



Sermon 4

Facing Diseases in Your City

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3 John 2

“He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.”

Introduction

In the heart of a bustling and famous city, urban life never came to a halt. The streets were always filled with people in a hurry, and skyscrapers seemed to touch the sky like towers of ambition. But beneath all that modern luxury and appearance hid invisible dangers.

One cold winter morning, rumors began to circulate about a disease that no one understood. People felt like they had a deadly flu, with crazy fevers, difficulty breathing, and relentless coughs. At first, no one paid much attention because, of course, colds and flus were common in such a densely populated city, right?

However, the disease started spreading alarmingly. Hospitals filled up in no time, and doctors were busier than streaming servers. Health authorities issued a red alert and began investigating what was happening with this disease. Public health experts analyzed how it was spreading and discovered that the disease was linked to a somewhat “exotic” food market in the city center, where they sold uncommon animals.

Panic gripped the city when they confirmed that the disease was a new version of a virus that could jump from animals to humans. So, they made a move and declared a quarantine, putting the entire city on standby! They closed down that strange market in a flash, but it was already too late to completely halt the disease. Thousands of people were infected, and the mortality rate soared.

The city plunged into total chaos. The once bustling streets turned into something out of a post-apocalyptic movie set. People stayed in their homes out of fear, businesses closed their doors, and the economy took a 180-degree turn. Hospitals were on the brink of collapse, and doctors worked as if there were no tomorrow to care for the sick.

Although it sounds like this account is pure fiction, we know this to be true. Life in a city can be more fragile than it seems, and it is crucial that we be prepared and cooperate when facing diseases in modern cities.

Development

I. Diseases in Cities

Diseases in cities are a complex issue tied to urban life and people's health. Let's look at some of the main causes of this problem:

- **Air Pollution:** In several cities, the air we breathe is a significant problem due to the high number of cars, factories, and other sources of pollution. This pollution can lead to respiratory problems like asthma, bronchitis, and even heart issues.

- **Water Pollution:** Water is crucial in cities, but it can lead to unpleasant consequences if not properly maintained. Waterborne diseases like cholera can spread if the pipes and purification systems are not in good condition.
- **Population Density:** In cities, people are packed together like sardines in a can, making infectious diseases more common. Influenza, COVID-19, and other illnesses can spread more easily in densely populated areas.
- **Limited Access to Healthcare Services:** While cities have hospitals and clinics everywhere, it's not always easy for everyone to access and receive care. Some people lack economic resources or live far from medical facilities, making it challenging to address illnesses.
- **Mental Health Issues:** Stress, anxiety, and depression are real concerns in cities. Urban life can be stressful due to job competition, traffic, social isolation, and other factors, contributing to mental health problems.
- **Nuisance Insects and Rodents:** In some cities, insects like mosquitoes and rodents can transmit diseases if not properly controlled. For example, dengue and other diseases can spread through bites or contact with these pests.
- **Sedentary Lifestyle:** Many city dwellers lead sedentary lives due to office jobs and

a lack of exercise spaces. This can lead to health issues like obesity and heart-related diseases.

- **Noise Pollution:** Constant noise in the city can cause high stress levels and disrupt sleep. This can affect blood pressure and rest, potentially leading to health problems.

II. God and Health

The God of the Bible is a God of health. In 3 John 1:2, we find a powerful message: *“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.”* In God’s original plan for humanity, disease was not on the radar. Can you imagine our first parents in such a healthy lifestyle? No pollution, in a healthy environment, eating nuts, grains, and natural fruits, without strange chemicals.

Ellen G. White, who wrote extensively on health, said that our first parents lived in perfect health. They were tall and good-looking as if taken from a photograph. Adam was much taller than people today, and Eve was slightly shorter but very beautiful and elegant.¹

Adam and Eve embodied perfect health. They had physical, mental, and social health. Best of all, they were deeply connected to God, which gave them enviable spiritual health. However, this perfect health was disrupted. When Adam and Eve chose not to trust God and were

¹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2018), p. 45.3.

expelled from paradise, everything changed, and diseases emerged in all areas.

