



Your Doctor

F. T. Wright

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1. Mankind's Marvelous Beginning

WE ARE almost six thousand years removed from the wonderful moment when God created a physically perfect man and woman, and settled them into their Eden home which in turn was absolutely free from the slightest trace of sin, defect, disease, or death.

If we were to be transported back to that scene and could look upon these incredible manifestations of the Creator's power and love, we would be amazed at the splendid vitality, strength, beauty, and purity of Adam and Eve. They knew nothing of feebleness, sickness, weariness, or any kindred complaint, but rejoiced in the vigor of vibrant life and health. Could we gaze upon those marvelous beings, we would realize something of what we have lost in the meantime, and would be even more dissatisfied with the low level of health with which we are now burdened.

Even though the curse of sin rested heavily on the earth after the temptation and fall, the endowment of vitality bestowed upon mankind when he was created protected him from sickness for a surprisingly long time.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 138-139:

The book of *Genesis* gives quite a definite account of social and individual life, and yet we have no record of an infant's being born blind, deaf, crippled, deformed, or imbecile. There is not an instance upon record of a natural death in infancy, childhood, or early manhood. There is no account of men and women dying of disease. Obituary notices in the book of *Genesis* run thus:

"And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died."

"And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died."

Concerning others, the record states: "He lived to a good

old age; and he died.” It was so rare for a son to die before the father that such an occurrence was considered worthy of record: “And Haran died before his father Terah.” Haran was a father of children before his death.

God endowed man with so great vital force that he has withstood the accumulation of disease brought upon the race in consequence of perverted habits, and has continued for six thousand years. This fact of itself is enough to evidence to us the strength and electrical energy that God gave to man at his creation. It took more than two thousand years of crime and indulgence of base passions to bring bodily disease upon the race to any great extent. If Adam, at his creation, had not been endowed with twenty times as much vital force as men now have, the race, with their present habits of living in violation of natural law, would have become extinct.

So, it took more than two thousand years of sin to bring sickness upon the human race to any great extent. To appreciate the length of the time spanned by those two thousand years and more, it needs to be realized that they reached close to four centuries beyond the flood, and the flood was 1,656 years after the fall. Abraham lived twenty centuries after Adam was obliged to vacate his Eden home, so that it was not until his day that disease first began to take its toll on humanity.

Obviously, there were no doctors of any kind practicing medicine during the first twenty centuries of human existence, as will be the case again when the long reign of sin is ended, and the earth is re-created. But, once the unrestrained indulgence of every fleshly lust and the violation of every natural and moral law broke down man’s immunity to the inroads of disease, the deterioration progressed so rapidly that by the time the next twenty centuries had passed, disease and sickness had become so deep-seated and deadly that the Saviour spent the larger proportion of His ministry treating

the sick.

Testimonies for the Church, vol 3, p. 139:

At the time of Christ's first advent the race had degenerated so rapidly that an accumulation of disease pressed upon that generation, bringing in a tide of woe and a weight of misery inexpressible.

The Desire of Ages, p. 350:

During His ministry Jesus devoted more time to healing the sick than to preaching. His miracles testified to the truth of His words, that He came not to destroy but to save. His righteousness went before Him, and the glory of the Lord was His rearward. Wherever He went, the tidings of His mercy preceded Him. Where He had passed, the objects of His compassion were rejoicing in health, and making trial of their new-found powers.

Crowds were collecting around them to hear from their lips the works that the Lord had wrought. His voice was the first sound that many had ever heard, His name the first word they had ever spoken, His face the first they had ever looked upon. Why should they not love Jesus, and sound His praise? As He passed through the towns and cities He was like a vital current, diffusing life and joy wherever He went.

Our situation today is no less evil and life-threatening than it was in Christ's day. Another twenty centuries of unrestrained indulgence of appetites and passions, wanton abuse of every organ of the human body, poisoning of the soil and plant life, and pollution of the air and water have reduced the human home to "a vast lazar house," as the earth is described in *The Desire of Ages*, p. 823. The sick and the dying are everywhere, while diseases never previously heard of are arising from the breeding grounds of human degeneration.

An increasing number of children are being born deformed, and millions of dollars are now being expended to give organ transplants to little children and even to babies only a few days old. On every hand the cry goes out for relief from this

oppressive burden of disease and distress. Millions of dollars are being spent in the unending search for some new drug, medicine, or treatment which men hope will spell the end to some small part of this misery. Yet, despite this herculean effort, the loss of life and health is undiminished.

But these conditions are continually worsening. Man has no capacity in himself to ward off the sure outworking of evil still unforsaken.

Is Sickness and Sin Unconquerable?

A very unfortunate development from this situation is that men have come to accept sickness as the appointed, inescapable, and unfortunate lot of mankind.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 139:

The violation of physical law, and the consequence, human suffering, have so long prevailed that men and women look upon the present state of sickness, suffering, debility, and premature death as the appointed lot of humanity.

Men, including all too many professing Christians, accept sickness as being inevitable, exactly as they consider sin to be unconquerable. How constantly do preachers, who above all others should know the awesome power of God as the answer to sin and sickness, declare that it is impossible to overcome sin and lead a perfect life. They point to the sinfulness of the human nature, and to the evil of our environment as sure proof that no one can obey the law to perfection. Furthermore they ask,

“Where are the people who are living sinless lives? Who is there who will testify that he has achieved sinless living?”

In response to this challenge, no true child of the Lord will ever present himself as a model of virtue and holiness, but will leave that to the heavenly witnesses to judge and declare.

The Sanctified Life, p. 7:

Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to His divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects.

Acts of the Apostles, p. 562:

The apostle Paul had been caught up to the third heaven and had seen and heard things that could not be uttered, and yet his unassuming statement is:

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after.” *Philippians* 3:12.

Let the angels of heaven write of Paul’s victories in fighting the good fight of faith. Let heaven rejoice in his steadfast tread heavenward, and that, keeping the prize in view, he counts every other consideration dross. Angels rejoice to tell his triumphs, but Paul makes no boast of his attainments.

The attitude of Paul is the attitude that every follower of Christ should take as he urges his way onward in the strife for the immortal crown.

This is the way it must be, for there is neither merit nor advantage in the presentation to the unbeliever of a person living a sinless life, for, no matter how sinless the believer might be, he would still appear faulty in the judgment of the unbeliever as is proved by the Jews’ incessant faultfinding of the perfectly sinless and healthy Saviour.

There is Victory over Sin

But, the God of the universe has made it abundantly clear that He is as well able to heal from disease as He is to deliver from the bondage of sin. We are slow to learn this powerful and essential truth. Let us first see that there are numerous declarations in the Scriptures each one of which alone is

sufficient to establish the truth that:

The Desire of Ages, p. 311:

There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God.

1 Corinthians 15

³⁴ Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God.

Romans 6

¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you.

1 Corinthians 10

¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

These are but a very few of the multiplied texts and statements which are liberally scattered throughout the written word all verifying the certainty of deliverance from all sin in this life. They are beautiful, refreshing, and wonderful declarations in which we can place the utmost confidence. It was when I saw and accepted them that a wonderful change for the better appeared in my life.

It was at the same time that I came to understand that it is the devil who promotes the lie that no man can live a life of righteousness that will satisfy the Almighty. It is Satan's dedicated determination to convince men that they cannot obey the law of God to perfection.

The Review and Herald, July 31, 1888:

From the beginning, it has been the special doctrine of the adversary of God and man, that the law of God was faulty and objectionable. He has ever represented the royal law of liberty, as oppressive and unendurable. He has denoted it "a yoke of bondage." He has declared that it was impossible for

man to keep the precepts of Jehovah. This has been, and still is, the work of Satan. This is the seductive doctrine that devils are seeking to spread throughout the world.

The Great Controversy, p. 489:

If those who hide and excuse their faults could see how Satan exults over them, how he taunts Christ and holy angels with their course, they would make haste to confess their sins and to put them away.

Through defects in the character, Satan works to gain control of the whole mind, and he knows that if these defects are cherished, he will succeed. Therefore he is constantly seeking to deceive the followers of Christ with his fatal sophistry that it is impossible for them to overcome.

After a period of struggle, I came to understand Satan's versus God's stated declarations, and I realized that the settling of the question was but a matter of believing the Lord in preference to the devil. This greatly strengthened my confidence in the truth that sin was not to have the mastery in the lives of those who have experienced salvation from iniquity.

There is Victory over Sickness

But, it took me many more years to understand that, with equal force, the Lord promises us total deliverance from sickness. I was very slow to comprehend the promises assuring us of victory over those sicknesses and diseases which are a result of sin. Let us now carefully read some of these promises and understand them as a commitment on God's part to deliver the believer from sickness and preserve him in health.

Exodus 15

²⁶ If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you.

The Desire of Ages, p. 824:

Christ had been the guide and teacher of ancient Israel, and He taught them that health is the reward of obedience to the laws of God. The Great Physician who healed the sick in Palestine had spoken to His people from the pillar of cloud, telling them what they must do, and what God would do for them.

“If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord your God,” He said, “and will do that which is right in His sight, and will give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon you, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that heals you.” *Exodus* 15:26.

Christ gave to Israel definite instruction in regard to their habits of life, and He assured them,

“The Lord will take away from you all sickness.” *Deuteronomy* 7:15.

When they fulfilled the conditions, the promise was verified to them.

“There was not one feeble person among their tribes.” *Psalms* 105:37.

Isaiah 40

²⁹ He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength.

³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall,

³¹ But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Psalms 103

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!

² Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits:

³ Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases,

⁴ Who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies.

Matthew 9

³⁵ Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 122:

The same power that Christ exercised when He walked visibly among men is in His word. It was by His word that Jesus healed disease and cast out demons; by His word He stilled the sea and raised the dead, and the people bore witness that His word was with power. He spoke the word of God, as He had spoken to all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament. The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ.

Medical Ministry, p. 16:

“Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Oh, how grateful we should be that Jesus is willing and able to bear all our infirmities and strengthen and heal all our diseases if it will be for our good and for His glory.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 113:

The desire of God for every human being is expressed in the words, “Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers.” *3 John 2.*

Matthew 8

² And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.

³ Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, I am willing; be cleansed. Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

Proverbs 3

⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil.

⁸ It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.

Proverbs 4

²⁰ My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my

sayings.

²¹ Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart;

²² For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.

Jeremiah 30

¹⁷ For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds, says the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5

²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jeremiah 33

⁶ Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth.

Psalms 107

¹⁸ Their soul abhorred all manner of food, and they drew near to the gates of death.

¹⁹ Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses.

²⁰ He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.

This is only a sampling of the abundant promises of victory over disease. But the greatest proof of the possibility of a life free of sickness and disease is found in the life of Christ. Jesus came as our living example of this victory as it is written:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 51:

Jesus was an earnest, constant worker. Never lived there among men another so weighted with responsibilities. Never another carried so heavy a burden of the world's sorrow and sin. Never another toiled with such self-consuming zeal for the good of men.

Yet His was a life of health. Physically as well as spiritually He was represented by the sacrificial lamb, "without blemish and without spot." *1 Peter* 1:19. In body as in soul He was an

example of what God designed all humanity to be through obedience to His laws.

This is verily the truth we have long needed to grasp. Our failure to do so heretofore is one of the chief reasons for our experiencing so little deliverance from sickness and disease.

While contemplating that marvelous truth, let us not overlook the facts that certain conditions apply to these promises. Good health is not given to us to squander on selfish ends. Whatever gift we receive is to be used for His honor and glory.

How tragic it is that we so readily forget that it is the Lord who heals us, and that it is our sacred and solemn responsibility to preserve the priceless gift by obedience to the principles and precepts God has provided for this purpose.

2. Victory over Sin and Sickness

A Sinless Life in Sinful Flesh

THE most powerful argument in support of the truth that every repentant believing child of God can live a spotlessly perfect life of victory over every sin while living on this sin-cursed earth and while burdened with mortal, sinful, degenerated flesh and blood, is provided by Christ's living such a flawless life under the same daunting conditions.

The flesh and blood body in which He met and overcame every temptation leveled against Him, was identical in every respect to the flesh and blood body in which we have to meet the same temptations. On this point the Scriptures are very clear as well they need to be. Every aspirant for righteousness must be absolutely confirmed on this truth if he would achieve living and abiding victory over all sin. Therefore it is written:

Hebrews 2

¹⁴ Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.

¹⁷ Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

¹⁸ For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Thus it is clearly taught that Jesus partook of the same flesh and blood as the children, in exactly the same way as every one of them does.

A distinction must be made at this point between the sinless Adam who is the father of the human race and the chil-

dren who have sprung from him. He and Eve were *created* beings, who acquired their sinless, immortal flesh and blood in a very different way from that by which the children received their sinful, mortal humanity. The latter are *begotten* beings who are what they are because they have inherited the sinful, fallen, mortal nature of their parents.

The laws of heredity ensure that whatever the parents are will be passed on to their children. It means that any child born of a human parent since the fall, will most certainly be cursed with the same sinful, mortal flesh and blood as his parents. There is no way by which any human being, including Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, could escape this heredity and be born sinless and immortal.

Therefore, it is written that He took the *same* flesh and blood in the *same* manner as did all the children, and was made in *all* things like His brethren—not in many, nor even in most things, but in *all* things. Do not overlook the vital fact that He did not take the sinless, immortal flesh and blood of the father, Adam, before he fell, but the sinful, mortal flesh and blood of the children after he fell. Since there were no children conceived before the fall, then there has never been a child born with a sinless, immortal heredity. So, when the Saviour took the same flesh and blood as the children, He took it from those who had only fallen, sinful, mortal flesh and blood which had been ravaged by four thousand years of sinning.

Once it has been established beyond question that Jesus came in the same fallen, sinful, mortal flesh and blood as the children, and not in the sinless, immortal flesh and blood of the unfallen Adam and Eve, we are ready to understand the true significance of the fact that Christ never once sinned, no, not even by a thought.

The Scriptures repeatedly testify that He never once sinned.

Hebrews 4

¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

1 Peter 2

²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

²² Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth.

The Desire of Ages, p. 88:

Of the bitterness that falls to the lot of humanity, there was no part which Christ did not taste. There were those who tried to cast contempt upon Him because of His birth, and even in His childhood He had to meet their scornful looks and evil whisperings. If He had responded by an impatient word or look, if He had conceded to His brothers by even one wrong act, He would have failed of being a perfect example. Thus He would have failed of carrying out the plan for our redemption. Had He even admitted that there could be an excuse for sin, Satan would have triumphed, and the world would have been lost. This is why the tempter worked to make His life as trying as possible, that He might be led to sin.

Countless inspired references could be quoted here to confirm the priceless truth that Jesus lived a life of perfect sinlessness while on this earth. He did this for several reasons, among which was the objective of saving lost mankind. However, the purpose which concerns us in this study of true medical principles is that He came to establish the truth that, if divinity was resident in humanity, no matter how sinful that humanity was, or how far it had fallen, the person who was thus blessed could live a perfectly sinless life.

We should not overlook the fact however that while in the estimation of God His Father he was perfectly sinless, some of His contemporaries estimated His character very differently. Here are some of their testimonies:

John 7

²⁰ The people answered and said, You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?

John 8

⁴⁸ Then the Jews answered and said to Him, Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?

⁴⁹ Jesus answered, I do not have a demon; but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me.

John 8

⁵² Then the Jews said to Him, Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and you say, If anyone keeps my word he shall never taste death.

John 10

²⁰ And many of them said, He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?

²¹ Others said, These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?

This false evaluation by His contemporaries was prophesied many years before.

Isaiah 53

¹ Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.

³ He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

But this fact does not alter God's estimation of His son, whom He knew to be perfectly righteous.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 180-181:

The Saviour took upon Himself the infirmities of humanity and lived a sinless life, that men might have no fear that because of the weakness of human nature they could not overcome. Christ came to make us “partakers of the divine nature,” and His life declares that humanity, combined with divinity, does not commit sin.

The Saviour overcame to show man how he may overcome. All the temptations of Satan, Christ met with the word of God. By trusting in God’s promises, He received power to obey God’s commandments, and the tempter could gain no advantage. To every temptation His answer was, “It is written.” So God has given us His word wherewith to resist evil. Exceeding great and precious promises are ours, that by these we “might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 *Peter* 1:4.

Christ’s perfectly sinless living while in the midst of a world steeped in sin at its very worst, and burdened with sinful human nature, reduced to its weakest and most dejected state, is conclusive proof that every believer in Jesus can do the same, provided he has been delivered from the bondage of sin and filled with the divine nature.

A Healthy Life in Sinful Flesh

But, what needs to be understood is that not only was Christ perfectly sinless; He was also perfectly healthy. At a time when men and women were unable in their sinful, mortal bodies to resist infection and disease, He, in the selfsame weakened and sinful human nature, in the same polluted, virus and germ laden environment, demonstrated that perfect health is possible as the word says:

1 Thessalonians 5

²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us carefully ponder that:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 51:

Jesus was an earnest, constant worker. Never lived there among men another so weighted with responsibilities. Never another carried so heavy a burden of the world's sorrow and sin. Never another toiled with such self-consuming zeal for the good of men. *Yet His was a life of health.* Physically as well as spiritually He was represented by the sacrificial lamb, "without blemish and without spot." *1 Peter 1:19.*

The problem of His immersion in a world of highly contagious diseases was solved so completely that He did not fear to mingle with the stricken, unclean, infected crowds, with their palsy, their issues of blood, their suppurations, and even their leprosy. When the leper drew near, the crowds fled in abject terror, but Jesus remained, and fearlessly laid His hands on the rotting, disfigured, loathsome figure before Him.

Consider the picture of the first encounter with a leper which the Saviour experienced, and the first one to be healed since the days of Elisha:

Matthew 8

¹ When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him.

² And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.

³ Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, I am willing; be cleansed. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

The leper is guided to the Saviour. Jesus is teaching beside the lake, and the people are gathered about Him. Standing afar off, the leper catches a few words from the Saviour's lips. He sees Him laying His hands upon the sick. He sees the lame, the blind, the paralytic, and those dying of various maladies rise up in health, praising God for their deliverance. Faith strengthens in his heart. He draws nearer and

yet nearer to the gathered throng. The restrictions laid upon him, the safety of the people, and the fear with which all men regard him are forgotten. He thinks only of the blessed hope of healing.

He is a loathsome spectacle. The disease has made frightful inroads, and his decaying body is horrible to look upon. At sight of him the people fall back in terror. They crowd upon one another in their eagerness to escape from contact with him. Some try to prevent him from approaching Jesus, but in vain. He neither sees nor hears them. Their expressions of loathing are lost upon him. He sees only the Son of God. He hears only the voice that speaks life to the dying. Pressing to Jesus, he casts himself at His feet with the cry, "Lord, if You will, You can make *me* clean."

Matthew 8 [RV]

³ Jesus replied, I will; be made clean, and laid His hand upon him.

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

Immediately a change passed over the leper. His flesh became healthy, the nerves sensitive, the muscles firm. The rough, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy disappeared, and a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy child, took its place.

His were loving hands,

The Desire of Ages, p. 776:

...that never refused to touch with healing the loathsome leper.

The Desire of Ages, p. 266:

The man who came to Jesus was "full of leprosy." Its deadly poison permeated his whole body. The disciples sought to prevent their Master from touching him; for he who touched a leper became himself unclean. But in laying His hand upon the leper, Jesus received no defilement. His touch imparted life-giving power.

Likewise, Jesus did not hesitate to touch the dead. He was

absolutely unafraid of receiving contamination from those who had died. This marvelous, soul-saving truth is revealed in the raising of the widow's son from the village called Nain. As Christ and His disciples approached the gates of the little town, they met the funeral procession advancing toward the burial place.

The Desire of Ages, p. 318-319:

It was a sight to awaken sympathy. The deceased was the only son of his mother, and she a widow. The lonely mourner was following to the grave her sole earthly support and comfort. "When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her." As she moved on blindly, weeping, noting not His presence, He came close beside her, and gently said, "Weep not." Jesus was about to change her grief to joy, yet He could not forbear this expression of tender sympathy.

"He came and touched the bier;" to Him even contact with death could impart no defilement. The bearers stood still, and the lamentations of the mourners ceased. The two companies gathered about the bier, hoping against hope. One was present who had banished disease and vanquished demons; was death also subject to His power?

In clear, authoritative voice the words are spoken, "Young man, I say unto you, Arise." That voice pierces the ears of the dead. The young man opens his eyes. Jesus takes him by the hand, and lifts him up. His gaze falls upon her who has been weeping beside him, and mother and son unite in a long, clinging, joyous embrace. The multitude look on in silence, as if spellbound. "There came a fear on all." Hushed and reverent they stood for a little time, as if in the very presence of God. Then they "glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God has visited His people." The funeral train returned to Nain as a triumphal procession. "And this rumor of Him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about."

Thus Christ demonstrated that through obedience to His Father, He lived in perfect immunity from disease even

though cursed with a flesh and blood body susceptible to invasion by all manner of infection, and living in the closest contact with people who were carriers of those infections. His total victory over sin was matched by His equally complete conquest over disease.

As Jesus was perfectly sinless, but not seen as such in the judgment of men, so likewise His perfect health was not recognized by those around Him. They pronounced Him just as susceptible to disease as anybody else. But God's evaluation was not diminished by their judgment. Christ, during His earthly sojourn was perfectly sinless and perfectly healthy.

One reason for the false judgment of men regarding the health of Christ could be found in the fact that in a weakened, mortal, sinful body He was constantly subjected to such incredible work loads and stress factors, that His energies were depleted even to the point of death. But the fact that He was able to maintain perfect health in that condition makes His experience even more wonderful.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 55:

The disciples who were associated with Him in His work, Jesus often released for a season, that they might visit their homes and rest; but in vain were their efforts to draw Him away from His labors. All day He ministered to the throngs that came to Him, and at eventide, or in the early morning, He went away to the sanctuary of the mountains for communion with His Father.

