

SMALL GROUP STUDY

The Body is a Temple

From the sermon series, "Health & Healing"



AGENDA

- Allow people to arrive, talk, and snack – 15 min.
- Open in prayer – 30 sec.
- Thank everyone for coming. Go around in a circle (starting with the leader) and have everyone introduce themselves and answer one of the icebreaker questions above – 15-20 min.
- Show DVD – 10 minutes
- Discussion – 30 minutes
- Worship – 10 minutes
- Prayer – 15 minutes
- Explain and ask for volunteers for the different roles within the group (see below) – 15 min

DISCUSSION

1. Physical fitness is an important part of Christian discipleship. The Bible is very concerned about our physical health. In the beginning, God created human beings as physical creatures. Genesis 2 describes how the Master Potter knelt in the dirt and formed man from clay. Then God breathed life into his new creation, and the man became a living being. The Lord created humanity as creatures that possess both body and soul. What affects the one also affects the other.

From an Old Testament, Hebrew perspective, our identity is inseparably entwined with our physical being. This viewpoint is reflected in the New Testament's emphasis on the bodily resurrection of Jesus and the promise of new bodies in God's kingdom. When creation was completed, the Lord declared everything was VERY, VERY GOOD. The Judeo-Christian heritage has always taught that our bodies are good gifts given to us by a gracious God.

Icebreakers

Use the questions below to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

- 1.** What are three favorite things you like to do for fun?
- 2.** Name some sports or physical activities you've participated in before.
- 3.** What are your 3 favorite foods and 3 favorite restaurants?



1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)

19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

The Jewish people believed that the Jerusalem Temple was God's Temple. They thought the Lord dwelt in the Holy of Holies at the center of the Temple. Using this imagery, Paul described how God's Spirit dwells in our bodies. We are holy or set apart for the Lord's use.

Another way to talk about Christian physical fitness is to use the language of stewardship. Stewards manage what they do not own as if it were their own. We are stewards of our bodies. Our bodies are loans given to us by God while we live in this world. We are to use our physical being to honor our Lord. However, Christians recognize that some day we will return our bodies to the Creator. The committal ritual in a funeral reminds us: "Ashes to ashes and dust to dust." We return to the ground from which Adam was formed. The central question of physical stewardship is: "Whose temple is it?" Are we using our bodies for our own purposes OR as wise stewards to glorify God?

How do you care for the body that God has given you? What do you think you do well? What is an area in which you could improve?

2. In the Christian stewardship of our bodies, there are two extremes to avoid: neglect and obsession. Both are counterproductive to our physical and spiritual health. One harmful extreme is to neglect our physical health by acting as poor stewards of our bodies. The Lord's house may be in desperate need of renovation and repair. Life is a constant struggle to determine whether we will rule our desires or our desires will rule us. Although we live with an illusion of self-control, oftentimes our physical passions control us. Due to our sinful nature, humans also tend to be self-destructive. Even when we KNOW certain things are harmful to our health, we do them anyway.

What self-destructive habits have you removed from your life already? What healthy habits have you adopted?

3. While many Christians may neglect their bodies; however, others become obsessed with diet and/or physical fitness. They end up worshipping their bodies. Our culture feeds this obsession with unrealistic and unobtainable images of the "perfect" body.

What are some ways in which you may be (or have been) obsessed with your body (either positively or negatively)? How do you think Jesus would want you to think about and act towards your body?

4. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the best), how would you rate how you're doing in each of the following areas?

A. Diet B. Exercise C. Rest/Recreation

5. It is never too early or too late to start "cleaning your temple". So consider what the next steps would be in your life. What's the best time to plant a tree? Twenty-five years ago. What's the next best time to plant a tree? Now! What's the best time to make changes in your diet, exercise, and lifestyle. Twenty-five years ago. What's the next best time to start? Now! Also remember that God created us as individuals in need of community. Disciplined lives are easier when we join with others to keep each other accountable. If you struggle in one particular area of life, then partner with someone else to provide mutual support (perhaps someone from the group.) So what is one change you'd like to make in your life as a result of what we just discussed?

WORSHIP

Either have a worship leader lead the group in a couple songs or pick an act of worship from the Small Group Resource Manual (your small group leader should have gotten this at the Small Group Leader Breakfast).

PRAYER

Take time to share prayer requests. The group will pray for anyone that anyone wants to lift up in prayer (coworkers, family members, friends, etc.) but no one should leave the group with a heavy burden on their heart that didn't get prayed for. Have someone write down the prayer requests. When you're ready to pray, have the leader open in prayer and then different people take turns praying for each of the people on the list. Ask someone to close (all they have to say is "Amen").

PITCHING IN TO HELP

Healthy small groups are like healthy families. If everyone pitches in and helps, it's a great experience. If one person does it all, it can overburden that person and rob the rest of the group of their opportunity to grow in the use of their gifts. To that end, we ask Vineyard Small Groups to promote a culture of shared leadership. Your leader will ask each of you to sign up to serve in the following roles. Snacks are easy. You just bring snacks for the group. The ice breaker is easy. You just pick one from the Small Group Study each week, answer it yourself first, and then go around the circle. Facilitating discussion is easy. Just ask the questions and allow time for people to answer. Try not to answer them yourself (well, occasionally you can). If it's just dead silence, then make up another question to ask that's a little more general (that everyone can answer.) Leading worship is pretty easy. If you're not a musician, ask your leader for some ideas on how to lead worship without music. He/She has many ideas in their Small Group Resource Manual (that they got at the Small Group Leader Breakfast). And prayer is pretty easy too. Just follow the instructions each week in the Small Group Study, and try not to pray long prayers in King James language. Just pray simple short conversational prayers. No need to show off.

Week 2:

Snacks: _____	Ice Breaker: _____	Facilitate Discussion: _____
Worship: _____	Prayer: _____	Host: _____

Week 3:

Snacks: _____	Ice Breaker: _____	Facilitate Discussion: _____
Worship: _____	Prayer: _____	Host: _____

Week 4:

Snacks: _____	Ice Breaker: _____	Facilitate Discussion: _____
Worship: _____	Prayer: _____	Host: _____

Week 5:

Snacks: _____	Ice Breaker: _____	Facilitate Discussion: _____
Worship: _____	Prayer: _____	Host: _____

Week 6:

Snacks: _____	Ice Breaker: _____	Facilitate Discussion: _____
Worship: _____	Prayer: _____	Host: _____

Week 7:

Service Project or Fun Night

Week 8:

Service Project or Fun Night

Other Roles We'll Need

Group Coordinator: _____

Will fill out the online report each week indicating what happened in the meeting, including listing prayer requests so that everyone in the group (including those who missed) get a report of what happened and know how to pray. The leader will forward this first week's email reminder to you so you can fill out this week's report. He/She will also need to make you a "leader" in the group in CCB in order for you to receive the email reminder each week. If the leader has a problem doing this, they can email SG Admin, Angie Evans at aevans@vineyardkcnorth.com

Service Project Coordinator: _____

Will plan the service project (with the group's help).

Fun Event Coordinator: _____

Will plan the fun night (with the group's help).

Childcare Coordinator: _____

If your group provides childcare, this person makes sure that there is a childcare provider that shows up to the group each week. They also collect the money at the end and make sure the childcare provider gets paid.

God bless,

Roger Sodsod

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