

Healing Scriptures

Healing in the Atonement

If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.

John 15:7

Healing is the children's bread according to Mark 7:26-30.

For they (speaking of the Word) are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Proverbs 4:22

Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

Proverbs 16:24

...He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Romans 8:11

Surely He hath borne our griefs (sicknesses) and carried our sorrows (pains): Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgression, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes, we are healed.

Isaiah 53:4-5

...He cast out spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias (Isaiah) the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses.

Matthew 8:16-17

Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes, ye were healed.

1 Peter 2:24

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ...

Galatians 3:13-14

According to Deuteronomy 28:15-22, 27-29, 35-61, all sickness and disease are a curse of the law. But, praise God, according to Galatians 3:13, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law!

Healing – Will of the Father

...for I am the Lord that healeth thee.

Exodus 15:26

And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee. There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfill.

Exodus 23:25-26

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him...

2 Chronicles 16:9

There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

Psalms 91:10, 16

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases: Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalms 103:2-5

He sent His Word, and healed them...

Psalms 107:20

For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord....

Jeremiah 30:17

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it.

Isaiah 55:11

Is anything too hard for the Lord?...

Genesis 18:14

For with God nothing shall be impossible.

Luke 1:37

And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Mark 10:27

If ye then, being evil (natural), know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?

Matthew 7:11

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights...James 1:17

And behold, there came a leper and worshipped Him saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean.

Matthew 8:2-3

Jesus said of Himself, "I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me" (John 6:38). Everything Jesus did in His earth walk was the will of the Father. He was the will of God in action. If you want to know the will of the Father, look at Jesus.

Healing – The Works of Jesus

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil...

Acts 10:38

Christ is the healer; Satan is the oppressor.

he thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

John 10:10

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching...and preaching...and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Matthew 9:35

And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet: and he healed them. Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

Matthew 15:30-31

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

Hebrews 13:8

Healing – Ministry of the Church

Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father.

John 14:12

And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Mark 16:15, 17-18

Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

James 5:14-15

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John 2

Healing – God at Work With

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.

1 John 4:4

Faith For Healing

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

Mark 11:23

We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.

2 Corinthians 4:13

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Matthew 17:20

Prayer of Faith

Therefore I say unto you, What things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them.

Mark 11:24

A BALANCED THEOLOGY OF DIVINE HEALING

By Philip A Matthews

Introduction

For several years there has been a need to respond to the many theological questions constantly arising in the Church of God (Evening Light Saints), or COG (ELS) for short, as member after member, some very notable, get sick, suffer greatly, then die "trusting God," i.e., refusing to seek/accept medical assistance during his or her illness. To exacerbate many of these situations, the church leaders closely involved have often more or less assured the families that God was going to heal and raise their loved ones up. But obviously He did not.

Such situations naturally engender multitudes of very significant theological questions, e.g., Where was God? Was it really His will for him or her to die, and if so, what in the world could God be thinking? Why couldn't God have simply overruled what appears to have been horribly bad decisions in order to avert what often become unmitigated tragedies? And indeed many other very legitimate questions arise, some of which we will seek to answer here.

First of all, let it be stated immediately that there is absolutely *no* scripture to forbid going to the hospital, clinic, or doctor, taking medicine or natural remedies, or seeking any other such medical assistance. There is *no* scripture indicating in any way that using medical assistance is a sin or moral failure. There is *no* written Word describing exactly what is or is not acceptable behavior when it comes to medicine, medical treatment, or the like. It's simply not there.

Those who believe, teach, and practice that seeking medical assistance is wrong or sub-par Christianity have the burden of proof resting on their shoulders. We accept the fact that divine, supernatural healing is a biblical concept: The New Testament provides many examples of divine healing occurring without medical intervention. The apostle James writes that any sick person should call for the elders of the church, who shall anoint the sick with oil and pray the prayer of faith (James 5:14-15). But there simply is no Bible telling us what to do *after* that has been done and the sick one is still sick and not healed. So where the Bible stops, we should stop. We have no authority to teach or take it any further.

James 5:14-15, the classical passage regarding prayer for the sick, reads thus: "*Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up...*" These are the only clear instructions regarding divine healing in the New Testament. But it is obvious that for this to work supernaturally, at least one of these "elders" must have the gift of healing, faith, or miracles (1 Corinthians 12:9-10). Otherwise, no healing will happen. Of course, this does not rule out the occasions when God, in His Sovereign love and mercy, decides to heal a person simply because He wants to.