Often His incessant labor and the conflict with the enmity and false teaching of the rabbis left Him so utterly wearied that His mother and brothers, and even His disciples, feared that His life would be sacrificed.

Incessant labor is that which never ceases during every waking hour of the day. A life such as the Saviour lived is extremely exhausting, reducing resistance to disease and increasing the possibility of infection.

Even worse was the stress placed upon His system by the enmity and false teaching of the religious leaders. Wherever Jesus went, they followed Him, contested the truths He lived and taught, and introduced such darkness that the Saviour's soul was distressed, His spirit deeply troubled, and His energies exhausted. He truly wrestled not...

Ephesians 6

¹² ...against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Human beings cannot war against these supernatural forces without suffering serious depletion of their nervous energies as the witness of Christ's life shows. At the end of most of those days of conflict, He was so incredibly exhausted, that those nearest to Him feared for His life. But even this did not give sickness the victory over Him. Throughout all these intensive attacks on His physical constitution, He triumphed over disease and was as free from sickness as He was from sin.

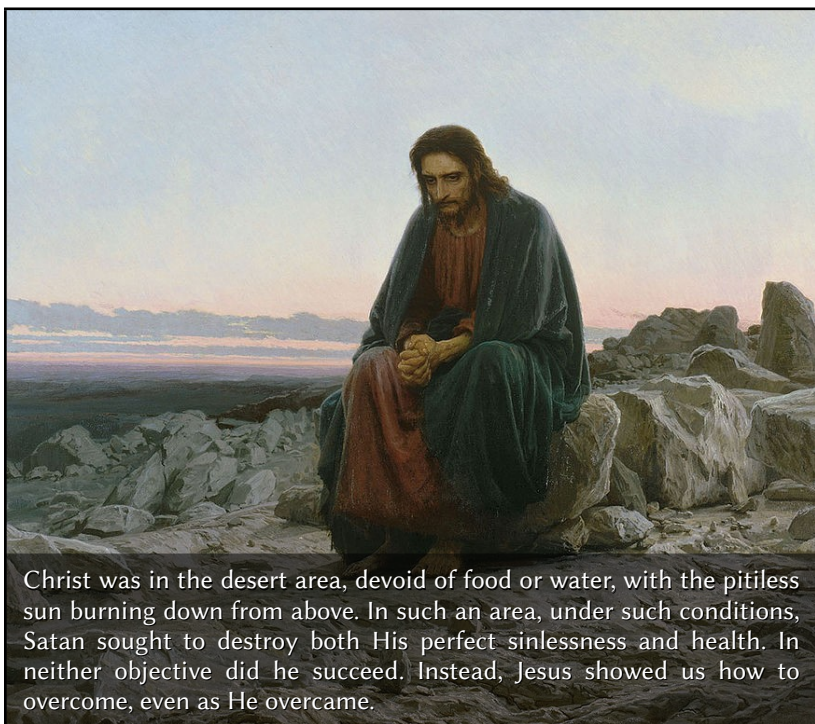
Apart from the agony of the crucifixion, the most taxing ordeal of all was endured by Him during the forty days of fearful struggle in the desert immediately after His baptism. It is impossible for any human writer even when under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to portray the sheer intensity of the suffering, darkness, agony, depression, and horror which the Lord passed through in that lonely battle. Satan was there in person to surround Him with an atmosphere designed to utterly sever Christ's hold upon Omnipotence and rob Him of His health and vitality. When it was all ended, the Saviour was actually dying and would have passed away but for the tender, loving ministry of the angels.

The Desire of Ages, p. 131:

After the foe had departed, Jesus fell exhausted to the

earth, with the pallor of death upon His face. The angels of heaven had watched the conflict, beholding their loved Commander as He passed through inexpressible suffering to make a way of escape for us. He had endured the test, greater than we shall ever be called to endure.

The angels now ministered to the Son of God as He lay like one dying. He was strengthened with food, comforted with the message of His Father's love and the assurance that all heaven triumphed in His victory. Warming to life again, His great heart goes out in sympathy for man, and He goes forth to complete the work He has begun; to rest not until the foe is vanquished, and our fallen race redeemed.



Christ was in the desert area, devoid of food or water, with the pitiless sun burning down from above. In such an area, under such conditions, Satan sought to destroy both His perfect sinlessness and health. In neither objective did he succeed. Instead, Jesus showed us how to overcome, even as He overcame.

Were any of us to be subjected to the same extreme assault upon our physical, mental, and spiritual natures, we would expect to be broken in health for the remainder of our lives. Nor did Christ escape unscathed, for He carried the marks

and scars of that awesome struggle for the remainder of His days on earth. Isaiah foresaw the stricken condition of the Saviour during His ministry, and spoke of it in these words:

Isaiah 53

¹ Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.

³ He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

It was during His ministry after the battle with Satan on the mountain of temptation that these words were fulfilled.

Therefore, contrary to the generally held concept that Christ was a handsome, physically attractive man during His public ministry, the facts are that He bore the appearance of a person who had been stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. Those are strong words indeed and convey the picture of a man who had suffered more than human words can tell. It is evident that He went to the desert as a normal looking man, but emerged forty days or so later...

The Desire of Ages, p. 137:

...pale, worn, and emaciated.

So drastic was the change in His appearance, that:

He had been recognized only by the prophet John.

Never thereafter did He regain all that He had lost, but ever

carried the appearance of a man “stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted”, that is, one who had suffered divine wrath. For this reason, many rejected Him, yet, despite the damage done to Him in that terrible conflict, He was still the total master of disease.

What does all this mean to those of us seeking to understand the truth that our Maker is our Doctor?

The Ministry of Healing, p. 51:

In body as in soul He was an example of what God designed all humanity to be through obedience to His laws.

Christ came to this earth exposed to every possible threat to His health, and in a human body with a background of four thousand years of degeneration, yet never once was He sick. Against every factor which we would regard as a sure and certain guarantee of illness, He demonstrated that neither sin nor sickness had the slightest mastery over Him.



No one can justifiably point to his having a sinful, mortal, degenerate body as a reason that he cannot live a life of per-

fect health. Let none go so far as to believe that the nature of the flesh we dwell in and the environment in which we are forced to live, guarantee that we shall be afflicted with sickness at some time or the other. Rather, it is the truth that one can live both without sickness and without sin even on this sin-cursed earth.

Psalm 91

³ Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.

¹⁰ No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling.

Special Considerations

In the light of what has been said so far, we should spend a little time considering some seeming contradictions. For example:

- Job was a truly righteous man of great faith against whom no sin is recorded, yet he became desperately ill and almost died.
- Elisha, the mighty prophet of God, died of a lingering disease.
- Lazarus, the special friend of Jesus, became infected with a disease which took his life, while Christ, by deliberately remaining away from his bedside, left him to die.
- Paul suffered from weak eyesight from which he prayed to be delivered three times, and
- Ellen White was frequently stricken with illness.

These cases, involving people who had definite victory over sin and certainly lived righteously, seem to contradict the principles being enunciated here. But there is no contradiction.

The subject of this chapter is the deliverance from our sick-

nesses which have come upon us by the sins of our parents and by our own transgressions. Job's case was very different from this. He was a truly righteous perfectly healthy man upon whom the Lord permitted Satan to impose sickness. For Job this was an opportunity to give a most important witness to the truth of God. These same principles apply in the case of Lazarus. In these special cases, these folk were given the very special privilege of remaining loyal to God no matter how much God may have appeared to have disappointed or betrayed them.

According to their own personal confessions, both Paul and Ellen White were endangered with pride. To save them from the awful consequences that would overtake them should such an evil thing be permitted to develop, the Lord mercifully left them with a factor which would deter them from committing sin and losing their usefulness in service.

We will deal with this aspect of the message in Chapter 19 and in this connection we also recommend the book *Entering into God's Sabbath Rest*.

3. Only One Way Approved by Heaven

AS HAS been demonstrated in the previous chapter, Christ came to this earth to reveal to us among other things, the wonderful truth that we can live victoriously over every sin and all sickness. This we can do no matter how infected with iniquity and disease those around us are, even so in mortal, sinful, and degenerate flesh. Receiving these truths by faith so that we truly believe them, is essential if we are to come into the joy of righteousness and health.

The Question is How?

The question now to be answered is: How do we reach this high ideal, or in other words:

“How is the healing art to be practiced?”

The answer is not difficult to find, but the array of professedly healing arts available today does cause considerable distraction. Because of the dreadful proliferation of disease coupled with the human disposition to be the problem-solver, there are many sciences of healing in operation today. There are general practitioners, specialists, surgeons, chiropractors, naturopaths, herbalists, hydro-therapists, color-therapists, masseurs, homeopaths, physiotherapists, acupuncturists, spiritualists, witch doctors, and more.

In truth and fairness, we acknowledge that some of these have become highly developed sciences capable of extraordinary achievements. Others have less to recommend them, and some are almost totally ineffective. But the question for the Christian is:

“Has Christ given to one or more of these groups the power and wisdom to satisfy my health needs?”

To this question, many respond by saying that there is

some good to be found in most systems of healing and that it is a matter of sifting through them all to find what truth is there, while rejecting that which is error.

The problem with this approach is that these people end up taking their problems from one doctor to another, and often spend a lot of money which many of them cannot really afford to do, only to suffer repeated disappointments.

When a person in need is confronted with this array of practitioners, it seems almost impossible to make a safe and sure choice. Many of them claim that they have much to offer, and some even say that theirs is the only system worth trying. To make matters more difficult, the average person just simply does not have the education, time, money, or facilities necessary to investigate all of the options in his quest for help.

Only One Way

But for the true child of God, these problems are solved, for the Lord has provided infallible guidelines for making the decision. He has declared that, while there are in fact many ways of treating the sick, there is only one system on which His blessing and approval rests, as it is plainly written:

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 443:

There are many ways of practicing the healing art, but there is only one way that Heaven approves.

That is the truth written in words which are too plain and forceful to be misunderstood. Therefore, at this point in our search for the living truth, we are to become fully established in the fact that there is only *one* way to practice the healing art that is approved by Heaven. At this stage we are to believe the truth of it because it is written in the Word by which we are to live. God says that it is so. Therefore, it is so, and, until we understand the truth of it, we must accept and believe the

fact of it by faith.

It follows then that each person determined to know and practice the healing, saving truth that God is our Doctor, must contemplate this mighty verity until he is fully persuaded that there is only one way which Heaven approves. He will know that he has achieved full persuasion when it becomes unthinkable for him to give even the slightest consideration to the use of any healing art which does not enjoy Heaven's approval.

This can only mean that there is only one way acceptable to us, only one way to which we can give recognition, only one way we will ever practice, and only one way we will ever permit to be practiced on us.

Christians can approve of and accept only that of which Heaven approves, and in the case of the healing arts, there is only one approved form. Therefore, before taking any further steps in our search for the truth that God is our Doctor, let it be forever settled in our minds that, when we have found this divinely approved procedure, we shall forever discard every other way in favor of it alone.

Which is the One Way?

Having made this resolution, the next step is to positively identify the one way which Heaven does approve. There must be no confusion in respect to this whatsoever, no doubts, and no uncertainties. Each believer in Jesus must absolutely know for himself the truth on this matter.

Let all those take heart who have until now vainly sought satisfaction in this matter of health. It is inconceivable that the Lord would keep so vital a truth hidden from the view of the sincere, Spirit-led seeker for eternal light.

The place to begin the search for God's way to health is in the saving ministry of Jesus Christ, the model medical mis-

sionary. He is the only example for every one who claims to be a practitioner of the one healing art that heaven approves. Only that which follows His procedures and methods can be the correct system for curing the maladies which curse mankind. His life and work as a medical missionary provide the only gauge by which to measure all forms of the healing art. That which does not reproduce His methods of providing deliverance has no justification for existence, is a curse to God's cause, and must be totally discarded.

If we are wise, we will compare our work with Christ's methods alone. While we are doing this, Heaven will be gauging our work by the same standard, as it is written:

Acts of the Apostles, p. 551:

Christian workers who succeed in their efforts must know Christ; and in order to know Him, they must know His love. In heaven their fitness as workers is measured by their ability to love as Christ loved and to work as He worked.



Jesus Christ is the model medical Missionary. All those who would work as medical missionaries must place their feet in His footprints and thus work as He worked in the same power which He exercised. Then they will be as successful as He was.

As the measurement by which we are to model our ministry for those who have lost their soundness of body and mind, Christ is utterly reliable. Every one is to learn and accept the fact that if they build their work as He built His; treat the sick as He did; and follow the same system of operation, then they cannot be misled. This is assured, for He was meticulously careful to do only that which heaven could and did approve.

John 5

¹⁹ Then Jesus answered and said to them, Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

Education, p. 80:

His service for heaven and earth was without failure or faltering.

Christ the Model

From the evidences considered thus far, we conclude that there is only one way approved by Heaven, and that those who wish to know the full extent of that system must study the life and work of the mighty and perfect Exemplar, Jesus Christ, the most successful medical missionary who ever walked the earth.

In order to accept this truth and live by it, there must first be a victory over the erroneous belief that Christ had powers which we may not have and therefore we cannot live and work as He lived and worked. This wrong idea leads to the conclusion that we require a system of healing which is different from what His was.

This is a grave mistake. Christ is the example of what every true medical evangelist is to be. The same power, facilities, and gifts which were at Christ's command are likewise available to His believing followers.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 122:

The same power that Christ exercised when He walked visibly among men is in His word. It was by His word that Jesus healed disease and cast out demons; by His word He stilled the sea and raised the dead, and the people bore witness that His word was with power. He spoke the word of God, as He had spoken to all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament. The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ.

The Desire of Ages, p. 664:

Jesus revealed no qualities, and exercised no powers, that men may not have through faith in Him. His perfect humanity is that which all His followers may possess, if they will be in subjection to God as He was.

There is no need to have the least doubt about this, for we have but to view the medical missionary work done by the apostles after Pentecost to see that those holy, Spirit-filled men conducted their ministry of healing exactly as Christ had conducted His with the same marvelous results. For instance, see Peter and John ascending the temple steps where they encountered the man who had been lame from his birth.

Christ had taught them how to heal the sick and they followed His ways precisely and exercised the same power He had. When they spoke the word of power, a flood of healing virtue poured into the man's wasted frame, and he became healthy. See *Acts* 3:1-10.

The Gift of Healing

Some may feel that only a favored few can attain to a ministry so powerful. They must be those who have the special gift of healing, described in:

1 Corinthians 12

²⁸ And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

It is concluded that only if we had that gift could we follow the methods of Jesus, otherwise we need to follow other methods. In that case Jesus would be the model for those few only especially endowed with a gift.

While it is true that some will be endowed with special gifts of healing in order to do a special work, there can be no two different ways of practicing the healing art correctly, for there is only one way that heaven approves. The methods of Jesus are the gauge for every believer. There may be a difference in the quantity or scale of the work, but there must never be a difference in the way that the work is done.

Not only those who are working for others as medical missionaries, but every believer may receive the health of Christ by following His way. This is a gift that God intends for everyone.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 113:

The desire of God for every human being is expressed in the words, "Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers." 3 *John* 2.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 51:

In body as in soul He was an example of what God designed all humanity to be through obedience to His laws.

The reason why so few attain to such a level in their Christian experience is two-fold:

1. There needs to be a correction of wrong ideas about this subject.
2. Once these ideas have been corrected, it takes considerable effort and dedication to build an experience incorporating them.

In Conclusion

So then, since Christ did nothing which the dedicated medical missionary cannot do, then He can justifiably expect His followers to accept Him as their Example and acknowledge that His life and work forever settle the question as to what is the one way of practicing the healing art which Heaven approves.

Therefore, when any true believer in Jesus wishes to know if his work is the one approved in Heaven, he has only to compare it with the work of the Exemplar to see if it qualifies. This is a very simple procedure and quite foolproof if done by an honest, dedicated, Spirit-instructed individual who is prepared to accept only that which passes the test, while discarding everything which does not.

4. The Gospel is the Solution

THUS far we have learned that Heaven approves of only one way of practicing the healing art, that Jesus Christ is the model medical missionary, and that the same powers and facilities available to Him, are likewise offered to us. This means that we can reproduce His work without departing from His methods and procedures in the least. On the contrary, if we do so depart, it would be disloyalty to God, a misrepresentation of His character, and an invitation to disaster.

The Principal Method of Christ

The next step in our search for the one way of practicing the healing art which is approved by Heaven, is to study the principles of operation by which the mighty Healer Himself brought relief to the suffering ones who sought His aid.

So, let us investigate further and ask, How did the Saviour accomplish His healing work?

The answer is: It was by, and only by, the gospel. He used no other means than that. In other words, the same gospel by which He delivered people from the bondage of sin and restored the righteousness of God in them, is precisely the same gospel which He used to deliver people from the bondage of sickness and give them health.

This was clearly demonstrated when Christ healed the paralytic who was lowered down through the roof. According to His own words, He healed the paralytic for the specific purpose of revealing that it was done by the same power and methods as the healing from sin.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 111:

Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." And at

once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!” But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, Your sins are forgiven you, or to say, Arise and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” *Matthew 9:2-6.*

In the ministry of healing the physician is to be a co-worker with Christ. The Saviour ministered to both the soul and the body. The gospel which He taught was a message of spiritual life and of physical restoration. Deliverance from sin and the healing of disease were linked together.

This paragraph does not inform us that the gospels which He taught were respectively designed, one to save from sin, and the other to heal the sick. That is not what it says. Instead, it speaks of only one gospel being the means by which both spiritual and physical illnesses are remedied.

When you read for the first time that the gospel is the one way of practicing the healing art which Heaven approves, you may feel a keen sense of disappointment, unbelief, and maybe, even scorn. Even though this is understandable, your reaction would change were you to experience the gospel in all its glorious, creative power. So many are very confident that they know the gospel of Jesus Christ when they really know nothing of its power, the work it is designed to accomplish within them, or the indispensable procedures governing its application.

A Wrong Concept of the Gospel

To many people the gospel is nothing more than the “good news” that Jesus pardons repentant sinners, and then covers their inherited and cultivated sinfulness with His own spotless righteousness, so that they are made to appear what they are not. Through the application of this teaching, only the outward appearance is changed, for, at heart, the sinner is as

sinful as ever, and the sick remain just as sick as before or even worse.

We are not to be surprised at the presence of a teaching which purports to be the gospel of Jesus Christ, but in which there is no power to save either from sin or sickness. We should expect this, for the devil is ever seeking to counterwork the mission of Christ who came to “destroy the works of the devil.” *1 John 3:8*.

The enemy works most successfully by offering a counterfeit of the real which is so like the genuine that it is almost impossible to tell the difference. It is the devil’s purpose that the attention and trust of the needy will be diverted from the true, in which there is all the saving power they could ever require, to the substitute, in which there is no power to save whatsoever.

Before we can experience or practice the one healing art that heaven approves, we must know the gospel which Jesus taught and lived. And having experienced the working of its mighty power to deliver us personally from both sickness and sinfulness, we can then testify that we really do know it.

Referred to here is not the stream of sins which flow from the evil heart, but the root of the problem itself, sin. Every individual who was or ever will be born into this world is conceived under the domination of this power, but every true medical missionary must have experienced deliverance from this source of evil in order to qualify for the work of God in this field.

The gospel is the awesome creative power of the eternally living God which He now devotes to saving His children from sickness, sin, and eternal death. As we look at His created works, we are strengthened in faith by seeing that, if He could call all that we see into existence, how small by comparison is the task to Him of His healing all our diseases, delivering us

from all our sin, and filling us on the resurrection morning with victory over the last enemy—death!

When told as a mere theory, even if the theory is true, the gospel has no power to save. Worse than that, the listener will reject truth as error when the one presenting it has not been sanctified by it. Consider well the solemn import of this as it is revealed in the following words:

Matthew 5

¹³ You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 441:

The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, pierces the heart of the sinner and cuts it in pieces. When the theory of the truth is repeated without its sacred influence being felt upon the soul of the speaker, it has no force upon the hearers, but is rejected as error, the speaker making himself responsible for the loss of souls. We must be sure that our ministers are converted men, humble, meek, and lowly of heart.

That is a very solemn statement which reveals serious implications in the preaching of the gospel either in the ministry of deliverance from sin, or in the healing of disease. Only when the medical missionary has experienced the power of the gospel in his own life, will his ministry for others be effective. That this is so is demonstrated by the situation facing the restored demoniacs from whom the devils departed to destroy the swine. See *Matthew* 8:28-34.

The Desire of Ages, p. 340:

The two restored demoniacs were the first missionaries whom Christ sent to preach the gospel in Decapolis. For a few moments only these men had been privileged to hear the teachings of Christ. Not one sermon from His lips had ever fallen upon their ears. They could not instruct the peo-

ple as the disciples who had been daily with Christ were able to do. But they bore in their own persons the evidence that Jesus was the Messiah. They could tell what they knew; what they themselves had seen, and heard, and felt of the power of Christ.

This is what everyone can do whose heart has been touched by the grace of God. John, the beloved disciple, wrote: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;...that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." *1 John* 1:1-3. As witnesses for Christ, we are to tell what we know, what we ourselves have seen and heard and felt. If we have been following Jesus step by step, we shall have something right to the point to tell concerning the way in which He has led us. We can tell how we have tested His promise, and found the promise true. We can bear witness to what we have known of the grace of Christ. This is the witness for which our Lord calls, and for want of which the world is perishing.

What is the Gospel?

What then is the gospel, as Christ taught it? The best definition of that mighty solution to the sin problem and its results, is given by the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul in these words:

Romans 1

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God! It is not merely a part of God's power, but it is the actual power itself—that awesome, creative energy by which He spoke the universe into existence, and by which He upholds and maintains

that same universe moment by moment. It is far beyond our capacities to fully comprehend how infinite is that wondrous might by which the Almighty accomplishes all that He does.

