

Does Liberty of Conscience Apply to Your Health Choices?

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When you hear the word “spiritual” what comes to mind? Usually something like Bible study, prayer, and evangelism ... perhaps church attendance and Sabbath observance?

This is all true. But the beautiful thing about the teachings of Christ is that our spiritual choices go beyond these important Christian disciplines into our everyday lives, as well.

The apostle Paul says that you are to seek to glorify God literally in “whatever you do” (1 Corinthians 10:31) and that “whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Colossians 3:17). The premise of all of our health choices is the fundamental truth that God cares about our health and so should we: “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers” (3 John 2).

Some have suggested that health choices are not spiritual choices, and that conscience does not apply when choosing what goes into our body. What saith the Lord?

Are health choices spiritual choices?

- "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).
- "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Everything we do, especially with what we put in our body, is a spiritual matter and is to be done with the purpose of glorifying God.

Do our bodies really have anything to do with worship?

- "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God-this is your true and proper worship" (Romans 12:1, NIV).
- "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
- "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength: This is the first commandment" (Mark 12:30).

We worship God with all that we are, not just a part of us.

Are there Bible principles that teach us to abstain completely from substances that cause harm?

Yes. In fact, the Bible says don't even look at it!

- "Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper" (Proverbs 23:31-32).
- "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1).

- "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are" (1 Corinthians 3: 17).

If a substance affects our mental, physical, or spiritual health, we must avoid it, claiming the promises of God.

(See also Leviticus 11, Genesis 7:2, and Revelation 18:2 for "unclean" meats that are prohibited-from Genesis to Revelation-for the Christian).

Does the Bible say that when we put things in our body that glorify God, it will bring spiritual blessings?

- "As the new wine (i.e. fresh juice) is found in the cluster, and one says, 'Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it...' " Isaiah 65:8
- "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)

Because of the intimate connection between our physical, mental, and spiritual health, not only do bad choices affect us entirely but so do good choices.

Is obedience or disobedience to God's health laws a moral issue?

- "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13).
- "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" (Exodus 15:26).
- "For you are a holy people to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. You shall not eat any detestable thing" (Deuteronomy 14:2-3).
- "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" (Daniel 1:8).

When we disregard the laws of life and health, we ignore the God-given laws of our body, resulting in injury, pain, sickness, suffering, and death. To violate these laws is to violate the law of God.



For more information:

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