



THE ONLY SIN

by David Clayton



Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (Matt 6:25-29)

What is the main theme of this passage? There are two things which are being emphasized: first of all there is our inability to do anything and secondly, there is the provision that God makes to completely take care of all our needs.

I have been a little bit challenged because among my relatives there are many different opinions about the present crisis concerning the Covid virus, and how people should relate to it. There are some of my relatives who believe it is wise to go and get vaccinated, but of course there are some of us were not quite so certain and who do not intend to get vaccinated. I was thinking, what if there is nothing wrong with the vaccine itself, why am I not intending to take it? Is it because of stubbornness and pride of opinion? Is it because having once taken a position I will stubbornly stick to it and refuse to bend? But this is not the reason at all!

There is a spirit and a mood in the world which says, being a Christian and depending on God is unrealistic! There is an attitude which says that depending on God to intervene when one gets into difficulties is an indication that one is not very intelligent. This is the primary, overriding spirit behind much of what is happening in the world. I find myself resenting this attitude. It does not exist only in the realm of health, but it is there in the realm of finance, it is there in almost every aspect of life, this idea that the world and its inhabitants have become very wise, and Christianity is not something that educated people get involved in. Christianity is more of cultural preference, an activity or lifestyle practiced by peo-

ple in primitive cultures, or a hobby that old people take up when they are nearing the end of their lives and have nothing better to do.

I became a Christian many years ago as a result of getting into some bad trouble. I needed somebody to help me and this made me turn to God. God did help me and it brought the reality of God's existence sharply to my mind. This is what made me become a Christian. But many years later I was impressed that I needed to leave my job and to become fully involved in the work of God, and preaching the gospel. I struggled with the decision because this would leave me without any income and no visible means of support. I prayed about this decision for a long time and finally I took the step and resigned my job as a teacher. There was one underlying thought which was at the foundation of that decision and it was this; if there is no God then life is pointless, it makes no difference if I and my family

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Wenatchee area, WA, USA

The *Berean Spirit* is dedicated to the promotion and restoration of all Bible truths and principles that God has given to His people, especially for the last days of this earth's history.

Our purpose is to share articles and studies about Bible truths and health to help motivate the readers to be prepared for the coming of the Lord.

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should die, but if there is a God it is impossible for me to step out, trusting him, and come to disaster!

After I gave up my job it was a very difficult situation for a few months. I had made up my mind that I would not borrow money and I would not ask anyone for help because I did not want anyone to think that God had failed to provide for the needs of my family. But it was very difficult. The point I am making is that at different periods of life we are faced with the challenging question, is there a God? More than this, can we depend on this person and can we trust this person? Is it really true that only desperate, primitive people without any other option choose to turn to God, while rational, intelligent people depend on the solutions offered by modern society? I am not suggesting that it is wrong to make use of the solutions that are offered

through human channels, that is not the point. Of course there are many modern developments and inventions which make life easier and more comfortable. But the problem arises when somebody says to me, there is no option other than the one man provides, and if you say you are depending on God for a better solution, you are stupid! For me as a Christian, this is waving a red flag in my face! It is implying that God cannot be trusted and I need to take insurance in case God lets me down.

WHAT CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE?

Jesus once asked the question, "which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" I am not very tall, I'm about 5 feet and 7 inches tall and sometimes I wish I were a little taller, but all my wishing has never been able to add even a single inch to my height! Jesus makes this point because he is emphasizing the fact that you can do nothing to contribute towards the things which truly pertain to life. He says you don't need to concern yourself about the things which pertain to your existence and in making this statement he is talking about the ability of God and the provision of God, versus man's inability to provide! He is concerned that we create stress and heartache about the problems of life when we cannot even change the color of our hair from black to white. And then to give us an idea of the kind of attitude that we should have, he says, "consider the birds," we have never seen them planting anything, we have never seen them building storehouses, but God feeds them every single day! It is God who takes care of our every need and there is absolutely no need to worry, this is Jesus' message.

Of course for most of us, God involves us in the process by which we are provided for, so most of us have a job and perhaps because of this many tend to take the credit

for providing for themselves. They think the provision comes from the job and they come to depend on the job to the point where losing the job is like the end of life!

Many years ago, some time after I had resigned my job in order to dedicate myself to the work of the ministry, I was going through a very difficult time financially and one night my father handed me ten dollars. I didn't ask him for it but somehow he realized that things were very difficult for me and he handed me this money. That was a bitter experience for me! I thought, "here am I a grown man and I should be giving money to my father, instead, here am I taking money from my father!" To be honest things were so bad with me that, that money prevented my family and me from going hungry that night. That is how God dealt with me back then in the early days. We never missed a meal, but it was not always bread and butter, sometimes it was bread and water.

After my father gave me that money, I went to talk to God, very dispirited and discouraged. But in that quiet moment God spoke to me and said, "you want to know that your hands have provided, you want to be able to say that David does not depend on anybody. But don't you know that whether somebody puts it in your hand or you go and work for it, or it drops from the sky, don't you know that everything comes from me?" That was the first time in my life that I ever really saw things from that perspective. From then on I never again felt bad when people gave me things. I had always wanted to be the one to give. Maybe inside of me there was a little pride in being independent, in being capable, and in never having to give anyone credit for helping me, but after that experience that night I learned that it also takes the grace of God to recognize my own incapability and to be

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SIN CONSCIOUSNESS (PART 1)

by Imad Awde



In my previous two articles, I shared the importance of distinguishing between *the realm of man's ability and the realm of God's ability*, and also the danger of *confusing faith with mental ascent*. I shared how naturally we make decisions based on the information we gather through our fallen human senses. We base our identity on this information, hence we think we are weak, we are not good enough, we are not accepted, and as a result we do not have the courage to come boldly to the throne of Grace. This leads to living a defeated life because we haven't accepted our victorious reality.

In opposition to this I highlighted some of the things the word of God says about us and made the point

that walking in the spirit is based upon the word of God. It begins by believing what the word of God says about us, and acting upon this belief or reality.

