

**BE HEALTHY! BE HAPPY!**  
**I Corinthians 3: 16-17**  
**Dr. John A. Wells**

I read a definition of health the other day that I thought you might enjoy. I found it on a card I had in the house. **“Health is the result of relinquishing all attempts to use the body lovelessly.”** The more I thought about this, the more it made sense. I generally think of staying healthy by what I do - exercise, watching how much fat and calories I consume, trying to live a healthy lifestyle, keeping spiritually fit, etc. You know what I am talking about.

When I thought about this particular definition of health, I started thinking about what things I need to let go of to be and stay healthy and happy. I have to let go of efforts to use my body in a way that is not loving or caring. This means letting go of ways I tear myself down or reinforce negative thoughts. It means letting go of bitterness, the hurt of old wounds, the old damaging messages that affect self-worth. It means relinquishing ways of thinking about God that are based on fear rather than faith. It means living forgiveness daily for myself and others. It means that I have to think about my body and myself in a much more caring and compassionate manner than what I was taught..

I believe the Bible stresses this as well. In I Cor. 3:16, the Apostle Paul makes it clear that our bodies are God’s temple, for God’s use, and not to be harmed or mistreated. In II Cor. 4, Paul talks of our bodies as a “precious treasure” that allows God’s light to shine through us. In Philippians 4 it says, “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.”

I caught a glimpse of a part of an Oprah Winfrey show. The subject was 4,5, & 6 year old girls becoming obsessed with doing aerobics, wearing makeup like grown-ups, and figuring out how to dress and move sexy. The various media and advertising pressure to look just a certain way, to have muscles in all the right places, to buy all the diets and exercise videos and equipment is great in our culture today. Health and happiness does depend to a certain degree on exercise and how we maintain our appearance. But to look on our bodies in a loving way means to look at the core of health and happiness: the condition of our spirits and minds.

This week I ask you to join me by thinking of yourself in a loving way, the way God loves us, and see what difference it will make on our health, our happiness, and our attitude toward others. By the way, a side benefit will be to work and play with more energy and fun.