

Four Health Secrets from the Bible  
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

*"I found God at the end of my scalpel, in the body tissues! The right thing morally is always the healthy thing physically." A Swedish Surgeon*

In the Bible, we may not find an exact cure for a dozen major diseases but there are certain principles that can help all of us attain better health and peace of mind and heart.

1. "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit makes one sick" (Proverbs 17:22 TLB). Modern life has become so hectic and hurried that many have forgotten how to smile. There is healing in laughter; it acts as an inner massage. Research shows that cheerful patients recover from surgery faster than their depressed neighbours.
2. "Whenever the tormenting spirit troubled Saul, David would take his harp and play, and Saul would feel better" (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 16:23). The right kind of music is medicine for body and soul. It can soothe. It can stimulate. It can move against depression. Early Christian martyrs went to their deaths singing hymns of praise to their Lord and Saviour. The joy of the Lord was their strength. Caregivers and health providers are finding that even people suffering from Alzheimer's or Dementia will respond favourably to familiar music, when other means of communication fail. Without a song, life can become sour and cynical. God can put a song in our hearts.
3. "Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely, and dwell on the fine, good things in others" (Philippians 4:8,9). To overcome troublesome thoughts willpower is not enough. Our computer minds must be reprogrammed. We must overcome evil with good, falsehood with truth, replacing the negative with positive thoughts and attitudes. Dr. S.I. McMillan compiled a list of 51 symptoms, everything from headaches to ulcers, which can be, (though not in all cases), brought on or aggravated by negative emotions such as fear, bitterness, resentment, guilt and an unforgiving spirit. Your problem may not be from what you eat but from what eats you.
4. "Confess your faults, one to another and pray for one another, that you may be healed" (James 5:16). God can certainly use all those involved in the medical profession as his instruments. But there are times when instead of a new prescription many of us need to experience forgiveness by getting right with God, ourselves, family and those around us. I cannot stick a splinter in my finger and simply ignore it. It must be removed. The same thing is true of sins in the mind and heart. British psychiatrists Dr. S White is convinced that "The mind can punish the body for the sins of the soul." The psychiatrist may remove neurotic or false guilt, but only God can remove realistic or true guilt.

*"God helps the sick in two ways, through the science of medicine and surgery and through the science of faith and prayer." Norman V. Peale.*