

The Wisdom of the Word of Wisdom

Lesson 26

Purpose To help class members understand that obeying the Word of Wisdom provides spiritual blessings as well as good health.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Doctrine and Covenants 10:4; 88:124; 89.
2. Make for each class member a copy of the handout “Blessings That Come from Obeying the Word of Wisdom,” found at the end of the lesson (page 153).
3. Make a copy of the story about Erroll Bennett in next week’s lesson. At the end of class, give each numbered section to a different class member. Ask these class members to prepare to tell their sections of the story, in their own words, in class next week.
4. Materials needed:
 - a. A pen or pencil for each class member.
 - b. An owner’s manual for a vehicle or appliance (optional).
 - c. A set of scriptures and a scripture marking pencil for each class member.
Continue to encourage class members to bring their own scriptures to class each week.

Note to the teacher All people, even those with little or no knowledge of modern revelation, can become more healthy by observing the principles of the Word of Wisdom. Obedience to the Word of Wisdom develops and strengthens the body and the mind, and its principles apply to everyone. But the Word of Wisdom is much more than a health plan. Those who are obedient to it are promised “treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” (D&C 89:19). Help class members recognize the treasures, or blessings, that are ours when we obey the Word of Wisdom.

Suggested Lesson Development **A Plan for Protecting Our Bodies**

Object lesson Explain that when a consumer purchases a new vehicle or appliance, the manufacturer provides instructions on the care and maintenance of the machine. (If you brought an owner’s manual, show it to class members with a short explanation of what it contains.) By following the recommended instructions, a person can expect better performance and longer use from the vehicle or appliance.

- What may happen if the owner ignores the manufacturer’s instructions? (The machine may break down or even become dangerous.)

Tell class members that each of them has a wonderful mechanism. This mechanism can repair itself when it has minor breakdowns, it has automatic “windshield wipers” and an automatic cooling system, and it usually works more efficiently the more it is used.

- What is this wonderful mechanism? (The human body.)
- What revelation could be considered an “owner’s manual” for our bodies? (The Word of Wisdom.)

Explain that just as a manufacturer provides instructions on the care of a machine, the Creator of our bodies has provided instructions on how to take care of these bodies. If we follow these instructions, many of which are included in the Word of Wisdom, we can expect better performance from our bodies and minds. This does not mean that we will never get sick or that our bodies will never need repairs, but the Lord will bless us as we try to keep our bodies in good condition.

Scripture and chalkboard discussion

Ask a class member to read aloud the heading and summary of Doctrine and Covenants 89 while the other class members follow along in their own scriptures.

- When was this revelation received? How was it received? (The Prophet Joseph Smith inquired of the Lord regarding the use of tobacco, and the Lord gave this revelation in answer.)

Write on the chalkboard *The Word of Wisdom*, and write the headings *Do Use:* and *Do Not Use:* under this title.

- What does the Word of Wisdom teach us about how to take care of our bodies? (If class members are already familiar with the principles contained in the Word of Wisdom, only a brief review is necessary here. If class members are not familiar with the principles, read and discuss Doctrine and Covenants 89:5–17.)

Write or have class members write their answers under the appropriate headings on the chalkboard.

THE WORD OF WISDOM	
Do Use:	Do Not Use:
Grains	Wine or strong drinks (alcohol)
Fruits	Tobacco
Herbs (plants, especially vegetables)	Hot drinks (tea and coffee)
Meat (sparingly)	

Point out that not everything harmful is mentioned by name in Doctrine and Covenants 89. For example, these verses do not specifically mention drugs, but prophets and medical experts have taught us that drugs are harmful when used outside of specific medicinal purposes. Explain that the message of the Word of Wisdom is to avoid all substances that are harmful to our bodies. Add to the “Do Not Use” column on the chalkboard “drugs” and any other harmful substances mentioned by class members.

Explain that the Lord has given other revelations in modern times concerning health care. Have class members read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 88:124 and 10:4.

- What additional rules of good health are given in these verses?