So, the first battle we have on a foundational level is, will I believe and base my identity and hence my ability on what my senses tell me, or will I believe and base my identity and hence my ability on what the word of God tells me.

I left you with the challenge to believe and accept your God given identity. To begin your walk in the spirit by believing what the word of God says about you, accepting it as your reality, building your identity on it, and allowing it to change your thoughts, beliefs and naturally your behaviour.

In this article I want to discuss one problem that hinders God's people from walking in the spirit. *Sin consciousness*.

Up till the cross, or the time of reformation, the worshipper of God followed a detailed system that required him to offer gifts and sacrifices which were part of a process the worshipper went through to be forgiven & accepted in the sight of God. These were types and shadows of something much bigger and greater which met its fulfilment in Christ. However, these offerings "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience" Heb 9:8, 9.

The worshipper could fulfil all the outward requirements and yet not

have a continuous peace of soul and assurance of acceptance with God. Only as he had personal faith in Christ could he find such peace. But few attained this higher experience. The majority of Jews depended on the meticulous performance of a multitude of regulations for acceptance with God.

To “*perfect*” a worshipper is to *fit him, legally and experimentally, for communion with God*. This, the old covenant with all its laws and priesthood could not do. That is why there was a need for a better covenant. The old system was abolished after a new and better way was consecrated (Heb 10:20).

The point is, the worshipper went through the motions of sacrifices and offerings, received forgiveness of sin by symbolically transferring his sin to the sacrifice and killing it. Hence, sin paid and atoned for. So, the worshipper went home forgiven, *but not perfect in his conscious*.

The sense of unacceptance, guilt, and sin, kept coming back. They were reminded of it all the time because of the continual sacrificial system. That is what the author of Hebrews goes on to say in chapter 10:1-4:

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

This was the condition of those living under the Old Covenant, before the coming of Christ. They lived under sin consciousness. There was a continual reminder of their sin, and

hence their guilt. This kept reminding them of their need of reconciliation, and forgiveness.

CHRISTIANS

The sad reality is that so many Christians live their life with this sin consciousness. I am not referring to the memory of our mistakes, I still remember the sins I did in the past. Neither am I referring to our need of repentance when we come to Christ. The spirit convicts us of sin so we can repent and seek righteousness.

I am referring to the lingering sense of unworthiness, unacceptance, and guilt. This sense of unforgiveness and rejection from God, even though we repented and accepted Christ. I am referring to this unhealthy fear of God. Sin consciousness is one of the main reasons for spiritual failure.

There is a healthy sense of unworthiness, humbleness, meekness and humility. It is healthy to always be mindful that I, as a new creature do not deserve what God has giving me. That I am not saved because of my goodness, or my effort; I am saved because of God’s goodness and grace. I am not referring to this sense of unworthiness.

I am referring to the sense of unworthiness, unacceptance and unforgiveness which destroys your faith. The false sense that gives you an inferiority complex; causes you to be afraid of God instead of love Him; and leads you to run away from God instead of long for His company.

Sin consciousness leads you to believe that:

- Your prayers are not good enough,
- Your service is not good enough,
- Your worship is not good enough,
- You are not good enough to be a child of God even though you have given your life to Christ.

People with this kind of complex have no sense of their own legal right to stand in the Father’s presence with boldness, without a sense of condemnation.

As a result of this complex they feel unloved, unforgiven, unaccepted, and hence unable to live a spirit filled life; unable to live like sons and daughters of God. They are forever confessing their sins and never reaching the place where they feel forgiven. They are continually seeking God’s approval and never entering into His rest. They are forever praying for the spirit and never reaching the place where they *know* they have the spirit.

To those who find themselves in this position I want you to think of these questions:

- Has God provided a redemption, a way, a salvation that is big enough to cure your sin Problem?
- Is God able to do what you cannot do, and what He promised to do?
- Is God able to forgive what you have done?
- Is God able to cleanse you from all unrighteousness and present you faultless before the presence of His glory?

That is what it boils down to. It does not boil down to your ability, but to God’s ability; Not to your efforts, but to His grace; Not to the extent of your repentance but to His forgiveness and mercy. You will never repent enough, work enough, and be able enough to undo what you did, and to fix what you messed up.

“So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” Rom 9:16

At the end of the day it boils down to God’s grace and mercy.

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SIN CONSCIOUSNESS

FEAST DAYS AND THE PRESENT TRUTH

by Nader Mansour

THE PRESENT TRUTH.

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No. 1.

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."—Ps. xxxv. 14.

The history of our publishing work and its humble beginnings is of great interest and import. The great disappointment of 1844 left a scattered flock of Advent believers in many places. This flock needed encouragement, support, and meat in due season. It is with this background that the call to begin publishing and sharing the message of truth came from heaven. James and Ellen White often travelled and held meetings with different bands of believers. It was in one such meeting that God directed the believers to the necessity of starting to publish and broadcast the truth in printed form.

THE DORCHESTER CONFERENCE, November 1848

The period between the great disappointment of October 22, 1844, and the memorable Sabbath conferences of 1848 was a critical four-year phase. It was during these conferences that the early Adventists better understood the Sabbath truth. In November of 1848, another such conference convened in the home of Otis Nichols in Dorchester. This gathering was to discuss the Sabbath and the sealing message. James and Ellen White were present

among the small company of believers. Joseph Bates, also present, briefly reported on that gathering in the following words:

"A small company of brethren and sisters were assembled in meeting in Dorchester, near Boston, Mass. Before the meeting commenced, some of us were examining some of the points in the sealing message; some difference of opinion existed about the correctness of the view of the word ascending, etc., and whereas we had made the publishing of the message a subject of prayer at the Topsham Conference (Mv.) a little previous, and the way to publish appeared not sufficiently clear, we therefore resolved unitedly to refer it all to God." {Joseph Bates, *A Seal of the Living God*, p.24. 1849}

A DIVINE COMMISSION

After some time spent in earnest prayer for light and direction, God gave Sister White a vision with some very clear instructions.

