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INTRODUCTION

I REMEMBER WORKING WITH my marketing team to create a promotional ad for an upcoming healthy lifestyle workshop. The pastor who was hosting the event was really into fitness himself. He was excited to have his congregation challenged in the area of personal wellness. He told me that a lot of people in the church needed to lose weight, and he wanted me to put something in the flyer to catch their attention, something that would really spark their interest.

I had just recorded a CD called *How to Lose a Pound of Body Fat Every Three Days*. I decided to make that the headline for the workshop. It worked. The place was packed with people who wanted to see if what I said was true or just another diet “hype.”

Their comments were insightful. “Wow, that sounds great! I would love to lose a pound of body fat every three days. But is it true? Can that really be possible?” Others proposed: “There has to be some catch to it. Probably an impossible-to-do-diet and workout routine required.” Some even wondered astutely, “Is it scientifically possible to lose weight and body fat at such a fast rate?”

The truth is that not only is it possible, but also some people can actually lose more body fat at a greater rate than what I suggested. It’s not about a crazy restrictive diet plan or spending hours on the treadmill. The key to making it happen is *simply positioning yourself for success and taking ownership of healthy lifestyle actions.*

WHY SOME PATIENTS GET WELL WHILE OTHERS DON’T

I have observed in my twenty-five-plus years of chiropractic practice that some patients get well and achieve their healthy lifestyle goals while others don’t. In pondering the reason for the lack of success for some, I have analyzed the differences between patients who are successful and those who are not.

In certain cases, the severity and the longevity of the health condition overwhelm the patient's hopes for success. In most situations, however, the difference is simply an improper positioning of the patient because of faulty mental, emotional, or spiritual issues. For example, many just want to be given a pill or five easy steps to losing weight or accomplishing other health goals.

From my professional observation, wellness is most often achieved by embracing proper mental, emotional, and spiritual positioning. The patients who do not succeed in reaching their health goals were not willing or able to make the real-life adjustments that would assure their success. These adjustments need to occur before a patient is able to develop any *repetitive and sustainable positive healthy lifestyle habits*.

If you're the type of person who says, "Just show me the formula for losing the fat; I don't care about all this positioning and behavior modification," you will most likely remain among the ranks of millions of people who try program after program but never achieve lasting success in their health goals.

In working with thousands of patients over the years, I have learned that it is more important to resolve in your mind and heart the "why I should get healthy and lose weight" issue rather than the "How do I lose the weight?" question. Unfortunately, most people just want to jump right to the how-to part of getting into shape. Their approach is: "Tell me what to eat." "What exercises should I do?" "How long will it take?" But this mentality usually ends in a fleeting commitment to diet and exercise followed by a sense of failure, which eventually gives way to a "Why bother anyway?" attitude.

Getting into shape, losing weight and body fat, and achieving optimal health and wellness naturally must begin with a rock-solid mental, emotional, and spiritual positioning regarding the underlying issue: "Why I should be healthy." Taking ownership of this vital issue in your heart is the only way to succeed in exercising the habits that govern good health, persistently and continuously.

You see, if your goal is just to lose weight at any cost, there is a good chance that you

Wellness is most often achieved by embracing proper mental, emotional, and spiritual positioning.

may engage in activities that could compromise your overall wellness. Diet pills, weight-loss shakes, and crash diets may all help you to lose unwanted pounds. But these fad regimens may also cause you to lose your health in the long term. The side effects of the medications or even so-called “natural caffeine”-laden products can cause severe and irreversible damage to organs and glands. As for crash diets, while you may lose a few quick pounds, these regimens are completely unsustainable. They rob your energy, tax your immune system, and eventually result in rebound weight gain that is greater than your original weight.

Your goal should be *wellness* rather than *weight loss*. As a matter of fact, weight loss is inevitably the end result of establishing good lifestyle habits to achieve wellness. Working on your wellness means you’re improving your overall health. Not only will you decrease your chance of becoming a victim of major illness, but you will also gain vitality, increase your energy levels, and, of course, reach your ideal weight.

A SPECIAL PICTURE OF GOD’S DIVINE PLAN

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

—GENESIS 1:26

The special picture of the design and plan God had for mankind revealed in this scripture has been a life motivation for me. Made in the likeness of God and given dominion over our surroundings, we were intended to enjoy abundant life, developing the attributes and characteristics of God and living in fellowship with Him.