Add these points to the appropriate column on the chalkboard.

We Will Follow the Lord, Not Conspiring Men

Scripture discussion

Have class members read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 89:4.

- What is meant by “conspiring men”? (Dishonest people who lure others into harmful or evil practices.)
- According to the scripture, when would these people try to lure others into evil? (In the last days, which are now.)

Teacher presentation

Tell class members that although the revelation in section 89 was given over 150 years ago, it applies directly to our time. In 1833, the advertising methods we see today were unknown. There were no radios or televisions, and printed material was limited. Since that time, advertising has become commonplace. People who are concerned only with making money often use sophisticated advertising to sell bad products as well as good ones. Much advertising is aimed directly at young people, trying to convince them that harmful substances and products are commonplace and acceptable.

Discussion

Mention a harmful product that is commonly advertised in your area, and ask class members to think about the advertisements they have seen for that product.

- What methods do advertisers use to try to convince you that this product is desirable? (Answers may include showing glamorous people and places or promising acceptance and popularity to those who use the product. For example, many beer advertisements show good-looking people having lots of fun, suggesting that the people have fun because they drink beer.)

Point out that advertisements often ignore the harmful effects of the products they sell. For example, beer advertisements never show people getting drunk and hurting themselves or others.

- How can we resist the efforts of people who want us to use things that are harmful to our bodies and spirits?

Help class members realize that when the Lord revealed the Word of Wisdom in 1833, he knew what practices would develop in our time. He gave us this revelation to help us know the truth about what things are and are not good for our bodies and spirits.

Treasures Are Promised to the Obedient

Discussion

Explain that occasionally a news item reports the discovery of a “hidden treasure,” such as a valuable book or work of art that had been stored in an attic, a sunken ship carrying gold, or an ancient tomb filled with rare artifacts and precious gems.

- Would you like to find a plan directing you to a hidden treasure? What would you do if you had such a plan?

Point out that we have been given such a plan, but it leads to hidden treasures of spiritual wealth, not material wealth.

Scripture discussion

Have class members read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 89:18–19.

- What blessings are promised to those who obey the Word of Wisdom?
- What “treasures of knowledge” and “hidden treasures” might be included in this promise?

Activity

Give each class member a pen or pencil and a copy of the handout “Blessings That Come from Obeying the Word of Wisdom.” Discuss each “treasure,” or blessing, listed and how it comes as a result of obeying the Word of Wisdom.

Point out that at the time the Word of Wisdom was revealed, most people did not know about the unhealthful effects of products such as tobacco and alcohol. Today, scientists have confirmed what the Lord told Joseph Smith over 150 years ago, and many people avoid such products in order to live more healthfully. Explain that the physical advantages of obeying the Word of Wisdom are the same for those who believe in the revelation and those who do not. However, those who obey the Word of Wisdom because it is a commandment of God receive additional spiritual blessings.

Have class members look at their handout and identify which treasures come from simply following wise health practices and which come from obeying the commandments of God.

After the discussion, have each class member choose the four treasures that are most desirable to him or her right now and mark them on the handout. Have class members take the handout home, and encourage them to discuss it with their families, perhaps in family home evening or at dinnertime.

Testimony

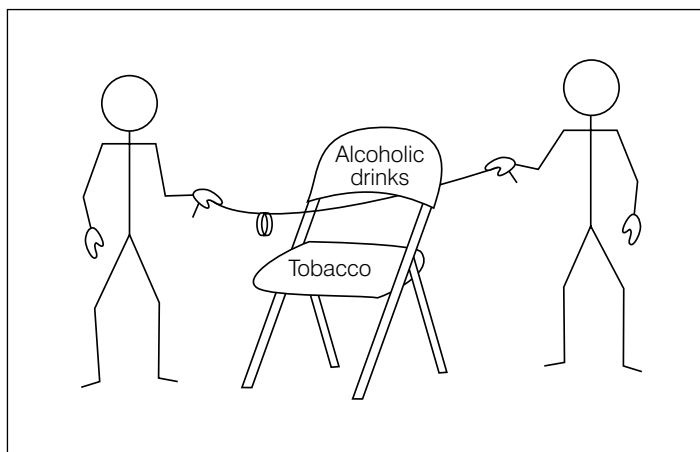
Bear testimony of the importance of the Word of Wisdom in keeping us physically and spiritually healthy. You may want to tell class members about the effect of the Word of Wisdom in your life or the life of someone you know.