One way in which our appreciation of the power of the King of kings can be improved, is to spend time studying the immensity, complexity, and perfect order of God's created works.¹ Once this has been accomplished, we begin to see that both sin and sickness are but minor problems to God. What appears to be an insurmountable obstacle to recovery and restoration to those who have never seen the power of God, is accomplished by the breath of His mouth, for:

Psalm 33

⁶ By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses....

⁹ For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast.

What must be clearly understood is that God's power is creative power by which He made man in the first instance, and by which He restores him in the second. Seeing that the power of God is the gospel, it then follows that the gospel is creative power in action. Therefore, it was the application of the gospel of Jesus Christ which created the worlds, and now that same creative power is devoted to saving man from sickness and from sin.

God knows no other way than this, and it will be demonstrated that every single healing which Jesus ever accomplished was a repeating of what He had done during the six days of the original creation week. The same power and the

¹ In this volume, we do not intend to dwell on that theme too much, but we recommend the second chapter in *Entering into God's Sabbath Rest*, entitled, "God—the Source." The information there will serve to awaken some consciousness of the infinite capacities of God.

same procedures are used.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 115:

When the gospel is received in its purity and power, it is a cure for the maladies that originated in sin. The Sun of Righteousness arises, “with healing in His wings.” *Malachi* 4:2. Not all that this world bestows can heal a broken heart, or impart peace of mind, or remove care, or banish disease. Fame, genius, talent—all are powerless to gladden the sorrowful heart or to restore the wasted life. The life of God in the soul is man’s only hope.

Consider carefully the message of this statement. It declares that the gospel, when received in its purity and power, is a cure for the maladies or sicknesses which originated in sin. The pure gospel is one unmixed with error; one which is truth through and through; one in which there is not one thread of human devising. That gospel is the actual power of God Himself, the Almighty Creator who *spoke* the worlds into existence. It is the beautiful, pure, and powerful word of the living God which is being revealed to us in these last days.

When it is seen that the gospel is both the truth of God and the power of God, it becomes easy to believe that it is the cure for the maladies, diseases, plagues, and sicknesses which originated in sin. In fact, it is wonderful news to learn that the Sovereign of the Universe has brought up His mightiest solution to effectively and totally deal with the problems of sickness and sin.

If then you will be a medical missionary approved by Heaven, you must possess the power of the pure gospel to begin with. But the possession of divinely endowed power is of no value unless you understand the procedures for its successful operation.

The Procedures of the Gospel

To illustrate this point, suppose you receive an offer to live

and work in a far-away country. Since your present working and living standards are unbearable, you are quite attracted by this offer and eagerly accept. However, you lack the necessary means to transport you there. A friend, hearing of your situation, offers you the use of his company jet. All arrangements are made and you arrive at the airport ready to go. But to your amazement, you find that there is no pilot to fly the jet. You would gladly fly it yourself but do not know the procedures. So your situation is just as hopeless as if there had been no jet at all.

In the same way, we have the power of the gospel made available to us as the one means of escape from sickness and sin, but, if we do not understand the procedures for the application of the gospel, we are just as lost as if there were no gospel at all. We will experience no relief from either our iniquity or our disease.

So then, what are the procedures by which the Saviour worked, and thereby demonstrated the one way of practicing the healing art which Heaven approves?

The answer to this question has three parts. We will not deal with them in detail just at the moment, but in brief they are as follows:

1. Removing the disease from the body and implanting health in its place.
2. Exchanging old ideas, theories, habits, and practices with those through which God can channel His healing life-forces, for the rebuilding of any weakened parts of the body and for the general work of preserving health.
3. Replacing this mortal body with a newly created immortal body at the resurrection.

The spiritual counterparts to the first two steps are known as Revival and Reformation. In the Revival, we are freed from

the bondage of sin which prevents us from being spiritually healthy and free. Reformation rebuilds our wasted characters and weakened minds and generally preserves our experience.²

In the next chapter we will take some time to look at the application of the procedures of the gospel in the area of health.

² For a more comprehensive study on Revival and Reformation, we recommend the books *Freedom from Sin*, and *Revival and Reformation*.

5. Contrasting Statements

THE last chapter closed with the declaration that there are three different health problems which must be solved:

1. Deliverance from the bondage of disease,
2. The need for the daily preservation and improvement of health, and, in the end,
3. The longed-for victory over death.

Each of these serious problems requires its own distinctive solution which are, namely:

1. Revival,
2. Reformation, and
3. Immortality.

Each of these is accomplished by the gospel—the living power of the Creator God to save from sickness and from sinfulness.

What we now need are some strong, incontrovertible evidences revealing these differences. We will find them in statements which will at first seem to be contradictory, but which, when related to the work to which they correctly apply, will appear in perfect harmony.

Here is one which declares that God is our Doctor, and that He heals by the impartation of His life into the believer. This is a description of the revival:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 243-244:

There is something better for us to engage in than the control of humanity by humanity. The physician should educate the people to look from the human to the divine. Instead of teaching the sick to depend upon human beings for the cure of soul and body, he should direct them to the One who can save to the uttermost all who come unto Him. He who made

man's mind knows what the mind needs.

God alone is the One who can heal. Those whose minds and bodies are diseased are to behold in Christ the restorer. "Because I live," He says, "you will live also." *John 14:19*. This is the life we are to present to the sick, telling them that if they have faith in Christ as the restorer, if they co-operate with Him, obeying the laws of health, and striving to perfect holiness in His fear, He will impart to them His life. When we present Christ to them in this way, we are imparting a power, a strength which is of value; for it comes from above. This is the true science of healing for body and soul.

Before we consider a statement which appears to contradict this one, let us make certain we understand what this statement is saying. Until we do, we shall not understand the revival and what it accomplishes.

Firstly, the procedures listed in this paragraph are declared to be the true science of healing for body and soul. Therefore, if, in living faith, we follow the instructions here given, we are assured that we are following the pathway mapped out by the Lord, and wonderful will be the results.

Once again, let it not be overlooked that the one gospel procedure is the solution for the needs of both the soul and the body, that is, for deliverance from either spiritual or physical bondage. Therefore, if you are truly born again, you will know precisely what to do to secure physical healing. Just apply the same steps of faith which you employed to obtain healing from the bondage of sin, to the liberation from the bondage of sickness.

The average person does not do this, but applies to the sin problem what he thinks is the gospel, and something else, usually called "natural remedies", to his physical ailments. It cannot be too strongly stressed that this is a fatal mistake. There is only one gospel, only one power of God unto salvation from sin and sickness, only one almighty provision by

which the Eternal One meets every need of humanity.

I am not claiming that there is no place for natural remedies in medical missionary work, for this would not be the truth. There is a place, particularly in the work of reformation, but the revival can never be the product of the application of natural remedies. That can only be accomplished by the creative act of God.

In the statement under consideration, no mention is made of nature being our doctor or of God working through nature. Instead, the suffering one is directed to have faith in Christ as the restorer, and the promise is that, if he will do this while meeting three simple conditions, he will receive the impartation of Christ's life, and thus thereby be a partaker of His health. Those three conditions are:

1. If they have faith in Christ as the restorer,
2. If they co-operate with Him, obeying the laws of health, and
3. Striving to perfect holiness in His fear,

He will impart to them His life.

One has but to study almost any one of the healings performed by Christ to see that He employed these procedures without using natural remedies at all.

Consider, for instance the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. Christ came to him and gave him the gift of faith, generated by the atmosphere of great creative power which emanated from Jesus, who simply spoke the word of command. In the new faith now invested in him, the impotent man grasped the power in that word, and was instantly and totally healed. He literally leaped to his feet, praising God for his wonderful deliverance. Natural remedies were not used at all, nor were they needed, nor will they ever be needed in the work of reviving those locked in the prison house of disease,

for if they had been needed, Christ would certainly have relied on their use in His healings.

Now then, all that the statement under consideration declares to be the true science of healing for body and soul is entirely true, but it is not the full revelation of this subject, and no one is to jump to the conclusion that I am presenting this as being the whole solution to sickness. Therefore, we must not limit ourselves to what is written there, for, if we do, we will have an imbalanced grasp of the healing art, which will rob us of the capacity to rightly understand other, seemingly contradictory declarations such as these:

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 443:

There are many ways of practicing the healing art, but there is only one way that Heaven approves. God's remedies are the simple agencies of nature that will not tax or debilitate the system through their powerful properties. Pure air and water, cleanliness, a proper diet, purity of life, and a firm trust in God are remedies for want of which thousands are dying; yet these remedies are going out of date because their skillful use requires work that the people do not appreciate. Fresh air, exercise, pure water, and clean, sweet premises are within the reach of all with but little expense; but drugs are expensive, both in the outlay of means and in the effect produced upon the system.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 127:

The only hope of better things is the education of the people in right principles. Let physicians teach the people that restorative power is not in drugs, but in nature. Disease is an effort of nature to free the system from conditions which result from a violation of the laws of health. In case of sickness, the cause should be ascertained. Unhealthful conditions should be changed, wrong habits corrected. Then nature is to be assisted in her effort to expel impurities and to re-establish right conditions in the system.

Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the

true remedies. Every person should have a knowledge of nature's remedial agencies and how to apply them. It is essential both to understand the principles involved in the treatment of the sick and to have a practical training that will enable one to rightly use this knowledge.

The use of natural remedies requires an amount of care and effort that many are not willing to give. Nature's process of healing and upbuilding is gradual, and to the impatient it seems slow. The surrender of hurtful indulgences requires sacrifice. But in the end it will be found that nature, untrammelled, does her work wisely and well. Those who persevere in obedience to her laws will reap the reward in health of body and health of mind.

What a seeming contrast there is between these statements and the one at the beginning of the chapter from *Ministry of Healing*, p. 243-244. In fact, so sharp are the seeming differences that it is difficult to find anyone who can reconcile them; anyone who can accommodate both statements without sheltering serious contradictions.

Some people try to solve the dilemma by allocating healing by the power of faith alone, to very rare and special times such as the ministry of Christ during His earthly sojourn, to the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the falling of the former and the latter rain, and today as a desperate last resort when all else has failed. Having applied all the natural remedies as best they know how without seeing the sick delivered, they grimly say: "All we can do now is pray," in the wavering hope that the divine sympathies might be awakened and the disease rebuked.

It must not be overlooked that man cannot change the unchangeable God, who is the same "yesterday, today, and for ever." *Hebrews* 13:8. His sympathies cannot be awakened, for they are constantly wide awake, and need not to be stirred to wakefulness.

Having dismissed the way of living faith in the Great Physician, then they put their entire trust in the power of nature's remedial agencies. This is the same as rejecting the revival phase in the work of being delivered from sin, while concentrating the total effort on the reformation phase. The person who denies the revival while trusting the work of reformation to confirm that he will be saved, can be assured he will never see the kingdom. Reformation can only be effective when the revival has firstly done its work.³

In like manner, those who reject the deliverance from the bondage of disease available only by faith in God's creative power, while putting their entire trust in God's working through natural remedies, will have a very imbalanced, ineffective message and work, and will never find the health they seek, and which the Great Physician designed they are to have.

A fitting title to these several paragraphs as most people understand their message would be: "Nature is My Doctor," or "God Through Nature is My Doctor," and either one of these, rightly understood, would be the truth. What must be correctly understood are the principles which govern the application of the laws of nature, so that the true believer will know where and how to apply them.

In a certain, definable area, God does work through nature to sustain and heal us. Just as revival and subsequent reformation are two different works designed to solve two different problems, so God's direct work on the one hand, and His working through nature on the other, are two different healing ministries each designed to solve two different problems.

To really emphasize that two different ministries of healing are described in the paragraphs quoted in this chapter, I will now make lists from each of them designed to demonstrate

³ For a detailed explanation study the book *Revival and Reformation*.

this:

Ministry of Healing, 243-244	Ministry of Healing, 126-127
God alone is the One who can heal.	Let physicians teach the people that restorative power is not in drugs but in nature.
Those whose minds and bodies are diseased are to behold in Christ the Restorer.	Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies.
This is the Life we are to present to the sick, telling them that if they have faith in Christ as the Restorer, if they co-operate with Him, obeying the laws of health, and striving to perfect holiness in His fear, He will impart to them His life.	We cannot be too often reminded that health does not depend on chance. It is a result of obedience to law.
When we present Christ to them in this way, we are imparting a power, a strength, that is of value: for it comes from above.	Nature's process of healing and upbuilding is gradual, and to the impatient it seems slow.
This is the true science of healing for body and soul.	But in the end it will be found that nature, untrammeled, does her work wisely and well. Those who persevere in obedience to her laws will reap the reward in health of body and health of mind.

A careful study of these contrasting statements confirms

that they are not descriptions of the same work, but are two different solutions to two different problems. Both are applications of the gospel, each of which is perfectly designed to meet and fill the specific need to which it is addressed.

The procedure described in the left-hand column, reveals God's way of dealing with diseases which hold men in bondage and for which they have no cure. For this kind of problem, the principles and procedures outlined in the right-hand column will not bring deliverance, for under no circumstances do they have the answer.

Neither will the science of healing presented in the left-hand column supply the solution needed for the problems handled by the principles and procedures listed in the second column. This means that, to achieve total victory over sickness, one must accurately identify into which category one's health problem falls, so he will know upon which of the two ministries of healing to call in order to cure the sickness, and become fully functional once more.

When these two solutions have accomplished their work, there will be, at the second coming of Christ, the ultimate deliverance from sickness—the abolition of death. While this will once more be the work of the gospel, it will be still another different solution which, like the others, will be specifically designed to effect the work for which it was planned.

Thus the healing ministries of Christ through the application of the living, creative force of the gospel, achieve the total victory over sin and death, and restore the true and faithful believer in Jesus to perfect health and eternal life.

In this chapter we have identified and briefly surveyed the three health problems, and the matching solution God has provided for each. It is time now to examine each in turn in depth and detail. This we will commence in the next chapter.

6. Deliverance from Disease

WHEN disease takes control of the body, it is a master that rules over us against our wills and forces us to suffer sickness despite our best efforts to escape its domineering and tyrannical power. So long as it is within us, it truly has the mastery over us in the area of health. Its presence, so long as it remains within us, makes it impossible for us to be as healthy as Jesus was.

Let us take some time now to look at how Inspiration compares the physical with the spiritual to see that there really is a comparison and not a contrast. Then we will look specifically at the spiritual side. After getting the picture there, we will draw a parallel between it and the physical. By understanding the nature of man's spiritual problem and how Christ deals with it, we will then understand man's physical problem and how Christ deals with that. The reasoning is as follows:

1. There is only one gospel for the healing of body and soul. This we studied in chapter four.
2. The one gospel can take care of two problems because these two problems are not so different as appear on the surface. Even though the manifestations of one are spiritual and the other physical, the differences stop there. At heart and in principle the sources of these manifestations are really the same in nature. This is why both problems can be solved by one solution.

Physical and Spiritual Compared

Let us look at some further evidences. In the Bible a distinct comparison is made between the physical and the spiritual natures. In fact, as far as their principles of operation are concerned, they are pictures of each other. To see one is to see the

other. For instance, consider Isaiah's description of Israel's condition in his time:

Isaiah 1

⁴ Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evil-doers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward.

⁵ Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more.

So far we have a description of Israel's spiritual condition which is one of sinfulness. As we can see, the description is spiritual in nature. Then suddenly, Isaiah begins to describe this same condition in physical terms:

⁵ ...the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints.

⁶ From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed or bound up, or soothed with ointment.

What appears to be a sudden change of description is not really such. The terms change from spiritual to physical, but Israel's condition does not change. First they are described as being sinful and iniquitous, then they are described as being sick.

In *Steps to Christ*, we are told the following:

Steps to Christ, p. 50:

From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins.

Here we have another comparison of physical healing with spiritual healing. It tells us that the procedures for obtaining one are the same as the procedures for obtaining the other. This is another way of saying that the basic nature of both problems is the same.

Then follows a description of the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda. After this description come these words:

Steps to Christ, p. 51:

In like manner you are a sinner.

This means that the manner in which we are sinful is the same manner in which we are sick physically. It is another way of saying that spiritual and physical sickness are basically the same in nature. Then we are told some details of the problem of sin:

You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy.

Here it talks about “past sins” and “heart.” The past sins require an atonement, but that would not make the person holy. Only a change of heart will produce holiness. Since all of this happens in the same manner as physical sickness, then we can see the parallel. We have past sins, a heart, and the heart determines whether we are holy or sinful. In like manner, we have the symptoms of sickness, and the actual disease, and the presence of the disease determines whether we are healthy or sick.

For those readers who are familiar with the gospel as I have taught it, the picture will be getting clearer. We are sinful not simply because of what we do, but because of what we are at heart. Were we never to commit a wrong act, we would still be sinful because the heart is sinful. Furthermore, it is the heart that produces the sins.

In like manner it is disease which produces the symptoms of sickness. Had we never suffered an outward manifestation of any sickness at all, we would still be looked upon by God as sick, because of the disease within.

The Romans 7 Experience

Though I do not intend to go into a detailed explanation of the gospel as applied to sin, we should take some time to touch on the subject, particularly for those who are not familiar with it. The gospel is in principle an explanation of the problem of disease and its solution.

I will use the illustration as given in *Romans* 7:14-25. I will not quote every verse but take the main points.

The problem the man of *Romans* 7 faces is that he cannot live a holy life though he very much wants to. If this were all we were told, the story would have little value, but in these verses there is an explanation of what the cause of his problem is. Not only that, we are also told what is not the cause. In this way we can identify the solution to his problem and also avoid applying what we think are solutions but which really are something else.

Let us look now at this man's testimony of himself. First of all we know that he wants to do the right thing.

Romans 7

¹⁸ For to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.

So we know that he wants to do the right thing but does not know how. He says further,

¹⁹ For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.

So we are also told that not only does he want to do good but cannot, he also does what he would rather not do. This sounds very much like the man at the pool of Bethesda, or any other sick person. They would like to be well and move about freely, and they apply their wills to make their bodies work, but they are in bondage or captivity to another power. This is described in verse 23:

²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Now let us take a closer look at four main aspects to this man's case. We will see that three are not the problem and one is. First of all we will look at what the problem is not. It is not his mind, for he wants to obey. It is not his will, for he exercises it but to no avail. It is not his members, that is, his body, for it only provides the problem with a place to stay.

But the fourth aspect is the problem. It is described as "the law of sin in his body." This law of sin holds him captive. In verse 14 he says that he is "sold under sin." To be sold means to be a slave, and to be a slave means to have a slave-master which in this case is sin. This is not just an individual sin or two, but it is the very root and power of sin.

Slaves are slaves because over them rules a master. This master is not such merely because of a few actions he commits, but because his nature is that of a slave-master and he has the power to keep the slave in bondage. The same is true in the spiritual. The sin-master is not a master because of a few sinful actions, but because its very nature is that of a master and it has the power to hold its victim in bondage.

In this way we can better understand how it is disease which dwells in us that rules us and holds us in bondage against our wills. Now the solution to this problem is revealed:

²⁴ Who will deliver me from this body of death?

²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

If the man of *Romans* 7 was having a true Christian experience, then he would not seek deliverance from it. The fact is that he is not having a true Christian experience, but through Jesus Christ he can be delivered from sin and be made free.

This requires the removal of sin from his members, and its replacement with the power of God, the righteousness of God. This therefore makes the man free—not theoretically free, not vicariously free, but free in living, experiential fact. Just as the man at the pool of Bethesda did not arise with disease still in him, “in like manner” the man who is delivered from his *Romans 7* experience, arises without this sin-master in him. He is free.

The Three-Tiered Problem of Sin

Each Christian needs to be aware of the fact that it is not merely his own deliverance from sin that is of major consequence. Even though this is important, let us look beyond our own personal problems and their solutions, to the absolutely awesome damage to mankind that these two powers have caused over a period of six thousand years.

In the spiritual realm, sin is only one aspect of a three-tiered problem:

1. The sin-master itself;
2. The stream of sins which is the fruit of that great and terrible root of all iniquity;
3. Finally, there is the actual damage done by the sins which have been committed.

Not until sin has been eradicated, the stream of sin thus dried up at its source, and a restoration from the damage done has been effected, will the mission of the gospel be accomplished or completed.

The stream of sins which finds its source in the root of sin are triggered by temptation from without. The thought is then cherished and sin is produced.

Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 424-425:

It is not for want of evidence that men doubt divine truth;

they are not infidels through ignorance of the character of the word of God. But through sin the whole human organism is deranged, the mind is perverted, the imagination corrupted. Temptations from without find an answering chord within the heart, and the feet slide imperceptibly into sin.

For this cause it is written that:

The Desire of Ages, p. 824:

The very essence of the gospel is restoration.

This has been made possible only by the timely intervention and sacrificial ministry of Jesus who came, not merely to forgive sins, but to obliterate sinfulness and its effects from existence. All that accomplished, Christ will then restore to His redeemed ones all that was lost through sin. This is necessary in order to terminate the sin problem, for, so long as even the smallest portion of the root of sinfulness remains, it will spring to light in a fresh outgrowth of the same evil, and the great controversy with all its agony will have to be repeated.

When we consider the damage caused by the stream of sins that have flowed from all the sin-masters that have ever resided in every human being, the enormity of it all is staggering. The ugly and heart-sickening results of six thousand years of sin are all too readily seen in our society today.

As these words are being written, wars are raging in Africa, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Russia, Northern Ireland, and many other parts of the world. Such savageries are being enacted by men against other men, as well as against helpless women and children, as to defy belief. With callous indifference to the desperate plight of starving multitudes, warring factions wantonly attack and destroy crops and convoys. So, one might go on, and on, and on, directing the attention to atrocities, terrorism, treacheries, crime waves, extortions, murders, and a host of other immoral attacks on men, women, and children. As one ponders man in the light of that to which he has come,

one is forced to exclaim in regard to his fellowman:

“Is this the splendid, warm, loving, harmless, intelligent being which God created and placed in Eden?”

