

When I chose the theme for today's message over a month ago, I had no idea that President Obama would take so much time this last week to talk about health care reform. But I do know that people have been talking about a more holistic view of health for a long time. It all started with watching what you eat. That is still important. Watch this:

[Play video clip from the movie *Imagine* about pancakes](#)

Anybody want some pancakes? What started out as advice to eat a well balanced meal, get regular exercise, avoid the use of tobacco, alcohol and recreational drugs has grown into a major industry. Think about some of the changes that have taken place over the years. You used to go to the gym; now you go to a wellness or fitness center. You used to take vitamins, now you have supplements for everything. At one time you got sick because of a bacteria or a virus. Now you get sick because you eat the wrong foods, don't get enough exercise or have too much stress. Even the food pyramid of what we are supposed to eat has changed. No wonder there is so much confusion about health care.

Well, it is nothing new. The Gospel of Mark tells us, **"A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding. She had suffered a great deal from many doctors, and over the years she had spent everything she had to pay them, but she had gotten no better. In fact, she had gotten worse."** (Mark 5:25-26) This woman had tried everything and nothing worked. Then she heard about Jesus, found him in a crowd, snuck up behind him and touched his robe. Immediately she was cured. Only two people in the crowd knew what had happened, the woman and Jesus. When Jesus asked who had touched him, the woman reluctantly came forward and told Jesus what she had done. The Jesus said to her, **"Your faith has made you well. Go in peace."** (verse 34) It was a total restoration of her health. She felt it in her body, recognized what had happened in her mind, and was given the gift of peace by Christ.

Jesus made the difference for that woman and He makes the difference for us. God's love makes us whole. He has the ultimate whole health plan for us. The need for God's help started a long time ago when sin entered into our world. After Adam and Eve disobeyed God, a worldwide pandemic broke out. Every person who has ever lived on this earth, with only one exception, has caught the disease. It is called sin and sin always lead to death. As hard as people have tried, they have not been able to find a cure for sin or a way to prevent death. Why? The Bible tells us that **"For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard."** (Romans 3:23 NLT) It also tells us that **"The wages of sin is death."** (Romans 6:23). Since we all sin, we all will die.

There is only one exception. His name is Jesus. He was never infected with the deadly disease we call sin because Jesus is both true God and true man. He was born without sin and lived a

sinless, a perfect life in our place. He is God's cure for sin. If sin brings death, Jesus gives life. Romans 6:23 tells us, **"The free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."**

We receive the new life that Jesus offers through faith. The woman who touched Jesus in the crowd was healed by faith. When the woman touched Jesus, he was on his way to the house of a man by the name of Jairus, whose daughter was dying. Before they could get to the house, news came that the daughter had died. Then Jesus told Jairus not to give up hope and encouraged him to believe. When they came to the house, Jesus brought the little girl back to life.

Faith is the key to our own personal health. God's love for us makes us whole. I'm not saying that if you have faith, you will never get sick. The Bible doesn't say that. If that were the case, the Apostle Paul would have been cured of his thorn in the flesh, but he wasn't. Paul tells us, **"Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness."** (2 Corinthians 12:8-9 NLT) Faith is the key to our total fitness plan because our sins are forgiven when we confess them to the Lord in faith.

Faith also calls for a total commitment. It is not just a head trip. It is not an emotional thing. Faith is a total commitment to the Lord. When Jesus was asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" He answered, **"Love the Lord your God with all Your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."** (Matthew 22:37) Heart, soul and mind – in other words a total commitment to the Lord.

When we have faith in God, He directs our lives because Jesus has already shown us the way. It is the path of faithfulness and service. The Lord gives us a purpose for life, a purpose that will outlive each and every one of us. The purpose is very clear. When Jesus called his first disciples, Peter and Andrew, he said to them, **"Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!"** (Matthew 4:19 NLT) During the heart of His public ministry Jesus said, **"For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost."** (Luke 19:10 NLT) The last command Jesus gave to his disciple before returning to heaven was this, **"Go and make disciples of all nations."** (Matthew 28:19) When our lives have direction and purpose, when know and trust in God's love and forgiveness in Jesus Christ, then we have the peace of God and peace with God. That is the ultimate whole health plan.

One final thought, God has put you at a very unique spot in life. Somebody else may be able to do the jobs that we do, but no one can take the place we have in our families. Be the best husband, wife, parent, child, grandparent, grandchild you can be. You already know that God loves and forgives you. You know that He has called you to be part of His family and has given you a direction and purpose in life. So use your gifts and abilities to God's glory and in service to others. Extend God's love to them. After all, God wants them to receive the benefits of His Whole Plan in Christ, too. Amen.