

Whole Person Health / God will Make a Way

Tammy: I've been thinking a lot about being healthy and how when one part of my life is unwell it affects other parts.

Carol: That's an interesting line of thought, Tammy? – tell us what you mean by that...

Tammy: Well when I'm eating good healthy food I notice how much more energy I have. And with more energy, I want to do exercise, like go for a walk, which gives me more energy. Then I start feeling even better!

Carol: Yes – I know exactly what you mean. And there are some good reasons why that is so!

Tammy: There are! Exercise releases chemicals that make us feel good about ourselves so it means our mood is happier...and that means we have happier relationships with those around us...

Carol: Hello there, I'm Carol...and we are here again on *Women of Hope*. Tammy, this sounds like an interesting discussion ...on 'whole person health.'

Tammy: Yes...I've been thinking...and asking questions...and I'm happy to be back again today to share some of what I've found out.

Carol: You know, if eating healthy food and exercising makes you feel good – then the reverse is most likely true as well. If you're *not* eating well or *not* getting exercise then you may *not* feel so good about yourself...and you may *not* enjoy the company of others so much.

Tammy: Or...if you're not feeling good about yourself it's easy to neglect your body and not eat well or exercise, so you continue to not feel good.

Carol: And that becomes a like a bad circle.

Tammy: That's right. We're quite complicated creatures really and each part of our life affects the other parts.

Carol: And we have many parts don't we...mind, body, spirit, soul, emotions...

Tammy: Some of us might see physical illness as a *body* problem that needs fixing. Others may see things differently. Some cultures see illness as a *spiritual* problem and look for a spiritual way to help a person recover. I've been thinking about the *emotional* side of a person and how that may affect a person's health.

Carol: Maybe we need to 'put the person back together' and see ourselves as a *whole*.

Tammy: Good thinking Carol! There's usually a mix of causes that lead us to be unwell.

Carol: These days, people often talk about how *stress* can affect our health.

Tammy: That's true. If we are suddenly stressed, our body produces chemicals that prepare us to *run* or to *fight*. But if we are under pressure for a long time those chemicals keep getting pumped around our bodies and will make us sick.

Carol: And then there are things in our *environment* that affect our health...like smoking, chemical sprays...maybe even cell phones. And when we get sick we don't always think about what might be making us sick. We sometimes just look for a quick fix - like a bottle of pills. I know I often feel I don't have *time* to be sick so I'll reach for some pills if I'm coming down with a cold. But sometimes I know it's my body's way of telling me I need a rest...or to slow down.

Tammy: Listening to our bodies is so important. As a child my son developed rhinitis...a persistent runny nose. The doctor wanted him to use a nasal spray. I thought about it and realized that it had started when he was upset about his father being away at work. He was embarrassed about getting upset and crying. One day we were talking about how he missed his dad and he said, "I think I cry through my nose now." Not a bad observation for a 7-year-old.

Carol: So what did you do to help him with his runny nose?

Tammy: We talked about a past experience where he had been afraid that his dad might not be able to get home. After we talked he learned to soothe himself. He

would say, “Its ok to miss dad; it was only once that he couldn’t get home...he’ll be alright...I’ll see him next week!”

Carol: And did that make a difference?

Tammy: It certainly did...his nose was a lot clearer...thank goodness.

Carol: I’m interested in the *story* behind a person’s illness and I wonder about how what we *feel* affects our bodies. We’ve probably all had that experience of being uptight or nervous about something and we feel churned up in our stomach. We call it butterflies...and we might need to go to the toilet more often than normal. Somehow that *anxious* feeling turns into physical symptoms.

Tammy: Sometimes it’s more hidden and difficult to find out the *real* story.

Carol: Yes, I was reading of a man who had suffered from a rash on his face for years. No cream or ointment could fix it. He gave the appearance of everything being fine but have you heard the expression ‘putting on a brave face’? ...That was true for him. When he stopped pretending and started being honest about the difficulties he had in his life the rash cleared up.

Tammy: I heard about someone who, as a child, believed that she was bad...rotten to the core! She struggled for years with a skin condition that looked rather like rotting flesh. Eventually she had counseling, and began to look at those terrible beliefs she had held deep inside. She began to understand that she was not bad – or rotten inside. She began to see her own ‘worth’ and feel God’s love for her...and that inner, painful message died away...and do you know, her skin gradually healed.

I wonder if you’ve experienced anything like this? You may know how she felt.

Carol: Our bodies affect our feelings, and our feelings and emotions affect our bodies. This is how God made us – as whole people...physical – our body...mental – our mind ... emotional – our feelings... and spiritual – that part that wants to connect with God. And these are all connected, like that circle we talked about earlier.

Tammy: Like the woman I just told you about, who had believed as a child that she was really bad...it affected her body, her mind, her emotions and her spirit.

Carol: And maybe it's a good note to finish on for now as it leaves us with the reminder that we are a *whole* person. Our health is a complicated mix of physical, social, emotional, spiritual...and environmental. So if we have a choice we need to choose good things to come into our lives. Listen to the good, not the bad; choose good habits that will make us feel well, and choose to eat healthy food and do healthy things like exercise.

Tammy: We'll be back shortly to hear the story of a woman who chose to make big changes in her life for the better. *

Carol said something about choices. ...She said, 'if we have a choice we need to choose good things to come into our lives. Listen to the good, not the bad; choose good habits that will make us feel well...'

We have a letter to read to you today about a young woman named Karis. She lives in a country, where many women and girls are forced into prostitution through poverty and social problems. Carol, would you read us the letter please?