It is the same man, yet he is not the same, for there have been terrible changes. So low has he been dragged down that there is no depth to which he could further descend. Not all, of course have attained to this base level, but it must be admitted that sin is remorselessly warping the entire human race in that direction. Things are rapidly becoming as they were before the flood.

Evangelism, p. 25:

The record of crime and iniquity in the large cities of the land is appalling. The wickedness of the wicked is almost beyond comprehension. Many cities are becoming a very Sodom in the sight of heaven. The increasing wickedness is such that multitudes are rapidly approaching a point in their personal experience beyond which it will be exceedingly difficult to reach them with a saving knowledge of the third angel's message. The enemy of souls is working in a masterful manner to gain full control of the human mind; and what God's servants do to warn and prepare men for the day of judgment, must be done quickly.

Dismal as the present situation is, the greater part of it is hidden below the surface, where it will remain so until such a time comes when the hidden horrors will erupt all around us. That which we can see is but the forerunner of coming total abandonment of the whole world to unrestrained iniquity. Then we will see how great is the change wrought in man by sin, how great is the damage done. In the meantime, we are advised that but few among us have any true realization of how bad things have become.

Evangelism, p. 28:

The angel that stood by my side then instructed me that but few have any conception of the wickedness existing in

our world today, and especially the wickedness in the large cities. He declared that the Lord has appointed a time when He will visit transgressors in wrath for persistent disregard of His law.

Understanding what the problem is, and being appraised as to the full extent of the envisaged restoration, are essential steps in discovering and appropriating God's salvation.

The Three-Tiered Problem of Disease

Just as the sin problem is three-tiered, "in like manner" the disease problem is three-tiered. Firstly, there is disease; secondly, there are the symptoms which spring from this root; and thirdly, there is the fearful damage done by the sickness.

It is in this physical application that the effects of the ravages of disease and its symptoms are most clearly seen. Again and again, in books such as *The Desire of Ages*, after describing the fearful condition of mind and body to which men had been reduced, the state of affairs was attributed to the damage done by diseases springing from a life of sin.

An excellent example of this is the encounter of Christ with the demon possessed man who rushed screaming at Him in the temple at Capernaum. The extent of the damage done to him by his life of sin and of sickness was very considerable as the following quotation shows:

The Desire of Ages, p. 256:

The secret cause of the affliction that had made this man a fearful spectacle to his friends and a burden to himself, was in his own life. He had been fascinated by the pleasures of sin, and had thought to make life a grand carnival. He did not dream of becoming a terror to the world and the reproach of his family. He thought his time could be spent in innocent folly. But once in the downward path, his feet rapidly descended. Intemperance and frivolity perverted the noble attributes of his nature, and Satan took absolute con-

trol of him.

Remorse came too late. When he would have sacrificed wealth and pleasure to regain his lost manhood, he had become helpless in the grasp of the evil one. He had placed himself on the enemy's ground, and Satan had taken possession of all his faculties. The tempter had allured him with many charming presentations; but when once the wretched man was in his power, the fiend became relentless in his cruelty, and terrible in his angry visitations. So it will be with all who yield to evil; the fascinating pleasure of their early career ends in the darkness of despair or the madness of a ruined soul.

In the leper who had been guided to the Saviour by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the three-tiered effect of disease in its destructive effects is very clearly revealed. He was stricken with disease which damaged him to a fearful extent:

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

He is a loathsome spectacle. The disease has made frightful inroads, and his decaying body is horrible to look upon. At sight of him the people fall back in terror. They crowd upon one another in their eagerness to escape from contact with him. Some try to prevent him from approaching Jesus, but in vain. He neither sees nor hears them. Their expressions of loathing are lost upon him. He sees only the Son of God. He hears only the voice that speaks life to the dying. Pressing to Jesus, he casts himself at His feet with the cry, "Lord, if You will, You can make *me* clean."

This disease, which in his case was leprosy, needed to be eradicated from him and replaced by the life and health of God. The symptoms also needed cleansing, and for the damage done he needed restoration. All three of these Jesus supplied. The demoniac was given back his mind and the leper was wonderfully transformed as it is described in this short paragraph:

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

Immediately a change passed over the leper. His flesh became healthy, the nerves sensitive, the muscles firm. The rough, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy disappeared, and a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy child, took its place.

Complete Restoration

Thus Jesus demonstrated the scope of the ministry of healing which we may by faith lay hold upon and receive today. He showed how He had the power when on earth to completely replace disease, and to restore the damage done as in the case of the leper cited above.

This does not mean that Christ gives either holy flesh or immortality to the trusting believer. One may wonder how Christ could do so much for a person without the result being either holy flesh or immortality, but the facts are that He can and has.

The Desire of Ages, p. 786:

During His ministry, Jesus had raised the dead to life. He had raised the son of the widow of Nain, and the ruler's daughter and Lazarus. But these were not clothed with immortality. After they were raised, they were still subject to death. But those who came forth from the grave at Christ's resurrection, were raised to everlasting life. They ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave. These, said Christ, are no longer the captives of Satan, I have redeemed them. I have brought them from the grave as the first fruits of My power, to be with Me where I am, never more to see death or experience sorrow.

It will be during the falling of the latter rain that the major work of restoration will be carried forward. Then once more, we shall be witnesses of marvelous things as promised through the message of *Joel*:

Joel 2

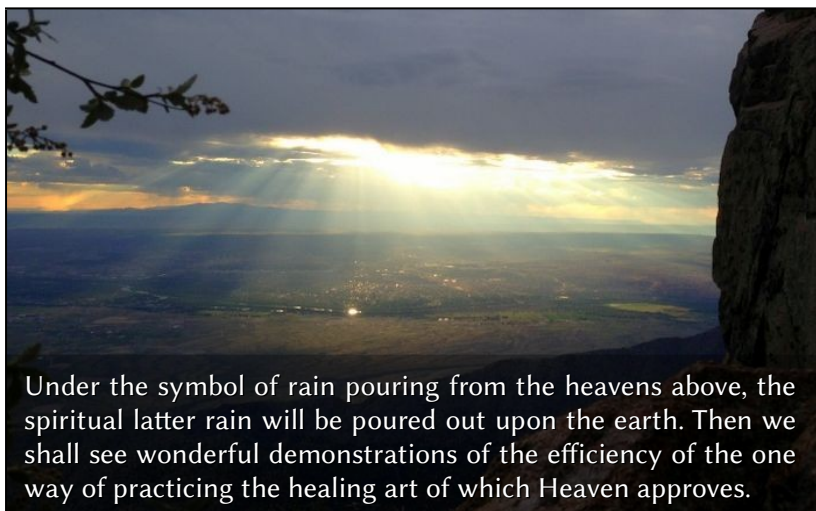
²³ Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God; for He has given you the former rain faithfully, and He will cause the rain to come down for you—the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

²⁴ The threshing-floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.

²⁵ So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the crawling locust, the consuming locust, and the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you.

²⁶ You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be put to shame.

²⁷ Then you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God and there is no other. My people shall never be put to shame.



Under the symbol of rain pouring from the heavens above, the spiritual latter rain will be poured out upon the earth. Then we shall see wonderful demonstrations of the efficiency of the one way of practicing the healing art of which Heaven approves.

But, these incredible blessings will be received by those alone who have been delivered from both sin and disease. There is the terrible danger of being where the Holy Spirit is being poured out without being the recipient of the measureless blessing.

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 507:

Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it.

They are making a terrible mistake. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge must be continually going forward. Every individual must realize his own necessity. The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit.

It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him.

It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.

7. The Gospel the Great Separator

WE WILL now study each of the three health problem areas *in their turn*, and not in parallel. This means that firstly, we will focus all our attention on the gospel's work of providing victory over bondage to disease. We will look closely at this problem and its divinely provided solution, to the exclusion of the succeeding problems and their solutions for the moment.

If this principle of study is firmly kept in mind, confusion will be avoided, and a clear presentation will result. Then, by the time the third and last problem and its solution have been examined, a very balanced message on the one way in the healing art of which Heaven approves, will have emerged.

Bondage to Incurable Diseases

So then, without further preamble, we shall enter into the study of the gospel of Jesus Christ as the solution to the problem of bondage to disease, or the presence of death in the body as in the case of blindness, for instance.

Both sickness and sin are cruel bond-masters who hold their victims in miserable servitude against their wills. It is for this reason that disease, whose power and character are so well known to us, is used in the Scriptures as an object lesson of the character and power of sin. To the Jews, leprosy in particular was the symbol of sin.

The Desire of Ages, p. 262:

Of all the diseases known in the East the leprosy was most dreaded. Its incurable and contagious character, and its horrible effect upon its victims, filled the bravest with fear. Among the Jews it was regarded as a judgment on account of sin, and hence was called "the stroke," "the finger of God." Deep-rooted, ineradicable, deadly, it was looked upon as a symbol of sin.

There are many diseases today for which man has found no cure. Cancer is probably the most notorious in this classification. Drug medications have been developed to combat most of these plagues, but, while they appear to restrict the spread of the scourge through the human organism,

The Ministry of Healing, p. 126:

...in most cases the drug only changes the form and location of the disease. Often the effect of the poison seems to be overcome for a time, but the results remain in the system and work great harm at some later period.

Thus in reality, men in their approach to the problem of incurable disease, actually make a bad situation much worse. We have to face the fact that all the mighty power and resources at the command of the most powerful medical researchers in the world, have not provided the suffering people with sure and certain victory over all disease. Furthermore, the methods they employ by using drugs, we could never accept. Therefore, we could never look to them and say, "Our doctors!"

We have come to a time when many others are also rejecting this form of the healing art, because there is an increasing awareness that it does not hold the answer to their diseases. These deserters from the ranks of those who respected the medical profession, have turned for help to the rapidly increasing number of so-called "natural practitioners."

There are several different classifications to this form of the healing art—naturopaths, herbalists, chiropractors, homeopaths, acupuncturists, colonic irrigationists, hydro-therapists, and so forth. There is some merit or value in these forms of the healing art, for in some cases, wonderful results have been achieved, and lives, saved from death, have been prolonged. To many this is convincing proof that the road back to glowing health lies with one or the other of these ways of

practicing the healing art.

But this considerable army of individuals likewise are not able to successfully bring to their patients deliverance from all disease, despite their heavy emphasis on cleansing programs and the use of “natural remedies.” Again and again they have to admit defeat. So, they in turn cannot be looked to as the doctors by the believers in Jesus.

Our loyalties are to be with the Doctor who, without exception, is able to heal any disease known or as yet unknown to man. God’s healings are performed by the power of God and according to the will of God. Therefore, our approach to Him as our almighty Healer must be charged with perfect faith in God’s unlimited power to heal us, but this must be accompanied by total submission to the divine will. There are times when God chooses not to heal the faithful, trusting suppliant because, in His wisdom, He sees that his healing would not be the best thing for the cause of truth under the prevailing circumstances of the moment.

Then there are those who come to God, but either in the wrong way or without really trusting His love for them. These also do not receive healing, but not because the Almighty is incompetent to heal them. Yet, in contrast to the naturopaths, God is able to heal any disease whatsoever, for:

The Desire of Ages, p. 490:

With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat.

As a proffered solution to the curse of established disease, the work of the “natural healers” seemingly has much to recommend itself to the true child of God who definitely believes...

The Ministry of Healing, p. 127:

...that restorative power is not in drugs, but in nature.

The Gospel is the Separator

As we consider their programs, we are impressed with the thought that we have so much in common with them, and can therefore seek help from them. But the enlightened child of God will not be misled by these appearances, for a closer examination will reveal that, the things we do not have in common, constitute the great separator between ourselves and both the medical doctors and the “natural healers.”

That great divider is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Those who have it, stand on one side, a unique and peculiar people, while all the rest stand on the other side.

We need to realize better than we do that the way of both the medical doctors and the natural practitioners is not the gospel procedure, and therefore cannot be the one way which Heaven approves. We need to further understand that the only way which Heaven does approve is the way of the gospel, and that therefore, Heaven emphatically rejects every other way than the way of the gospel. Whatever Heaven rejects, we too are to reject, and failure to do so will be very much to the peril of our souls.

Let us never lose sight of the depth and breadth of the separation which Christ maintained between Himself and every operational procedure which was not the pure and powerful gospel, the one means by which He brought deliverance from sin, sickness, and death.

Paul understood the vital necessity of working with nothing but the gospel, as he testified in these words:

1 Corinthians 2

¹ And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.

² For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

³ I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.

⁴ And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

⁵ That your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Jesus Christ and Him crucified is the gospel, the unlimited power of God to save from sin, sickness, and death. Paul preached nothing else but this, which means that he healed the sick and raised the dead and delivered sinners from their iniquity by no other means than this—the everlasting gospel—exactly as Christ had done before him.

He did this to save them from putting their faith in the wisdom of men, and to fix their confidence in the power of God, which is naught else but the gospel. Oh! How well it would be for the Church of God today, for the spiritual and physical health of every one of her members, and for the effectiveness of her witness, if only she saw in the gospel the only means whereby salvation from sin, sickness, and death can be achieved!

There are some who might complain that Paul must have been limited to a narrow, restricted ministry if he only preached one subject—Christ and Him crucified. On the contrary, his preaching covered the widest possible area, for, as will likewise be seen by those who know the gospel, the entire Bible is the revelation of Christ and Him crucified which is the gospel. God has no other provision, and needs no other by which to effect His beneficent purposes.

How I long that every person upon whom rests the burden of carrying the ministry of spiritual and physical healing to the sinful and the sick, would truly realize that the pure and powerful gospel is the only thing that heals. Let every medical

missionary be charged with the conviction that:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 115:

When the gospel is received in its purity and power, it is a cure for the maladies that originated in sin. The Sun of Righteousness arises, “with healing in His wings.” *Malachi* 4:2. Not all that this world bestows can heal a broken heart, or impart peace of mind, or remove care, or banish disease. Fame, genius, talent—all are powerless to gladden the sorrowful heart or restore the wasted life. *The life of God in the soul is man’s only hope.*

The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy—joy in the Holy Spirit,—health-giving, life-giving joy.

Our Saviour’s words, “Come unto me,...and I will give you rest” (*Matthew* 11:28), are a prescription for the healing of physical, mental, and spiritual ills. Though men have brought suffering upon themselves by their own wrongdoing, He regards them with pity. In Him they may find help. He will do great things for those who put their trust in Him.

These are wonderfully powerful words, the full might of which will be progressively better understood as we separate from every other way of practicing the healing art than the way of the gospel, and daily advance in the knowledge of its power and effectiveness. For those who come to know and apply the gospel to the problems of physical, mental, and spiritual death, a glorious present, and marvelous future is assured.

Once one is alerted to the truth that the Lord ministers to the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of man with only the gospel, it is surprising how often we begin to see this truth repeated in the inspired writings. Here it is once more in this

statement:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 111:

In the ministry of healing the physician is to be a co-worker with Christ. The Saviour ministered to both the soul and the body. The gospel which He taught was a message of spiritual life and of physical restoration. Deliverance from sin and the healing of disease were linked together. *The same ministry is committed to the Christian physician.* He is to unite with Christ in relieving both the physical and spiritual needs of his fellow men. He is to be to the sick a messenger of mercy, bringing to them a remedy for the diseased body and for the sin-sick soul.

This impressive statement reveals the precious truth that when Christ was confronted by a soul needing deliverance from sin, He brought the gospel to bear upon the problem, and the man or woman was saved. In exactly the same manner, when He was confronted by the diseased—the lepers, the palsied, the maimed, the blind, and so forth—He brought the same gospel to bear upon the physical problem in exactly the same way, and the man or woman was healed.

In many cases, individuals came to Him who were physically diseased and also spiritually sick and who sought relief from both burdens. To such, when He spoke the gospel, was given both release from their sickness, and salvation from sin, the one expression of the gospel simultaneously solving both problems.

A Christian Physician

Having described the principle of operation employed by Christ, we are then informed that:

“The same ministry is committed to the Christian physician.”

So then, everyone who believes himself to be a Christian

physician—a medical missionary—must absolutely know and truly believe that the gospel is the only remedy for all the ills which have come upon man in consequence of sin. Such a man of God will be a co-worker with Christ.

A co-worker with Christ is one who so follows the same procedures as his divine Leader and works in such harmony with Him that it is as if there were but one person involved. There will be total compatibility, oneness of purpose, and unity of action. The true co-worker with Christ will be as committed as his Lord is to the gospel being the only prescription for all the healings needed by everyone of those who have been dragged down by sin. He will be determined not to know or preach anything apart from Christ and Him crucified.

Such a man will minister to both the soul and the body:

- The gospel which he teaches will always be a message of *spiritual* life and of *physical* restoration;
- In his work, deliverance from sin and the healing of disease will be linked together;
- He will understand that the same ministry is committed to Him as was given to his peerless Example;
- He will unite with Christ in relieving both the physical and spiritual needs of his fellow men;
- He will be to the sick a messenger of mercy, bringing to them a remedy for the diseased body and for the sin-sick soul.

Such a man or woman, and only such a man or woman, is a true medical missionary. Those who come under the influence of his truly godly life will gain the victory over sin and sickness through the ministration of the gospel.

Now that we are aware that all true healing is achieved only through the application of the gospel, we can be assured

that only those who have that marvelous facility both in their minds, and in their heart's experience, have any light from God and are therefore qualified to treat the sinning or the diseased.

Discarding Every False Way

We do not need books on this or that method of treating disease by authors who know nothing of the gospel. Please understand that I am not making a general rejection of books on health-related topics such as nutrition, physiology, and the like, but to those books written to explain how to treat disease, that is, on how to practice the healing art.

I have never yet seen a single book come from those shelves which contained a presentation of the everlasting gospel as the answer to the bondage of sin and sickness, and I am very sure no one else has either. Then, I ask in all sincerity, how can we learn to heal disease, from a book in which the gospel does not even appear? It is impossible! Nor will the person who seeks light where only darkness is to be found, escape unscathed, for he will be darkened by Satan at his will.

But even worse than seeking information on how to cure a disease from authors who know not the gospel, is the practice of going for treatment to practitioners who do not practice the one way in the healing art of which heaven approves—the way of the everlasting gospel.

Believers in Jesus would most wholeheartedly agree that medical doctors who attempt to cure disease with drug medication, are not applying the gospel to the diseases suffered by their patients, but there are those professed Christians who would claim that it is saying too much when I state that the “natural therapists” do not understand and apply the gospel either. To support their stand, they point to the many statements in the writings of Ellen White declaring that:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 127:

Restorative power is not in drugs, but in nature.

From this the rather superficial conclusion is drawn that those who use “natural” methods of healing are practicing the one way of healing which heaven approves. Therefore, it is reasoned, it is perfectly safe and proper for us to be treated by them.

But, no matter how well versed a practitioner may be in the application of natural remedies, if he applies them without having the presence and power of the pure gospel within himself, his is not the only way which heaven recognizes and blesses. From such we are to separate just as positively as we need to part company with that form of healing art which resorts to drug medication.

Nowhere is the danger of not making a total separation more clearly brought out than in:

Early Writings, p. 124-125:

The different parties of professed Advent believers have each a little truth, but God has given all these truths to His children who are being prepared for the day of God. He has also given them truths that none of these parties know, neither will they understand. Things which are sealed up to them, the Lord has opened to those who will see and are ready to understand.

If God has any new light to communicate, He will let His chosen and beloved understand it, without their going to have their minds enlightened by hearing those who are in darkness and error.

I was shown the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors. I saw that neither young nor old should attend their meetings; for it is wrong to thus encourage them while they teach error that is a deadly poison to the soul and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. The influence of such gatherings is not good.

If God has delivered us from such darkness and error, we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has set us free and rejoice in the truth. God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of the will, He will not keep us. The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with the darkness.

I saw that we have no time to throw away in listening to fables. Our minds should not be thus diverted, but should be occupied with the present truth, and seeking wisdom that we may obtain a more thorough knowledge of our position, that with meekness we may be able to give a reason of our hope from the Scriptures. While false doctrines and dangerous errors are pressed upon the mind, it cannot be dwelling upon the truth which is to fit and prepare the house of Israel to stand in the day of the Lord.

It is essential that the closest attention be paid to this instruction from the Lord Himself, and the strictest obedience rendered to it. Let us examine the main points for added emphasis and clarification.

It is true that all of the religious groups each have some light. But there is no need for the members of the final remnant to fear deprivation of any essential information necessary for our physical or spiritual well-being. This is so because any truth to be found out there is already in the possession of God's little company who are standing in the light. In addition, the Almighty Councilor will reveal all the further light which they need to those who are being prepared for the great day of God.

So amply does the Lord provide for His own that there is not the slightest need for any of us to go out there for anything. No wonder the Lord is so displeased with those who

seek life and health from sources apart from Him, and leaves those who ought to know much better, to the darkness they have chosen.

In the light of the instruction, counsels, and warnings given in *Early Writings*, is it not high time to purge our libraries of every religious book written to offer salvation but without the true gospel, together with every health book written to offer healing from disease but again without the true gospel?

Those who have the determination to serve the Lord with all their hearts will gladly dispose of every book on spiritual or physical deliverance which does not present the gospel as the solution. When they do, they will find the blessing of the Lord will attend them, and their righteousness and their health will spring forth speedily.

Testing All Things

There might be some who will feel that this proscription is the introduction of papal principles, and that it is a restriction of their liberties. They will remember that they left the fallen churches protesting their right to study as they felt the Lord directed them. Now they feel that the old limitations are again being imposed upon them, and may consider that it is time for them to be moving on again.

They will find seeming justification for this reasoning in the instruction given by the Holy Spirit through Paul:

1 Thessalonians 5

¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit.

²⁰ Do not despise prophecies.

²¹ Test all things: hold fast what is good. ["Prove all things."