"At a meeting held in Dorchester, Mass., November, 1848, I had been given a view of the proclamation of the sealing message, and of the duty of the brethren to publish the light that

was shining upon our pathway." {*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p.125}

The vision also had a clear message for her husband—it was time to publish.

"After coming out of vision, I said to my husband: "I have a message for you. You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first; but as the people read, they will send you means with which to print, and it will be a success from the first. From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear round the world."" {*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p.125.2}

Despite being penniless and with no steady income, James White seriously pondered the words spoken in the commission. Regardless of pressing obstacles, he determined to carry out this instruction.

THE PRESENT TRUTH, July 1849

It took less than a year before James was ready to publish the very first paper which he entitled *The Present Truth*. Ellen White gives us an insight about that time:

"While we were in Connecticut in the summer of 1849, my husband was deeply impressed that the time had

come for him to write and publish the present truth. He was greatly encouraged and blessed as he decided to do this. ... He immediately began to write, and when he came to some difficult passage, we would unite in prayer to God for an understanding of the true meaning of His word." {*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, pp.125, 126}

Not only did they pray for an understanding of the word of God as James wrote, but many other prayers were also offered for this fledgling first step in our publishing work.

"One day in July, my husband brought home from Middletown a thousand copies of the first number of his paper. ... The precious printed sheets were brought into the house and laid upon the floor, and then a little group of interested ones were gathered in, and we knelt around the papers, and with humble hearts and many tears besought the Lord to let His blessing rest upon these printed messengers of truth." {*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p.126}

Together they folded the papers and prepared them for mailing. It was a customary practice to pray over each number before it was sent out. Many years later, Ellen recalled those early days of that paper:

"It was in Middletown, about 1849, that my husband began the publication of our first paper, a small sheet called, *The Present Truth*. We were then living in Rocky Hills, seven miles from Middletown, and my husband often walked back and forth between the two places, though he was then lame. When he brought the first number of the paper from the printing-office, we all bowed round it, and with humble hearts and many tears besought the Lord to let his blessing rest upon the feeble efforts of his servant. My husband then directed copies of the paper to all who he thought would read it, and walked seven miles to the Middletown post-office, carrying the pre-

vious papers in a carpet-bag. Again and again, before the papers were taken to the post-office, they were spread before God, and earnest prayers, mingled with tears, were offered to God that his blessing might attend the silent messengers. Very soon letters came, bringing means to help in the publication of the paper, and bringing also the good news that many souls were accepting the truth." {E. G. White, *Review & Herald*, October 6, 1904 par. 9}

This little paper that was divinely commissioned had a very humble beginning. It would later grow and exert a powerful influence¹.

THE MESSAGE IN THE PRESENT TRUTH

Part of the vision that Ellen White received in 1848 was to do with the sealing message and the Sabbath. James at the time records that "She saw many interesting things about this glorious sealing Sabbath, which I have not time or space to record."² Thus it was natural for James to write something about the Sabbath and the sealing message in the very first numbers of that paper. This afforded him both time and space to expound on this question in detail. The articles that followed James White's opening editorial explanation carried such titles as "The Weekly Sabbath Instituted at Creation, and Not at Sinai"; "The Sabbath a Perpetual Weekly Memorial"; "The Law of God, or the Ten Commandments"; "Scriptures Usually Quoted to Prove the Abolition of the Sabbath Examined."

James White made it very clear that the seventh-day Sabbath was the eternal memorial and sign of God's creative power. It was the seal between God and his people forever.

THE PRESENT TRUTH AND FEAST DAYS

In addressing the importance and validity of the Sabbath James also had to address the subject of the

feast days and annual Sabbaths. It was necessary to make this distinction clearly for many were confounding the two. Here are a few extracts from the first few numbers of *The Present Truth* setting forth the relation of the feast days to us today. Note the distinction between the annual Sabbaths and the weekly Sabbath (*emphasis supplied in bold*).

"The first covenant which had "ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary," was a shadow of the second, and better covenant. The law was the shadow, and the Gospel is the body, that cast the shadow; and as all shadows reach to their body, and no farther, **it is very clear that the sacrifices and oblations, new-moons, feast days, and Sabbaths of the Jewish law ceased, when the precious body and blood of the Lamb of God was sacrificed on the cross.** This is what Paul calls "nailing it to his cross." {James White, *The Present Truth*, August 1849, p.9}

"All shadows cease when they reach the bodies which cast them. Follow the shadow of a tree to its body, and there the shadow ends. **But the weekly Sabbath will never end; therefore it is not a shadow; but a body, as well as the other nine commandments.** The ten commandments are of the same nature; and if one is a shadow, they are all shadows. How can we make swearing,, stealing, and killing, shadows? This we cannot do. **Neither is there a man that can show that the Sabbath is a shadow.**" {James White, *The Present Truth*, August 1849, p.10}

"Some regarded **the Jewish Sabbaths, new-moons, and feast days, after they were abolished and nailed to the cross, and others did not.** Paul would not have the Colossians judged by **Judaizing teachers, in respect to those things that had ceased,** according to the testimony of the Prophet. [Hosea 2:11 quoted]" {James White, *The Present Truth*, August 1849, p.9}

"The Sabbath of the Lord our God was instituted at the creation, before the fall, when the earth and man were holy, and Eden bloomed on earth. **The convocation sabbaths of the Jews were given at Mount Sinai, more than twenty-five hundred years after, and were a portion of the hand-writing of ordinances of the law of Moses, which was nailed to the cross, at the death of the Messiah.**" {James White, *The Present Truth*, August 1849, p.9}

"The fact that some were teaching these Jewish customs to the Christian Church, and judging them in respect to them, drew the Apostle out to write as he has to the Galatians, Romans, and Colossians, upon this subject." {James White, *The Present Truth*, August 1849 p.9}³

"Finally, the fact that the early Christians were troubled by those who were teaching them that they must observe the law of Moses in order to be saved, shows what Paul's subject was, and that he did not refer to the Sabbath; **but to the shadows of Moses law, which began to reach their body when the new covenant was introduced by the death of Messiah.**" {James White, *The Present Truth*, August 1849, p.11}⁴

It is important to remember that Ellen and James prayed for God to lead and guide in the writing of these articles. She reminds us of what James did "when he came to some difficult passage, we would unite in prayer to God for an understanding of the true meaning of His word." {*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, pp.125, 126}

A few questions we need to ask ourselves: Did God answer those prayers or not? Did God give him a correct understanding of the Word when it came to the feast days?