Adam Clarke, in his *Commentary*, actually states this about James 5:13 (italics added):

"In short, anointing the sick with oil, in order to their recovery, was a constant practice among the Jews... *And here I am satisfied that it has no other meaning than as a natural means of restoring health; and that St. James desires them to use natural means while looking to God for an especial blessing. And no wise man would direct otherwise.*"

"The oil may have been used as was Christ's clay or spittle to reinforce faith, and *may in some cases even have been medicinal...* The important points are that the outlook in the passage is spiritual (i.e., the matter is referred to God), the distress of the individual is made the concern of the Church, *and what is said neither excludes nor condemns the use by doctors of the normal means of healing available at any particular time and place.* The whole of this passage is really concerned with the power of prayer" ("Disease and Healing" section, page 317, italics added).

To lend credence to both of these commentaries, it should be noted that, except in Mark 6:13, anointing the sick with oil was not the usual way for Jesus, Paul, or Peter to heal. They healed by laying on hands (Luke 4:40), touching hems (Matthew 9:20; 14:36), handkerchiefs and aprons (Acts 19:12), passing shadows (Acts 5:15), or simply with a word (Matthew 8:8; Acts 3:6). So James' advice to "anoint with oil" could very well mean just what Clarke and Douglas have said: Use all natural means to restore health while looking for God's supernatural intervention. But in any case, whether the oil was used medicinally or symbolically, all healing came from God.

These conclusions about divine healing are in many ways similar to what D. S. Warner, the "founder" of the COG, expressed over 115 years ago in the *Gospel Trumpet*, October 24, 1895 (italics added):

"Let us be understood. If you know nothing in nature that will produce the desired healing effect, take the case to God in prayer and faith. *If you do know any thing at hand that will heal you, be free to use it if you wish, if you feel desirous to glorify God as the all-wise Creator... Therefore it is all right to use God-created remedies, when the devout soul would do so wholly to the glory of God...* But if a sincere child of God does use medicines... *do not reprove or rebuke such as if a sin had been committed...*"

These principles would apply to any kind of medical assistance, not merely to herbs or naturally-occurring medicines, because all medicines are nothing more than special formulations of God-created substances, all arising from the earth. And all three of the above sources recognized that no "sin has been committed," whatever the remedy, obviously because *no scripture or God-spoken commands are being violated.*

While God can and does heal miraculously without any medical intervention whatsoever, He should also be praised for healing through the instrumentality of human medical skills, medicines, natural remedies, and other methods, besides anointing oil and prayer alone. Still, though medical assistance is used, people must keep their ultimate trust in God. Doctors and medicine are not really trustworthy. Their ability to affect healing is limited, fallible, and never guaranteed. Thus, it is not wise to *trust* in them.

But that does not mean one can never *use* them. A person must trust in God, even while using medical assistance, praying that whatever treatment takes place will be blessed by God to accomplish the intended healing and restoration. Indeed, it takes great faith in God to place one's life in the hands of another frail, finite, mistake-capable human being, or to relax in a hospital where deadly, treatment-resistant infections are increasing every year, or to count on a prescribed medicine whose side effects might be worse than the benefits. One must trust in *God* even when using medical assistance.

God does not make all of our decisions for us. Instead, He has given us two things:

- (1) The *responsibility* to "have dominion" (Genesis 1:26, 28), to conquer and rule the world, to develop and maintain culture and civilization, to nurture life, etc. One of the most important responsibilities He gave us is the responsibility to take care of our bodies, souls, and minds in the best way possible. When we do so, we actually honor Him as our Creator/Father, because responsibly taking care of ourselves shows that we value the life He has entrusted to us. Neglect, abuse, indulgence, and other selfish ways to treat ourselves is dishonoring to God because it devalues what He has created and entrusted to us.

- (2) But in addition to responsibility, God, in all fairness, has also given us *authority and ability*, including intelligence, creativity, curiosity, wisdom, knowledge, skills, resources, etc., to fulfill our responsibility. We exercise this authority and ability by exercising our free wills in decision-making. Although God is all-powerful and can do anything, He Himself has limited Himself by giving us humans this freedom to make choices. He set up this system at the Beginning and expects us to perpetuate this by making the best choices we can make using our authority, abilities, and available resources. *He can be expected to supernaturally intervene only when circumstances go beyond our authority and abilities, when they go beyond what our choices can control.* Otherwise, He would be guilty of overriding our free wills.