K/V]

In reply to these arguments, let me firstly point out that the instruction and warnings given in *Early Writings*, p. 124-125, are from the Lord Himself. They did not originate with me or

issue from me, but come with an authority as far higher than mine as the Heaven of all heavens is higher than the earth. Therefore, they are the truth and are to be obeyed as such. Anyone who feels that his liberty is being restricted, is misreading the character of God, who deprives no one of any liberty whatsoever. What He does do is to warn of the terrible consequences of certain behavior, but thereafter leaves the one who has been warned with the utmost freedom to heed or to disregard the instruction given.

The history of Adam and Eve very clearly demonstrates this:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 53:

Like the angels, the dwellers in Eden had been placed upon probation; their happy estate could be retained only on condition of fidelity to the Creator's law. They could obey and live, or disobey and perish. God had made them the recipients of rich blessings; but should they disregard His will, He who spared not the angels that sinned, could not spare them; transgression would forfeit His gifts and bring upon them misery and ruin.

The angels warned them to be on guard against the devices of Satan, for his efforts to ensnare them would be unwearyed....

Satan was not to follow them with continual temptations; he could have access to them only at the forbidden tree. Should they attempt to investigate its nature, they would be exposed to his wiles. They were admonished to give careful heed to the warning which God had sent them and to be content with the instruction which He had seen fit to impart.

There is no difference between the counsel given in *Early Writings*, p. 124-125, and that given to Adam and Eve. In fact, the final sentence from the quotation above which describes the instruction given to our first parents, is a very concise but comprehensive restatement of *Early Writings*, p. 124-125.

We know what we wish they had done about the instruction given to them! As we suffer the bitter fruit of their disobedience, we deeply regret their having failed to obey to the very letter. We know that, had they resolutely refused to pay any attention whatsoever to anything other than what the Lord chose to reveal to them, they and we would have been saved an incredible amount of suffering and humiliating loss.

It must be impressed on our minds that:

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 401:

God is the Teacher of His people.

Not only does He instruct us in the lessons of truth, but it is He also who decides on the curriculum. It is not truth in general that we are to study, but *present truth*, and God the Teacher of His people is the one who determines what is present truth. That is why His messengers through whom He teaches His people, are commissioned to go only where He sends them and to teach only what He gives them to teach.

This principle of operation was made very clear to Jeremiah, when he was called to be a messenger. The Lord said to him in the plainest of terms:

Jeremiah 1

⁷ Do not say, I am a youth, For you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak.

As surely as the Lord's messenger is to teach only what his Master gives him to teach, so certainly must the people of God study only what He gives them through His messenger.

There will be some who will find this a hard saying, but why should they? The only safe place is within the will of God which includes our strict obedience to the warning given to Adam and Eve in Eden, and to us in *Early Writings*, p. 124-125.

This still leaves unanswered the charge not to despise prophecies or teachings, but to test all things, and cling firmly to that which passes the test.

This is sound advice which in no way contradicts the instruction found in *Early Writings*. It is a matter of understanding the circumstances in which each applies, for otherwise, there will be a negation of the one by the other.

In the *Early Writings*' statement, all are positively warned against looking for light and truth among those who are not numbered by God as His children who are being prepared for the kingdom. Those who have received the truth for this time, will have no difficulty in knowing which movement is now the only one with whom the Lord is present and on whom His blessing rests.

All they have to do is to ask in which movement is to be collectively found all the truths scattered among all the other groups. When that check eliminates all but one body of people, then look to see if that same group of people have in addition, great, soul-saving truths which none of the other parties know, neither will they understand.

At the present time, there must be but one movement which meets these specifications, one movement in which is to be found, not all that the others teach, but all the *truths* which they teach. In addition, there must be found therein *truths* which none of the others know, nor will they understand. God, of course, knows who His organized body on earth is, and to them He has solemnly promised that, when He has any new light to communicate, He will reveal it only to them. Then it is their work in turn to give this light to others.

In this context and under these circumstances, it is an insult to Jehovah, the Author of all truth, to go hunting for light among those who are continually absorbing new errors. We

are decidedly warned that if we go out searching for truth in this way, we will not have the Lord's presence or protection, but will be weakened and darkened by Satan at his will. It would be far better to learn the lesson taught by Adam's and Eve's fall, by staying where the Lord is delivering His truth.

But you are not compelled to heed the clear warning. If you choose to seek light where there is darkness, and life where there is death, you may exercise your absolute freedom to do so. Neither God nor His true people will use any form of compulsion to stop you, but then, neither will He work a miracle to counteract the deadly effect of your seeking light among the rejecters of present truth.

The question now remains: Where do we apply the counsel given by God through Paul, admonishing us to prove or test all things and to hold fast that which is good? Does this mean that we have to systematically attend the meetings of every religious body on the earth so we can know for certain what each one teaches, and thus be able to prove *all* things?

Such an undertaking would be a physical impossibility, for the task is much too great for anyone to encompass in a lifetime. Furthermore, we have much more important work to do than to spend all our time hunting all over the world in an endless quest for truth when the Lord has already made plain what it is and where it is to be found.

Of course, as has happened with so many, we might find ourselves passing through several movements before we arrive at the truth, but once we have been led to the light, that activity should be terminated, and usually is.

But, after we have come to the truth for this time, to the people who are carrying it, and to the messenger or messengers whom God uses to bring that light to His people, we will be confronted with further advancing revelations from Heaven. It is these things, the things that God gives to His or-

ganized body, that we are to prove. These we are to prove, but not with a skeptical mind. In other words, the verse does not say to try to disprove all things and believe them only when they bear up under every acid test. The true sheep hear and know the true Shepherd's voice. When He calls, they do not treat Him with skepticism. Even Christ's opponents knew that He had spoken the truth, even though they tried to disprove it.

To prove all things means firstly to be sure that we understand the explanations of the truth. There will be a basic appreciation of the truths God has sent, but there might be some areas that we will want to understand better. We might also be like the man who said,

Mark 9

²⁴ Lord I believe, help my unbelief.

This man knew that Christ was offering him the truth, but he could not grasp it as an experience. His cry was an attempt to prove the truth the Lord was bringing to him. And this depicts the second aspect of proving all things, which means to make these truths our experience. We look for the fruits of these truths in our lives.

Be assured that those who totally separate from the ministries of those who do not possess the gospel of Jesus Christ, while looking to God alone as the Teacher, Helper, Healer, and Saviour of His people, will find themselves enjoying a freedom from sin and sickness which they would never have thought possible.

On the other hand, those who persist in seeking victory over sin and sickness from those who do not have the gospel, are forfeiting the Lord's protection. Nothing could please the devil more, for, under these circumstances, there is no way of stopping him from weakening and darkening them at his will. The end result of such captivity of their souls by our deadly

foe, can only result in their failure to gain healing now, and in their loss of eternal healing from all sickness and sin.

Let us resolve upon total separation from every other way than the one procedure for practicing the healing art of which Heaven approves—the almighty, creative power of God—the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us come out into total separation, in strict obedience to the divine command:

2 Corinthians 6

¹⁴ Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

¹⁷ Therefore come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.

¹⁸ I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

8. Understanding the Problem

THE evidences advanced in the previous chapters clearly and effectively prove that the only means whereby the Almighty Healer conquers disease in a person and puts life where there was only death, is through the application of the gospel according to definite procedures.

When living faith within the believer connects with the infinite Source, the disease is banished, and a flood of health pours into the sick person. The only limiting factor is the degree of faith with which the sick person is blessed. Unfortunately for most people, the faith of the suppliant is very low, with the result that very little help if any at all reaches the needy one.

On the other hand, the effect may be so sudden and dramatic that, unless those observing it are familiar with the way in which the Lord heals through the gospel, they will be astonished and awestruck, and quite unable to explain just how it happened. To them it is all so extraordinary and unusual as to be inexplicable. Such is the nature of a miracle.

However, the healing does not always happen so quickly, for God manipulates the rate at which these movements of life and energy are to take place, according to the dictates of His divine love and wisdom, for He is God who knows best how swiftly or otherwise the healing should take place.

What is a Miracle?

But what is a miracle? Several definitions for the word are provided in the large, standard dictionaries, one of which defines it as:

“An event which cannot be explained by known laws of nature.”

Another definition reads:

“An extraordinary event taken to manifest the supernatural power of God fulfilling His purposes.”

Through the inspired word of God, and the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, that which otherwise would remain hidden from us is revealed to those who are sincere seekers of truth.

Both of these definitions project the same misleading idea, that a miracle is an operation conducted outside of the process of law. One gains the distinct impression when listening to conversations about miracles, that those engaged in the discussion believe the Lord acts as He pleases without any reference to guiding principles. On the other side of the question are those who believe that God is the servant of nature and is therefore restricted by the laws of nature.

It needs to be clearly understood both by those who seek God's ministry of healing to relieve them of the diseases originating in sin, and by those who are called to work as medical missionaries, that there is no mystery shrouding the process by which the Great Physician heals. Instead, it is a simple, straightforward science by which the sick are taken from one point to the next until the work is done.

In the administration of this almighty, creative, healing power of God, there are procedures which can be understood by every believer in Jesus. They are utterly consistent, totally reliable, and therefore absolutely predictable. They are classified as being either revival or reformation solutions.

For instance, if on the day you read these words, you experienced complete healing from a serious disease, it would have been effected by the application of the power of God which is the gospel, according to certain specific procedures.

Education, p. 257-258:

Prayer and faith are closely allied, and they need to be studied together. In the prayer of faith there is a divine science; it is a science that everyone who would make his life-work a success must understand. Christ says, "What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them." *Mark* 11:24. He makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal.

This statement makes it plain that once the conditions have been faithfully met, there will be no quibbling on God's part. If, at the same time, another person was delivered from slavery to the same disease problem, it would be by the same power administered according to exactly the same operating principles.

Methods of Treatment

It is essential that we understand just what those revival and reformation procedures are so that we can be effective co-workers with Christ both in our own healing and in the work of being medical missionaries to others. We must be able to explain to the needy just what the Lord will do for them and how, whether it be in the realm of the revival or the reformation, and what conditions they are required to fulfill.

Therefore the first step in the solution of the particular problem is obtaining a clear understanding of what the nature of the problem is. I stress this point because it is futile to apply a treatment to one health problem which was designed for another.

The same principle of operation applies in the spiritual realm. There it is found that while some sin problems require one kind of treatment, others are cured by another.

To be specific, some problems can be solved only by the eradication or elimination of the sin-presence, and its replacement with a new spiritual force altogether. Another class of problem can be dealt with by bringing the problem under strict control.

Eradication and Replacement

Pride, hatred, and jealousy are samples of sin-problems which can only be dealt with by eradicating the evil so thoroughly that only a vacuum is left, followed immediately by an infilling with the pure, powerful, and perfect graces of the Holy Spirit, namely, humility, love, and the preferring of one another.

Even though some people can control these and other evils, this procedure does not solve the problem, for controlled hatred is not love, but hatred still. The fact is that anyone in whom hatred resides, whether that hatred be controlled or not, cannot obey Christ's command to love our enemies. To do that, he must be filled with God's love, but this is an impossibility if he is already filled with hatred, even if it is controlled.

In manifesting the savage disposition to ruthlessly destroy and devour the sheep, the wolf is living out his nature. He does what he does because of what he is. Captured and caged he cannot continue his wasting of the flocks, but this does not mean that he has changed. The moment in which he escapes, he will immediately resume his depredations, spreading terror among the sheep.

It would assist in making the point clearer if we use a savage timber wolf as a symbol of hatred. The wolf is a ruthless carnivore, which, unrestrained, will prey on the helpless sheep. If captured and caged, he becomes a wolf under control, but is a wolf still, with his terrible nature unchanged. The

longer he is kept under restraint, the more savage and dangerous he becomes, so that, should he escape his confinement, he would again slaughter the flocks and herds.



Of course, the only solution to which man can turn when dealing with a wolf are to chain it or kill it, for he does not have the power to change its nature into that of a lamb. Only God has the creative might to accomplish such a transformation. Were He to speak the word and change the nature of the wolf into that of the lamb, what a marvelously different pattern of behavior would mark the new life of the wolf! He would indeed be a new creation, not a controlled old one.

Self-Control

But not all sin-problems require eradication and replacement as the solution. In fact, such a procedure when misapplied would result in the sinner's elimination, not in his salvation. Let me illustrate.

Intemperance is a sin even when the over-indulgence is of good food or drink. While the sinful intemperance must be

eradicated because it is sin, and replaced with a temperate appetite, the appetite must not be eradicated, else you would die. The appetite must be controlled, and taught to obey the laws of God. I am not referring to addictions which are not only appetite out of control, but are perversions which are really tyrannical sins. In that situation, eradication and replacement must be applied in order to solve the problem. Control, no matter how strict and successful, is not the answer here.

Distinguishing the Treatment

The question now is: How shall one know which is which? The answer is quite simple if we apply the following rule: If it is still sinful when controlled, then it must be eradicated and replaced. If it is not sinful when controlled, then it must not be cleansed away, but be brought under subjection and sanctified.

That which is true in the spiritual realm, is equally true in the physical world of sickness. Such scourges as AIDS, cancer, and leprosy are problems which cannot be solved by simply bringing them under control even if that were possible. As sin is a master ruling our entire beings, so likewise these diseases dominate and control the lives of all those in whom they dwell. Men are spending billions in their determination to break out of this awful servitude, but they will never succeed, for:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 243:

God alone is the one who can heal.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 115:

Not all that this world bestows can heal a broken heart, or impart peace of mind, or remove care, or banish disease. Fame, genius, talent—all are powerless to gladden the sorrowful heart or to restore the wasted life. The life of God in the soul is man's only hope.

It is the only hope, simply because these diseases will yield ground to nothing less than omnipotent might. The old must be removed and an entirely new nature be created by the same power and procedures as God used in the creation of the universe in the first case.

More Than a Judicial Act is Required

Even though divine pardon is essential to our salvation, becoming a Christian is not accomplished by repenting of one's sins, and then being judicially forgiven for them, for that judicial act only satisfies the condemnation of the past up to the present. There must also be a new creation, a transformation of nature, or otherwise the best that can be expected is the status of a forgiven sinner, who will be but a sinner still.

Remaining sinful in himself even though he believes himself to be forgiven, means that he will continue to commit sin no matter how much he may wish to cease from it. What this means is that we must come to understand what forgiveness really involves, so that we, in turn, can understand how to achieve deliverance from sickness and sin.

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 114:

But forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. When God gives the promise that He "will abundantly pardon," He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." *Isaiah* 55:7-9.

God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." *Psalms*

51:10. And again he says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." *Psalm* 103:12.

Just as becoming a Christian involves much more than receiving a judicial pardon which leaves a person in the same sinful nature as he had before he was forgiven, so, being healed of those "incurable" diseases which enslave their human hosts, involves much more than suppressing or controlling these scourges. There must be the re-creation in the person of health where there was sickness, strength where there was weakness, and life where there was death.

Having determined that we must understand the category into which the problem must be placed, the time has come to study the procedures followed by God in order to bring total relief from all sickness. I will deal firstly with the way in which God deals with the so-called incurable diseases which hold their victims in bondage. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

9. The Stream of Life

AS I have said before, when confronted with diseases which require eradication and replacement, God, who is your Doctor, proceeds along an easily identifiable and understandable course of action. There is no dark mystery enshrouding the matter, for it is as open as bright daylight.

In fact, it is my conviction that the Lord desires that we shall understand what He is doing. In His immense love for us, He wishes us to enter into the wondrous blessing of beholding the working of His pure and perfect power.

Furthermore, inasmuch as intelligent, enlightened faith is required in order to make the divine work effective, the Master Healer by His holy word, opens His operations to our view to ensure that we come into possession of the requisite faith.

Throughout this book, we must never lose sight of the fact that Christ's ministry of healing from "incurable" diseases, and from "inescapable" bondage to sin, is a process of creative power.

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

In the creative process, God is the Source of all life and health. In response to His spoken word, a living stream flows forth from Him into His messenger, and from there into the sick person. In this way and by this process, the actual life and health of God will flow into the needy one, and thus become resident in him.

It must be seen through this marvelous, life-infusing process, that God's health becomes our health; His life becomes our life; His strength becomes our strength; and His vi-

tality becomes our vitality. Thus,

The Ministry of Healing, p. 115:

The life of God in the soul is man's only hope.

It is essential that we grasp the powerful, health-giving, life-giving verity of these words:

“The life of God in the soul.”

Think about what these words are saying in reality, and what that declaration means to us. Doctors of the world who do not understand the power of the gospel, put medicines into the sick; the naturopaths have their patients imbibe natural remedies; but our Doctor flows His own life and health into us. When we realize that “the life of God in the soul is man's only hope,” we shall better understand that, while there are many ways of practicing the healing art,

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 443:

...there is only one way that Heaven approves.

It has been stated that, when God heals, it is a process of creation, by which, when He speaks the word, “I will! Be made whole!” a river of life flows from Him into the sick, and health literally and actually fills the body of the diseased. Disease is dispelled, and vibrant health takes its place.

This all may seem to be too much to expect, especially when we have never witnessed such a marvelous change take place in another person, nor have experienced it in ourselves. But that does not leave us without a verification by demonstration, for every healing performed by Christ declares that this principle of operation was the one followed by Him with unqualified and infallible success.

The Healing of the Issue of Blood

To confirm our confidence in the one way of practicing the

healing art performed by Christ, the absolute leader in medical missionary work, we will now consider several examples of our Saviour's healing ministry. What we will be looking for are statements describing the healing work of Christ to be the flow of life and health out of God, into, and then from Christ, and on into the sick person, producing the instant result of total healing.

The first example to which we will give our attention is the healing of the woman who for twelve years, had been burdened with a debilitating issue of blood. The story is recorded in:

Mark 5

²⁵ Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years,

²⁶ And had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse.

²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment.

²⁸ For she said, If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.

²⁹ Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction.

³⁰ And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, Who touched my clothes?

³¹ But His disciples said to Him, You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, Who touched me?

³² And He looked around to see her who had done this thing.

³³ But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth.

³⁴ And He said to her, Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.

This story is covered in *The Desire of Ages*, p. 343-348, a portion of which will be quoted here:

The Desire of Ages, p. 343:

On the way to the ruler's house, Jesus had met, in the crowd, a poor woman who for twelve years had suffered from a disease that made her life a burden. She had spent all her means upon physicians and remedies, only to be pronounced incurable. But her hopes revived when she heard of the cures that Christ performed. She felt assured that if she could only go to Him she would be healed. In weakness and suffering she came to the seaside where He was teaching, and tried to press through the crowd, but in vain. Again she followed Him from the house of Levi-Matthew, but was still unable to reach Him. She had begun to despair, when, in making His way through the multitude, He came near where she was.

The golden opportunity had come. She was in the presence of the Great Physician! But amid the confusion she could not speak to Him, nor catch more than a passing glimpse of His figure. Fearful of losing her one chance of relief, she pressed forward, saying to herself, "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole." As He was passing, she reached forward, and succeeded in barely touching the border of His garment. But in that moment she knew that she was healed. In that one touch was concentrated the faith of her life, and instantly her pain and feebleness gave place to the vigor of perfect health.

When God spoke the word of power at earth's creation, He said, "Let there be light," and in the same instant there was light. There was no delay, no advancing from a dull flickering to full power, but an instant flood tide of glorious white light. So it was with His creative work on every successive day of earth's first week. When He said, "Let there be dry land," there was dry land; when He said, "Let there be grass and trees," there and then they appeared, and so on till His work was finished.

Psalm 33

⁹ He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood

fast.

With the same immediacy, this woman with the issue of blood was healed. In the same moment in which she touched His garment, she knew she was completely healed. The Bible says:

Mark 5

²⁹ *Immediately* the fountain of her blood was dried up.

In the writings of Ellen White, it is written that:

The Desire of Ages, p. 343:

Instantly her pain and feebleness gave place to the vigor of perfect health.

The outreach of faith by which she touched His garment, was just as effective as if Christ had spoken to her in audible tones. In any case, the results were the same—*instant* healing. Let the point not be missed that it was the Holy Spirit who filled her with saving faith, and directed her to exercise that faith by touching Christ's garment.

And what was it that was *instantly* and painlessly taken from her, and what was as *instantly* given to her in its place? The answer is that she was *instantly* delivered from her pain and feebleness, and therefore of the disease which was the cause of her pain and feebleness. In its place she *instantly* received life and health.

No woman who has suffered from a constant flow of blood needs to be told that such a loss of vital body fluid certainly causes enfeebling of the whole body. Movements become slow, and it is only with great effort that proper attention can be given to work responsibilities. For a normally active person who has much work to do, this is a great trial and frustration, as well as a threat to that one's livelihood.

As usually attends this type of ailment, there was pain

which no doubt ranged from moderate to very severe, so severe in fact, that she would have been forced to spend days in bed from time to time. In addition to this affliction of suffering, the onslaught of pain would have further weakened her.

Now in a single instant, her "pain and feebleness" were gone, never to return. "In that moment she knew she was healed." What a glorious experience that was for her!

A characteristic of the procedures employed by the medical profession especially when surgery is involved, is the presence of prolonged and severe pain, to cope with which, they resort to pain-killing drugs. The pain is bad, but the use of pain-killers is much worse since it results in growing immunity. To counter this the potency of the drug prescription must be periodically strengthened, a procedure fraught with the danger of side-effects, and in many cases with drug addiction.

As in the case of the woman who touched Christ's garment, so it has been in every case personally known to me; when God healed these people, there was no pain either then or later.

I remember one brother whose heart was in a serious condition. He dared not exert himself for fear of a fatal attack. The pain was unbearable at times. He had heard and accepted the beautiful truth declaring that God is your Doctor, when one night he went to bed not knowing whether he would awake in the morning or not.

About two o'clock in the morning, he was awakened with searing chest pains, in response to which he picked up *The Desire of Ages* and began reading the accounts of several of Christ's healings. As he read, the power of God and His remarkable love shone forth with such brilliance, that living faith in God's capacity to heal was inspired in him. He reached out to grasp the hand of Omnipotence, and the bless-

ing came. All he felt was a slight tingling which passed through his entire body, and he knew he had been healed. The next day he fearlessly worked for several hours in his garden without any unpleasant effects whatsoever.

