

Sickness and Healing

Healing is the restoration of health (Psalm 41:3), the making whole or well whether physically, mentally, or spiritually. The Bible did not indicate that God's highest will for man is to have good health, but the highest level of spirituality. Prosperity of body and soul is the result of spiritual maturity (3 John 2) not of petition or request. Healing is a prominent but misunderstood theme in the Scripture. The reported sicknesses in the Bible were cured by the supernatural intervention of God with or without the use of earthly means.

When God proclaimed, "I am the Lord thy healer" (Jehovah-Rophi, Exodus 15:26) before Israel, He gave them a direct command to obey the Word of God. It was an exclusive and conditional command for Israel and not for us. It was God who put the diseases upon the Egyptians as divine discipline, and it was God who promised that the same diseases will not inflict the Israelites if they will obey the Word of the Lord.

The phrase, who heals all your diseases of Psalm 103:3 is openly misinterpreted by many when they claimed complete divine healing for every kind of diseases. There are many in the New Testament who died without receiving the healing of their body: such as the apostle Paul, Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25-27), and Trophimus (2 Timothy 4:20). Healing of all kinds of diseases of every person is definitely not a biblical teaching. Ridiculously, those who practice healing are very sick themselves. The spiritual gift of healing was one of the sign gifts given to the apostles and early Church Age believers.

It is a historical gift given to authenticate and prove their calling because the Jews were seeking for a sign (1 Corinthians 1:22, 14:22-23). We have to rightly divine the Word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15) which means that we have to use the grammatical, historical, exegetical and categorical methods of biblical interpretation.

In the Old Testament Yahweh alone was the source for healing, just as he was considered the source for sickness. Summarizing the basic OT attitude concerning sickness and healing, Deut. 32:39 portrays God as the direct dispenser of sickness and disease as punishment for man's sin (Numbers 12:9-15; 2 Chronicles 21:18-19; 26:16-21).

In the Old Testament, healing is a reward for obedience, a manifestation of God's forgiveness, mercy, and love (Genesis 20:17; Psalm 41:5). This applied not only to individuals but also to entire nation of Israel (Exodus 23:22-25; Leviticus 26:14-21; Numbers 16:47; Deuteronomy 7:15). This view is not applicable for the Church Age believers.

Basically there are four causes and source of sicknesses with corresponding course of action:

- Sickness as results of violating the natural laws: Whenever an individual by-pass the laws of nature. For example: when you get out into the rain without an umbrella. You do not ask God to heal your colds or flu but go and buy medicine. When you skip meals and suffer from ulcer, you do not ask God for healing but consult your doctor. Such sickness is self-made falls under self-made misery and outside the will of God. The Christian cannot manufacture his own misery and then ask God to deliver him from its consequential sufferings
- Sickness as results of preventive suffering: When a growing believer suffers physical pains as divine preventive measure against arrogance (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). Such sickness is not curable by medicine or by divine healing. No amount of prayer or fasting can remove it. The believer must endure and learn to manage it by the grace of God.
- Sickness as result of divine discipline: When a sinning believer receives a warning, intensive, or sin unto death divine discipline for failure to rebound (1 Corinthians 11:30). Such sickness does not need divine healing but simply adjustment to the justice of God through rebound. It is not curable by medicine or by any means except by adjustment to divine justice.
- Sickness as result of undeserved suffering: When an advancing believer suffers physical pains under momentum or evidence sufferings (Job 1:11, 2:5). Such suffering is so intense and fierce but no medicine can possibly cure the sickness. The spiritual mature believer can triumph over such sufferings by using the divine resources. Such sickness is from Satan who aims to destroy the believer but uses by God for his promotion.

Majority of believers considered the ability to perform healing as sign of spirituality or spiritual maturity. The healers are exalted and more popular than the Lord Jesus Christ. Sickness and healing is one of the most distorted teachings in Christianity. There are various religious myths, hypothesis, superstitions and practices contrary to Bible doctrine but slowly became acceptable and considered "Christian" in perspective.

The following are common fallacy related to sickness and healing:

- Sickness is closely related to demonic activities against human beings
- Sickness is always a divine punishment
- Spiritual people are not susceptible to diseases because they have divine protection
- Sickness is related to sin and iniquity
- Sickness is an evil that contradict God's will
- Sickness hinders God's purpose
- Sickness is barrier in the development of faith and must be eliminated
- Sickness is a sign of lack of faith
- Divine healing is not possible when the people have no faith.
- Faith on the part of the sufferer or by someone on his behalf is prerequisite for healing
- The prayer of faith of the healer brings healing of the body
- Divine healing is the inheritance of the believer through the atoning death of Christ
- Sin that causes sickness is spiritual and the only solution is spiritual.

