

Part 1 - Living Healthier

Sermon Title: **Part 1 - Living Healthier**

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Elijah Bronner: You got to take care of what God gives you. We have one body; you have one life here. You got to take care of it. You got to treat it well because this is your vehicle to carry you through this life.

Female: You are listening to brothersoftheword.com. This is part one of the series titled, "Live Healthier" by C. Elijah Bronner. This message is number 7898.

[Music Playing: 00:00:19 - 00:00:32]

And now for Live Healthier, part one.

Elijah Bronner: Well, thank you for joining brothers of the word because brother, you need the word. We welcome all of you those of you joining us by television and those of you joining us online at brothersoftheword.com or social media Facebook. Welcome to today's service. Always a wonderful, delight and joy to have you to tune in and join us. Well, I would like to share a little humor. This is actually my favorite joke. I shared all the time at least a few times a year and I'm sharing it today because it really ties into my message.

A reporter she walked up to a little old man in a rocking chair on his porch. And she said I couldn't help but notice how happy you look. She said what's your secret for a long happy life and he replied I smoke three packs of cigarettes a day. I also drink a case of whiskey a week. I eat fatty foods and never exercise. That's amazing. The woman replied, how old are you? Twenty-six. He said --

Well, at the beginning of this year, I was walking into my house one evening and I heard the Holy Spirit say to me. He said live healthier, live happier, live inspired and love more. And so that's what he said. He said those four things to me and I'm going to be sharing this series on those four things. So, we'll do a week or two on each one of those points. But those are the four things he said to me kicking out this new year.

And so, the first one today is live healthier, live healthier, live healthier. I don't care how good you are. You're never too good to get better. So, I don't care how healthier you are. We all can do something a little bit better. We all can do a little bit more.

We all could be a little bit healthier. And so, I take it as a wonderful challenge. The Holy Spirit breathe into my spirit live healthier, live healthier.

Well, let's read some scriptures. This is 3, John 2, 3 John 2; 3 John 2 says, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health even as thy soul prospereth." And let me read it from The Message Bible. It says, "To my good friend Gaius: How truly I love you! We're the best of friends and I pray for good fortune in everything you do and for your good health that your everyday affairs prosper as well as your soul." I love that one. And then I like the Amplified Bible says, "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in every way and that your body may keep well even as I know your soul keeps well and prosperous."

And so here in this scripture, we find the will of God that is God's will for us to prosper in every area of life and that includes our physical body. God is not only concerned about your heart which He is. He's not only concerned about your spirit which He is. He's not only concerned about your soul which He is. But God is concerned about every part of your life and He's concerned about your physical health because that's a big part of your life while you're here on earth and God cares for you watch fully and affectionately. So, God cares about your physical health. God cares about our physical health. If you think about Jesus, that was actually one third of his ministry. He went about teaching, preaching and making people whole Spirit, soul and body. That was a third of his ministry making people whole.

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Paul prayed a very similar prayer to John. Now, this is 3 John we're reading. Now, remember this is the Apostle John. This is one of Jesus' twelve disciples. John wrote the gospel of John. He also wrote first, second and third John. He also wrote the Book of Revelation. So, John was quite an author. But so -- John and is actually a prayer. He's praying there. He's praying that his friend would prosper and be in good health even as the soul prospers. And it's really the intent in the will of God for his people. So, Heart of God for us to prosper and to be in good health even as our souls prosper.

There's a similar prayer Paul prayed in 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 23. Paul prayed this prayer. He said, "And the very God of Peace sanctify you wholly and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so, Paul prayed very similar prayer for the entire man. Spirit, soul and body that it would be preserved. So that's not only us being kept from sin, not only us being sanctified and made wholly but I believe that it's also saying that -- he's praying that we would be preserved from sickness, from disease from premature death.

And there was this very similar prayer that we read in 3 John. Paul pray that our Spirit, soul and body would be preserved blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so, we can see here that it's God's will for us to live healthy, to be strong, to be vibrant, to be full of life, vim, bigger, vitality and energy to fill our best. We are not only to have life. We are to have and enjoy life. That's what life more abundantly is all about that Jesus talked about. Man, there's something about Spirit. There's something about His Spirit that promotes life health and energy. When you hang around God, there's something about him that promotes life, health and energy.

Check this out Moses was 120 years old. His eyes were not dimmed neither were his natural force is abated. He was a strong man, full of life, vim, vigor and vitality. We get an essence of God's picture of man the way God intended. Look at Caleb, 85 years old. Caleb said, "I'm just as strong as I was when I was 40." He said you give me this Mountain. Put me on the front lines and I whip everybody out here.