Then there was a woman for whom I was asked to pray as she was about to slide into insanity. She too reported a gentle tingling which ran through her body as she was totally delivered from her sickness. Apart from that, in both of these cases, there was no pain. All of that disappeared with the sickness itself as it did with the woman who touched Christ's garment.

However, because two people reported this tingling sensation, it does not mean that every healing ministered by Christ will be marked in the same way. Actually, among all the healings known to me, these two are the only cases who reported such an experience of tingling. None of the rest made any mention of this whatsoever. But in any case, no one whom God healed described it as a painful experience. Rather, it was one which brought an end to pain.

The Source of Healing

When the woman with the issue of blood touched His garment, Jesus knew it, and immediately asked the question:

Luke 8

⁴⁵ Who touched me?

The Desire of Ages, p. 344:

The people answered this query with a look of amazement. Jostled upon all sides, and rudely pressed hither and thither, as He was, it seemed a strange inquiry.

Peter, ever ready to speak, said, "Master, the multitude throng You and press You, and say You, Who touched me?" Jesus answered, "Somebody has touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." The Saviour could distinguish the touch of faith from the casual contact of the careless

throng. Such trust should not be passed without comment. He would speak to the humble woman words of comfort that would be to her a wellspring of joy,—words that would be a blessing to His followers to the close of time.

I have made the point already, that in God's way of replacing sickness with health, a stream of life flows out of God, through His messenger, and on into the sick. The healing of the woman who touched Christ's garment illustrates this point. By stating that health-giving virtue had flowed forth from Him, Jesus Himself testified to the fact that a stream of divine life had flowed, for one fleeting moment, from Himself into the woman, thus effecting her restoration to perfect health.

This makes it appear that Christ Himself was the Source, the Fountain, the Reservoir, from which flowed the river of life. It “appears” that Christ Himself claimed this for Himself by His saying,

Luke 8

⁴⁶ Somebody touched me, for I perceived power going out from *me*.

A statement from *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 17, would appear to support this concept though it really does not. It reads as follows:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 17:

From *Him* [Jesus Christ] flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole.

Here we seem to have a contradiction. While it appears that Jesus was the Source, we know that the spring of life was not with Him, but with the Father, for Jesus Himself testified that He was totally dependent on His Father for everything. There was nothing He could do without His Father. Here is His own testimony about Himself:

John 5

¹⁹ Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

³⁰ I can of myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is righteous, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the Father who sent me.

Therefore, we would expect the mighty Healer to have said that He perceived that virtue had flowed *through* rather than *from* Him, and for the statement from *The Ministry of Healing* to say, *through* Him flowed a stream of healing power, instead of saying, *from* Him. To say the stream of healing power flowed *from* Him, seems to claim that He, and not His Father, was the Source of that woman's healing. But His Father was the one and only Source of all the healing virtue by which health was imparted to the sick.

Actually, there is no contradiction here, but there is a very important truth to be understood by all who would be successful medical missionaries. It is clearly revealed in the procedures Jesus followed in His highly successful ministry for the sick.

Firstly, He was often found in prayer during which times He became powerfully and adequately charged with divine life. He came from those hours spent with the great Source, braced for duty and trial to the point where He was literally a powerhouse filled with divine vitality—the mighty capacity for charging the sick with health and strength. There are a number of Scripture references which testify to this:

The Desire of Ages, p. 362:

No other life was ever so crowded with labor and responsibility as was that of Jesus; yet how often He was found in prayer! How constant was His communion with God! Again and again in the history of His earthly life are found records such as these: "Rising up a great while before day, He went

out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.” “Great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. And He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed.” “And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.” *Mark 1:35; Luke 5:15-16; 6:12.*

The Desire of Ages, p. 363:

In Christ the cry of humanity reached the Father of infinite pity. As a man He supplicated the throne of God till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that should connect humanity with divinity. Through continual communion He received life from God, that He might impart life to the world. His experience is to be ours.

So there is the pattern. Firstly, Christ received life and therefore health from God, until His entire being was charged with almighty power. Thus armed for the day, He went out to face the world in its great need. When He encountered a plea for help to which He could respond, He did not then turn to His Source, the Everlasting Father, to receive the needed blessing, for He had done that in the early hours of the day. He had received life from God in the beginning of the day so that He might impart life to men during the remainder of its hours.

So it was that in the early hours of the day, the all-powerful life of His Father flowed into Him, but not through Him. Instead, it accumulated within Him, ready at any moment to flow from Him into the sick ones, who, during His daily ministry, would come seeking deliverance from their burdens of sickness and sin. But, let it be understood that during the time it was flowing into the sick person, it was not flowing through Christ, but it was flowing from Him.

Thus, the position of God as the original Source is not compromised, for it is from Him into Christ that the life of God first flowed.

The Desire of Ages, p. 363:

His experience is to be ours.

In other words, we are to work as He worked. This means that our first work every day is to receive life from God until we are charged with heaven's power. Then, having received life from God, we are to impart that life from its store in ourselves to those who are in need. Note the clarity of this truth as expressed in the following quotation:

The Desire of Ages, p. 825:

The power of love was in all Christ's healing, and only by partaking of that love, through faith, can we be instruments for His work. If we neglect to link ourselves in divine connection with Christ, the current of life-giving energy cannot flow in rich streams *from us* to the people.

As the life-giving energy flowed firstly into Christ, and then from Him into the needy, so it must be with us, for His experience is to be ours. And when it does come from God into us, and then from us to the sick, we shall see all manner of incurable diseases obliterated from those in bondage to disease. We shall know it is the Lord's doing and we shall joyously testify that it is marvelous in our sight.

Summary

This chapter contains much light on the one way of the healing art which Heaven approves. It is a way which is superior to all others. Just think about it. Which other system of supposed healing enjoys all the features attending God's ministry of healing? With God:

1. There is no need for hospitalization of the patient.
2. The healing can be administered anywhere.
3. There is no use of poisonous drugs.
4. The actual healing is painless.
5. There are no side effects.

6. There is no disease which cannot be healed.
7. It is equally available to all people in every land.
8. There are no heavy doctor's bills, since it is free.

Now then, who would want to follow any other way of practicing the healing art than that which produces such results? Understandably, it has Heaven's unequivocal endorsement.

Well will it be for the Church of God in the world when this way of practicing the healing art has as unequivocally become her way of ministering to the sick.

10. The Leper Restored

RELATIVELY few of the great healings performed by Christ have been kept on record. Those which have been remembered are those best calculated in the divine reckoning to reveal God as comprehensively and as effectively as possible in His saving role as our Doctor and our Saviour.

While the same basic principles will be seen throughout all of them, each story will have its own special revelations of truth. Some of them concentrate on physical healing, others focus on spiritual deliverance, while others show both works together.

In the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, Jesus revealed that He restored the sick by flowing a stream of life out of Himself into the diseased body of the suppliant, but there was no visible evidence that there had been a work of physical creation effected within her body. No one saw the bleeding stop. No one was able to see the eradication of the disease and the instant restoration of the affected organs. Even she could not see it all, but she could tell that her pain and weakness had disappeared, and that a wonderful sense of well-being filled her entire body. But the wondering crowd saw nothing. All they could ask in surprise was how He, jostled by the rude throng, could say that someone had touched Him.

But it was a different story with the first leper to be healed since Elisha's day. All who witnessed the total restoration of that diseased body had no difficulty in seeing the terrible inroads made by this loathsome sickness. In the instantaneous restoration of that man's wasted form, they beheld a work of creation, for nothing less than that could have achieved such sudden and complete results.

But the crowd in general did not realize that this healing

was a manifestation of God's creative power. We know this because we are informed of the unbelief and consequent serious lack of spiritual perception which plagued their minds. They missed the message this demonstration was designed to teach. Their loss was incalculable. If only they knew what they were too blind to see!

Reference to the story of the leper's healing has already been made in Chapter Two where the truth was being established that Christ could come into direct physical contact with the most diseased of people without Himself becoming infected. We will take a second look at this leper's case, this time from the point of view of its being the revelation of creative power.

In the case of the woman whose healing was studied in the last chapter, the knowledge of her hidden disease was known only to herself, some physicians, and a few friends. But the leper's awful physical condition was quite visible. Consider the following description:

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

He is a loathsome spectacle. The disease has made frightful inroads, and his decaying body is horrible to look upon. At sight of him the people fall back in terror. They crowd upon one another in their eagerness to escape from contact with him. Some try to prevent him from approaching Jesus, but in vain. He neither sees nor hears them. Their expressions of loathing are lost upon him. He sees only the Son of God. He hears only the voice that speaks life to the dying. Pressing to Jesus, he casts himself at His feet with the cry, "Lord, if You will, You can make *me* clean."

Here was a case of such extreme physical destruction that his flesh was actually rotting. Imagine the vile odors emanating from him and fouling the air wherever he went. See the open sores, recoil from the suppurations, and view with horror the absence of body parts such as fingers, toes, and ears.

There can be no wonder that the people fell back in terror at the mere sight of him. As far as they were concerned, there was nothing which could be done but to separate him from society and leave him to die. At all costs, they must be sure not to make any physical contact with him, for they knew leprosy was highly contagious.

Here was a frightful disease in total command of this man's dying body, the solution to which could be nothing less than creative power.

- If he had been placed on a perfect diet, that would not have solved the problem;
- If there had been added to that the covering of his entire body with a healing balm or salve, the inner infection would have remained unchanged; or
- Had he been injected with a powerful drug specially synthesized to cure leprosy, he still would not have been saved from death.
- He could have been placed on cleansing programs of endless variety without any possibility of his disease being arrested;
- He could have been fed herbal cures of every known kind, only to find himself steadily sliding from worse to worst.

All these measures can achieve much in certain contexts, but could effect nothing as a solution to the problems facing this leper. There was only one hope for him—the life of God diffused throughout his entire being—and this life was available to him from Jesus. Only his Creator could impart that saving presence and thus deliver him from this terrible scourge. It was a case vindicating the awesome truth that:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 140:

For earth's sin and misery the gospel is the only antidote.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 115:

The life of God in the soul is man's only hope.

Christ was more than willing to provide the Creator's solution to a problem which no one else could solve. In response to the leper's plea:

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

Jesus replied, "I will; be made clean," and laid His hand upon him. *Matthew 8:3, R.V.*

The moment Christ touched the diseased man before him, a charge of divine, creative power surged through the leper. It flowed out of Christ and into the man, thereby spreading health into every fiber of his being. The leprosy was purged from within him so totally that not even the slightest vestige of it remained. No roots, no matter how deep and hidden they had been, were left to spring into active growth and return the man to the abject misery of the bondage from which he had just been delivered. His was a total transformation such as only creative power could produce. He was delivered from disease, sin, and from the effects of their reign over him.

When Jesus said to the woman with the issue of blood from which she had suffered so much misery for so long:

"Your faith has made you whole;"

When He said to the leper:

"Be made clean;"

When He said to the man at the Pool of Bethesda:

"Take up your bed and walk;"

And to the paralytic:

"Your sins are forgiven;"

—there flowed into each of those stricken bodies a surge of

creative power. To everyone of them it was the dawning of a great new day which illuminated and restored them in body, mind, and spirit.

When Jesus touched the poor man,

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

Immediately a change passed over the leper. His flesh became healthy, the nerves sensitive, the muscles firm. The rough, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy disappeared, and a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy child, took its place.

The amazed people were quite unable to see the marvelous inner transformation which involved the total eradication of the disease from within him, and its replacement with the life and health of God, but they were able to witness the incredible change which took place on the outside. Up until one moment they saw before them “a loathsome spectacle,” whose skin had a “rough, scaly surface,” and was rotting away. It would be difficult to imagine a more repulsive human being, and certainly this was an extremely bad case. Then with breath-taking suddenness, this view is exchanged for one of radiant health and strength as “a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy child,” took the place of what he had been.

As surely as this is one of the worst cases of physical decay to which Christ administered healing, just so certainly does it convincingly declare the saving truth that Christ’s healing ministry was the process of creation. Therefore, when He healed a man, He was but repeating on a limited scale, what He had done during this earth’s first week.

The other outstanding case in which Christ was confronted by and healed a decaying body was that of Lazarus.

Not Limited to Christ’s Time

The revelation provided by the story of the healing of the

leper does not limit the process of creation to a few terminal cases, while some other procedures are employed to bring deliverance to others enslaved by disease. In every healing administered by Christ, the same creative process was employed, and, if we need healing today, it must be brought to us in the same way.

Of the years leading up to the first advent of Christ, there is no record known to me of any healing ministry, other than those of Christ and John the Baptist, which were made powerful and effective by the creative process. Then came the marvelous era of Christ's ministry when the creative power and process were employed to the full, and what a time of physical and spiritual riches that was!

This was followed by the glorious period of the former rain, when once again health was restored to many, and even the dead were raised. Sadly, the great apostasy followed during which time the creative process was lost to the Church, and the sick knew no relief until this process was restored at later times. During those periods when the sick were healed, it was always the working of the same creative process, in which He speaks and it is accomplished, He commands and it is done.

There is a tendency to limit the wonderful manifestations of creative, healing power to a few brief segments of history, of which the present, it is felt, is not one. Therefore, as befits an age of tremendous enlightenment and unparalleled acquirement of knowledge, it is considered more scientific and more honorable to man to turn to other procedures than the creative process. Those who think this way regard the healing ministry of Christ as being unique and, as such, cannot be regarded as the representative ministry which the rest of us are to copy.

But Jesus is the great Example which every other medical practitioner is to follow. And why not? As it was then, so it

should be now!

The Desire of Ages, p. 823:

And when virtue from Christ entered into these poor souls, they were convicted of sin, and many were healed of their spiritual disease, as well as of their physical maladies. The gospel still possesses the same power, and why should we not today witness the same results?

That question allows for only one answer which is that, as surely as the gospel still possesses the same power today as it did in the period during which Christ was upon earth, then the same splendid results will be seen, provided the believers in Jesus are blessed with the same faith as the Great Physician had.

If this way of healing is peculiar to the Son of God and limited to His personal ministry, so that only He could operate by it, then His crucifixion would have marked the end of the application of the gospel and its procedures to the problems of sickness and sin. Some other way of healing would have taken its active place in the Christian society. Then, never again would the sick be restored to health by God's flowing a stream of His own life into the ailing one.

But such a change in procedure was never to be instituted. It was never God's plan that there should be a departure from the way of healing practiced by Christ. That there were changes as the years went by was due, not to any alterations in God's perfect ways, but to the loss of living faith and divine power on the part of God's professed people as the great apostasy set in.

That departure from the ways of the healing God, was as great a tragedy as history has ever produced. Had those who received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost morning, continually "supplicated the throne of God" till their whole beings were daily "charged with a heavenly current

that should connect humanity with divinity,” they would have continued to be reservoirs from whom life and health would have flowed in rich streams to the people. Each day’s renewal of these increasingly inspiring, refreshing, and faith-confirming experiences, would have established them in the one way of practicing the healing art which Heaven approves. Thus God’s perfect way would have become eternally confirmed to the Church of God.

At the time when the power of the Holy Spirit was freshly outpoured on the day of Pentecost and immediately thereafter, the believers who were recipients of that incredible blessing were literally and abundantly charged with the living power of God. From them, as it had from Jesus, there...

The Ministry of Healing, p. 17:

...flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole.

Of them it could be truly said that, in the ministry of healing, their procedures and the results achieved were identical with those employed and achieved by their Master. In fact, where Christ left off due to His ascension, His disciples took up the same work and performed it in the same way.

That this is so, is confirmed by the healing of the cripple “a short time after the descent of the Holy Spirit.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 57.

The story is told as follows:

Acts 3

¹ Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.

² And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple;

³ Who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple,

asked for alms.

⁴ And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, Look at us.

⁵ So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

⁶ Then Peter said, Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.

⁷ And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

⁸ So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God.

⁹ And all the people saw him walking and praising God.

¹⁰ Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

There are strong similarities between this wonderful healing and those performed by Christ. Let us compare the work of the apostles in healing the cripple at the Gate Beautiful, with the work of Jesus in restoring the palsied cripple who had lain helpless at the Pool of Bethesda. We will see how the Great Physician was and forever will be the model for all the rest of us.

Both men were helpless. The man at the Pool had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years; the man at the temple gate was forty years of age. From his birth, his life had been one of pain and infirmity. Of this unfortunate one it is written:

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 57-58:

A short time after the descent of the Holy Spirit, and immediately after a season of earnest prayer, Peter and John, going up to the temple to worship, saw at the gate Beautiful a cripple, forty years of age, whose life, from his birth, had been one of pain and infirmity. This unfortunate man had long desired to see Jesus, that he might be healed; but he was almost helpless, and was far removed from the scene of the great Physician's labors. His pleadings at last induced

some friends to bear him to the gate of the temple, but upon arriving there, he found that the One upon whom his hopes were centered, had been put to a cruel death.

The helpless condition of both of these men was very visible to the passing crowds before whom they had become familiar figures. They could see the shrunken state of their muscles, the distressing deformities of their bodies, the features distorted with pain, and the struggles to change from one posture to another. These poor sufferers could only depend on the sympathetic kindness of people passing by to throw them an odd coin or two.

Among all those in the passing crowds, there was not one person who could reach out a healing hand as Jesus had done to the man at the Pool of Bethesda, and as Peter and John had done at the Gate Beautiful. But when Peter and John brought the power of God, the gospel, to the man at the gate, the results were as swift and positive as in the case of the man whom Christ healed by the pool. There was no difference in procedure, the medicine, the immediacy of the results, or the results themselves. In both cases there was a flow of creative power from the human agent into the sick ones. The results were instantaneous, and the effects were total healing.

The dramatic speed with which these healings took place eliminates all but one possible way of healing—the way employed by Christ—the one way which heaven approves. Nothing achieved by drug medication, no matter how stimulating it might be, could possibly enable an almost totally helpless cripple to instantly commence walking, leaping, and praising God. Furthermore, Peter and John had no stimulants to administer, nor would they have used any had such things been available.

There was no one in the wondering crowd who looked upon this application of the healing art and challenged its

genuineness. It was so extraordinary that there was no escaping the conviction that here was a revelation of the workings of a power above and beyond the human.

Nor could these manifestations be attributed to natural laws alone. One of the strong characteristics of working by natural laws alone is that it usually takes a noticeable amount of time to obtain satisfactory results and often little or no satisfaction is obtained. But in these cases, natural law alone could have accomplished nothing anyhow, since the solution required creative power to restore shriveled muscles instantly to their normal size and strength. By using this method, these healers were practicing the one way of healing which Heaven approves, and the results were just what could be expected. It was so amazing that it brought the crowd running from all directions.

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 58-59:

“And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and anklebones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened.”

“And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon’s, greatly wondering.” They were astonished that the disciples could perform miracles similar to those performed by Jesus. Yet here was this man, for forty years a helpless cripple, now rejoicing in the full use of his limbs, free from pain, and happy in believing in Jesus.

Peter and John certainly got the attention of the people that day, just as Christ had done during His earthly ministry. The manifestation of God’s power may be awesome and dramatic as when Jesus stilled the raging tempest, stopped the demoni-

acs in their tracks, and cleansed the temple courts from the noisy buyers and sellers; or it may be gentle and quiet as when Nicodemus' eyes were opened to see the light of the true gospel, the woman at the well was beautifully converted, and the woman with the issue of blood was healed.

But it did not matter in which of these two ways the manifestation was revealed. If the power-generated blessing was there, the attention of the people was caught and held. This is why there is so little attention paid to the preaching of the gospel today. It contains a relatively small proportion of the power of God. Very few lives are being transformed by its ministry, and few if any healings are seen that can really compare with the marvels of the past.

The Change to Come

But a great change is about to take place. There is to appear upon us, the measureless might of the Holy Spirit. When He comes, we will understand just how the entire earth shall be warned and brought to its final decision in a very short time.

This has been a difficult question to resolve given the enormous and rapidly increasing population of the earth, which is multiplying at a far greater rate than is being reached by the gospel and its attendant warnings. Presently, the problem is hopelessly out-stripping the solution. This means that every year the prospects of a successful conclusion to the ministry of the fourth angel are receding into the ever-more-distant future. Under these conditions, the finishing of the work will never be finalized—we are not even catching the attention of the people, let alone seeing a significant number being delivered from sin and sickness.

But we have been promised that the work will be finished, that every person of every kindred, nation, tribe, and people will have their interest so captivated, that they will be com-

pelled to concentrate their undivided attention on God's true people in whom the Holy Spirit will be dwelling in unlimited power.

The same problem of lack of power which retards our work today will no longer be present then, for there will be a return to the powerful, attention-gripping manifestations of the Holy Spirits' effectiveness which characterized the ministries of Christ, and then later of His apostles after the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. There is no shortage of statements promising that. Here is one which describes both the living presence of divine power, and the focusing of the attention of the people on the crucial issues of that time:

The Great Controversy, p. 606-607:

Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed. As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions.

Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power—all will be unmasked.

By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven.

As the people go to their former teachers with the eager inquiry, Are these things so? the ministers present fables, prophesy smooth things, to soothe their fears and quiet the awakened conscience. But since many refuse to be satisfied with the mere authority of men and demand a plain "Thus says the Lord," the popular ministry, like the Pharisees of

old, filled with anger as their authority is questioned, will denounce the message as of Satan and stir up the sin-loving multitudes to revile and persecute those who proclaim it.

Let us not miss the point that it will be with amazement that the multitudes will hear that Babylon is the seat of apostasy. Likewise, at Pentecost, the people were filled with amazement when they saw the results of the ministry of the Holy Spirit as it is written:

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 59:

When the disciples saw the amazement of the people, Peter asked, “Why marvel you at this? or why look you so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?” He assured them that the cure had been wrought in the name and through the merits of Jesus of Nazareth, whom God had raised from the dead. “His name through faith in His name,” the apostle declared, “has made this man strong, whom you see and know: yea, the faith which is by Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.”