James saw a clear distinction between God's ten commandment moral law and the ceremonies and shadows of the typical law:

"The keeping of the commandments of God, is no where spoken of in the New Testament as a thing of little importance, as circumcision, eating, **and feast-days are;** but it is always made a test of Christian fellowship, and Eternal Salvation." {James White, *The Present Truth*, July 1849 p.8}

He also comments on the situation that existed in the early church. The issue of feast keeping is not a new debate, but was the doctrine of the Judaizers of Paul's day:

"The Christians at Rome were labouring under trials, similar to those in other Churches. Some of them were holding on to the Jewish customs of eating, and feast-days, and others were opposed to these customs. Paul's greatest trial with them, was their judging one another, and making these things a test of Christian fellowship." {James White, *The Present Truth*, July 1849 p.8}

God certainly guided the mind of his servant in answer to the fervent prayers offered up to him. The God who commissioned the writing of this paper would not leave its author to stumble in the dark.

NOT A PRESENT TRUTH

As far as James and Ellen White were concerned, the feast days were not a present truth message. This is abundantly clear as one reads through the first numbers of *The Present Truth*. Far from being a present truth message, the feast days (with their annual Sabbaths) were part of the shadowy types that passed away at the cross of Christ. This position and understanding was later confirmed by many pioneers of what later became the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The sealing message, which this movement was raised to preach, was to focus on the seventh day Sabbath, not on the expired shadows.

NEW TRUTH DOES NOT CONTRADICT THE OLD

If the feast days and their annual Sabbaths were indeed shadowy types as James wrote, then it is impossible for them to cease being so now. Unless, of course, James White was wrong in his understanding of them. Some may feel that James did not have all the light on the matter of the feasts, and today we should observe them as binding upon us. Perhaps the feast days are a new light, or a progression into a deeper understanding of truth for today. Maybe they are present truth for us *now*.

Such a position raises some very serious questions, and doubts, as to the foundation that God laid at the inception of our publishing work. If the feast days are valid and binding today then this presents a very serious contradiction with the present truth message in our early days. Truth does not—*cannot*—contradict itself. We are left with only one of two choices:

1. James White was *correct* and the feast days are *not binding* on us today, or
2. James White was *wrong* and the feast days are *binding* on us today.

Thankfully, the pen of inspiration clears the matter up for us easily. We need not doubt the leadings of God in our past history, nor question the teachings that he established.

"The truth is the same as it ever has been, and not a pin or a pillar can be moved from the structure of truth. **That which was sought for out of the Word in 1844, 1845, and 1846 remains the truth in every particular.**" {E. G. White, *IMR* 52.2} 1906

"That which was truth in the beginning is truth now. Although new and important truths appropriate for succeeding generations have been

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has done his part and now it is up to me to do my part. That's how I grew up, this thinking was everywhere around me. But these days I have come to realize that the emphasis should be on what God is and what God has done. I recognize that I have no part in the process, except to trust God and allow him to work his way in me. In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus said:

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matt 11:28-30)

THE FOUNDATION OF FAILURE

Some years ago, I remember contradicting God one morning after I had read this verse. I found myself exclaiming, "no Lord, it is not easy, it is not easy!" I was fighting and struggling and yet I continued to fail, so I contradicted the Lord. My way was fight, struggle and fail, fight struggle and fail, over and over again and it was not easy! Jesus says that the answer is, to come to him, if we do that his promise is, "I will give you rest!" The great challenge before us is really this question: can we believe God, can we trust him, can we count on what He says?

In Hebrews 4:10,11 we read,

For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. (Heb 4:10-11)

Here the apostle explains that the person who has found this rest in Christ has "ceased from his own works." At first I thought that this verse was really focused on "resting" from sin, from the wrong works involved in disobedience to the law. I would no longer lie, steal, commit fornication etc. But this is not the

true meaning of the verse. Those who find this rest, they rest **as God rested!** God did not rest from doing what was wrong, his rest was not a rest from the works of sin, it was rest from works of self, it was God's self-originated works from which he ceased and rested. When we apply this to our works, we can see that this is focusing on the fact that we also are to cease from our self-originated works, not merely works that are defined as wrong, according to the law. We need to understand that the real problem is the fact that we are operating on the basis of what is self-originating, self-energized. These activities may be perfectly lawful in themselves, but the fact that they originate with us, with self, makes them harmful. This is the reason why we have so much stress and why we struggle and fail over and over again, even though we think that we are fulfilling the will of God in being morally careful. The real problem is the domination of the self-life! The one great sin, is the sin of self-government! That is the greatest sin of all! It is the respectable sin which is least recognized by even those who call themselves, "Christians." Paul says that when a person enters into God's rest, he ceases from his own works. Not necessarily the works of transgressing the law, but the works of self, that is the point.

Most of us will acknowledge that we are not yet at the place where we want to be in our Christian experience, but what is the reason for this state of endless frustration and what is the answer for it? Some of us just conclude that it is the normal way of Christian life and we resign ourselves to just living like this until we die. Others try one device after another – religious exercises and psychological disciplines in this endeavor to rise about our mediocre brand of Christianity, but despite all our struggles, we still seem to be stuck in one place. There is the

one great lesson that we need to learn: We need to stop looking at our Christian development, and we need to start looking at Christ. The more we focus on Christ, the more contented and at rest we find ourselves and, strangely, the more we will find that the struggles we have had with ourselves and with sin, just disappear out of our lives.

