
OBJECTIVE Each young man will understand that obedience to the Word of Wisdom will help protect and maintain his physical and spiritual well-being.

PREPARATION

1. Prayerfully study 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 and Doctrine and Covenants 89.
2. Materials needed:
 - a. Copies of the scriptures (each young man should bring his own).
 - b. A picture of a car the young men would like to own.
 - c. Picture 9, A Healthy Young Man, and picture 10, Manila Philippines Temple (62591), or a picture of the temple closest to your area.
 - d. Pencils for marking scriptures.
3. Copies of *For the Strength of Youth* (each young man should bring his own).
4. For each young man, prepare a card containing Elder L. Tom Perry's statement found in the lesson.
5. If it is available in your area, show "Addiction versus Freedom" on *Family Home Evening Video Supplement 2* (53277).

**SUGGESTED
LESSON
DEVELOPMENT**

Introduction

Picture and discussion Display the picture of a car. Describe the car and its desirability. Make sure the young men know how good the car is. Ask the young men to imagine that they have been given this car.

- How would you take care of this car if it were yours?
- How would you feel if some vandals put sand in the engine?
- What would the sand do to the engine if you started the car?

Display picture 9, A Healthy Young Man. Tell the young men that Heavenly Father has given each of them a gift far more wonderful than the car in the picture—a physical body. Without bodies we could not experience the opportunities and lessons of life on earth. Without bodies we could not progress to godhood and become like our Father in Heaven. Point out that because of birth defects, diseases, or accidents, our bodies may not be perfect. However, Heavenly Father expects us to take care of our bodies in the very best way we can. Because he loves us, he has told us how to care for our bodies.

Things the Body Should Not Have

Scripture and discussion

Emphasize that taking harmful things into our bodies is like putting sand in the engine of a car.

Have the young men read Doctrine and Covenants 89:7–9.

- What are some things that we should not take into our bodies?

Explain that the prophets have taught that "hot drinks" are coffee and tea. The prophets have also made it clear that we are commanded not to abuse drugs.

- What might happen if we take into our bodies substances the Lord has told us not to use?
- How has disobedience to the Word of Wisdom hurt people you know? How? Ask the young men to explain their answers without revealing the names of those involved.

Physical Consequences of Disobedience

Quotation

Explain that addiction is one of the most dangerous results of breaking the Word of Wisdom. Read the following statement from Elder Russell M. Nelson:

“I am impressed to speak out on a problem of deep concern—the worldwide epidemic of drug addiction. . . . I raise my voice with others throughout the world who warn against abuse of drugs beyond prescribed limits, and the recreational or social use of chemical substances so often begun naively by the ill-informed.

“From an initial experiment thought to be trivial, a vicious cycle may follow. From trial comes a habit. From habit comes dependence. From dependence comes addiction. . . . Indeed, drugs are the modern ‘mess of pottage’ for which souls are sold. No families are free from risk.

“But this problem is broader than hard drugs. Their use most often begins with cigarette smoking. Tobacco and alcoholic beverages contain addicting drugs. They lead the list in incidence and cost to society” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, pp. 5–6; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, p. 6).

- Why is addiction so dangerous?

To help the young men understand how dangerous it is to break the Word of Wisdom, you may want to read the following statement by Elder Boyd K. Packer:

“Narcotic addiction serves the design of the prince of darkness, for it disrupts the channel to the Holy Spirit of Truth. At present the adversary has an unfair advantage. Addiction has the capacity to disconnect the human will and nullify moral agency. It can rob one of the power to decide. Agency is too fundamental a doctrine to be left in such jeopardy. . . .

“I plead with all of you to pray earnestly that somewhere, somehow, the way will be discovered to erase addiction in the human body.

“It is not just human suffering, even human life, which is at risk; it is all of the personal and social and political and spiritual freedoms for which humanity has struggled for ages. At risk is all that was purchased by the blood of martyrs. Moral agency itself is in jeopardy! If we all pray fervently, the Lord will surely help us. And with those prayers, teach your children to obey the Word of Wisdom. It is their armor and will protect them from habits which obstruct the channels of personal revelation” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, pp. 16–17; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, p. 14).