Now, I want you to see that this is full of life. This is full of vigor. This is full of vitality. Look at Sarah. Sarah was 65, 75. She was so beautifully radiant and youthful that kings wanted her in their harems. We get a picture of God's youth renewing and the energy and vitality and being strong and vibrant and healthy and well. You can see it all through scripture. Listen to this, Isaiah chapter 40 verse 31. "But they that wait upon the Lord," so I told you something about hanging around God, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." Listen to this this doesn't sound like some worn-out weakling that's old and decrepit. Listen to this, or sick. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall Mount up with

wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint.”

Listen to this translation. This is a contemporary English version says, “But those who trust the Lord will find new strength. They will be strong like eagles soaring upward on wings. They will walk and run without getting tired.” So, something about being around God to something about being in the presence of God, is something about following the promptings of the spirit that will always lead towards life and health. Everything that comes from God always promotes life, health, energy, vitality, victory. All of these things come from God. And so, you can hear from all of these people I just talked about is something about hanging around God. When you hang around God, man, you get in shape.

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You get in shape hanging around God. I love that. I love that. You get in shape hanging around God. Now, health comes from God. Health ultimately comes from God. So, we depend on God for our health. We looked at God for our health, but we also cooperate with God because God always leads us into things that promote life and health. God always leads us into good health disciplines. God always tell you what you need to do to stay well and to be strong and to be fit and to be active. God always give you instructions.

I remember I was probably 22 and just gotten married, and I remember my wife was -- she's not here so I can say this. My wife wasn't much of a cook back then. And so, I was eating a lot of deli sandwiches and chips. I had a lot of deli sandwiches and chips. And one day the Lord spoke to me. He said cut back on the potato chips. He said cut back on the potato chips. See, God is so practical. God is so real. But notice this when you walk with God, God will always lead you toward life. He'll always lead you toward things that promote health, vitality, energy and vigor.

God always lead you in that direction. So, when you walk with God, he's going to always lead you toward healthy disciplines. He's going to always lead you to towards things that are good for you. Things that will increase you and better you. And so God

speak to you about very practical things that promote life things that are great health disciplines.

And so, we cooperate with God. We cooperate with God and so with God's help we can all prevent disease. We can all be healthy and we can all feel our best with God's help, with God's help. We can all improve. We should all be at a place where we are taking good care of ourselves and we should be disciplining our bodies so that we could be at our best for God's service so that we can live out our purpose, so that we could be useful and helpful to our families and others, so that we can enjoy God's blessings, His wonderful blessings in life.

You can't really enjoy the blessing if you're disease and you're ill and your body is wreck with pain and you're just wasting away. That's not really an enjoyable life. And so, with God's help we can feel good, we could be energetic, we could function on our best, we can enjoy life, we can serve others. And so, Paul actually talked about this. Paul talked about this in 1 Corinthians chapter 9 verse 24 through 27. He compared himself to Olympic athletes. He said, now if you look at the world, he said world class athletes they train themselves. They discipline themselves. They are hard on their bodies.

And Paul said should we do any less and we're working for God, we're serving his purposes. They are doing it for something that is temporary. They're doing it for a temporal crown. We are doing it for something that has eternal weight and glory and value. Should not we discipline our bodies and keep our bodies in shape. Shouldn't we get ourselves in shape? Shouldn't we tell our bodies what to do? Shouldn't we be fit for God's kingdom to send(ph).

And so, Paul actually talked about that. Paul -- he actually compared himself to a world-class athlete. He talked about how they beat their bodies and discipline themselves because they want to win. And Paul is saying if they can do it to win a trophy how much more should we do it so that we can share Christ, so that we can be a blessing, so that we can help others. Shouldn't we be at our best. And this is what Paul said, Paul said I have to discipline my body. I just can't let it go and do what He wants to do. No, I take charge of my body and I begin to training and disciplining just like world-class athletes do. I'm in charge here.

And the spirit of God's on the inside of me if they can do it, bless God I can do it.

And this is what Paul did. He took a world of knowledge and he began to talk about bringing discipline into our lives, so that we can be full of life and energy, so that we can do what wants us to do and we can be good examples and we can feel great and we can have the energy to do it. It takes energy to share the gospel. I said it takes energy to share the gospel. It takes energy. I can't even preach (00:14:53) up here. I can't preach with this kind of energy. It takes life. It takes energy towards vitality to even share the gospel.

