



The Examiners

...Examining the Scripture daily to see whether these things were so... Acts 17:11

Terminal Illness

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It has been said that there are two things which man cannot view with a steady gaze – one is the sun, the other is death. When we think about terminal illness, faith and fear comes to mind. Faith: we have the hope that we will live. Fear: we have the terror that we will die.

When we ponder upon this final earthly experience, we show inhibition. Death is an unpleasant subject, unless one is in the business like mortuaries, cemeteries, crematories, and the like. No one likes to talk about it—much less reflect upon his own demise. Terminal illness is more dreadful and avoided topic. Death is the inevitable destiny of all men (except for those who will be alive when Christ returns (1 Thessalonians 4:15)).

My personal thesis: As two times cancer patient, let me give you my thesis at the beginning of this study. The diagnosis of the illness from the standpoint of medical science with the latest technology is always accurate. The prognosis and the treatment are not. It is called medical practice and sometimes, it can become medical malpractice. When it comes to the diagnosis, finding second opinion is rational. When it comes to treatment, God is the first and final opinion, not men. When it comes to the impossible things, we trust God not men, we must not panic with the shocking prognosis of fallible men. Where men does not have any solution, God has has the ultimate solution.

Evaluate your doctors: Most people know of someone who was given a dire prognosis, but lived far past their doctor's expectations. Some even show a complete reversal of disease and live long, full lives. While doctors are highly educated people who know a great deal about the workings of the human body, they are not infallible and are undoubtedly delighted when patients who were expected to die beat the odds and thrive. Some doctors are sincerely

honest to their profession and charitable to patients, some are just the opposite.

It is appointed unto every man to die physically (Hebrews 9:27). Therefore we are all terminal, since God alone has the sovereign power and control over our dying and death. No one is in control of the time, manner and place of his dying unless God allows it.

- Death is the inevitable fate for all with the exception of Enoch, Elijah and the Rapture believers.
- The uncertainty of the time of death is common to all. Death can take us at any stage of life.
- The manner and cause of death will always be a question of uncertainty. Even the terminally ill with cancer may die with heart failure, kidney failure, not necessarily with the cancer.
- There is common physical phenomenon both for the prepared and unprepared to die.
- Both the souls of the saved and lost are conscious after physical death.

But what does one do if he is informed that he has terminal cancer. Suppose the physician tells you, "With chemotherapy you may be able to live a year; without it, you will have two to three months." Is the Christian obligated to subject himself to sickening treatment for the sake of a few months more? Do we love this earth and dread heaven that much? We certainly have the option of treatment, but there is nothing in the Scriptures that would require it.

Some who are diagnosed as terminal will perish, but not everyone will. Some will beat the odds and look back on their illness as "the fight of their life" is a highly worthwhile endeavor. A terminal illness is an infection or disease which is considered ultimately fatal or incurable. Usually a patient is considered to have a terminal illness if he or she seems likely to die despite diagnosis and treatment. The dictionary.com defines terminal disease as "occurring at or causing the end of life," that isn't always the case. Some patients who are considered terminal ill win their

battles against disease and dying. Some even go on to conquer other things that they had previously viewed as road-blocks; armed with the knowledge and faith in God that nothing is impossible.

A private matter: Terminal disease is something private and personal just like your faith is personal. The faith of others cannot help you. The issue is between you and God and the real issue is His will for you not healing or dying. The issue is whether you are ready to accept His will for you. Bible doctrine in the soul (virtue) will avoid the terminally ill patient from solicitation of sympathy from others and demanding others to share his sufferings.

Lessons learned the hard way: Adversity is a good teacher, if only you will learn to keep silent, abstain from murmuring, complaining and grumbling. The isolation from the fast track of life is designed by God to make us enjoy a qualitative moments with Him through consistent, progressive, and less interrupted study of Bible doctrine. Ironically, most believers cannot see the fabulous plan of God for them while in good health. It takes the lost of a limb or a foot before they are motivated to pursue their personal sense of destiny. This really sounds awkward, but some believers can only fall in love with God while in adversity. Divine discipline can only wake up the believer unlike the momentum testing and evidence testing that brings the appreciation of God in the greatest height.

The sources of Sickness:

- Psychological - induced by negative mental attitude sins
- Physiological - induced by the body out of imperfection
- Demonic Induced – the soul out of harmony with God and in tune with cosmic policy and principles. Satan is the master of bringing sickness & healing to deceive mankind.
- Environmental – violating the law of nature
- Divinely permitted – God allowing Satan to test the spiritually mature believer

Prepare for your death: one cannot live wrong and die right! After death there is no opportunity for salvation for unbelievers or repentance for believers. The real issue for those who are terminally ill is not about healing or dying, but the quality of life in relationship to God while still alive. If you are not

living in the plan of God, there is no way you can die right.

Benefits of doubting your doctors: You have the rights to explore treatment options and to research further. Conventional medicine is constantly making enormous advancements, offering hope to patients who would have previously been considered incurable. In addition to traditional treatments and medications, many patients claim to benefit from the use of alternative treatments, either on their own or in tandem with standard medical methods. Alternative and complementary medicine has a strong following in both the prevention and treatment of disease. Patients may want to research all of their available options so that they can decide on the best ways to proceed as they battle their illnesses.

Only God can prolong life: Is the Christian morally obligated to prolong his life by the use of artificial techniques? May he refuse chemotherapy, knowing that such would only add a few months to his life (and that with considerable suffering)? Is it wrong to refuse permission to be connected to a machine that can sustain biological functions, when one knows that death will result otherwise?"

Life and death issues entail some of the most difficult decisions one will ever be called upon to make. The Bible does have provided us with explicit answers to the complex medical questions with which we are confronted in today's technological world. The Bible is perpetually relevant, and do contain principles that will enable the devout person to make reasonably confident decisions in many of these areas of ethical concern. Let us consider the following. The Christian must acknowledge that human life is a gift from God (Acts 17:25; 1 Tim. 6:13). No person, therefore, has the arbitrary right to destroy that life — either by homicide or suicide. And this includes what has come to be called "euthanasia" (a term meaning "good death"). Mercy-killing is morally wrong. It is an infringement into divine territory.

There is a mark difference in deliberately terminating one's life, and letting natural processes take their providentially permitted course. Allowing death is not the equivalent of producing death.

Principles:

- Only God can add days or years to your life (2 Kings 20:1-6, Isaiah 38:1-5, Proverbs 3:2) not an apparatus, machine, drugs, doctors, surgery or chemotherapy.
- Only God can shorten your days on earth (Psalms 89:45, 102:23, Proverbs 10:27) not the exclusion of medication, treatment, surgery, or not going through medical procedures.
- 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 man 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, 9:11).
- 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.

Faith and divine miraculous healing: 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.

God will never use the imperfect plan of men, the imperfect wisdom of men and the imperfect resources of men contaminated with old sinful nature and apart from the power of the Holy Spirit and metabolized Bible doctrine in the soul. All works, all sacrifices, all services and all endeavors apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit and metabolized Bible doctrine in the souls are called human good works rejected by God, and that's including your doctors.

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 natural 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.

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. It is a historical gift (now obsolete in the post-canon Church Age) 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), while 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.

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 a 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 a 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
- God uses doctors, surgery, drugs and chemotherapy to bring miraculous healing.

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 have necessary but divine healers continued to come and go.



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Subtitled: The Fight of your Life: A Winner's Faith
Dedicated to Melyn Gil Lerio
Who lost some battles but won the war