Discussion

- How does obedience to the Word of Wisdom protect us from physical danger?
- How does obedience to the Word of Wisdom protect us from spiritual danger?

Things We Should Take into Our Bodies

Picture and adviser presentation

Refer again to the picture of the car. Explain that in order to keep a car running properly we must put gas and oil into it. We must keep the tires properly inflated and maintain a good battery. In a similar way, our bodies need nutrients, or they will lose their capacity to function properly and to be fit temples for the Spirit of the Lord to dwell in.

Scripture and discussion

Have the young men read Doctrine and Covenants 89:10–17.

- What does Heavenly Father tell us to eat?
- What will happen to us if we obey the Word of Wisdom?

To help answer this question, have the young men read Doctrine and Covenants 89:18–21. Suggest that the young men mark this scripture.

- What does Heavenly Father promise to those who obey the Word of Wisdom?

Physical Blessings

Quotation	<p>Point out that generally members of the Church are blessed with better physical health than nonmembers. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Council of the Twelve said the following about the Word of Wisdom:</p> <p>“Early members of the Church obeyed the Lord’s counsel without the benefit of present medical knowledge, which has validated the physical benefits of their obedience. We now know by scientific evidence what the Saints have known by revelation for 158 years.</p> <p>“Imagine the results we would see if the total populace were to live this law of health and never abuse their bodies with alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and other harmful substances. What magnitude of decline would we see in automobile accidents, illness and premature death, fetal defects, crime, squandered dollars, broken homes, and wasted lives resulting from alcohol and other addictive drugs? How much would lung cancer, heart disease, and other ailments caused by cigarette smoking decrease? The fruits of this commandment bring innumerable blessings.</p> <p>“Members of the Church have obviously been blessed with health and spirituality by being obedient to this commandment” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, pp. 19–20; or <i>Ensign</i>, Nov. 1991, p. 16).</p>
Adviser presentation	<p>Explain that obedience to the Word of Wisdom does not guarantee a life free from illness; however, we can be certain that Heavenly Father keeps his promises. If we sincerely try to obey the Word of Wisdom, we will receive the blessings promised.</p>
Story	<p>Tell the following story of Paul C. Kimball, which shows how obedience to the Word of Wisdom can bring spiritual and physical enlightenment:</p> <p>“When Paul C. Kimball, a Latter-day Saint student at Oxford University in England, was asked to coach a young, inexperienced rowing crew, he said he felt ‘rather weak. I had never done any coaching.’</p> <p>“However, he accepted the invitation with one condition: ‘If I am going to coach you,’ he told the rowers, ‘I am going to make you train according to my rules.’ His rules were total abstinence from tobacco, alcohol, tea and coffee. It took the boys about a week to decide to accept his condition.</p> <p>“With their agreement secured, Kimball ‘took them in hand and . . . worked with them every afternoon for three hours till February.’ That month they entered a series of rowing meets against all the other colleges at Oxford. ‘My boys were competing against crews composed of men who had been rowing since they were tiny tots,’ Kimball said. ‘This group I had was made up of inexperienced boys. But they had trained hard, and not one of them, so far as I know, used a cigarette during this time, or had a cup of tea or coffee, or drank any alcoholic drink.’</p> <p>“Still, when the day of the race came, no one thought the inexperienced crew had even the remotest chance of winning. When the cannon sounded, starting the mile-and-one-half race up the Thames River, it was expected that the young crew would fall back quickly. But by the time the rowers reached the half-way point, Kimball, who was running along the bank shouting instructions to his crew through a megaphone, noticed that his charges were still running even with their competitors.</p> <p>“Kimball shouted his last word of counsel: ‘Sprint!’ They sprinted beautifully and within a minute had stretched out a hundred feet ahead of their nearest competitors. They won the race with ease.</p> <p>“Each day of the six-day rowing competition, it was expected that Kimball’s crew would be defeated. But each day, following the same tactics, they won handily. ‘When people asked me how I managed such success with novices, I answered, “I made those boys live right,” ’ he said. “When the sprint came, their lungs were clean; their systems were clean; their blood was clean, and their nerves were strong’ ” (Joseph Walker, “Victory on the Thames,” <i>Church News</i>, 20 Feb. 1983, p. 20).</p>

