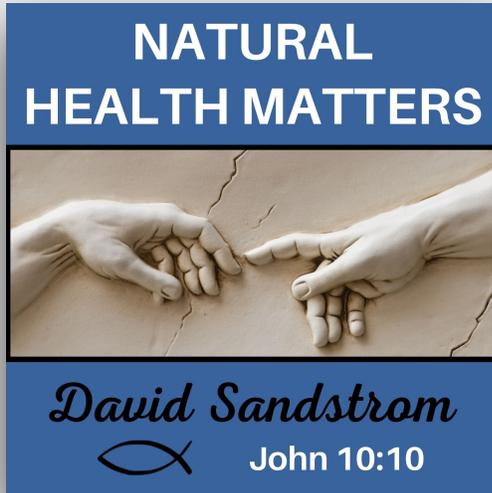


HHM - 65 Spiritual Warfare part 11: Pride Comes Before the Fall

David Sandstrom 0:05

Here's a sample of what you'll hear on this episode of natural health matters. An important concept to understanding the spiritual component to health is how our thoughts impact the autonomic nervous system. Our autonomic nervous



systems are designed with two divisions, the sympathetic or the fighter flight, and the parasympathetic or the rest and digest. When we experience peace, the parasympathetic portion of our nervous systems becomes dominant. And that's where our bodies prefer to do their repairing and rebuilding. This is a foundational concept to the spiritual component of health when we learn to surrender to God's goodness, and be obedient to his clear teachings, it reduces our stress and brings a supernatural peace, that peace is health promoting. 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 65.

David Sandstrom 1:17

This episode is part 11. In our series on the spiritual component of health, we've covered a lot of ground up to this point. So I think it's appropriate to go back and review a few of the things we talked about, as most of you, the Natural Nation have heard before we maximize our health potential by aligning our lives more fully with God's designed for spirit, mind and body. This series is all about aligning our lives more fully with God's design for our spirit, and what spiritual health really looks like. We started in Episode 53. And that episode was part one in this series on a spiritual component to health. In that episode, we talked about spiritual health being the foundation for our physical vitality. I detailed how human beings are a spirit, we have a mind, and we live in a body. The spirit, mind and body are interconnected, and interdependent, which means that what affects one part of our being will by necessity alter the others for good or bad. I talked about the Bible being authoritative. The Bible is the inspired Word of God and is more or less our user manual for life. The Bible actually makes that declaration in Second Timothy chapter three, it says, "All Scripture is inspired by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training and

righteousness, so that the man or woman of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." That equipping for every good work includes the health and vitality to get the job done. I also discussed the idea that biblical teaching on health is completely consistent with the naturopathic approach to health. With naturopathy, our desire is to come alongside the body's natural processes, and encourage our bodies to do what they already know how to do, and that is to thrive. We don't have to teach our cells how to do their jobs, because health is our default setting. It's baked into our design. Since God designed and built us this way. His word, his instructions, or user manual, if you will, teaches us how to behave in a fashion that supports the natural default setting for health. God would never lead us in directions that are contrary to his natural design. God is our loving Heavenly Father. And as such, he wants what's best for his kids. We could trust in these two principles. When God tells us to do something, it's for our benefit. And when he tells us to avoid something, it's for our protection. That's why Jesus taught his yoke is easy and his burden is light. When we cooperate with our natural design, it's like swimming with the current as opposed to swimming against it, we make far more progress with far less effort. An important concept understanding the spiritual component to health is how our thoughts impact the autonomic nervous system. Our autonomic nervous systems are designed with two divisions, the sympathetic or the fight or flight, and the parasympathetic or the rest and digest. When we experience peace, the parasympathetic portion of our nervous systems becomes dominant. And that's where our bodies prefer to do their repairing and rebuilding. This is a foundational concept to the spiritual component of health. When we learn to surrender to God's goodness and be obedient to his clear teachings, it reduces our stress and brings us Supernatural peace, that peace is health promoting. On the other hand, chronic stress will produce a chronic activation of the sympathetic nervous system. And when we're in fight or flight or sympathetic dominance, our bodies release stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. And the chronic release of those catecholamines will produce system breakdown and compromise our health. That's the reason why people of faith enjoy better health outcomes because they spend more time in a parasympathetic or peaceful state. God's indwelling presence in our lives will lead to more fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self control. All of the fruit of the Spirit, our health promoting the spiritual component to health is really not rocket science. But I hear very few people talking about health this way. And that's the reason for this series. By the way, if you know somebody that you think might enjoy this kind of teaching, I would appreciate you let them know about the podcast, I could really use your help in spreading the word.