THE JOURNEY'S END

We don't come to God simply for salvation, and then we move on from there. This is a perverted perspective that infects Christians everywhere, it's the idea that God saves me without my help, but when it comes to my improvement and development, I have a much greater responsibility and involvement. But we cannot make one hair black or white, we cannot add one cubit to our stature. There is no need to move on from square one because square one is the end of the journey! When you have found Christ you have found both the beginning and the end of the journey! The only progress we can make from there on, is to build and grow in him. All my efforts to improve outside of this, is simply an exercise in futility. Jesus expressed the formula in the simplest form when he said, "abide in me." That is our work, that is our duty, that is the only necessary emphasis.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. (John 15:4)

A branch never concerns itself with the question of how to grow, how to add to its stature, how to bear fruit. It is connected to the vine and that is all it needs, it simply rests and allows the rest to happen.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. (John 15:5)



FEAST DAYS AND THE P.T.

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opened to the understanding, **the present revealings do not contradict those of the past. Every new truth understood only makes more significant the old.**" {E. G. White, *Review & Herald*, March 2, 1886}

"The Word of the Lord has guided our steps since the passing of the time in 1844. We have searched the Scriptures; **we have built solidly; and we have not had to tear up our foundations and put in new timbers.**" {E. G. White, *IMR* 54.1} 1907



"When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth. **No aftersuppositions, contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained.** Men will arise with interpretations of Scripture which are to them truth, but which are not truth. **The truth for this time, God has given us as a foundation for our faith. He Himself**

has taught us what is truth. One will arise, and still another, with new light which contradicts the light that God has given under the demonstration of His Holy Spirit."—Preach the Word, p. 5. (1905.)" {E. G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 31, 32}

These quotes are too plain for comment. There is no evidence to suggest that James White changed his position on the feast days and annual Sabbaths. As the head of his home, his position was doubtless representative of his entire household. Not only was this the position of the White family, it was actually the position and understanding of the entire Church at the time, and for many

years to come. After all, none of the pioneers thought it wise or prudent to deviate from the foundation that God had laid at the commencement of our publishing work. Feast keeping was never intended to be part of the platform of eternal truth that God established our movement on.

CONCLUSION

These early beginnings of *The Present Truth* paper reveal a divine guiding hand in its commission and success. The visions had given assurance that God's blessing would attend James White as he wrote. God not only provided the funds to sustain the paper, but also blessed the mind of James White as he expounded the Scriptures in its pages. From the very start of our publishing work we find that God did not desire the inclusion of the feast days with their annual Sabbaths as part of the foundation of truth that He was building. The structure of truth was to focus on living realities, on *present* truth, and not on shadows and types that had ceased to be of force. Let us stand fast on that platform that God has built and established for us. He has not commissioned us to alter or add to it that which He intentionally left out.

Notes:

¹ *Present Truth*, in 10 issues published over a period of 11 months, heralded the third angel's message, with the Sabbath truth as the focal point. It was the forerunner of the paper that would be known by a number of names: *Advent Review*, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, *Review and Herald*, and *Adventist Review*.

² Elder James White, in an unpublished letter, gave his account of this meeting and vision. More of his comments can be found in *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p.116.

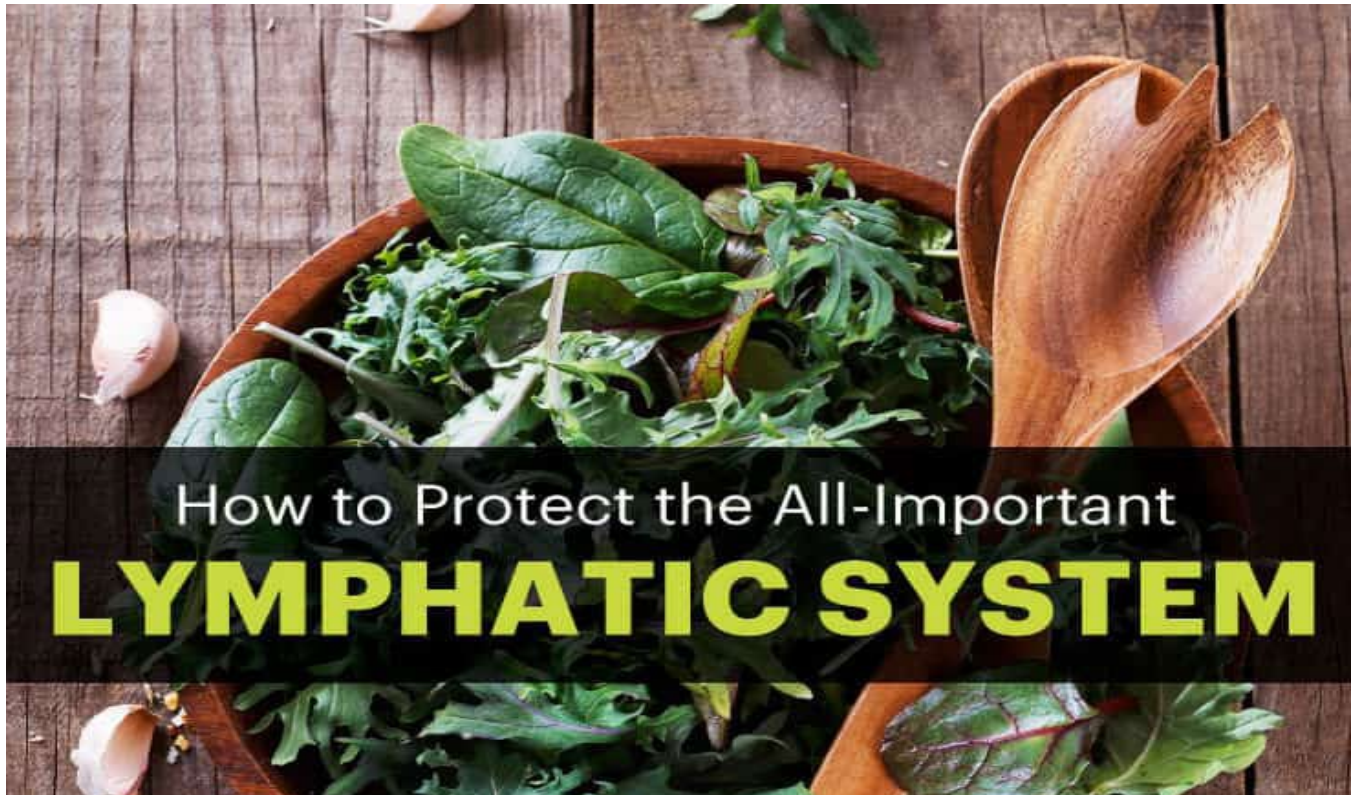
³ The relevant texts being referred to are: Galatians 3:2; 4:10; 5:3, 4; Romans 14:1-6; & Colossians 2:14-17. These passages deal with eating, and feast-days which some of the Church regarded, and others did not.

