



Say to wisdom, “you are my sister,” And make understanding your closest friend. For they will keep you from the immoral woman.
Proverbs 7:4-5a

Women’s Discipleship Group – 2006
HELPMATES, HANDMAIDENS & HARLOTS ON-LINE BIBLE STUDY
HEALTHY LIFE SERIES
LESSON #1 Cleansing the Body-Temple
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Definitions: *Helpmate – Handmaiden – Harlot*

Helpmate: A married woman who is committed to the well being of her husband.

Handmaiden: An unmarried or married woman who is committed to serving the Lord.

Harlot: An unmarried or married woman who sells her soul or body for personal gain.

Temple:

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any one corrupts the temple of God, that person God will destroy, for the temple of God is holy, and such are you.” I Corinthians 3:16

Scripture Focus:

Helpmate: Proverbs 31:17 (Amplified) She girds herself with strength (spiritual, mental and physical fitness for her God given task) and makes her arms strong and firm.

Handmaiden: Proverbs 3:7-8 Do not be wise in your own eyes. Fear the Lord and stay away from evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

Harlot: Psalm 38:3 There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your anger, nor any health in my bones because of my sin.

OPENING STATEMENT:

The Helpmates: One of the big challenges that a marriage can face is the issue of how the wife takes care of her body. Unfortunately, most husbands are conditioned by television images of bouncy girls with breast implants. They want a wife who looks like Tara Banks and prepare meals like Martha Stewart. In reality, pregnancies, stress, menopause and other factors like genetics, can cause a woman to go through many physical transformations. The virtuous woman in *Proverbs in 31:17* was not interested in becoming the next top model. Her focus was to keep her body in good condition for the purpose of maintaining a very busy schedule, looking good for her husband and setting a good example for her children. The virtuous woman was a hard

worker and she recognized that her brain and her body were her most important tools. Try one day a week of cleansing your body by drinking fresh juices in the morning and eating only raw or steamed vegetables in the evening. Proper diet and exercise should be your way of saying thank you to the Lord that I am *fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139:14)*

Handmaidens: How would you like it if you gave someone a brand new house to live in (free of charge) and they refused to take care of it? I'm sure you would be upset with that person. The Spirit of God dwells within us. We are His house, but not just any house. The Lord calls us His Holy Temple. Therefore, our bodies should be treated with reverence and respect. We should be proud of who we are because *we were created in His image (Genesis 1:27)*. A handmaiden is a woman who serves the Lord and dwells in His presence. I want to challenge you to make a list of all the things you are doing that are harmful to your body. Be sure to include things like junk food and fad diets. Now I want you to imagine sharing all of these practices with the Lord. After all, He is your roommate. Would you sit in the presence of Jesus and light a cigarette and blow smoke in his face? I often hear women who love the Lord say, "I want to be used in ministry, but the Lord seems to overlook me." Perhaps if you take the time to cleanse your body/temple, and *stay away from evil practices (Proverbs 3:7)*, the Lord might feel more at home and begin to redesign your life.

Harlots: Have you ever gone to a class reunion and ran into some of your old classmates? Or taken a trip to your hometown and looked up your old girlfriends? There's nothing sadder than seeing an ex-party girl who did a little bit of everything and now she's paying the price. She looks older than her age and seems to lack strength and energy. Sin will take away your health and leave you with diseases that you can hardly pronounce, let alone get rid of. The harlot who is kicking up her heels today – living large with men at her beck and call – will pay a high price for her rebellious lifestyle. If you are out there being a party girl, I urge you to change your lifestyle while there's still time. I have seen the Lord renovate a run down, abused body and turn it into a beautiful dwelling place. *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation; the old has gone and the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17*

YOUR STORY:

Are you someone who had to make radical changes in your lifestyle in order to restore your health? If so, what forced you to make the change? Where did you find the strength, discipline and determination? What actions did you take and what prayers did you pray?

OBSERVATIONS AND PERSONALIZATION:

Helpmate: Read Proverbs 31:13-24. The woman in this passage was one busy lady. How do you think she found the time to take care of her family, run a business and then "strengthen her body?" Search the bible and find out where our strength comes from.

If finding time to take care of yourself was a matter of life and death, what changes would you make in your schedule that would help to keep you alive?

Handmaiden: Read Revelations 3:20. If Jesus Christ came back to earth in human form and chose to be your houseguest for seven days, what would you prepare for him to eat? What would you do to help him relax and feel welcomed in your home?

Harlot: Read Deuteronomy 7:11-15. All disease does not come from a sinful lifestyle. But if we desire good health, it is necessary to know what the Lord requires. What are some of the things that you can change in your lifestyle that would be pleasing to the Lord?