Working on your overall wellness may seem to be a loftier objective than just losing weight. But to me, according to the Scriptures, pursuing overall wellness fits in better with the grand scheme of God’s plan for your life. I believe that from God’s perspective, while achieving your ideal weight would be nice, to experience optimal health would be even better. His perfect design for mankind was all-inclusive for the benefit of living life as He ordained it to be.

WHY FOCUS ON THE BODY FAT FACTOR?

Since we are not born with the perfect design God intended, I realize that you have to start somewhere. My purpose for presenting the concept of losing body fat quickly is not just to get your attention; it is intended to give you opportunity to understand the foundation for the science of getting into great shape. Addressing hidden spiritual and psychological issues will help to position you for success in achieving your health goals.

Simply stated, *The Genesis Diet* is much more than a simple way to eat; it is a recipe (diet) for healthy living in every area—spirit, soul, and body.

So why should you focus on losing body fat? Isn't that the same concept as losing weight? Not exactly. You may be aware that the concept of losing body fat is based on a group of contributing factors that coincide with lifestyle habits governing overall wellness. The numerical loss of body fat pounds (body fat percentage) are markers used by physicians to track wellness progress and to direct fitness habits.

Your ideal body fat percentage cannot be achieved by simply losing weight. It is achieved primarily through correct eating habits, including appropriate nutritional intake, along with a proper balance of aerobic, strength, power, and endurance exercises. In addition, you can't dismiss the necessity for drinking plenty of water, getting adequate rest, eliminating harmful stress, and insuring a properly functioning nervous system. These are some the positioning factors we will discuss that will assure your success in your long-term wellness goals.

OBESITY IN THE UNITED STATES

- The latest statistics say that 68 percent of Americans are overweight and 34 percent are considered clinically obese.¹
- According to the US Census Bureau, there were 308,745,538 American citizens in 2010.² That would mean 210 million Americans are overweight and 105 million are clinically obese.

- Latest studies released by the National Bureau of Economic Research indicate that the medical cost associated with obesity is well over \$168 billion annually.³
- These studies also suggest that obesity adds \$2,800 per person annually to their medical costs over people who are not obese.⁴
- If that is not enough, clinically obese people have an increased risk of cancer, diabetes, and heart disease.

These statistics are shocking for two reasons. First, the epidemic of obesity is almost completely *avoidable*. This is a crisis born out of poor choices and terrible lifestyle habits. Scores of people are unnecessarily getting sick and dying prematurely of diseases that could be prevented by avoiding obesity. In addition to the tragic loss of quality of life and life itself, the economic loss is staggering; that is, unless you are in an ownership position of a hospital, a health insurance company, or a pharmaceutical company. Businesses like these profit from our poor lifestyle choices.

Your ideal body fat percentage cannot be achieved by simply losing weight.

Secondly, these statistics are shocking to me personally, as a believer in the gospel of Christ, because Christians understand that their body is the “temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 6:19). While Christians confess that God the Holy Spirit dwells in them, they cultivate destructive eating habits, hate to exercise, and create tons of self-induced stress, much like non-Christians.

As Christians, we believe in a God who is Jehovah Rapha (the Lord Our Healer) and a Savior who is the Great Physician. Yet I have treated many Christian patients who are sometimes in worse shape than their non-Christian counterparts. Our churches are filled with overweight and obese children and adults who are unwittingly circumventing the grace of God for their health through poor personal lifestyle choices.

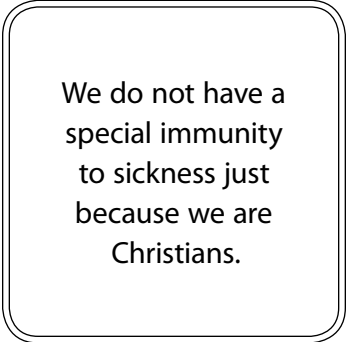
It seems we do not understand, as born-again believers, that we do not

have a special immunity to sickness just because we are Christians. Though we may give up bad habits such as smoking, drinking, and so forth, if we do not follow biblical principles for caring for our temple, we will suffer the same consequences to our health as our non-Christian friends do.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS HEALTH PROTOCOL

The primary goal is to get you to your ideal body fat by improving your overall wellness. To do that, I will introduce you to scientifically sound principles that align as well with timeless biblical covenants. These powerful biblical principles reveal God's design and plan for living the abundant life through establishing a healthy lifestyle—body, mind, and spirit.