Those who have never personally experienced the saving power of the gospel, will always be astonished when its power is unsheathed before them, especially when it is done for the first time. However, it was not the fact that the apostles could restore this sad cripple which astonished the excited populace, but the marvel that the apostles could work miracles similar to those performed by Christ.

Acts 3

¹² Why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 58-59:

They were astonished that the disciples could perform miracles similar to those performed by Jesus. Yet here was this man, for forty years a helpless cripple, now rejoicing in the full use of his limbs, free from pain, and happy in believing

in Jesus.

There was no discernible difference between Christ's restoration of the paralytic at Bethesda, and the healing of the cripple at the temple gate by the apostles. There can be no doubt that, once Christ had completed His earthly ministry, the apostles performed the same work, by the same procedures, with the same impressive success rate as Jesus had.

In these last days, great and numerous healings will take place, saving people from even the worst scourges which plague our modern society, but it will only be possible through the power and procedures used by Jesus in His ministry of healing.

This means that, if we are to successfully participate in delivering God's last messages of mercy to a perishing population, we must have a message of such powerful effectiveness that the very worst problems of sinfulness and sickness will be swept aside while God is revealed as the compassionate Saviour and almighty Healer from sin, sickness, and death.

11. Your Sins Be Forgiven You

IT IS very important that we understand as was mentioned earlier in this book, that the gospel is the one means by which the Lord takes care of physical, mental, and spiritual bondages.

It can be truthfully stated that our Maker is our Doctor and that He heals through the gospel which is the almighty power of God Himself. It was this same power that brought the earth and everything on it into existence. Anything less than that is not the gospel, and anything less than that will not suffice to provide anyone with the restoration of physical, mental, and spiritual health.

The beautiful, saving truth that the one gospel is the universal provision for all the deliverances we could ever need, was demonstrated by Christ with convincing power, and irrefutable clarity on the occasion when the paralytic was let down through the roof to Jesus' feet.

The Desire of Ages, p. 267:

It was to manifest His power to forgive sins that the miracle was performed.

It was almost too late when this man heard about Jesus and besought His aid. He was "entirely helpless," a paralytic, which means he was completely paralyzed. He could not move any part of his body, and had to be fed and otherwise cared for like a little baby which can do nothing for itself. His muscles were shrunken and powerless. He was a pathetic, extreme case, and death was not far distant.

The Pharisees "coldly pronounced him incurable," which pronouncement from the unbelieving, human standpoint was the truth. Neither those religious leaders nor the doctors of that time could heal him. His only hope was for the life of

God to be flowed into every part of his body as the stream of creative power. Could you imagine what a miserable, uncomfortable, and desperate existence was his?

The Desire of Ages, p. 267:

Like the leper, this paralytic had lost all hope of recovery. His disease was the result of a life of sin, and his sufferings were embittered by remorse. He had long before appealed to the Pharisees and doctors, hoping for relief from mental suffering and physical pain. But they coldly pronounced him incurable, and abandoned him to the wrath of God. The Pharisees regarded affliction as an evidence of divine displeasure, and they held themselves aloof from the sick and the needy. Yet often these very ones who exalted themselves as holy, were more guilty than the sufferers they condemned.

The palsied man was entirely helpless, and, seeing no prospect of aid from any quarter, he had sunk into despair. Then he heard of the wonderful works of Jesus. He was told that others as sinful and helpless as he had been healed; even lepers had been cleansed. And the friends who reported these things encouraged him to believe that he too might be cured if he could be carried to Jesus. But his hope fell when he remembered how the disease had been brought upon him. He feared that the pure physician would not tolerate him in His presence.

It was the great awareness of his need that caused the man to regard with interest every possibility of healing which in any way offered relief from his terrible physical, mental, and spiritual suffering. So, when his friends came to him witnessing to the wonderful mastery over sickness and sin which the Saviour manifested, his interest was excited at once. In turn, as his knowledge of the ministry of the invincible Healer was increased by each report brought to him, he began to sense that here was a power with the creative capacity to heal any disease with which it was confronted.

Then came a negative reaction as he thought of bringing his sin-polluted self into the pure and holy presence of the great Healer, whose character had been falsely represented to him by the haughty Pharisees. They, as the professed representatives of the Most High God, had pictured Him as being an exacting, punishing Potentate, an all-powerful Being who wreaked vengeance on sinners. In the light of these representations of our loving heavenly Father, he feared that his plea for healing might be coldly denied.

Yet, while the message of the Pharisees repulsed him, the holy atmosphere of love encircling the Great Physician drew him to Jesus with mounting irresistibility, even though he was as yet physically at a distance from Him. In fact, in view of the appalling listlessness which usually attends great feebleness, it is quite remarkable how strong his determination to come into Christ's presence became. After failing to gain access to the door of the house in which Jesus was preaching, those who had brought him thus far, tore up the roof at his urging, and let him down at Jesus' feet.

Artists' unrealistic depictions of the scene portray a clear atmosphere in the house, but in actual fact the room must have been choked with powder-fine dust. It would have descended on the heads and lodged in the hair of everyone in the room including Christ's. To the sick man all that was lost sight of in his determination to reach the Saviour.

The Desire of Ages, p. 267:

Yet it was not physical restoration he desired so much as relief from the burden of sin. If he could see Jesus, and receive the assurance of forgiveness and peace with Heaven, he would be content to live or die, according to God's will. The cry of the dying man was, O that I might come into His presence! There was no time to lose; already his wasted flesh was showing signs of decay. He besought his friends to carry him on his bed to Jesus, and this they gladly undertook to

do. But so dense was the crowd that had assembled in and about the house where the Saviour was, that it was impossible for the sick man and his friends to reach Him, or even to come within hearing of His voice.

The crowd was so dense that they could not reach the Saviour, but there is an important revelation of truth in the arrangement of the people involved. At one extreme was Jesus teaching within the house itself. In the immediate area “close about Him” sat His disciples, while outside were all the people who needed the message of life and health so urgently, and they were doing their best to hear Jesus. Between the great Teacher and the people were Pharisees and doctors of the law who had come to spy on Jesus in order to accuse Him.

From the records given it appears that on this occasion these men did not speak to either Christ or the people, but, whether they spoke or not, they still proclaimed their authority by positioning themselves between Christ and the people. Thus they announced their belief that they should be in control of all information that comes to the people from God and to God from the people.

This is the standard procedure of apostate ministers and priests all down through time. Having rejected the truth themselves, they are determined that no one else shall see and accept it either. So they position themselves between the Source of light on the one hand, and the people on the other where they believe they can control what the people shall believe.

Christ in all His ministry absolutely refused to recognize this arrangement. Ignoring its presence, He reached out to the people regardless of the restrictions the apostate ministry tried to enforce upon Him. He always penetrated the obstacles erected to stop His enlightenment of the people as on this occasion when He was teaching in the house of Peter:

The Desire of Ages, p. 267-268:

Jesus was teaching in the house of Peter. According to their custom, His disciples sat close about Him, and "there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem." These had come as spies, seeking an accusation against Jesus. Outside of these officials thronged the promiscuous multitude, the eager, the reverent, the curious, and the unbelieving. Different nationalities and all grades of society were represented.

"And the power of the Lord was present to heal." The Spirit of life brooded over the assembly, but Pharisees and doctors did not discern its presence. They felt no sense of need, and the healing was not for them. "He has filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He has sent empty away." *Luke* 1:53.

What a message this is of the power of importunate prayer! When the determined sufferer found his access choked with people so that he could not penetrate the obstruction, he went over the top of all the crowd, so that quite suddenly, the religious leaders found that he whom they had intended should be kept on the side of them farthest from Christ, was now on the side nearest to the mighty Healer.

The Desire of Ages, p. 268:

Again and again the bearers of the paralytic tried to push their way through the crowd, but in vain. The sick man looked about him in unutterable anguish. When the longed-for help was so near, how could he relinquish hope? At his suggestion his friends bore him to the top of the house, and, breaking up the roof, let him down at the feet of Jesus. The discourse was interrupted. The Saviour looked upon the mournful countenance, and saw the pleading eyes fixed upon Him. He understood the case; He had drawn to Himself that perplexed and doubting spirit. While the paralytic was yet at home, the Saviour had brought conviction to his conscience. When he repented of his sins, and believed in the power of Jesus to make him whole, the life-giving mercies of

the Saviour had first blessed his longing heart. Jesus had watched the first glimmer of faith grow into a belief that He was the sinner's only helper, and had seen it grow stronger with every effort to come into His presence.

Once the man had arrived in Christ's presence, it was time for the mighty Healer to practice the one way of healing which Heaven approves, and this is the creation procedure. Essential to this procedure is His speaking the word of creative power as He had done during earth's first week. Thus He spoke to the paralytic and...

...in words that fell like music on the sufferer's ear, the Saviour said, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins be forgiven you."

The Power of Forgiveness

Through the pronouncement of those words, a tremendous endowment of wonderful blessing was presented to that man on that glorious, never-to-be-forgotten day. He was not merely pardoned in the sense of being legally released from bearing the responsibility for his sins, for God's forgiveness is much more than that. When God forgives, He heals, for God's forgiveness is actual healing. When we have grasped the truth of this, we shall see remarkable answers to our prayers.

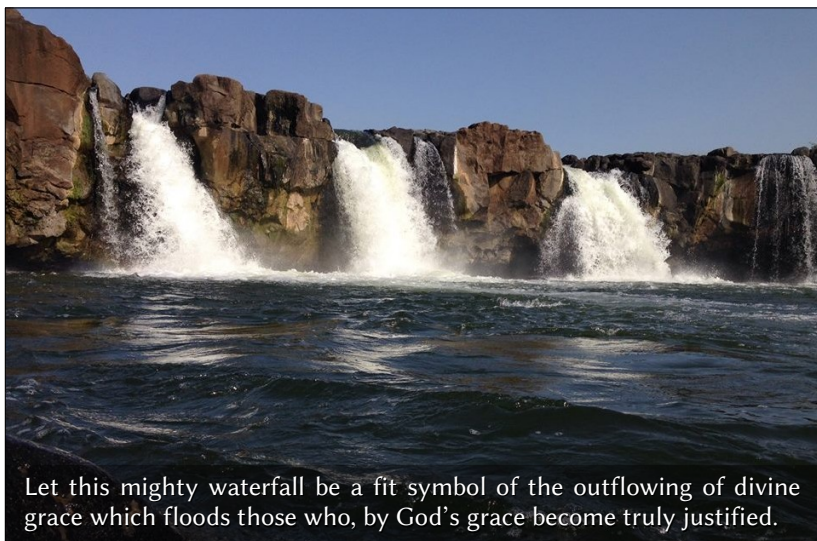
Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 114:

But forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. When God gives the promise that He "will abundantly pardon," He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend:

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." *Isaiah 55:7-9.*

God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. *It is the outflow of redeeming*

love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” *Psalm* 51:10. And again he says, “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” *Psalm* 103:12.



Let this mighty waterfall be a fit symbol of the outflowing of divine grace which floods those who, by God's grace become truly justified.

It is very important that we understand the actual nature of God's forgiveness, that we see it, not merely as a legal release from condemnation, but as the mighty outflow of divine life which transforms the recipient.

Man does not forgive his fellowman as God forgives. When men say, “I forgive you,” they are merely conveying the information that their attitude toward us at best is free from any spirit of hatred, separation, or retaliation. But when God through Christ says: “Your sins are forgiven,” a living stream of health and righteousness pours into the body of the sick and the sinful as it did on that momentous day when the man was let down through the roof. The twin results of Christ's spoken words were marvelous.

The Desire of Ages, p. 268:

The burden of despair rolls from the sick man's soul; the peace of forgiveness rests upon his spirit, and shines out upon his countenance. His physical pain is gone, and his whole being is transformed. The helpless paralytic is healed! the guilty sinner is pardoned!

In simple faith he accepted the words of Jesus as the boon of new life. He urged no further request, but lay in blissful silence, too happy for words. The light of heaven irradiated his countenance, and the people looked with awe upon the scene.

Jesus made only one pronouncement, "Your sins are forgiven," and two wonderful works were effected:

1. "The helpless paralytic is healed!"
2. "The guilty sinner is pardoned!"

This is a thrilling demonstration that God's forgiveness...

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 114:

...is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart.

That is the same as saying, that it is the outflow of creative power which recreates the sinner into a child of God.

This power and the procedure for its application to the needs of those who sought for His blessed relief from sickness and sin, were always present wherever Jesus went, and were always the means of bringing salvation to the sufferers who came to Him. Every one who came in living faith and fulfilled the necessary conditions, was forgiven by Jesus as was the man let down through the roof.

That means that a new life, a created life, was poured into him. This is the living power of God. It is God's love, and it delivers from the bondage of sickness and sin thus transforming the life. No wonder Paul exclaimed:

Romans 1

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

If only at the present time our eyes were truly opened to really see something of the magnitude, the intensity, and the effectiveness of those powers which have been given lodgment within us once we have been forgiven, we too would really see the salvation of our God. Then we would have no difficulty in accepting and practicing the one way in the healing art of which Heaven approves. Every time we are truly forgiven, there is an inflow of all these wonderful forces into our souls whether we actually *feel* this flooding or not.

But, even though hidden from our senses, they are really in us who believe. All such will find themselves mightily blessed if they strive to understand the simple but beautiful and powerful truth that God's forgiveness is the "outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart."

In order to obtain this glorious, energizing light, let us bow in humility claiming the promise:

James 1

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

If with the importunity of Jacob, we refuse to let go until the blessing is ours, we shall marvel at the light the Lord has in hand for us. If we would be healed ourselves, and then in turn be a successful medical missionary, we must know by experience the power that is God's forgiveness.

Please do not miss the point that God's forgiveness is itself redeeming love, and not merely the dispenser of that great and glorious blessing. Carefully consider the wording of the statement:

“It [God’s forgiveness] *is* the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart.”

It does not say that redeeming love provides forgiveness, but that God’s forgiveness *is* redeeming love which is the creative energy that transforms the heart. What a doorway to infinite light is opened by this message. This knowledge is for me personally the dawning of powerful light I have never seen before. I find it wonderfully inspiring.

It was because Jesus possessed this transforming light in Himself, that He enjoyed such unqualified success in His ministry.

The Desire of Ages, p. 825:

The power of love was in all Christ’s healing, and only by partaking of that love, through faith, can we be instruments for His work. If we neglect to link ourselves in divine connection with Christ, the current of life-giving energy cannot flow in rich streams from us to the people. There were places where the Saviour Himself could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief. So now unbelief separates the church from her divine Helper. Her hold upon eternal realities is weak. By her lack of faith, God is disappointed, and robbed of His glory.

“The power of love was in all Christ’s healing.” This was the mighty medicine which effected in men, women, and children, the physical, mental, and spiritual transformations which moved them from sickness to living health.

From this it follows that “only by partaking of that love, through faith, can we be instruments for His work.” It is important that we learn the power of that love by personally experiencing it. It must first flow into us, then from us in a living stream of life and health which will leave in its wake physically, mentally, and spiritually healed people. When we have attained to this level of faith, we will need no persuading

that there is only one way of practicing the healing art which Heaven approves. We will know the way, be glad to walk in it, and have no desire for, nor interest in any other.

Certainly, the paralytic into whom Christ poured His forgiveness, “the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart,” and who suddenly found himself in possession of “the elasticity and strength of youth” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 269), needed not to even consider the claims of any other healing art than the one he had just experienced. What he knew by experience was convincing enough for him!

It was a special occasion when God through Christ gave an exceedingly clear and powerful demonstration of His way of relieving the sick and sinful. The Almighty God by His Holy Spirit was present with healing power for the purpose of blessing every person assembled there, but this proved to be an impossibility, for there were those present whose cold, hardened hearts, were impervious as granite. These, unless they permitted their hearts of stone to be broken up, could never learn that one way of the healing art which bore Heaven’s sole endorsement.

The Desire of Ages, p. 268:

“And the power of the Lord was present to heal.” The Spirit of life brooded over the assembly, but Pharisees and doctors did not discern its presence. They felt no sense of need, and the healing was not for them. “He has filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He has sent empty away.” *Luke* 1:53.

They knew the seriousness of this man’s case. They knew that he was completely paralyzed, totally helpless, and on the verge of death. Then they saw all of this changed suddenly to the elasticity and strength of youth, yet, they still would not believe. In fact, even though “the power of the Lord was present to heal,” and even though “the Spirit of life brooded

over the assembly,” there is no record of anyone else being healed on this occasion. It is possible that there were others, but, if so, there is no record of them known to me at this time.

When that man leaped to his feet with the elasticity and strength of youth, he was literally receiving and experiencing the promise written in these words:

Psalm 103

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!

² Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits:

³ Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases,

⁴ Who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

⁵ Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The promise declared that the paralytic's youth would be renewed like that of the soaring eagle. The fulfillment declared that he rose to his feet with the elasticity and strength of his youth.

It has to be obvious that only a Creator could achieve the results revealed in this wonderful story, and this is the truth.

The Desire of Ages, p. 269-270:

It required nothing less than creative power to restore health to that decaying body. The same voice that spoke life to man created from the dust of the earth had spoken life to the dying paralytic. And the same power that gave life to the body had renewed the heart. He who at the creation “spoke, and it was,” who “commanded, and it stood fast,” (*Psalm* 33:9), had spoken life to the soul dead in trespasses and sins. The healing of the body was an evidence of the power that had renewed the heart. Christ bade the paralytic arise and walk, “that you may know,” He said, “that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins.”

In the Mission Field

What a marvelous mission field awaits those who, like their Master, possess the power to practice the one way of healing which enjoys Heaven's approval. To all such, the needy and the oppressed will come in their thousands seeking not only deliverance from their diseases, but also cleansing from their sins. These are they whom God will bring to those of us who understand His way of ministering to the diseases plaguing body, mind, and spirit, and possess the power to perform this saving ministry.

The Desire of Ages, p. 270:

The paralytic found in Christ healing for both the soul and the body. The spiritual healing was followed by physical restoration. This lesson should not be overlooked. There are today thousands suffering from physical disease, who, like the paralytic, are longing for the message, "Your sins are forgiven." The burden of sin, with its unrest and unsatisfied desires, is the foundation of their maladies. They can find no relief until they come to the Healer of the soul. The peace which He alone can give, would impart vigor to the mind, and health to the body.

It is always a frustrating and depressing experience for someone to pour out his life in loving ministry for the sick and sinful, only to find them returning to their evil ways again. They come for treatment, and are happy to feel better, but show no interest in their spiritual welfare. Their sorrow is for the *results* of sin, and not for the sin itself.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 134:

However skilled and faithful a physician may be, there is in his experience much of apparent discouragement and defeat. Often his work fails of accomplishing that which he longs to see accomplished. Though health is restored to his patients, it may be no real benefit to them or to the world. Many recover health, only to repeat the indulgences that invited disease. With the same eagerness as before, they

plunge again into the round of self-indulgence and folly. The physician's work for them seems like effort thrown away.

Christ had the same experience, yet He did not cease His efforts for one suffering soul. Of the ten lepers who were cleansed, only one appreciated the gift, and he was a stranger and a Samaritan. For the sake of that one, Christ healed the ten. If the physician meets with no better success than the Saviour had, let him learn a lesson from the Chief Physician. Of Christ it is written, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." *Isaiah* 42:4; 53:11.

But, as stated above, not all the work of the true medical missionary will be disappointing. There are those out there in the darkness who will not be satisfied until they have been delivered from their sinfulness as well as from their sickness. These are the ones who will make our ministry productive, rewarding, and inspiring. The eagerness with which those in this class grasp the truth, and the marvelous transformations which follow, are an inspiration to those medical missionaries who understand the divine procedures for healing the body and the soul.

The Desire of Ages, p. 270:

Jesus came to "destroy the works of the devil." "In Him was life," and He says, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He is "a quickening spirit." *1 John* 3:8; *John* 1:4; 10:10; *1 Corinthians* 15:45. And He still has the same life-giving power as when on earth He healed the sick, and spoke forgiveness to the sinner. He "forgives all your iniquities," He "heals all your diseases." *Psalms* 103:3.

The effect produced upon the people by the healing of the paralytic was as if heaven had opened, and revealed the glories of the better world. As the man who had been cured passed through the multitude, blessing God at every step, and bearing his burden as if it were a feather's weight, the people fell back to give him room, and with awe-stricken

faces gazed upon him, whispering softly among themselves, "We have seen strange things today."

This is the revelation of the results of a person's coming for treatment according to the way of practicing the healing art which has Heaven's blessing and approval. Every day His disciples were witnesses to these kinds of results until they came to the place where they could regard as normal, that which at first they had greeted with astonishment. Yet, even so, they failed to have any true understanding of the awesome magnitude of the power, which, though hidden from them, was at Christ's command.

The Desire of Ages, p. 667:

As yet the disciples were unacquainted with the Saviour's unlimited resources and power. He said to them, "Hitherto have you asked nothing in my name." *John* 16:24. He explained that the secret of their success would be in asking for strength and grace in His name. He would be present before the Father to make request for them. The prayer of the humble suppliant He presents as His own desire in that soul's behalf. Every sincere prayer is heard in heaven. It may not be fluently expressed; but if the heart is in it, it will ascend to the sanctuary where Jesus ministers, and He will present it to the Father without one awkward, stammering word, beautiful and fragrant with the incense of His own perfection.

To be successful medical missionaries, we must become as acquainted with the limitless resources at God's command as Jesus Himself was, for only thus can the cleansing, restoring power of love flow from us to the sick, the sinful, and the sorrowing, as it did from Jesus. When that mighty experience is ours, no further doubts will be entertained in regard to what is the one way of practicing the healing art which Heaven approves. We will know the answer to that question with absolute certainty.

