

Going to Church: A Healthy Choice!

by Wayne Goff

AARP Magazine for seniors reports in the November 2019 issue that going to church is good for your health! Might I add that it's also good for your soul?

Inflammation

Inflammation that is constant in your body is a sign of poor health. But there are choices you can make to reduce such inflammation.

1. **Whole grain bread** is beneficial as it creates butyrate, a beneficial fatty acid with anti-inflammatory powers.
2. **Fruit bowls** with dark colored fruits, vegetables and beans contain polyphenols that have anti-inflammatory properties. Grapes, tea, apples, berries are in this group.
3. **Yoga**, on a regular basis, helps one to be 4.75 times less likely to have detectable levels of C-reactive protein, thus reducing inflammation.
4. **Church**. Mindfulness techniques such as prayer and meditation have been shown to reduce some markers of inflammation and can help people suffering from chronic inflammatory conditions.
5. Yogurt, healthy fats and colorful salads were also in the list.

Why Church?

Keep in mind that the above list is suggested as ways to keep your **body** healthy. Your body is connected to you mind, so **unnecessary anxiety, worry, grief, fear, etc.** can affect your body, alerting the immune system, which is designed to help your body through temporary inflammation, but which can be harmful if those mental issues remain.

None of this is new and it should be no surprise to us that God's "owner's manual" (Bible) is a great tool to give you the best life now and eternally (**1 Timothy 4:8**).

Note that Paul says "*godliness is profitable for all things.*" **Godliness** is being mindful of God — He is Creator, He is Sovereign Ruler of the universe, He is *behind* all things upon the earth even though His will and actions may seem invisible to us, and He is in control. These truths calm our minds and should ease our anxieties. But you have to **believe** these truths in order for them to work, and it's apparent that any of us — true believers included — can forget them from time to time.

Though Jesus was with the disciples in a boat crossing the Sea of Galilee, when a tempestuous storm arose, the disciples were greatly afraid and woke up Jesus from much needed sleep to ask Him if He cared for them or not (**Matthew 8:24-25**). Notice *carefully* Jesus' answer to them: "**Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?**" (**v. 26**). He then immediately rebuked the winds and the sea and there was a great calm. **Lesson to be learned?** The boat is not going to sink as long as Jesus is in it, awake or asleep! **Fear** and **faith** do not coexist. And for that matter, **fear** and **love** do not coexist (**1 John 4:18**). So fill your heart with faith and love and you can enjoy this life so much more!

The godly man **meditates** on God's Word day and night (**Psalms 1:2**). Such meditation is wonderful for the heart, soul and mind! It keeps life in perspective, it keeps hope alive in the soul, and it makes you humbly dependent on God. Isaac meditated (**Genesis 24:63**), Joshua, the General of Israel, meditated (**Joshua 1:8**), David meditated (**Psalms 63:6; 64:1; 119:15, 23, 27, 48, 78**, etc.), and Christians are encouraged to "*meditate*" on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, and of good report (**Philippians 4:8**). Timothy was taught by Paul to "*meditate*" on the Word of God so that his progress would be obvious to everyone (**1 Timothy 4:15**). Meditation is the digesting of God's spiritual food.

The assembly of the saints is a wonderful place to practice all these things in the various acts of worship. Music is good for the soul. Communion is active meditation on Christ's sacrifice. Giving to God is a blessing. Studying God's Word in quiet reflection is calming. God knows best.