Encourage class members to obey the Word of Wisdom so they can receive the physical and spiritual blessings promised.

Enrichment Activities

You may want to use one or more of these activities during the lesson.

1. Play the game “Don’t Get Poisoned.” Set a folding chair in the middle of the classroom. On one piece of paper, write *alcoholic drinks*, and on another piece of paper, write *tobacco*. Tape the label “alcoholic drinks” to the top of the chair and the label “tobacco” to the seat of the chair. Pass a six-foot-long string through the space between the backrest and the seat (see the illustration on the next page), and place a ring on the string. Tell class members that the object of this game is to pass the ring from one end of the string to the other without touching the poisons “alcoholic drinks” and “tobacco.”



Invite a class member to try to do this alone. If other class members want to try, allow them to do so. Then have the first class member choose a partner, and have the two work together to pass the ring. (They will probably find it easier than the person working alone did.) Ask the first class member:

- Was it easier to accomplish this task by yourself or with another person?

Point out that keeping the Word of Wisdom is easier when you have the help and support of other people. Encourage class members to support each other in their commitment to keeping the Word of Wisdom. Briefly discuss ways they might do this.

Note to the teacher: For information on other games that teach, see Teaching—No Greater Call, 143–44.

2. If the following video segments are available, show one of them (do not show a segment you have already shown during another lesson):
 - a. “Addiction versus Freedom,” a three-minute segment of *Family Home Evening Video Supplement 2* (53277).
 - b. “True to the Faith,” a nine-minute segment of *Family Home Evening Video Supplement* (53276).

After showing the video segment, discuss how choosing to obey or disobey the Word of Wisdom affects one’s freedom to make future choices (see lesson 2).

3. Before class, glue a piece of candy, money, or some other desirable object to the tongue of a mousetrap. In class, set the mousetrap and display it on a table or box.
 - How many of you would be willing to try to take the object? (Do not allow anyone to actually try this.)

Point out that the object is glued to the mousetrap.

 - How many of you would still be willing to try to take the object from the trap? Why not?

Explain that Satan sets spiritual traps for us. To entice us into these traps, he will promise us anything we want, but he has no intention of keeping

his promises. Many of Satan's traps involve the Word of Wisdom. To get us to disobey the Word of Wisdom, Satan promises us that doing so will bring us desirable things. For example, he tells us that drinking or using drugs will make us beautiful or popular or make us feel good. But disobeying the Word of Wisdom will never bring lasting beauty, popularity, or happiness. It is a trap that will ultimately cause pain and unhappiness.

Blessings That Come from Obeying the Word of Wisdom

Physical health:	Your body will be more resistant to disease and weakness.
Emotional health:	You will have less stress and guilt and more peace of mind.
Health for your descendants:	Your children will be free from inherited deformities and weaknesses caused by drug abuse, smoking, and drinking.
Faith:	Your faith will be strengthened as you see that the Lord blesses those who obey.
Spiritual sensitivity:	You will be better able to receive and follow inspiration from the Holy Ghost.
Freedom:	You will not be a slave to drug abuse or other addictive habits.
Wisdom and knowledge:	You will have a clear mind, the desire to learn, and the ability to distinguish truth from falsehood; you will perform better in school and employment.
Self-discipline:	You will be in control of yourself and will strengthen your ability to say no to people or things that would harm you.
Financial advantage:	You will not spend money on cigarettes, liquor, or other harmful substances; you will not need to pay medical expenses caused by use of these substances.
Ability to serve:	You will not cause harm to others (by driving drunk, smoking around them, and so on); you will have the health and strength necessary to serve others.