The overriding purpose for guiding you to your ideal physical prowess will be to give glory to God, your Creator—not for your personal vanity. Getting into great shape and attaining optimal health by means of obedience to divine precepts of biblical covenants will not only let you live the abundant life they promise, but it will also make you an effectual witness in the earth to the truth that our God is still in the healing business.



We do not have a special immunity to sickness just because we are Christians.

Chapter 1

THE *WHY* IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE *HOW*

IN MANY SELF-HELP books the major premise revolves around the how-to concept. People who buy a self-help book hope to discover five easy steps that will tell them how to achieve their desired goals. Though authors sincerely want to help their readers learn the *how-to* for getting the help they need, there is a larger issue that many books do not address. That is the *why* they should pursue specific health goals.

Can the intentional hype necessary for book sales be misleading? Are authors addressing the underlying issues that may sabotage the reader's ability to reach their goals? Can the reader be successful simply by complying with the how-to steps taught in the book? My experience in working with thousands of patients who have read these books tells me otherwise.

The primary goal is to get you to your ideal body fat by improving your overall wellness.

I have personally read dozens of fabulous motivational books for a healthy lifestyle written by highly qualified authors. I have marveled at their breakthrough science, brilliant concepts for dietary habits, and ingenious exercise methods that are cutting edge in the world of fitness. Then, in consulting with my patients, I ask them if they have read these books. They have. So I wonder why they are in my office. Didn't they get what they read? Why didn't they follow through with what was taught in the books?

Finally it dawned on me. We have developed into a society of people who pride themselves in looking for shortcuts. People open a self-help book, flip through the table of contents, and go right to the chapter on "How to..." Just show me what to do right now! It better be quick, easy, and painless. If

the title of the book is *5 Steps to Lose*, the prospective reader may perceive instead: *5 Easy, Quick, and Painless Steps to Lose*.

Don't get me wrong; it is imperative to have an easy-to-understand, scientifically sound how-to methodology for any successful self-help book. That is especially true with books that deal with improving one's health. But is giving people the how-to enough to make the reader compliant to the lessons presented? Again, my experience with patients tells me, "Not at all."

CONSIDERING THE IMPORTANT *WHY* FACTOR

For years I studied my patients to try to understand the answer to this vital question: Why do some patients achieve their health goals while others do not? I do my best to explain to each of my patients the procedures and methods that have proven to be successful to establishing a healthy lifestyle. Some patients follow through with these methods; some don't. As I analyzed the motivation of my patients, I found a consistent difference between those who succeeded and those who did not.

My successful patients have one thing in common: their profound understanding of *why* they should be well is greater than their desire for a shortcut way of *how to* get well. Their clear and persuasive understanding for why they should be well makes them considerably more compliant and goal oriented than patients who do not succeed in reaching their health goals.

The specific goal for your health presented in this book is to get you to your ideal body fat percentage and help you achieve optimal natural wellness. I will show you step by step exactly how to reach those goals. But to assure your success, there are issues that must be addressed, which could otherwise hinder you from reaching your fitness goals. The first is to develop a clear, persuasive argument that you can own in your heart for *why* you should get yourself into shape: *Why* should you follow the necessary how-to section of this book?

In summary, getting into shape, losing weight and body fat, and achieving optimal health and wellness must begin with a rock-solid mental, emotional, and spiritual positioning regarding the underlying issue: why I should be healthy. Taking ownership of this vital issue in your heart is the only way to succeed in exercising the habits that govern good health, persistently and continuously.

THREE DIFFERENT MOTIVATIONS FOR PURSUING HEALTH

Over the years I have noticed three reasons why people are motivated to lose weight, eat better, and improve their lifestyle habits. One of the reasons relates only to temporary success, one may be too late, and only one results in permanent and life-transforming success.

Time-sensitive vanity

The first reason people become motivated to lose weight is because of what I call *time-sensitive vanity*. There's a wedding coming up or a class reunion, and you want to show up looking good, like you're really in great shape. This motive is prideful and very shallow, not exactly attributes of a Christian. Don't get me wrong when I say that I partially approve of this faulty motivation. It can become a great adjunct in the support or initiation of lifetime success, a starting point to take you forward into a healthy lifestyle.

I encourage you to look good *all* the time so you feel good about yourself all the time—not only physically but also mentally and emotionally as well. The better you view yourself physically, the less self-conscious you become and the more confident you are. Looking good draws attention to the lifestyle changes you have made; it gives you an opportunity to witness to what you have done and share the plan you have followed.

