

TALK IT OVER

A Faith That Heals The Sick

"Jesus went everywhere, teaching...preaching...and healing people who had all kinds of disease and sickness." Matthew 4:23 (TEV)

Three Mistaken Views About Divine Healing

ERROR #1: I CAN BUY MY HEALING WITH GIVING

"There was a man named Simon who had used magic tricks for many years to pose as a miracle worker. He amazed everybody and claimed supernatural powers. He had a large following and people called him 'The Great Power'...But when Philip preached Jesus, Simon himself believed and was baptized...(Later) when Simon saw the Holy Spirit was imparted through the laying on of hands by the Apostles he offered them money to buy this power...But Peter said, 'You and your money will end up in hell if you think God's gift can be bought! Your heart is not right before God. Turn from this wicked attitude and pray. Ask God to forgive you for trying to use God to make money.'" Acts 8:9-11, 18-22

"Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity." 2 Corinthians 2:17 (NIV)

Jesus said, "On Judgment Day, many will say to me 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and drive out demons and perform many miracles in your name?' Then I will say to them 'No, I never knew you and you have never been mine. Go away from me. Your word was evil.'"

Matthew 7:22 (NIV)

Question 1: Acts 8:21-22 says we need to examine our attitudes and make sure our hearts are right with God. Have there been times where you thought you could work and earn points to make God do something?

ERROR #2: IT'S NEVER GOD'S WILL FOR ME TO BE SICK

"Those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good." 1 Peter 4:19 (NIV)

Jesus said, "In this world you will have trouble." John 16:33 (NIV)

"For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him." Philippians 1:29 (NLT)

(Paul) "There are things that Christ still suffers through his Body, the Church. I am accepting, in my body, my part of these things that must be suffered." Colossians 1:24 (NCV)

"We want no one to be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them." 1 Thessalonians 3:3 (NIV)

Question 2: In John 16:33, Jesus tells us that we should expect suffering. How should this shape our view of hardship?

ERROR #3: DIVINE HEALING AND THE MIRACULOUS GIFT OF HEALING ARE THE SAME.

Proof Text Misapplied: *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."* Hebrews 13:8 (NIV). Consider this fact. God made a man that never was a boy. Is this happening today?

"Are you hurting? Then you should pray. Are you happy? Then you should sing songs of praise. Are you sick? Then you should call the church elders to pray over you and anoint you with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will heal the sick person; the Lord will raise him up. And if you've sinned, you'll be forgiven. Therefore confess your faults to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a believing person is powerful and effective. For example, Elijah was a human being just like us. Yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, so there was no rain for three and a half years! Then, he prayed that it would rain, and it poured down and everything began to grow again!"
James 5:13-18

Four Questions to Ask About Healing

I. WHEN SHOULD I PRAY FOR HEALING?

- "Are you hurting? (kakopatheo) = having trouble, suffering
- "Are you sick? (ästheneo) = feeling weak or sick
- "The sick person" (kamno) = weary and feel like giving up
- "No rain for 3 ½ years" = a drought or dry spell in your life

ANYTIME I'M HURTING, SICK, TIRED OR EMPTY

Question 3: Each of us can identify with each of these four circumstances - being hurt, sick, tired or feeling empty. Give an example of how you prayed during one of those trying times.

II. WHY AREN'T PEOPLE HEALED EVERY TIME?

- We don't know God's will!
- God uses illness in many ways:

1. TO GET MY ATTENTION AND REDIRECT ME

"It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees." Psalm 119:71 (NIV)

"Sometimes it takes a painful experience to make us change our ways." Proverbs 20:30 (TEV)

2. TO BE A TESTIMONY FOR OTHERS

"I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has helped spread the Good News." Philippians 1:12 (NCV)

"This sickness will not end in death. It is an illness for the glory of God, to bring glory to the Son of God." John 11:4 (NCV)

3. TO TAKE US INTO ETERNITY

"God has already appointed a time that each of us will die and then our lives will be judged by God." Hebrews 9:27

"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." 1 John 5:14 (NIV)

Question 4: Has God ever used suffering in your life to get your attention or redirect you, or has he used your experiences as a testimony for others? Talk about some of the unexpected blessings that came about as a result.

III. WHO CAN PRAY FOR HEALING? ANY CHILD OF GOD

"The earnest prayer of a believing person is powerful and effective! For example, Elijah was a human being just like us. Yet when he prayed earnestly..." James 5:16-18

Jesus: "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I've been doing. He will do even greater works than these, because I'm going to the Father. And I'll do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father." John 14:12-14 (NIV)

Question 5: How does James 5:16-18 bring comfort and assurance to anyone who is hurting and needing prayer?

IV. HOW DO I PRAY FOR HEALING FOR MYSELF AND OTHERS?

1. MAKE SURE MY HEART IS CLEAN FROM SIN

"Confess your faults to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." James 5:16a

Question 6 How does confessing our faults and praying for each other help in the healing process?

2. BE SPECIFIC WHEN I ASK

"You do not have, because you do not ask God." James 4:2

Question 7: What are the benefits of being specific when we ask God for anything? How does it strengthen our faith and the faith of the others when we share God's answer?

3. ASK IN FAITH

"When you ask, you must believe and not doubt..." James 1:6