⁴ James is here commenting on Colossians 2:16-17 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: (17) Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.



THE LYMPHATIC SYSTEM

by Dr. Axe



How to Protect the All-Important **LYMPHATIC SYSTEM**

What is the lymphatic system? It's a critical part of the immune system, vital for protecting us from illness and damaging, disease-causing inflammation. Essentially, the lymphatic system is the the body's inner "drainage system," a network of blood vessels and lymph nodes that carry fluids from tissues around the body into the blood and vice versa.

The lymphatic system has the primary role of protecting the body against outside threats—such as infections, bacteria and cancer cells—while helping keep fluid levels in balance.

The best way to protect the complex series of criss-crossing lymphatic vessels and "nodes" that span almost the entire body (every one except for the central nervous system) is to eat a healing diet, exercise and take steps to detoxify the body naturally.

Lymphatic vessels carry fluid that is managed through "valves," which stop fluid from traveling the wrong way, similar to how blood flow works within the arteries and veins. In fact, the lymphatic system is very similar to the circulatory system made up of branches of veins, arteries and capillaries—both bring essential fluids around the whole body and are vital for keeping us alive.

In comparison to veins, lymph vessels are much smaller, and instead of bringing blood throughout the body, the lymphatic system carries a liquid called lymph, which stores our white blood cells. Lymph is a clear, watery fluid and also carries protein molecules, salts, glucose and other substances, along with bacteria, throughout the body.

In addition to the lymph vessels and nodes, the lymphatic system (also

sometimes called "the lymph system") includes several other organs:

- the **TONSILS** (glands located at the back of your throat that filter bacteria before digestion takes place)
- the **ADENOIDS** (a gland located at the back of your nose that protects the entrance to the digestive system and lungs)
- the **SPLEEN** and the **THYMUS** (filtering organs that scan the blood and produce white blood cells)

HOW THE LYMPHATIC SYSTEM WORKS

Here's how the lymphatic system works to protect us from becoming sick: We come into contact with various types of microbes, bacteria and toxins every day that enter our

bodies and make their way into the lymphatic fluid. Eventually, the fluid containing these organisms can get trapped inside lymph nodes, which is where the immune system “attacks” any perceived threats by attempting to destroy them with white blood cells.

Inside the lymph nodes (which look like small, bean-shaped structures), bacteria are filtered out and white blood cells are produced, used up as part of our defensive mechanism, and then replenished.

Another important role of the lymphatic system is keeping bodily fluids in balance. When the lymphatic system works properly, we don’t experience any painful swelling or abnormal water retention.

Our blood vessels and lymphatic vessels seep fluid into and out of surrounding tissue so the fluid can be drained. Extra fluid is eliminated from the body, which stops tissue from swelling or puffing up—however, when we are stuck or injured, fluids build up in the damaged area, which is why throbbing and pain occur.

You’ve probably experienced swollen lymph nodes at some point when you’ve been sick, especially the ones located near the throat or genitals that can be triggered by common infections (urinary tract infections, strep throat, colds or sore throats, etc.).

Lymph nodes are found around the body, some of the most prominent locations being the throat, groin, armpits, chest and abdomen. Lymph nodes are located close to major arteries since the lymphatic system connects to the blood flow to keep the blood clean. Within the lymph nodes is where the immune cells are created, which are critical for fighting infections and healing wounds.

The lymph nodes are able to detect when harmful organisms have made their way into the body, which prompts them to make more in-

fection-fighting white blood cells called lymphocytes.

Lymph fluid also makes its way through the spleen and thymus in addition to the lymph nodes before emptying into the bloodstream. The spleen is another filtering organ that is located inside the abdomen under the diaphragm. It has the important role within the immune system of removing dangerous microbes, balancing fluids, and destroying old or damaged red blood cells.

One of the most important jobs of the spleen is producing macrophages, B lymphocytes and T lymphocytes, types of white blood cells that are triggered when blood passes through the spleen and harmful substances are detected. These engulf and destroy bacteria, remove dead cells lingering in the blood, and eliminate foreign matter from the body. The thymus is located under the ribcage and has the same sort of job, filtering blood and creating or removing white blood cells.

DISEASES THAT DAMAGE THE LYMPHATIC SYSTEM

When the lymphatic system becomes overly stressed, symptoms and signs can include:

- chronic fatigue
- swelling in lymph nodes (like throat, armpits or groin)
- muscle aches and pains
- joint pains
- sore throats and getting colds more often
- frequent infections or viruses
- fibromyalgia symptoms
- arthritis
- and even cancer formation

The body protects us from infection and illness by trapping microbes found in our tissues (mostly bacteria we pick up from the environment) and sending them to

the lymph nodes, where they become “trapped.” This keeps the bacteria from spreading and causing further problems like viruses. Once the bacteria are trapped, lymphocytes attack and kill the bacteria.