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May God's life and wants to come through us. God let us enjoy life and we get to do what he wants us to do and we do it at our best but with his help. And so, I believe that God's people can live without disease. I believe we can live without sickness. I believe we can live without dying prematurely. I believe we can live without being riddled with all of the ills of the world if we learn to simply follow God, follow his instruction, adopt some healthy habits and do some things so that we can be in our best serving him and we can be at our best with our families and our loved ones. And so, God is always prompting us. He's always prompting us. He's always prompting us.

Let me share this with you. This was over in -- this was over in the book of Philippians chapter 2 and you'll see it beginning around verse 26 through 30. There was a man named Epaphroditus. He was a laborer in the gospel. My God, this man worked hard. He loves the Apostle Paul. He loved the Philippian church, and he worked so hard that he literally worked himself nearly to death literally. He fell gravely ill and he almost died.

And Paul begins writing about him, in Philippians chapter 2 verse 26 through 30 you find it there the story. Paul talks about him, he please and he said man, he said we almost lost him. We almost lost him because he sacrificed his life for Christ to such an extent that he didn't take care of his body. He didn't take care of his health. He was so busy making sure that we had everything in the ministry. He was so busy taking care of the church. He was so busy taking care of people that he did not

take care of himself. He literally gave his life for us and he was at the point of death and God had mercy on him and spared his life. God have mercy on him spared his life.

But there's a lesson there to us. The lesson to us is that even in the ministry, you have to take care of yourself. You can't save the world and you are all out of gas and that you have run yourself down. You can't run yourself down helping everyone else. It requires some self-care. You got to take good care of yourself so that you can be serviceable to others. And Paul begin to share this lesson because Epaphroditus almost died for the calls of Christ. And he was simply merely because he didn't take some simple steps to preserve his health, to guard his energy. He didn't take time to make sure that he was well taken care of physically, so that he can do the work that he was doing.

And so, he neglected his own physical health for the calls of Christ and it nearly killed them. And Paul brings attention to that to let us know we're human. We are in human bodies. These bodies can break down if you don't take care of them. You can run them into the ground. You have to take care of what God's given you. We have one body. You have one life here. You got to take care of it. You got to treat it well because this is your vehicle to carry you through this life.

And so, Paul teaches us very powerful illustration here as he talks about Epaphroditus. He took the time to talk about him because this man nearly died serving Christ. And Paul loved him and he appreciated his service because he laid his life on the altar of service, but it was at the expense of his own health. Now if he had died, he didn't been good to no one. They needed him alive. And so, Paul teaches the importance, taking care of your body. Take care of your body. Give yourself some self-care because we need you alive. The world needs you alive. The world needs your vibrant and full of energy so that you can thrive and do what you need to do to help bring light, to help bring the gospel to the world. And so, you have to take care of yourself so that you can be a blessing.

A few weeks ago, I was driving all around town and I was delivering care packages to people who were sick. It was one after another. Some had COVID, some didn't but I was getting care packages to them. And finally, I got a call about another

case and they said they need -- I said look I'll do it, but I'm not doing it right now and it's going to be a couple of days because I have to first guard my own energy reserves and I am not about to wear myself out trying to look out for everyone else. I said if I wear out, there is no one else to help. I said, I must take a couple of days to guard my own energy reserves. And I said once I recuperate, I'll be more than happy to assist and help. That's what Paul talked about with Epaphroditus. That's what Paul talked about. I was doing something good, but if I hadn't been careful, I will wear myself out.

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So, I have to take care of myself because if I don't take care of myself, I'm not serviceable to anyone else. I have to keep myself well and going, so that I can be serviceable and helpful to others. Now, once I recuperated for a couple of days, I went and I served and I got right back on the mission, but I took time to get myself together. Don't let anybody wear you out because of they wear you out, now what? You're no good to anybody when you are worn out. And so, Paul teaches that. He teaches that lesson. A lot of pastors don't realize this. A lot of pastors are in the hospital, you know, they have worn themselves out not realizing this principle that Paul teaches here with the Epaphroditus, but it's a powerful principle. It's a powerful principle.

And I thought about this, I said you know, if I was there, I would have loved to have sat down and talk with Epaphroditus because I could have shared some things with him. And I jot it down what I would have told Epaphroditus if I could have talked with him. I have said Epaphroditus you have to do some self-care man. And this is what I want you to do Epaphroditus. I want you to divert daily. I want you to withdraw weekly. I want you to go missing monthly. I want you to be quiet quarterly and I want you to abandon annually. That's how I would have started.