We "tempt" God when we expect Him to do for us supernaturally what He expects us to do for ourselves with the authority, ability, and resources He has already provided and which we can freely *choose* to use. A divine miracle is not always necessary if we make the right choices.

- B. **This answers the question, "Why doesn't God simply overrule our bad choices?"** Some of our choices have consequences that are just too horrible to live with. "If He loves us," it is reasoned, "then why doesn't He step in and save us from ourselves when we make bad choices? Where was God in all of this?" These are reasonable-sounding questions. It would sure make the world a better place if God would just nullify all of our bad choices and let only the good choices take effect. But once God gets into the business "the *overwhelming* business" of overruling our bad choices, He eliminates our free will. And once He eliminates our free will, He removes

the possibility that we would serve Him out of Love. And that would remove the only reason for which He created this world in the first place.

So God, just as He did with Adam and Eve, must sometimes sadly stand by and watch as we blunder along, making choices that have consequences utterly impossible to live with. Most unfortunately, this includes our choices to refuse medical assistance, and the consequences can be absolutely nightmarish. It is even more devastating when we do this mistakenly believing that the Bible requires it all, and still worse yet when we do this with the encouragement of those we deem to be our spiritual leaders.

die 'trusting God' by not seeking medical assistance, is it God's will for it to happen that way?" And the simple answer is "No! He didn't want things to happen that way," meaning that it wasn't in His *Sovereign or Perfect Will*. He did not make it happen that way; our own choices did. But it would definitely still be within His *Permissive Will*.

Of course, there's really nothing simple about these concepts. But if God truly had His way directly and perfectly, everything would go according to His wishes and we would have heaven on earth. However, since He's given us this free will, He must deal with our choices that are often contrary to His original wishes. And since He is the one who has given us this freedom, whatever happens is still within His Permissive Will, that is, what He *permits* to happen. God's Permissive Will allows both bad and good things to occur. For example, it is not God's Sovereign or Perfect Will "that any should perish" (2 Peter 3:9), but, in His Permissive Will, based on their own choices, millions still do.

Things never get out of His control, however, but stay within His ultimate design. And being the loving Designer that He is, He is able to salvage, rearrange, rescue, redeem, and otherwise bring everything back into His ultimate Sovereign Will and decree. But the pain, suffering, and badly-broken lives we ourselves may experience during this process, because of the choices we ourselves or someone else has made, may be unimaginably devastating.

So we can say definitely that it is not God's will and desire for people to die by choosing death over obtaining medical assistance. *Using medical assistance for healing does not involve moral sin*. Therefore, God does not require His people to choose death or chronic suffering rather than obtaining medical assistance. If this did involve some type of moral evil or violation of the Scriptures, God would then expect Christians to choose not to seek medical assistance in order to obey the Word. But once again, this is not the case.

Therefore, it is His will and desire that His people use everything at their disposal to care for their physical bodies in the best way possible. Nothing in the Bible indicates otherwise. This is the only responsible behavior.

Summarizing, this is what the COG (ELS) should now do regarding divine healing in order to avoid being guilty of "sentencing" any more people to die (some have even called it "murder"!): Start openly advising those who are sick:

- (a) to go get the medical assistance they need;
- (b) to quit believing that refusing to seek medical assistance is *required* by the Bible, or that accepting medical assistance is sinful, requiring a person to repent and get saved again;
- (c) to quit believing that refusing medical assistance is equivalent to truly trusting God or displaying greater spirituality;
- (d) to quit believing that refusing medical assistance is a responsible way to treat our bodies and begin to see it as the form of selfishness that it really is "some have even called it a "slow suicide;"
- (e) to quit spiritually condemning, accusing of being backslidden, and disciplining those who choose to use medical assistance, and
- (f) Leaders should begin prayerfully seeking how to get this group back on track and reconnected to the primary, kingdom-building, Holy Spirit-led purpose of the church in the world "if that's even possible at this point" where God's people rally around Christ and His love instead of religious doctrines and traditions.

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