Lymph nodes swell if you have an infection or virus—even if cancer cells are detected—because lymphocyte production increases. This is essentially how inflammation occurs. Sometimes it’s noticeable when a lymph node is inflamed, such as glandular fever, which is an illness where lymph nodes become tender. Other diseases that impact the lymphatic system include:

- **Lymphomas**—a type cancer that starts in the lymph nodes when lymphocytes undergo changes and then multiply and form a tumors, the tumor can spread to other parts of the body
- **Hodgkin’s disease**—cancer of the lymphatic system
- **Oedema** (also called edema)—water retention and swelling caused by trapped fluid within the tissues
- **Tonsillitis**—infection of the tonsils in the throat, often resulting in swollen tonsils needing to be removed
- **Lymphadenopathy**—the lymph nodes become swollen or enlarged due to infection, sometimes several at once can swell and cause pain
- **Lymphadenitis**—inflammation of the lymph nodes caused by an infection of the tissue, usually a bacterial infection and often in the throat. Lymphangitis is another infection of the lymphatic system, which affects the lymphatic vessels rather than the nodes
- **Splenomegaly**—an enlarged spleen due to a viral infection, it can be

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Before I go back to Hebrews, let me digress a little and show you something about God's love and forgiveness back in the Garden of Eden.

You see, many Christians think their biggest problem is changing the mind of God about them. They think that because of their sin, God is angry with them, rejected them, and wants nothing to do with them. So, they repent and spend their lives trying to please God, hoping their efforts will eventually turn the heart of God towards them; change the mind of God about them.

So, they live their Christian lives without entering into God's rest, without experiencing His love, mercy and forgiveness because they are not sure if they have managed to persuade God to love them, forgive them and accept them.

It might not be exactly the way I described it in your case, but I am sure many reading this will know what I am writing about. Because I know some think this way, I want to refer you back to the Garden of Eden to show you what sin did, and *did not do*.

Gen 3:1-3 *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*

So long Eve believed and trusted the word of God, she continued to reflected the mind of God. She saw the tree as an avenue of death because God said so. The word of God had power to shape her mind and perception of things.

Gen 3:4-6: *And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

When Eve believed the word of Satan she began to reflected the mind of Satan. The "word" believed had power to shape her mind and perception. Earlier she saw the tree as an avenue of death, now she saw it as "good for food and desired to make one wise"; she saw it as an avenue of a better life and wisdom.

This was the sin of Eve. This was the real problem. In her heart and mind she shifted her trust from the information coming from God to the information coming from Satan. Meaning, the object of her trust or faith changed from God to Satan; Hence, her mind changed, which naturally was reflected in her behaviour. A change in the object of her faith—led to a change in her thinking process—which led to a change in her behaviour.

Sin changed the mind of man. In Eden, as a result of man's fall, a change took place. Make no mistake, the change was not on God's part, rather it was on man's part. Notice what happened afterward:

Gen 3:7-8: *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*

God knew they sinned, yet He still came to walk with them. He never changed. He still behaved the same way He behaved before they sinned. In other words, sin DID NOT CHANGE the mind and heart of God towards man. It did not change the behaviour of God towards man. He still came to walk with them like He did before they sinned. However, there was a change on the part of man:

Gen 3:9, 10: *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*

Back in Eden, God came seeking for man even though man had sinned, "Where are you?" Notice Adam's answer: "I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself".

Adam's fear as result of a certain knowledge impacted his behavior. Adam said: "There is a fear within me, because of a certain knowledge I have about myself (naked), that led me to run away from you."

Adam's sin created a sin consciousness within himself, a particular knowledge about himself. This knowledge gave him an inferiority complex, it told him he is no longer accepted with God, he is not worthy of His love. That in turn caused him to run away and hide from God.

Two points from this passage:

1. **Sin did not change the mind and heart of God. It changed the mind and heart of man.**

Recognise where the problem is; stop projecting it on God. God does not hate you, He is not holding a grudge against you. In Eden, just like in Christ, God came to seek and to save that which was lost.

You do not need to change God's mind and heart about you. Forgiveness has never been an issue, guilt has never been an issue on God's part

(2 Cor 5:19). The real issue is man's heart and mind. The real issue is the way man began to relate to God, to think of God, as a result of the way man began to *think of himself*.

So, stop worrying about changing God's mind about you; and allow God to change your mind about *yourself* and *Him*.

2. *It was a certain knowledge, nakedness, that brought about fear.*

In dealing with man's problem, God clothed Adam and Eve, with "coats of skins" (Gen 3:21), which pointed to the time when God will clothe His children with the "robe of righteousness" through His Son (Isa 61:10).

The question you need to ask yourself is this: Have you received Jesus as your saviour? Have you put your trust in Him? If yes, then you have been clothed with the robe of righteousness. Jesus was made sin for us so "*we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*" 2 Cor 5:21.

If you have been clothed with the robe of righteousness, then you are no longer "*naked*". The nakedness which caused Adam to fear and hide from God is no longer yours. To remove the fear which caused man to run away from God, God has to first change man's perspective about himself. He does that through the gospel as we saw in the first article "Walking in the Spirit."

Eph 1:6, 7 *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

In and through His Son, God has changed your identity and covered your nakedness.

Are you still allowing your previous identity and nakedness to give you a sin consciousness which is robbing you from free fellowship with God? Or have you allowed your new identity and the robe of righteousness to

take away your sin consciousness, and hence you have free fellowship with God?

Which reality are you living in?

To be continued ...



THE LYMPHATIC SYSTEM

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dangerous to exercise or play contact sports when someone has this condition because any impact to a very swollen spleen can cause it to rupture.

THE LYMPHATIC SYSTEM AND CANCER DEVELOPMENT

The lymphatic system is crucial for protecting us from cancer formation. When cancer cells break away from a tumor, they can get trapped inside of a nearby lymph node, which is why swollen lymph nodes are a potential sign that a cancerous tumor could be lurking (although this isn't always the case). Many times doctors will check the lymph nodes for swelling and abnormalities when they test a patient for cancer or investigate whether existing cancer has spread.

A very important job of the immune system is creating lymphocytes, some of which make antibodies, which are proteins that destroy germs and stop infections or mutated cells from spreading. In some instances, this process doesn't work quickly enough to fight free radical damage and stop cancer from spreading. Or malfunctions and mutated cells can start to multiply very quickly and spread.

Cancer can either start within the lymph nodes (called lymphoma), or it can spread there from somewhere else. Cancer cells that have broken away from a tumor can travel to other areas of the body through the blood or lymph fluid, where they reach other organs and continue to multiply.