Some divine healers considered any medical means of healing as Satan's instruments to defeat the believer's exercise of true faith. Any medical attempt would imply a lack of faith in God's healing power. The Lord Jesus Christ recognized the function of physician in the healing of the sick people (Matthew 9:12).

The divine healers misunderstood the plan and purpose of God for different ages. They arrogantly refused the truth of Bible doctrines. The healing ministry of the Lord Jesus was continued through his commissioning and sending out of the twelve (Mark 6:7-13; Matt. 10:1-5; Luke 9:1-6) and the seventy (Luke 10:9).

The book of Acts and the epistles provide clear evidence of the continuance of divine healing throughout the apostolic church but slowly diminished after the completion of the Canon of the Bible.

James 5:14-16 was written at the time medical science was not yet popular and medicine was rare. The context of this text clarifies several things. The prescribed "oil" was a kind of herbal balm popular in the area. The "pray over him" is the intercession of the elders for him to rebound. The "prayer of faith" refers to spiritual people who are praying inside the will, purpose and plan of God.

The prayer of faith is not a permanent provision for the entire Church Age. The "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man" demonstrates that from Genesis to Revelation, from early Church Age to the 21st century, the record demonstrates that physical healing by divine intervention has been the experience of many of God's people, even without the aid of divine healers.

God continues to heal, and He is doing it privately and personally apart from human intervention or human ministry. The gift of healing is already void and no longer has a necessary but divine healer continued to come and go. The rise and fall of divine healing is not alarming since pseudo-divine healing will significantly multiply prior to the Great Tribulation where the devil will deceive many with signs and wonders. The gift and practice of divine healing today are the work of the devil. Divine healing has become a major cult that showcases the wolves in sheep's clothing.

Consider these basis principles:

- Only God can add days or years to your life (Prov. 3:2) not an apparatus, machine, drugs, doctors, surgery or chemotherapy.
- Only God can shorten your days on earth (Psa. 89:45) not the exclusion of medication, treatment or surgery.
- The divine timing for the physical death of every person in this world is the sole domain of God's sovereignty; no one can interfere or change it.
- Under God's perfect plan, He allows man to suffer the agony of physical pains so that he will learn to put his confidence on God and not on doctors, surgery or medications.

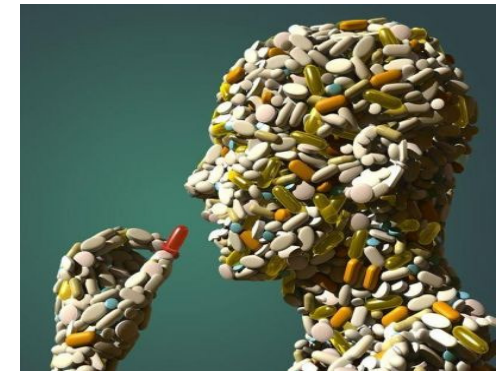
- Satan is using the suffering of sickness to drive man away from God and turn to human remedy or solution.
- God add "days" to a person's life because of positive volition toward Bible doctrine or the unconditional desire to know God through His Word (Deut. 6:2, Psalm 91:16, Proverbs 3:2).
- God allows pains and sufferings as vehicles to draw us nearer to God and not turn to human solutions.
- Terminal illness is designed by God to make the believer put his confidence on God's power and grace not on human resources, human wisdom, or human solution.

As Christians, we do not trust man and human invention. When it comes to miracles, God does not use human, human invention, human wisdom – He operates by his own. Miracles are the sole decision and action of divine sovereignty. God does not use human assistance in executing His will. God alone is in control of human life. Man is arrogant to claim to know your time of death. When God allows impossible adversities and problems, it is designed for Him to resolve it by His own power. God is doing miracles today, without using the loud TV healers, in His own way, in His timing.

Our part is to put our total confidence on Him and not to panic. Human solutions are not solutions to human problems. Trust God, He alone has all the solutions. God will never use human solutions to problems He allows to confront us. If a Christian is after real divine intervention, it would be wise to stay away from surgery and chemotherapy, which God does not need to bring a miracle healing. Miracle is the sole decision and action of God's sovereignty which does not employ human power, wisdom and resources. It is presumptuous arrogance to claim that one is used by God apart from His perfect plan.

Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries
www.dikaosune.com

Tract No. 87
Sickness and Healing



SICKNESS AND HEALING