The problem is, if the motivation is just for the temporary goal date alone, what happens after that date is passed? Do you go back to the old habits that kept you out of shape in the first place? Probably. Without positioning yourself in the right mind-set emotionally, mentally, and spiritually for lifetime success, cookies and doughnuts will be right back on the menu.

There is another serious problem with this prideful, shallow motivation. Time-sensitive vanity is usually more *time sensitive* than the person realizes. They want to lose twenty-five pounds or drop five dress sizes in a few months. Unfortunately, there is no safe health plan that can pull that off. So these people may resort to unnatural or risky methods for weight loss that can cause more harm than help. Time-sensitive vanity goals are only good when they don't make you vain and they motivate you continually for special events throughout the year. That means you set goals that you want to look good for your birthday, Christmas, and the Fourth of July party, so you follow a healthy lifestyle consistently to that end.

Facing a health crisis

The next reason many people choose to lose weight and get into shape is based on desperation. They are not just focused on losing body fat; they are trying to save their life. This motivation is the one that I cited as probably coming too late. It is precipitated by *crisis*.

You may be twenty-five pounds overweight and have a body fat of 38 percent (3 percent above the clinical obesity line). But you feel relatively fine and have no urgent health concerns. More than likely you are not going to race to my office and knock down my door for an appointment. Nor are you going to stay up all night reading this book in one sitting to find answers you don't feel you need.

What happens in more than 90 percent of people is that they live a complacent life, slowly and steadily getting out of shape. Every year they get a little bigger and move a little slower. They take a few more mild medications to keep what they consider minor health conditions under control. They settle for a lifestyle of mediocre wellness instead of the Lord's promised abundant life; then the day of the crisis arrives.

Suddenly the pain in the chest is intense, they suffer shortness of breath, and they are startled by the yellow color of their eyes. They never expected that they would have to call 911 for help—or that the matter of their life or death would be in the hands of an overworked EMT who would rush them to an emergency room where an even more overworked and underpaid doctor was attempting to save their life. They never considered that maybe the ambulance would not get to their house on time because of traffic or that the emergency room doctor was really an exhausted resident in training with seven months of experience.

If, by the grace of God, they survive, they suddenly become motivated to pursue a healthier lifestyle. “Yes, Dr. Vetere, tell me what to eat and I'll do it; show me the exercises, and I'll be at the gym every day; eight glasses of water a day, eight hours of sleep every night, no more coffee, no more soda. I'll be at your office every day for my spinal adjustments; I'll even wash your car for you.”

While crisis may be the *great motivator*, it is definitely not the *best* motivator. The problem with crisis-based motivation, though very effective in getting your attention, is that quite often the damage is already done.

The ability to regain your God-ordained vitality is gone after suffering that damage to your body.

You may ask, “Can’t God create a complete healing?” Of course He can. I don’t doubt anything regarding what God can do or what God will do. But the point I am making is that most crisis-related disorders never had to be a crisis in the first place. I believe that good health is a blessing based on our obedience to the laws of God regarding His design for the body and His covenants (precepts) that govern wellness.

Break the covenants and suffer the consequences. Get your lifestyle in alignment with principles that dictate good health, and your restoration will be forthcoming. After experiencing a crisis, you can only hope that you last long enough for complete healing to occur. For my part, I believe in youthfulness at any age and vibrancy every day I live as I choose to consistently obey divine principles for a healthy lifestyle.

Especially for the crisis-motivated person, being aware of the body fat percentage health marker is the ideal approach to health. In my experience, people who are motivated to change as a result of crisis can sometimes go overboard in their efforts, trying to regain everything they lost in their health crisis overnight. Instead, they should make it their objective to develop a plan for regaining health, one that is safe and practical. Learning to evaluate their body fat percentage and other health markers and working to improve it consistently is a safe plan for everyone and is especially effective for the crisis-motivated person.

Again, the keys to being successful, whether your goal is to lose twenty pounds of body fat, naturally reduce your blood pressure, or just get into better shape, is to mentally, emotionally, and spiritually position yourself for lasting success. (See chapter 2.) In large part, that vital positioning is the result of embracing the *why* of your pursuit of optimal health.

Exercising wisdom

The third reason people are motivated to achieve optimal health goals is by far the most sensible and categorically the least practiced. I call it *exercising wisdom*. We have all heard the adage, “Knowledge is power.” That may be true, partially. But I believe that it is in *applying* knowledge that it becomes true power. *Wisdom* may be defined, according to Webster,

as “good judgment, insight, and a wise attitude or course of action”¹—in other words, *applied knowledge*.