Most of the time the body takes care of this process and is able to destroy small amounts of mutated cells or escaped cancerous cells before they start spreading, but it only takes a small amount of mutated cancerous cells to make their way to another part of the body before they can form new tumors (called metastasis). This can become painful and noticeable very quickly if lymph nodes become enlarged (sometimes they are big and tender enough to feel with your fingers by pushing on the skin). (...)

HOW TO MAINTAIN A STRONG LYMPHATIC SYSTEM

Ignoring the health of your lymphatic system means your immunity is going to suffer, and you're more likely to deal with common illnesses and even long-term health problems. Here are five ways to boost your immune system and, moreover, support a healthy lymphatic system:

1. Reduce Inflammation and Improve Circulation

Eating a healthy diet, exercising, not smoking, getting enough sleep and reducing stress are all critical for lowering oxidative stress and halting the body's natural detoxification processes. The circulatory system and lymphatic system rely on one another.

While blood circulates around the body via blood vessels, some fluid naturally leaks out and makes its way into tissue. This is a normal process that brings nutrients, water and proteins to cells. The fluid also gathers cells' waste products, like bacteria or even dead or damaged cells like cancer cells.

Tissues located around the body can become inflamed and painful when circulation slows and inflammation builds. A healthy lymphatic system nourishes muscle, joint and other tissue because lymph vessels have tiny openings that let gases, water and nutrients pass through to surrounding cells (called interstitial fluid). The fluid then drains back into the lymph vessels, then goes to the lymph glands to be filtered and finally to a larger lymphatic vessel located at the base of the neck called the thoracic duct.

The thoracic duct dumps cleaned lymph fluid back into the blood, and on and on the cycle goes—which is why circulation is important for keeping the system running smoothly, otherwise tissue can become swollen with excess waste. To keep circulation pumping and the lymphatic system functioning optimally, it's important to load up on all the essential nutrients, like vitamins, minerals, electrolytes and antioxidants, you need.

2. Follow an Anti-Inflammatory Diet

The more nutrient-dense your diet, and the less chemicals entering your body, the better your lymphatic system can work. Foods that put stress on the digestive, circulatory and immune systems include common allergens (like dairy products, gluten, soy, shellfish or nightshades, for example), low-quality animal products, refined vegetable oils and processed foods that contain chemical toxins.

Anti-inflammatory foods, on the other hand, supply much-needed nutrients and antioxidants while also lowering free radical damage (also called oxidation stress) that ages the body and lowers immunity.

Some of the key high-antioxidant foods to focus on include:

- green leafy vegetables
- cruciferous veggies (broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, etc.)

- berries
- omega-3 foods
- nuts and seeds (chia, flax, hemp, pumpkin, etc.)
- unrefined oils like extra virgin olive oil and coconut oil
- herbs and spices (ginger, turmeric, garlic, for example)

3. Exercise

The lymphatic system works best when you move your body, which helps keep fluids circulating and nutrients reaching your cells. There's a reason why being stagnant causes you to feel more achy, stiff and prone to becoming sick.

Any type of regular exercise and movement (such as simply walking more) is good for keeping lymph fluid flowing, but some exercise seems to be particularly beneficial, including yoga (which twists the body and helps fluid drain), high-intensity interval training (also called HIIT workouts, which is great for improving circulation) or “rebounding.”

Rebounding is growing in popularity and involves jumping a small trampoline that you can keep inside your house. It only takes up a few feet, and just five to 10 minutes of jumping daily can really get your heart rate up and help keep your lymphatic system running smoothly. (And why not follow up exercise with a relaxing detox bath to further help improve blood flow?)

4. Massage Therapy and Foam Rolling

Foam rolling and massage therapy are both usual for preventing swelling, pain and fluid build-up with tissue. Foam rolling, also called self-myofascial release, is a type of self-massage that many people do before or after exercising. Its purpose is to help tissue repair more easily and break up muscle and tissue adhesions that can cause tight-

ness and injuries. Foam rolling also increases blood flow to your muscles and is used to help with quicker recovery and better performance.

“Lymphatic drainage massage” is a type of specialized massage therapy that helps cells release toxins and breaks up lymph congestion. Studies have found it's beneficial for lowering pain intensity, pain pressure and pain threshold. Massages can activate the lymphatic system and help flush excess fluid from within tissues.

Some massage therapists are specially trained in manual lymphatic drainage, but any type of deep tissue massage is also beneficial. You can even massage yourself to help reduce pain in swollen lymph nodes, muscles or joints.

5. Infrared Sauna Treatment

Never heard of infrared saunas? This simple treatment is one of the best ways to naturally detox the body and support an overall healthy immune system. Infrared sauna therapy works by increasing sweat production so more toxins are removed from tissue. It can also improve blood flow and help with tissue healing, which is critical for lymphatic health.

Studies show that regular infrared sauna treatments can improve the quality of life for people living with chronic pain, chronic fatigue syndrome, depression and congestive heart failure. People who use sauna therapy love it because it's relaxing, healing, cost-effective, can be done within your own home and really works. Infrared saunas use heat lamps that generate infrared light waves, which make their way into tissues and promote cell regeneration along with sweating.

Source Material:

<https://draxe.com/health/lymphatic-system/>

TASTY VEGAN RECIPES



STRAWBERRY YOGURT PARFAIT

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup vanilla yogurt of choice
- 1 cup fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1–2 teaspoons sweetener of choice, *optional*
- 3 tablespoons granola

DIRECTIONS:

1. Set aside 1 glass jar or cup.
2. Spoon 1/3 cup yogurt into the bottom of the jar, creating an even, smooth layer.
3. Sprinkle sliced strawberries over the yogurt, creating a single or double layer, depending on the size of your jar.

4. Optionally, sprinkle granulated monkfruit or sweetener of choice over the berries. Add more to sweeten tart fruit, less if the fruit is already very sweet or you like your parfait on the less sweet side.
5. Pour 1 tablespoon of your favorite granola over the sweetened fruit layer.
6. Repeat this sequence two more times.

Enjoy!

Source Material: <https://beamingbaker.com/strawberry-yogurt-parfait/>