David Sandstrom 6:09

In part two of this series, we talked about the hierarchy to the spirit-mind-body relationship. Our spirits are the highest and most noble part of our being and they're designed to be connected to and submitted to God, when they are built animate our minds in healthy ways. Our minds are designed to be connected to and submitted to our spirit. When our minds are animated in healthy ways. They'll send healthy instructions to our brains, in our brains run our bodies. Because of this connectedness and interdependence, there's no denying the spirit-mind-body connection.

David Sandstrom 6:48

The Bible has some pretty encouraging words regarding our health. I want to go over just a few. "The Lord will remove from you all sickness and he will not put on you any other harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known." That's 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." That's Psalm 103: 2 through five, "Do not be wise in your own eyes. fear the Lord and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your body, and refreshment to your bones." That's Proverbs three, seven, and eight. And here's one of my favorite passages on biblical health. "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 the life to those who find them, and health to all their body." That's found in Proverbs chapter four, verses 20 and 22. "Beloved, I pray that in all respects, you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers." That's 3 John 1:2, "Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease, and every kind of sickness." That's found in Matthew 9:35. "And he set them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing." Luke 9:2. So 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 8:56

In part three of this series, I talked about how the Bible is so very useful for advice on health and wellness, and science is now catching up with biblical teaching. That's 1000s of years old. For example, the Old Testament law teaches that Jewish people were to bury the dead quickly, and after touching a dead body, they were to appropriately wash themselves and sanitize their hands. In the early 1800s, in Vienna, Austria, that advice was ignored. At that

time, pregnant women who were about to give birth, were dying at very rapid rates from a mysterious disease they called labor fever. You see, at that time, doctors would routinely perform autopsies. And then without washing their hands, do vaginal exams on pregnant women in labor. Those women often developed deadly infections as a result of forward thinking doctor by the name of Ignas Symelwies, suggested that doctors wash their hands with bleach and water before doing exams on pregnant women. That practice all but eliminated labor fever. Countless lives could have been saved by taking the biblical advice for hand sanitizing more seriously in the first place. Study after study in the published, peer reviewed medical literature verify the fact that people of faith, have less disease, they live longer and have better relationships.

David Sandstrom 10:23

In Part Four in this series, I talked about the ultimate cause behind all sickness and disease. God wants us healthy. But we know all too well, that many of us are not enjoying the physical health and vitality we desire. Why is that so? The short answer for why do believers get sick is this is not Eden. And we live in a sinful fallen world. The ultimate root to all sickness and disease is sin. Adam and Eve were designed to live forever in the garden. But sin disrupted that plan. But that doesn't mean that we just roll over and accept our poor health as our lot in life. God designed us for health and we should be doing all that we can to align our lives more fully with that natural design. We really do reap what we sow, let's not allow our poor choices to cause us harm that God would prefer to spare us from.

David Sandstrom 11:19

In Part Five in this series, I talked about the spiritual warfare aspect to health. The enemy truly has come to steal, kill and destroy, and Satan gets a lot of bang for his buck if he can rob us of our health. Because that keeps us distracted from the higher, more purpose-driven, spiritual, kingdom work. We talked about Satan having access to our thought lives and playing the ventriloquist. We also discussed the idea that thoughts don't just float through the universe waiting to land on someone. thoughts have their origin in the mind of an intelligent, sentient being. The three sources of thoughts are God, ourselves and Satan. There's a very clear account of that teaching in Matthew chapter 16.

David Sandstrom 12:07

In Part Six, in this series, we talked about knowing our true identity. We talked about the most important thing about us is what we believe about God. We also talked about a common misunderstanding of the definition of the word grace. Most people understand grace to mean getting what we don't deserve. Although that's true. It's an incomplete definition. Grace is much more than simply getting what we don't deserve. God's grace is more about his divine

influence on the human heart. I also stated that all followers of Jesus Christ are saints in our hearts are good. When we make the decision to follow Jesus Christ and make him Lord of our lives. God gives us a heart transplant. Ezekiel 36:26 says that God will remove our heart of stone, give us a heart of flesh. And those new hearts are all together good.