Genesis 3 tells how the first couple succumbed to the enemy of God and turned their backs on their Creator. But despite the rebellion of our first parents, God still cares deeply about our health.

Out of His infinite love, God left us a promise that provides an opportunity to live healthy lives. Initially, God gave this promise to the Israelites during their journey through the desert, but we can also embrace it, as Romans 15:4 states:

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” (NKJV).

Look at the promise God gave Israel through Moses in Exodus 15:26:

“If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you” (NKJV).

In ancient times, the people of Israel had advanced health principles. It turns out that an ancient book called the “Ebers Papyrus,” written by the Egyptians around 1500 BC, during Moses’ time, was discovered by

archaeologists. This book served as a guide to Egyptian health, although some of their ideas were quite bizarre. Let's look at some of the medical advice found in this papyrus, but seriously, don't try this at home!

For example, to prevent gray hair, they recommended rubbing black cat blood boiled in oil or rattlesnake fat into your hair. And if you didn't want to go bald, you had to use six types of fat: horse, hippopotamus, crocodile, cat, snake, and goat. You had to mix honey with donkey tooth powder to strengthen your hair. How about that?

If you had a splinter stuck, the medical prescription included "worm blood and donkey dung." Other strange advice involved "lizard blood, pig teeth, decomposed meat, moisture from pig ears, and even human, animal, and fly excrement." Can you imagine if your doctor gave you these tips today? What a madness! These were the "experts" of Moses' time.

Certainly, Moses must have been aware of these Ebers Papyrus writings because, according to the Scriptures, he learned all the knowledge of the Egyptians. But the interesting thing is that you won't find any of these strange recommendations in the Bible. Why? As we've already mentioned, the health laws God gave to His people were far more superior for their time.

For example, in the Middle Ages, Europe was plagued by the "Black Death." The plague killed one in every four people, and no one knew how

to stop it because they didn't even understand microbiology as we do today. Do you know what saved them? The Bible! They finally turned to the Scriptures, specifically Leviticus 13:46, which says, "He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He is unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp" (NKJV). From the Bible, they learned about the importance of isolating the sick.

The Bible provides clear instructions on how to care for our health, not just physical health, but also emotional, sociocultural, and especially spiritual health.

What do you think?

Conclusion

Dear young people, God wants you to be healthy and to share that health in your city. Did you know that God's medicine is more about prevention than cure? He left us with eight natural tips that can help you live energetic and well-balanced lives. Would you like to know what they are? Here they are, with the acronym FORWARD!

- **F for Fresh Air:** Start feeling great by flooding your bodies with fresh air, taking deep breaths during the day. Oxygen is essential for cells. The fresher the air you breathe, the more energy you'll have.
- **O for One's Control:** No excess, folks. Say no to tobacco, alcohol, caffeine, and

addictive substances. But moderation and balance with the good things.

- **R for Rest:** Getting proper sleep is essential, meaning seven to eight hours in a well-ventilated room. Balance your life between work and rest.
- **W for Water and Workout:** Water, water, and more water. The best drink to purify and keep all your cells hydrated. Aim for six to eight glasses a day. Also, you need to activate your bodies with daily exercise, preferably outdoors if possible. A little walking, about half an hour, is a good start. Get moving, folks!
- **A is for Accepting God's Will:** Don't forget your spiritual life. Faith and trust in

God enhance your health and bring joy. Spend time in church with your families, cultivating love and hope.

- **R for Right Nutrition:** Eat healthy foods with all the necessary nutrients and a touch of fiber. Balance is key to keeping your bodies at their best.
- **D is for Daylight:** A bit of sunlight boosts your mood and vitality. But in moderation, okay? Excessive sun exposure can be harmful. Best in the morning.

So, guys, move FORWARD with these healthy tips! Keep your bodies in good health.