Carol: Sure. Karis wrote this:

'Last Christmas God pressed on my heart to play carols - Christmas songs - at a local brothel, sharing God's truth through music. Three of us had been visiting the women sex workers each week and we had made friends there. My friends and I made invitations for the party and I took my guitar. We prayed that God would take a woman out of the brothel that day.

The women loved the Christmas music and some of them started singing along. Some men were sitting at the bar listening. Suddenly my friend whispered, 'The police are here. Let's just keep singing.' Several men were arrested - it seems they were thieves hiding out there. So God just took away a lot of the brothel's business!

Then a woman began singing a simple song. I joined in, and other women came out of their rooms, singing what seemed to be the cry of their hearts;

'God will make a way, when there seems to be no way.

He works in ways I cannot see, he will make a way for me...'

I cried out to God in my heart, 'Please make a way for these women!'

As I was packing up my guitar, a young woman named Joy came to talk to me. She was pregnant. The person who had taken her to the brothel was trying to make her have an abortion, but she didn't want to. She wanted to leave the brothel and keep her baby. Joy told me her real name was Chiwendu, which means 'God is the owner of life'. I prayed that she would soon realize that God really is the owner of her life.

We contacted a Christian center and the people there helped her find somewhere to stay. As we went with Joy to the brothel to pack her belongings, we prayed that she would not be forced to stay. The other women did not really understand why she would give up a job that made good money, but their eyes were sad as they watched her go. We passed Jane, the young woman who had started singing that song, 'God will make a way'. She asked me, 'Is Joy going traveling?' I told her, 'No, she's chosen to start a new life'. 'That's a good choice', said Jane. I prayed that God would make a way for her too. I didn't realize that two days later she would give her life to Jesus Christ and start a new life too. She discovered that Jesus *is* the Way.

Tammy: Well Joy certainly did make a wise choice that day. And Jane made a wise choice soon after. They might have felt like the girl we heard about earlier – who thought she was bad – rotten to the core – but who discovered that she was worth a lot to God.

Carol: How happy they must both be that Karis listened to what God wanted her to do – sing Christmas songs in that brothel. And her prayers were answered that day weren't they...that one person would leave the brothel that very day.

Tammy: And her prayer for Jane was answered as well... Jane also chose to leave and make a better life for herself.

Carol: Friend, I wonder how you feel today? Do you sometimes feel that there is no hope for you? I expect both Joy and Jane must have felt that there was no hope for them either. But because Karis listened to what God wanted her to do, she was able to bring hope into their lives. Hope that they had never imagined.

Tammy: Yes, Karis not only did what God wanted her to do – go to the brothel to sing, but she prayed to God and expected him to answer her prayers. Let's listen as Mornette shares something with us about prayer – and praying to our father, God.

Mornette: Do you ever wonder: ‘Why should God listen to my prayers? I’m nobody special, and I don’t know how to pray in special words.’

Well, God hears and answers our prayers, not because we *deserve* it, but because we pray in Jesus’ name. It’s as though we knock on God’s door and say ‘*Jesus* sent me to tell you my thoughts and needs.’ Or ‘Jesus sent me to pray for someone I love.’ Wouldn’t God listen to a friend of his loved Son?

Have you ever heard us, or someone else, end a prayer with the words ‘In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen’? Now praying in Jesus’ name is not a magic set of words put on the end of a prayer to make it more powerful. Praying in Jesus’ name means praying about something as Jesus would pray about it. It means we have tried to match our thoughts and wants to what *he* would think and want.

Jesus himself said to his followers: ‘the Father will give you whatever you **ask** in my **name**.’ (John 15:16) It shows we believe and trust in *him*. He is the one who gives us authority when we pray. And when God answers these prayers we want to give thanks and praise to him, our heavenly Father, and to Jesus Christ his Son. (John 14:13)

By the way, Amen just means ‘let it be so’. In a way, you are confirming all that you have prayed and put it into Jesus’ hands. Where could it be safer?

Developed from Prayer: talking with God (Stonecroft Ministries, 2006)

Tammy: Thank you, Mornette, it is always good to hear about how we can pray to God. Even the words to our next song help us to focus on this, let’s listen.

Before we finish today, I want to read to you from God’s word in the Psalms. Do you remember stories about King David? He wrote this special song - guided by the spirit of God: He was expressing his praise and thanks to God for his kindness and compassion. These words remind me of how God took care of Joy and Jane...

(Psalm 103: 1-6)

With all my heart I praise the LORD, and with all that I am I praise his holy name!
With all my heart I praise the LORD! I will never forget how kind he has been.
The LORD forgives our sins; he heals us when we are sick, and protects us from death. His kindness and love are a crown on our heads.

Each day that we live, he provides for our needs and gives us the strength of a young eagle. For all who are mistreated, the LORD brings justice.

The LORD is compassionate! He is kind and patient, and his love never fails. The LORD won't always be angry and point out our sins; he doesn't punish us as our sins deserve. How great is God's love for all who worship him? The LORD is always kind to those who worship him, and he keeps his promises to their descendants who faithfully obey him.

Carol: I'm going to pray now and ask the Lord, God to take care of each one of us. And when I finish you can say 'Amen' if you agree with the words I pray. Remember it means 'let it be so'. It means we put all this in the safe hands of Jesus.

Father God, Thank you for what we have heard today about living as a whole person. Thank you for making a way out for Joy and Jane and taking care of them. We pray that you will take care of each one of us. You made us, so you know us, and you love us...please provide what we each need today.

We praise you and thank you that you are a compassionate and loving God. We pray this in the strong name of Jesus... Amen.

Tammy: We would love to hear from you. You may have a story to tell us that we can share with others too. You may contact us in care of this station or you can email us. Good bye and have a great week filled with God's blessings.

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