The truth is that you can have all the knowledge in the world, but if you don’t have the wisdom to apply that knowledge, it becomes ineffective. Here’s my (slightly biased) best example of knowledge without wisdom. Medical doctors, nurses, and other allopathic-related practitioners all have the knowledge of how the body works; they know the risks of poor lifestyle habits. But there is little evidence that these health care providers are any healthier than the general population.

On the other hand, most chiropractors, naturopaths, and holistic nutritionists I know personally are in significantly better shape than the general population (my biased opinion based on my interaction in the profession). Why? Well, by example, they have to practice what they preach, or no one will accept their healing methods.

In fact, many holistic healing professionals, who embrace New Age philosophies, deny the lordship of Christ and some even the existence of God. Yet they are in better health, suffer less chronic disease, and live life more abundantly than some Christians. You might wonder how they inherited the promises made to faithful followers of Christ. The answer is simple. They applied the knowledge of the divine principles that govern the ability of the body to maintain health. Admittedly, some of their practices may be far-fetched and unscientific, which we must reject entirely. But those practices are simply a ploy of the enemy to keep Christians away from the sensible and scientific practices offered through natural health care.

The point is that your obedience to the biblical principles that govern health will result in good health, whether you have faith or not. Wisdom, which is applied knowledge, works for everyone who practices its principles. If you want to attain your ideal body fat percentage, lose weight, get rid of aches and pains, or naturally resolve your diabetes, then you must make the choice to exercise wisdom in all your health-related lifestyle habits.

OUR CHRISTIAN DUTY/PRIVILEGE

As Christians, we should be embarrassed that we are not the leaders in living exemplary, healthy lives. The Scriptures teach that, as believers, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). When we are born again, the Holy Spirit comes to reside in us. As we grow in grace, we are continually

filled with God for the purpose of bringing glory to Him through every area of our lives, including our physical well-being.

The apostle Paul admonishes believers to “present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship” (Rom. 12:1). We understand that we are made in the likeness and image of God (Gen. 1:26). Though God does not have a physical body, His divine character should be reflected through ours by living lives that embrace His covenant promises for abundant life.

Do we as Christians embrace the Scriptures as the truth of God to be *obeyed*? Or are they convenient clichés that we use when we want to make a point, even out of context? For example, some folks are adamant about refusing to drink wine. They can quote scriptures that support their position, while helping themselves to a third doughnut that supports their unhealthy obese condition. It is not an *option* for believers to respect our body as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit; it is an *obligation*. According to the new covenant, we are to live by this biblical principle that states clearly our lives are not our own:

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

—1 CORINTHIANS 6:19–20

Paul describes our physical being as the “earthen vessel” (2 Cor. 4:7) that the Lord uses to get His work done on earth. We are His arms, legs, hands, and voices to share the gospel with those who don’t know Him. In short, it is the debt (and privilege) of the believer to be used as God’s instrument for His purposes on earth. That is why we must position ourselves to practice wisdom in all our actions, including the area of physical health.

Why am I so passionate about this biblical truth? Physical wellness is a great way to draw attention to your newly achieved healthy lifestyle, giving you opportunity to witness for Christ. People who knew you before will applaud you when you drop fifty pounds, six dress sizes, or four notches off the belt. Coming off your blood pressure medicine, avoiding a surgery, or just not complaining about your achy back any more offer great

opportunities for testimony in conversations with friends. With those opportunities comes the real impetus for your newly found attention—being able to witness to another person that both the knowledge and your motivation for applying it successfully are a result of obeying the Word of God. You can share with them the *why* of your ongoing success in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

This reality does not in any way minimize the importance of the how-to factor of your pursuit of health. The method by which something works is critical also. I am convinced that if you follow the how-to plan presented in the later chapters of this book, the body fat will drop and the pounds will come off. You will see how the whole plan will affect your overall wellness and improve any health conditions you may have been suffering. The science behind my method is solid and makes sense from a physiological and biochemical perspective. This scientific basis is necessary to validate the effectiveness of the method.

But it is simply a fact that the science itself won't motivate would-be participants in a health protocol. The bottom line is that while science will confirm our procedures and actions, it is your correct spiritual, mental, and emotional positioning that will enhance your motivation to exercise wisdom. It is that applied knowledge that will surely bring you success. In the next chapter we will explore this concept of correct positioning that will set you free to achieve your health goals.