David Sandstrom 13:02

In Part Seven, we talked about the healing power of love. And there is no greater love than the love of God. But wrapping our minds around that kind of love is easier said than done. God's love is other centered. And it's not complete until it's given away. We talked about God illustrating his love for us through nature, with example, after example of this never ending circular or circuit pattern to it. The Seasons come, the seasons go, the tide comes in, the tide goes out, the sun rises, the sun sets, all these examples and more point to the kind of love God has for us. And that is that it's freely given away, and it's never ending.

David Sandstrom 13:53

In Part 8, we talked about how we're wired for relationships. The spiritual component to health is all about relationships, our love relationship with God, our love relationship with one another, and our love relationship with ourselves. We talked about a study published in Harvard health News that demonstrated that people that lack strong relational connectedness, compromise their health, on a level that's on par with smoking a pack of cigarettes a day, and worse than center lifestyle and obesity.

David Sandstrom 14:26

In part nine, we talked about meditation and prayer being two sides of the same coin, and how they can almost immediately bring a sense of peace. And when it comes to natural and holistic health. It's peace whe're after not stress. We talked about a useful acronym for prayer called ACTS A-C-T-S. A is for adoration. C is for confession. T is Thanksgiving, and S is supplication or asking for things. By structuring our prayers this way. It keeps us humble and patient by putting God first and asking for things last.

David Sandstrom 15:06

In Part 10 the last episode, we talked about why we should be obedient to the Word of God. God's word is our user manual for life. And in it, we find principles and guidelines that act as guardrails to keep us on the path to success in all areas of life. We also talked about the nature of truth, and why something is right or wrong. My feelings have nothing to do with whether or not something is true or right. Something is true or right, if it's consistent with the nature and character of God. Why is clearly understanding the nature of truth important to our health? Well, because when we embrace truth, the truth will set us free, but only if it's

applied. That's why obedience to God's guidelines or admonitions is necessary. If we want to nurture our spirit and receive the blessing of improved health and well being. The more areas of our lives, we can surrender to God, the more peace we experience, and that supernatural peace makes better health outcomes, far more likely.

David Sandstrom 16:13

Okay, so that brings us to this episode. Here, we're going to turn the page a little bit and start getting more specific on what sins that we participate in, that can compromise our health, and what we can do about it. We all detained unhealthy thoughts and beliefs at times that can become blocking factors to our health, we can compromise our health when our self talk chronically engages our stress response. When it comes to the spiritual components of health, this is where the rubber meets the road. Up to now we've talked about pursuing righteousness to improve our health in a general way. Now, we're going to turn the corner a little bit and get more specific.

David Sandstrom 16:54

Most Christians I know have made good progress with their public or visible sins. For the most part, we don't curse or do recreational drugs. We're not doing things that will land us in jail, such as extortion or murder. We're not robbing banks. Most of us give a portion of our financial resources and even get involved in some type of service or volunteerism. These are all great things. However, when it comes to our private sins, well, that's a horse of a different color. Put me first in mind when it comes to this. We seem to think that as long as nobody sees our sins, it's okay to live with them. We assume I'm not hurting anybody. So why should it matter? I'm talking about things such as pride, fear, unforgiveness, persistent anger, jealousy, materialism. We're going to address each of these in the coming episodes, but for now, we're going to focus in on one of them. For many of us, these thoughts are so familiar. We may not even think of them as sins. We likely saw them modeled in our homes as children. Often it's been years or perhaps decades that we've been dealing with these issues. For me personally, I didn't recognize much of my own dysfunction until I got married. My wife was able to see things in me that I couldn't see myself I couldn't see the forest for the trees. And with God's grace in my wife's help, I was able to grow through some of that. I'm still a work in progress, but I'm better than I used to be. Some Eastern religions and even some teaching in the field of psychology, are centered around learning to live with our dysfunction, and not getting over it. Satan wants us to coexist with our brokenness, but God is in the transformation business. Isaiah 61:1 says that he's come to heal the brokenhearted and set the captives free. But many people get stuck with their personal transformation because they don't understand the battle going on in their minds that we've been addressing over the last few episodes. There is no

