the fittest evolutionary claim. Jesus advocated the sharing of love and self sacrifice for the benefit of others. Acts 20:35 and john 15:13. We've already established that sacrificial love is beneficial to our health. When we freely and lavishly love on others. It will not return void, selflessness, generosity, and philanthropy are soothing ointments to the spirit, mind and body. sharing our love with others and generously giving our lives away for the sake of others is good for our health. This stands in stark contrast to evolutionary theory, which promotes survival of the fittest, where it's dog eat dog. the strong survive, and the weak and feeble naturally die off. Charles Darwin, the father of evolutionary theory, referring to medical care, said this, quote, caring for the weak should be discouraged. He advocated that we quote, intentionally neglect the weak and helpless. Referring to medical care for the sick, Darwin said, quote, thus the weak members of civilized societies propagate their kind, end quote, Darwin also believed that allowing the quote, weak in body and mind to marry and have children was doing a disservice to mankind by artificially allowing the weak to survive and reproduce. I'm gonna put a link in the show notes to let you read that article for yourself. It's pretty shocking. Darwin's theories are extreme self promotion, and the antithesis to Christian love. The Christian concept of love says, I'm willing to sacrifice myself so that you might live. Survival of the fittest says, I'm willing to kill you, so that I might live. One belief system brings order, peace, relational harmony in life, while the other brings anarchy, chaos, destruction and death. Which belief system do you think would promote better health? You don't need a PhD in psychology to know the answer. It's quite evident that the power of love is superior.

David Sandstrom 25:31

So let's summarize. There is no greater healing power in the universe than the power of love. God's love is a sacrificial, others centered kind of love. We can look to nature to confirm what the Bible says about God's style of love. We're created to respond and imitate God's love toward him and others. Submitting to God's great love makes a supernatural piece available, which is health promoting. Christian teaching on a promotion of love is better for health than the evolutionary theory of survival of the fittest.

David Sandstrom 26:13

Okay, I hope you enjoyed this teaching. And once again, I want to remind you that this series is based on my book, the Christians guide to holistic health, specifically the section on the spirit. If you enjoyed this series, I think you're really gonna enjoy my book, you can pick up a copy by going to my website, Davidsandstrom.com, forward slash book, you can use that link there, it'll take you to Amazon. It's available in paperback, Kindle, and audible. I don't share that link with you just because I want to make money off of you. I share it because I want to put this life giving information into your hands and I want to make sure that you're aware of that opportunity. 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 peach 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