Spiritual Blessings

Adviser presentation and quotation	<p>Explain that everything which affects the body also affects the spirit. The spiritual blessings that result from obedience to the Word of Wisdom are even greater than the physical blessings. Read and discuss the following words from Elder Boyd K. Packer:</p> <p>“Our physical body is the instrument of our spirit. In that marvelous revelation, the Word of Wisdom, we are told how to keep our bodies free from impurities which might dull, even destroy, those delicate physical senses which have to do with spiritual communication.</p> <p>“The Word of Wisdom is a key to individual revelation. It was given as ‘a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints’ (D&C 89:3).</p> <p>“The promise is that those who obey will receive ‘great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures’ (D&C 89:19). If we abuse our body with habit-forming substances or misuse prescription drugs, we draw curtains which close off the light of spiritual communication” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, p. 16; or <i>Ensign</i>, Nov. 1989, p. 14).</p>
Handouts	<p>Give each young man a card containing the following quotation, and tell the young men to keep the card where they can refer to it frequently:</p> <p>“The largest measure of good which is derived from following the code of health prescribed by the Lord is the increase of faith, the development of more spiritual power and wisdom” (L. Tom Perry, “‘In the World,’” in <i>Brigham Young University 1981 Fireside and Devotional Speeches</i> [Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1981], p. 3).</p>
Adviser presentation	<p>Help the young men understand that the most important thing about the Word of Wisdom is not the warnings about dangerous substances or even the glorious promises for those who obey. The most important thing is that Heavenly Father has commanded us to obey this law. Obedience builds spiritual strength and invites the Holy Ghost. Disobedience can be far more deadly to the soul than physical cancer is to the body.</p> <p>Emphasize again the importance of obeying the Word of Wisdom so that we do not lose the direction of the Holy Ghost. Heavenly Father promises physical and spiritual blessings to those who obey, but we should not obey simply because we want blessings. We should obey because we love Heavenly Father and because we respect our bodies as temples he has created.</p>

We Are Expected to Take Care of Our Bodies

Quotation	<p>Read the following statement:</p> <p>“It is a great privilege to have a body. We are the offspring of God clothed in mortal bodies. These bodies are not wholly our own to do with as we please. We have a responsibility to our temporal bodies” (Oscar W. McConkie Jr., <i>The Priest in the Aaronic Priesthood</i> [Salt Lake City: Corporation of the Presiding Bishop, 1964], p. 285).</p>
Scripture and discussion	<p>Have a young man read 1 Corinthians 3:16–17.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why is Paul so anxious that we not defile our bodies?
Adviser presentation	<p>Display the picture of a temple. Describe the beauty and cleanness of the interior, and remind the young men that those who enter the temple must be obedient and pure.</p> <p>Remind the young men that Paul refers to our bodies as temples. Explain that we have the right and responsibility to control what enters our bodies and to keep our bodies in good condition. If we dishonor our bodies, Heavenly Father will not be pleased. If we defile our bodies with things that are not good for them, the result is spiritual, as well as physical, decay.</p>

Conclusion

Review with the young men the section “Mental and Physical Health” from *For the Strength of Youth*. Encourage them to refer to this pamphlet often.

- Testimony Testify that Heavenly Father has given us the Word of Wisdom for our benefit. Obedience to this commandment strengthens our bodies, our minds, and our spirits. Through obedience we make our bodies holy and obtain the peace that comes from the companionship of the Spirit of God. You may want to tell the young men about blessings you and your family have received through obedience to the Word of Wisdom.
- Challenge Invite the young men to commit themselves to obey the Word of Wisdom throughout their lives. Challenge them to never take the first step toward disobeying the Word of Wisdom or, if they have done so, to repent immediately. Encourage them to pray daily for help to resist temptation.