such thing as harmless sin. All sin is detrimental. This is why God tells us become the Masters over our sin. Genesis 4:7 says, sin is crouching at your door. It's desire is to have you but you must master it. The reason God hates sin is that it hurts the ones he loves. I'll repeat it. God is all knowing it because of his great love for us. He would never tell us to do something that's not for our benefit. And he would never tell us to avoid something that's not for our protection. This is our starting point in this struggle. The inner voice or a self-talk that goes on inside our minds is very familiar. And we assume it's accurate. Although we must remember that not every thought is our own. And we're susceptible to believing lies or untruths. This is a spiritual battle that will ultimately manifest in the physical, these manifestations. can come in the form of compromised health. An excellent place to start is to pray and ask God to reveal the areas or our lives that we haven't completely surrendered to Him. We all have areas in our lives we need to surrender to God through humble submission to His Lordship more completely. And the upcoming episodes, we're going to explore some of the specific areas where we can do better. I'm not going to go through a comprehensive list of specific sins. But what I am going to discuss does represent some of the issues that have the most direct impact on our health.

David Sandstrom 20:35

Now, let's turn our attention to some specific sins that could end up becoming blocking factors to our health. The first thing we're going to address is pride. Because when we have a prideful heart, and we think we know it all, it keeps us from learning anything new. First, Peter 5:6 says, "Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time." If we're gonna embrace righteousness for health, then we've got to start with humility. There is of course, a level of pride that is healthy and consistent with the concept of loving ourselves well, the pride that leads to a reasonable and appropriate level of self esteem is a good thing. We can also have a healthy level of pride in our accomplishments or a job well done. However, pride can become destructive. an inordinate amount of pride can easily lead to selfishness, conceit, or even disdain and contempt. When that happens, we've crossed the line, we've got to be careful because when we think of ourselves more highly than we ought, we're on a slippery slope to harm. Pride definitely does come before the fall. "A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor." That's proverbs 29:23. Once again, we find ourselves living in the tension between two pursuits. On the one hand, we want an appropriate level of self esteem. On the other hand, we want to embrace humility and consider others more important than ourselves. We've got to find the balance. One of the best reasons to embrace humility is that it's good for our personal growth. When we think we know it all we've shut the door to learning anything new. God's Word tells us in Hosea 4:6, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

Knowledge is necessary for freedom, and to maximize our health potential. We do need knowledge. However, it's not just what we know. It's what we apply, because rejecting knowledge and no knowledge, have the same consequence. Zero growth. Wisdom is knowing how to use our understanding. Wisdom begins to work with the humble and contrite heart. God wants to walk intimately with us through life, he desires to lead us and teach us. But pride keeps God at a distance. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, Oh, God, you will not despise." That's Psalm 51:17. Isaiah 66:2 says, "but to this one, I will look to Him who was humble and contrite, a spirit and who trembles at my word." It's the humble they received grace or God's divine influence on their hearts. "God is opposed to the proud that gives grace to the humble." James 4:6. If we want to improve our health by nurturing our spirit, then we need God's help in changing our beliefs, self talk, and actions. God's help is required in order to recognize the subtlety of the enemy's influence. It's interesting to note that James 4:6 that verse that I just quoted, referring to God opposing the proud to give me grace to the humble is provided in the context of spiritual warfare. The whole passage says this, "God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit therefore to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. That's James four, six and seven. warfare is the backdrop to all that we do spiritually. submission to God's way of doing things is how we put on our spiritual armor in Ephesians six. Without humility, it's impossible to submit ourselves to God. Therefore, Satan gets to have his way with us. This is a dangerous place to be because Satan is bent on our destruction, and he wants to destroy our health, john 10:10. The enemy will use pride as part of an overall strategy to accomplish his schemes against us. Therefore, in our pursuit of health, we need to be vigilant and guard ourselves against destructive levels of pride. Again, one more time. First Peter, 5:6 "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time."

David Sandstrom 25:07

All right, so let's summarize. Most of us have done an adequate job cleaning up our public since. But when it comes to our private since the ones no one sees, well, that's a horse of a different color. We've got to examine ourselves for private since that may be hindering our thought lives and creating stress. unhealthy levels of pride will stunt our spiritual growth. God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humility is the key to winning in spiritual warfare because only the humble can submit themselves to God, and submission to God's will, is required to resist the enemy.

David Sandstrom 25:47

Alright, I think that's enough for one episode. I hope you're enjoying this series. If you are, I would appreciate it if you tell some friends about it. I'm doing my best here to connect the dots between biblical teaching and how that impacts

our health and vitality. There's not a lot of people talking about health this way. And if you share this podcast with one of your Christian friends, I'll bet they'll appreciate you making them aware of it. For more, go to DavidSandstrom.com 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