And then I would have kept talking to Epaphroditus and I will say Epaphroditus, I want you to aim for seven or eight hours of good sleep every night. Sleep is your superpower. Sleep is your superpower. That's the time when your body rebuilds. That's the time where even your literal brain washes itself, regenerates itself, so that it can function at optimum power. You have to rest, you got to sleep because your body rebuilds, repairs,

restores, so that you can wake up, refreshed and full of energy to be able to go. Without sleep there is no energy. There's no vibrancy, there's no clarity of thought. You can't perform well.

I would have told Epaphroditus, you need to get seven or eight hours of good sleep so that you can do what you need to do. I would have told Epaphroditus you need to spend time in nature alone. I would have told Epaphroditus that you need to learn to say, "no." Don't over commit yourself. I would have told Epaphroditus that you need to learn to take deep breaths. I've learned to stand outside for a few moments every day and I do breathing exercises. You have to oxygenate the body. You have to oxygenate your blood. You have to breathe deep from your belly. It relaxes the body removes tension and then oxygenates the body and all your cells. Breathes deeply something healing in that, something healing in fresh air. One God's eight doctor is fresh air. Breathe deeply.

I would have Epaphroditus to sleep and sometimes, sleep and relax, rest. I would have told Epaphroditus to go get a massage, get in the hot tub or at least take a hot bath. I would have told Epaphroditus to do something fun. I would have told him to do something fun. Ivy(ph), if you have the video of the sliding board, I did something fun not too long ago. It was my daughter's birthday and we got a sliding board and all the kids came down and adult would come down and I decided to come down.

[Video Playing]

I wanted to do something fun. I wanted to create a moment. I was the only adult to come down. But I realize that was the moment. I didn't want to have a moment regret the rest of my life. I wanted to seize that moment. I wanted to create a moment. Listen to what somebody says. Somebody says when we embrace childlike wonder and let ourselves be whimsical, we can feel lighter, more energized and more inspired. I was invigorating when I hit the bottom of that slide, I felt the life, I felt energy. I was having fun. I seized the moment. All the other adults were around looking but I was splashing and laughing. I would have told Epaphroditus to have some fun, have some fun Epaphroditus, have some fun, have some fun.

I've got to stop, I'm out of time. I'm out of time, but we'll pick up -- I wasn't sure how many sessions I would need on each one of these subs, but I'm going to need more than today because I have a whole lot more to tell Epaphroditus.

I'm only talking to Epaphroditus here. You all are just listening here on what I would have shared with Epaphroditus. I just wish I could have been there to talk with my head so much to share with him, but next session we'll complete this but we're going to be sharing what the holy spirit said to me live healthier and then we'll share a live happier. We'll share live inspired and we'll share love more. Praise God. Give the Lord a hand for his word. Praise God. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Glory, Glory, Glory, Glory, Glory, Glory. Thank you. Lord Jesus. God is so good.

God is so good to us and he wants us to be full of life and energy and vitality and he wants us to be invigorating man and having fun in life to be able to do man. And so, that's why you know, I made a decision to just start having fun while I preach, just start having fun. I just wanted even disclaim(ph) for you've heard me say for the last few months, we're having so much fun. We are having so much fun. The gospel is fun because Jesus came and he freed us from our sins. He freed us from death. He freed us om from sickness and disease. He defeated the devil and we are having fun sharing the good news of that.

There is a lot of fun. There's a lot of fun that I have the Holy Spirit living on the inside of me. That's a lot of fun. That's a lot of fun. That's a lot of fun. Did know that I'm a citizen of heaven right now. That's a lot of fun. There's a lot of fun. It's a lot of fun to know the joy has come. It's a lot of fun to know the love is gone. It's a lot of fun to know that grace has come. That's a lot of fun. That's a lot of fun and that's why you always hear me say we're having fun. We are having fun because we are. We having fun because we are. We're having fun because we are. Praise God, praise God. Amen. Amen. I have preached myself happy, Glory, Glory, Glory, Glory. Hallelujah. Glory, Glory, Glory, Glory.

Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Oh, the Lord God Almighty. He's concerned about your physical body. He's concerned about your physical health means a lot to him because he needs you strong. He needs you well. He needs your vibrant. He needs your able-body and he wants it to be full of life and vim and vigor and vitality and he wants you to be ready to go when it's time for you to go. He wants you to be well rested. He wants you to be healthy. He has a mission. And we get to carry out his mission and have fun all while we're doing it. Praise God. Amen.

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