

Faith and HEALTH Connection

God Wants You Whole

We all would like to be whole in spirit, mind and body, yet so many of us do not enjoy that wholeness. We have settled for living a life that is something less than God intends for us. Let's explore why many of us may not be whole and how we might better achieve the wholeness we desire.

According to the Christian faith, we were born separated from God because of our sins. We inherited this nature from Adam and Eve when they disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. Out of this nature, we do things that are opposed to the principles of God. This further separates us from Him. In addition to this, most of us have experienced major disappointments and hurts from people and life circumstances. This wounds our souls. We learn unhealthy habits to escape and ease our pain. We also develop beliefs and thinking patterns that are distorted. Many of us try to control things. We worry excessively. Some become people pleasers. Some withdraw and become isolated. In others, guilt turns into deep depression. From all this, our bodies develop stress-related problems.

What the Research Says: The research shows that the body, mind and spirit are interconnected. Many would say that our souls are where we have our will, our mind and our emotions. It's where we make our choices, do our thinking and have our feelings. Our spirit and body are connected by the thinking and feeling that occur in our souls. As we think positive and pleasing thoughts, the corresponding emotions release chemicals that are healthy. Ongoing negative thoughts and associated emotions like fear, guilt and anger cause harmful chemicals to be released into our body. This negative state impacts adversely on our immune system which results in our body's inability to fight off certain diseases and illnesses. In *Molecules of Emotions*, Candace Pert, PhD., quotes Brian Seward, PhD., "The body becomes the battlefield for the war games of our mind. All the unresolved thoughts and emotions, the negativity we hold on to, show up in the body and makes us sick."

What the Bible Says: God made each of us in a marvelous way with a spirit, a soul and a body. He wants us to be whole. The Message translation of the Bible tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 "May God himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together—spirit, soul, and body." John 3:16 indicates that God loves us so much that He sent His son Jesus to die for us so that we might have an eternally full life. Jesus reminds us in John 10:10, "A thief comes only to rob, kill, and destroy. I came so that everyone would have life, and have it in its fullest." Finally, in James 2:26 we are told "the human body apart from the spirit is lifeless." To have the kind of full and whole life that God wants us to have we must attend to our spirit, soul and body. We especially must care for our inner soul and spirit. One way to assess our wholeness is to gauge the degree to which we are experiencing the "fruits of the spirit" in our lives as mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23. How prevalent is love, joy, peace, patience,

kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control in your life?

What You Can Do: Do you believe in your heart that God sent His son Jesus to die for you and to give you a full life here on this earth and for eternity? If not, and you want to experience His deep love, you may want to seek the help from a local pastor or a trusted friend to walk you through this process. One place on the internet for information and guidance on the Christian faith is allaboutgod.com.

You still may be harboring wounds or hurts deep in your soul. They may be characterized by unhealthy addictive-type behaviors or repeated strong emotions like resentment, anger, fear, or guilt. Or, you may feel that you can not trust God. If your soul is still wounded, perhaps you'd benefit from talking with a professional or a pastor to show you how those wounds can be mended by receiving and experiencing more completely, the love of Jesus. More than anything, God wants you to have a strong personal relationship with Him... a relationship so deep and solid that it frees you from any chains that keep you from being completely whole!

Maybe you haven't had traumatic life experiences or relationships but have been relying on your own strength to make it in life. Your pride has caused you not to embrace the love of God in a deeply personal way, and in your will you choose to depend on yourself, not on Jesus. Although you're assured of living an eternal life, you haven't experienced the full and complete life God wants you to have. You have not relinquished control of your life to God so you are still not enjoying the deep inner peace and wholeness you could have. Again, a pastor or a gifted Christian counselor could help you understand how to allow God to settle in and have a stronger place deep in your spirit.

Are you whole? Is your soul well? Are you living the full and deeply rich life that God wants you to experience? It takes courage to reflect and honestly assess your deep beliefs, emotions and habits that could be affecting your emotional, spiritual and physical health. I hope you'll set aside some time to reflect on this aspect of your life. More importantly, I hope that if you recognize that there are opportunities for healing and growth to occur, that you'll be able to experience more deeply the loving balm that God has for us through His son, Jesus.

© 2008 Dale Fletcher, M.S.

Dale Fletcher is a speaker and wellness coach who lives in Charlotte, NC. He writes and conducts workshops on the link between the Christian faith and health. Connect with Dale at www.faithandhealthconnection.org.