There will be those truly dedicated and sincere souls who will feel that this message is ideal, beautiful, and attractive, but daunting. They fear that to place their feet in this pathway will lead to the same embarrassing defeat and disappointment as was felt by the disciples of Christ at the foot of the Mount of Transfiguration. Seeing it as such, in their minds they have placed it as being beyond the capacity of the average Christian, who has thus far found himself unable to operate as Christ did. This would infer that the Lord should have a secondary level of performing medical missionary work, such as, for instance, reliance on natural remedies.

This however is reverse or negative reasoning. It calls for the significant lowering of the standard of operation to meet that which is acceptable to the human mind, instead of recognizing God as the one whose right it is to determine what the standard of operations is to be. If God declares it can be done, then it can be done!

Our confidence in God is to be so firmly established that we cannot be shaken in our confidence that our wonderful heavenly Father never calls on His people to operate at a level beyond their capacity even though it may appear that He does. If we find that we cannot really believe that, we must, with all diligence, develop faith until we do.

Christ's Object Lessons, p. 38:

In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God.

Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, November 9, 1897:

He never asks us to do anything without supplying the grace and power to do that very thing. All his biddings are enablings.

Therefore, when God holds before us the highest commands, He is saying in effect that they can be achieved. The Christian, instead of being discouraged at the lofty mountain facing him, will rejoice that its heights can be scaled. He will exclaim with Paul:

Philippians 4

¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

He could say this because he knew that the union of the divine and human wills rendered the latter to be omnipotent:

Messages to Young People, p. 101:

As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command, may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.

It is to be understood that the high levels opened before us in these statements are neither achieved nor maintained without the utmost of diligent effort. There must be a dedicated singleness of purpose in the development of every single gift the Lord has invested in us. Otherwise it will be impossible for believers in Christ to practice the one way in the healing art that heaven approves.

12. The Healing Power of Love

JUST as soon as it is realized that the one way of practicing the healing art which Heaven approves involves the flowing into the sick person of the creative power of the living God, so that God's health becomes the health of the diseased and sinful, the question then asked is:

"How can I come into possession of that power so that I can be a true medical missionary?"

The desire for power in this context is not only legitimate, but is expected of us by God Himself who is greatly dishonored when His people are unacquainted with the unlimited powers at Christ's command. Let us consider again a statement quoted in the last chapter:

The Desire of Ages, p. 825:

The power of love was in all Christ's healing, and only by partaking of that love, through faith, can we be instruments for His work. If we neglect to link ourselves in divine connection with Christ, the current of life-giving energy cannot flow in rich streams from us to the people. There were places where the Saviour Himself could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief. So now unbelief separates the church from her divine Helper. Her hold upon eternal realities is weak. By her lack of faith, God is disappointed, and robbed of His glory.

Ponder these warning words very prayerfully and thoughtfully. Ask the question,

"What is the power of love?"

Is it merely a persuasive, attractive, winsome force which exerts a positive influence over those upon whom it shines? No! It is much more than that. The love spoken of here is the life of God. It is that love which is not merely *in* Him, but is

the Eternal One Himself, for, as the Scriptures declare it,

1 John 4

⁸ God *is* love.

God is also life, the very fountain of it, and the full supply of it. There is no love, nor life, nor healing, nor existence apart from Him. But there is everything with and in Him.

1 John 4

¹⁶ God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

This love and life of God is the infinite, unlimited power of the Almighty, which in turn is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore the power of God is the healing, restoring power of love which is God's forgiveness, which flowed into every sick person whom Christ healed. It is the creative force by which we and all things...

Acts 17

²⁸ ...live and move and have our being.

We can conclude from these wonderful truths that anyone in whom the life and health of God is resident, can have the mastery over sin and sickness. It also means that everyone who has a burden to become a medical missionary must partake of that love through faith, for only thus can he be an instrument in the Lord's work. This is the unequivocal revelation of what is required in order to become qualified to practice in this field. It admits no other alternatives, for...

The Desire of Ages, p. 825:

...only by partaking of that love, through faith, can we be instruments for His work.

To partake of that love through faith, and therefore in fact, is to literally receive into ourselves those marvelous, immortal life forces which are God's forgiveness, love, life, power, cre-

ative might, and healing virtue. Equipped with these forces, which are readily available to us through the ministry of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and our friends, the angels, the true medical missionary cannot fail in his work of saving men and women from sickness and sin provided that living faith can be developed in the one needing Christ's ministry of healing. Without them he cannot succeed. So therefore, the solemn warning is sounded:

The Desire of Ages, p. 825:

If we neglect to link ourselves in divine connection with Christ, the current of life-giving energy cannot flow in rich streams from us to the people.

This means that the sick go away from us sick, the diseased remain diseased, the crippled do not leap with rejoicing, and sinners do not experience the transformation achieved whenever the "current of life-giving energy flows in rich streams from us to the people."

Then, in the place of faith, unbelief flourishes, skepticism reigns, the knowledge of God's character becomes distorted and darkened, the Church is separated from her living Head, death follows, and Satan triumphs.

No amount of the knowledge of disease and its causes, or of the workings of the human organism, essential as all that is in true medical missionary work, can make up for the absence of the healing power of divine love. Without that, our ministry is worse than none at all, for it provides a false image of what the real ministry should be.

Christ provided a true manifestation of what it means to be charged with the healing, creative power of love, and marvelous beyond comparison were the results attending His work. He spoke the living word of command, and sickness disappeared, lepers were restored, cripples leaped to their feet, and even the dead arose to live again. His is the ministry

to be copied, for anything other than this is unacceptable, for it is ineffective. It could *never* be said of Christ:

By His “lack of faith, God was disappointed, and robbed of His glory.” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 825. No!

The early Christian Church provided a like demonstration of the healing power of love, for when those believers spoke the word of power, the same deliverances from sinfulness and sickness attended their ministry as marked the works of Jesus. It was a wonderful period of love, life, and healing for the needy, and the triumph of God’s redeeming love flowing from the heart of the Almighty into the sick and sinful so that they arose in health and righteousness, transformed in body, mind, and spirit.

During the forthcoming latter rain, the healing power of God’s pardoning love will again cleanse and restore the sick and the sinful, for the very last time.

But how is it with the Church of today? What kind of performance is being rendered by those who claim to be true medical missionaries and those who classify themselves as natural healers? We need to closely examine ourselves to see if we are blessed with the needed qualification of the transforming power of God’s life-giving energies so that this vital current can flow from us to the people. We also need to ask ourselves if our performance as medical missionaries bears the divine credentials.

If our unbelief is such that we are shown to be a powerless people,

The Desire of Ages, p. 825:

God is disappointed, and robbed of His glory.

Only a powerful, faith-charged people whose lives are victorious over sinfulness and sickness are not a disappointment to God, and are not robbers of His glory.

If we could truly realize it, we would understand that to be a disappointment to God, and to be robbers of His glory, is a very serious matter. Then, when the Holy Spirit is able to reveal our condition to us as God views it, a powerful conviction of sin will pass over us, and we will be mightily motivated to avail ourselves of all the divine provisions of His creative might so that we become true medical missionaries even as Christ was when He served God on this earth.

13. Following the Example of Christ

GOD wants a people filled with His power, a power so great that one man possessed of it, can rout a whole army of those who do not have it.

Our High Calling, p. 311:

The world's Redeemer presents to His followers the plan of the battle in which they are called to engage, and He bids them count the cost. He assures them that angels who excel in strength shall be in His army, and will enable those who trust in Him to fight valiantly. One shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight—not through their own strength, but through the power of Omnipotence....The Captain of the Lord's host is with them, taking the command of the armies, and leading them on to victory.

God is more than willing to pour out the Holy Spirit without measure onto His people so that they may do the deeds of Omnipotence, but, in His infinite wisdom, He is careful not to do this until they can be trusted not to use the gift to destroy themselves and others.

Unbelief Robs the Church

In God's hour of power, unbelief has robbed the church of the achievement of great triumphs over the works of the enemy. Instead, they have repeatedly yielded to the fearful temptation to take into their own hands the work which belongs to the Lord alone. They have mistakenly feared that, unless they step in, the cause of God will fail. So many have stumbled again and again over this very point, that history has become cluttered with the wreckage of a very great number of individuals who would have done exploits for God if they had never given the spirit of faith in exchange for the spirit of unbelief.

Abraham and Sarah in their attempt to provide the special

child of promise, provide us with an excellent example of this manifestation of unbelief. The aging couple believed in God in the sense that He was the supreme ruler in the universe, that He had saved them from sinfulness, loved and served Him, trusted Him, were prepared to make any sacrifice for His sake, and were very diligent in leading their extensive company of family and servants to reverence the holy name of the Lord.

Yet, because the time for the fulfillment of the promise had expired with no visible prospect of its being fulfilled, they yielded to the pressure on them to do something. So Sarah devised a plan which Abram, acting on a course of action which, no doubt, he thought would greatly please God, acquired a son by unlawful means. Thus Ishmael joined the family. True faith would have taken God at His word, and would have waited patiently no matter how long a time would have been required to bring forth the promised one.

Moses too, when he slew the Egyptian, failed in the same way.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 247:

In slaying the Egyptian, Moses had fallen into the same error so often committed by his fathers, of taking into their own hands the work that God had promised to do. It was not God's will to deliver His people by warfare, as Moses thought, but by His own mighty power, that the glory might be ascribed to Him alone.

When we come to realize the level of power needed to be really successful medical missionaries, we will understand the weight of responsibility resting upon us to achieve the required levels of proficiency. Then we shall not rest day nor night until we are in possession of the needed powers.

The Severest Discipline

Moses was one who rose to the place where he was no disappointment to God and did not rob Him of His glory. But to

arrive there cost him everything, as he learned by personal experience. His life witnessed to the truth that,

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 248:

All who are fitted for usefulness must be trained by the severest mental and moral discipline, and God will assist them by uniting divine power with human effort.

What a sobering statement this is, for it so plainly declares what is involved in becoming *fitted* for usefulness and to how many these principles apply. It states that “all” who are fitted for usefulness, must be trained by the *severest* mental and moral discipline. No exceptions to the rule are provided for here. Everyone is included.

Note that *severe* and *severer* disciplines are not enough, for only the *severest* will suffice to achieve such a fitness for usefulness as will deliver them from being a disappointment to God and a robber of His glory, but instead, will fit them to be medical missionaries of the same order as Christ and His apostles were.

Obviously, a person must be highly motivated by powerful incentives for him to voluntarily subject himself to the *severest* mental and moral discipline, for by nature humanity finds such privations unwelcome. Far sooner would we choose the pathway of pleasurable pursuits in preference to the denial of the appetites and passions of the flesh.

This is particularly true in the context of Christian living, except in those religions where the strictest rules of behavior are enforced, only to produce what are more than likely the unhappiest religionists in existence. This is because in those religious bodies, there is a highly disciplined effort at forcing a proud, hateful spirit to act humbly and lovingly. That is to attempt the impossible although there are those who achieve the appearance of success by virtue of the stern, rigorous application of the will.

For such a people to submit themselves to such discipline, requires they be constantly persuaded that they are God's elite, whose subjection to such deprivations in this life, they believe, will assure them a place in heaven. There, as they suppose, having been delivered from sinful flesh, they believe that they will at last find that they can live righteously. By these expectations they are reined up in the maintenance of the standards of outward Christian living.

The true Christian, being as much a flesh and blood creature as any follower of a legal religion, also needs to be motivated by powerful incentives. But, he has advantage over the legalist by his knowledge of the fact that he is not called upon to force the lovely attributes of love and humility from a heart filled with hatred and pride—which is an impossibility anyway. The true Christian, having been delivered from the presence of hatred and pride, finds that he does not need to fight futilely to bring love out of hatred, or humility out of pride, for these lovely attributes are the natural fruit of his re-creation.

But the fact remains that, because of the continuing presence of his flesh and blood human nature, the true Christian needs powerful forces to motivate him to suffer the *severest* mental and moral discipline in order to attain to fitness for usefulness in God's cause.

In the life of a truly dedicated believer in Jesus, the presence of God's pure love creates the powerful desire within him to attain to that level of usefulness where God is neither disappointed in him, nor robbed of His glory. Once this desire becomes a living force within the believer, the next question to be asked is:

“How does one attain to these heights of excellence?”

There are several factors to be considered when looking

over this question. The first of which I will mention is the need to enlarge our concepts to the point where we have a more realistic evaluation of what can be acceptable to God when all factors are considered. We must be elevated above the level where the best we can say is:

“I would never have thought it possible.”

To reach the highest standards requires that we aim at the highest possibilities.

Gospel Workers, p. 73 [1915 Edition]:

He should aim high; he will never reach a higher standard than that which he seeks to attain.

But how shall we gain a true vision of that which is possible? How shall this be opened up before our minds? How shall the Laodicean blindness be taken away and replaced by a clear vision of reality? How can we acquire a realistic understanding of what God has for us and what He expects us to attain, while ever bearing in mind that:

The Desire of Ages, p. 311:

God’s ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach.

The answer is to study the exhibitions of those powers as they are revealed in every encounter of Christ with wicked men, demons, diseases, death, and anything opposed to the divine will. The more clearly we behold the amazing powers exercised by the Model Medical Missionary, the better we shall realize what fitness for usefulness requires when those words are used in the writings of Ellen White.

We cannot spend time and space in this book studying every single manifestation of Christ’s divine power recorded in the sacred writings, but will meditate on one or two as samples of all the rest.

Governing Principles

As we do so and are mightily impressed with the incredible faculties and powers exercised by our Saviour, we must, at the same time, never allow ourselves to forget certain governing principles. Otherwise we could be oppressed into discouragement on the one hand, or perhaps plagued by selfish ambition on the other.

The first point is that, while we can copy the Pattern, we can never equal it:

Signs of the Times, November 28, 1892:

Never can we equal the goodness and the love of Jesus, but he calls upon every man and woman, youth and child, to behold him, and by beholding His perfection of character, to become changed into His image. Call every talent into exercise to copy the Pattern. Christ died to save man, and He calls upon us to live as seeing Him who is invisible, that we may save souls. Then seek the Lord most earnestly. Eternal life at the right hand of God is worth a lifelong, persevering, untiring effort.

The next thing I propose is to remember that God's almighty powers are not given to us for our own glory or vindication, but for selfless service.

The Desire of Ages, p. 407:

He does not impart to us power to vindicate ourselves or to satisfy the demands of unbelief and pride.

Thirdly, let it never be forgotten that we can possess and exercise the healing, restoring power today and lose it by tomorrow. As in Christ's experience, a fresh supply has to be gathered every day. This too is taught in the provision of the manna in the wilderness. Every day they were to gather to themselves a fresh supply, for that which they attempted to carry forward to the next day contrary to God's instructions, spoiled, and was unfit for food.

Keeping these three points in mind, we are better prepared to attempt the discovery of the awesome powers of the great Healer, and be inspired to copy the Pattern.

The Cleansing of the Temple

Let us earnestly meditate on that demonstration of His mighty power in the exercise of which...

The Desire of Ages, p. 161:

...Jesus was announcing His mission as the Messiah, and entering upon His work.

The occasion was His first cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem, where Jesus gave a most convincing demonstration of the creative power by which He would do all the mighty works commissioned Him by His Father. Let us now in our imagination greatly illuminated by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, stand there as intensely interested spectators of the entire event.

As with Jesus on His arrival at the temple, so we too take in the terrible desecration of the building which had been turned into a market place noisy with the sounds of sharp bargaining, and the plaintive bleating of sheep and lowing of cattle.

It was a scene of oppression, robbery, and cruelty in which the priests who should have been the champions of righteousness were the leaders in the wickedness designed to enrich themselves at everyone else's expense. The purpose of the temple's being a place where God's richest blessings were to be poured out, and where God's gracious revelations of the plan of salvation were to be revealed in the typical services, was completely lost to view.

The Desire of Ages, p. 157:

As Jesus came into the temple, He took in the whole scene. He saw the unfair transactions. He saw the distress of the poor, who thought that without shedding of blood there

would be no forgiveness for their sins. He saw the outer court of His temple converted into a place of unholy traffic. The sacred enclosure had become one vast exchange.

Christ saw that something must be done.

This is something which we are usually quite good at when we see wrongs being done among God's people. We see that something must be done, but *who will do it, and what must they do in a specific situation?*

Imagine yourself faced with the situation confronting Christ that day. That which needed to be done was the solving of no small problem. It required the driving out of the temple all those sin-hardened men to whom their ill-gotten treasure was more precious than life itself. It would take mighty power to dislodge them from their entrenched positions. A band of battle hardened soldiers could do it, but where were such to be found who would obey your commands? We know that the solution did not lie in that direction.

But God would appoint you to be His agents through whom He would solve this problem only if through hours spent in communion with Him, your entire being had become charged by supplicating the throne of grace until your humanity was charged with divine power connecting it with divinity. Nor would one night of such life-empowering communion suffice to supply us with the capacity to completely solve the problem before us. The true believer's life is one of continual communion by which he builds up and maintains a high level of mighty spiritual strength, so that, like his loved Commander, he will always be supplied with grace to supply every need, and successfully meet every emergency.

The Saviour Himself had an established pattern of intimate, power-supplying communion with God which, through the ministry of His godly parents, began before He was even born. As he grew older, many were the entire nights spent in

prayer, many the sessions fortifying Him for conflict with the arch-demon. Thus He became fitted to handle absolutely any problem requiring the exercise of living power. So we now return to His performance in the temple: Something had to be done; it was He who was commissioned of God to do it; and He would not leave it undone.

The Desire of Ages, p. 157:

With searching glance, Christ takes in the scene before Him as He stands upon the steps of the temple court. With prophetic eye He looks into futurity, and sees not only years, but centuries and ages. He sees how priests and rulers will turn the needy from their right, and forbid that the gospel shall be preached to the poor. He sees how the love of God will be concealed from sinners, and men will make merchandise of His grace. As He beholds the scene, indignation, authority, and power are expressed in His countenance.

Up until this point, Jesus has neither said nor done anything at all. Instead, we see Him silently standing alone near the entrance to the building. But “indignation, authority, and power are expressed in His countenance.”

Ask yourself what you, with your level of power, would expect the reaction of the people before you to be toward you if you were standing where Jesus stood. Unless you had in yourself the almighty power with which Jesus was charged, you would expect the passersby to give you no more than a casual glance. If you went a step farther and, in strong, positive tones, rebuked their sin, they would most likely do nothing worse than scornfully laugh at you. But look at the reaction to the incredible power emanating from Jesus even before He spoke a word or did anything at all. Consider the following description of what next took place:

The Desire of Ages, p. 157-158:

The attention of the people is attracted to Him. The eyes of those engaged in their unholy traffic are riveted upon His

face. They cannot withdraw their gaze. They feel that this man reads their inmost thoughts, and discovers their hidden motives. Some attempt to conceal their faces, as if their evil deeds were written upon their countenances, to be scanned by those searching eyes.

The confusion is hushed. The sound of traffic and bargaining has ceased. The silence becomes painful. A sense of awe overpowers the assembly. It is as if they were arraigned before the tribunal of God to answer for their deeds. Looking upon Christ, they behold divinity flash through the garb of humanity. The Majesty of heaven stands as the Judge will stand at the last day,—not now encircled with the glory that will then attend Him, but with the same power to read the soul. His eye sweeps over the multitude, taking in every individual. His form seems to rise above them in commanding dignity, and a divine light illuminates His countenance.

What a dramatic change in the whole situation. For the moment, silence reigns where there was previously the discordant and unlovely sounds of unholy traffic, and the stage is set for the thorough cleansing of the temple.

And all this so far was accomplished without Jesus saying a single word or doing anything whatsoever. He simply stood there sizing up the situation, while wave after wave of invisible power flowed out from Him over the trembling crowd. Now the speaking and the doing follow with even more dramatic results:

The Desire of Ages, p. 158:

He speaks, and His clear, ringing voice—the same that upon Mount Sinai proclaimed the law that priests and rulers are transgressing—is heard echoing through the arches of the temple: “Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house a house of merchandise.”

Slowly descending the steps, and raising the scourge of cords gathered up on entering the enclosure, He bids the bargaining company depart from the precincts of the temple. With a zeal and severity He has never before manifested, He

overthrows the tables of the money-changers. The coin falls, ringing sharply upon the marble pavement. None presume to question His authority. None dare stop to gather up their ill-gotten gain. Jesus does not smite them with the whip of cords, but in His hand that simple scourge seems terrible as a flaming sword. Officers of the temple, speculating priests, brokers and cattle traders, with their sheep and oxen, rush from the place, with the one thought of escaping from the condemnation of His presence.

A panic sweeps over the multitude, who feel the overshadowing of His divinity. Cries of terror escape from hundreds of blanched lips. Even the disciples tremble. They are awestruck by the words and manner of Jesus, so unlike His usual demeanor. They remember that it is written of Him, "The zeal of Your house has eaten me up." *Psalms* 69:9.

Soon the tumultuous throng with their merchandise are far removed from the temple of the Lord. The courts are free from unholy traffic, and a deep silence and solemnity settles upon the scene of confusion. The presence of the Lord, that of old sanctified the mount, has now made sacred the temple reared in His honor.

We must be careful to correctly identify the kind of power which flowed out from Jesus and drove the people from the temple precincts. Jesus certainly did not employ brute, physical force or compelling power in this accomplishment, for:

The Desire of Ages, p. 759:

Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power.

There was no physical contact between Christ and the desecrators of the temple. He did not strike them with His whip, and there was no pushing and shoving except by members of the fleeing crowd against each other as they frantically fought

to take the lead in their flight.

The almighty power which, emanating from Christ, drove the crowd from the temple, was the power and force of spotless righteousness. By the exercise of this power, Jesus was able to expose each man's sinfulness so that each saw himself as he actually was. There is nothing so devastating and fear-provoking as the sense of awful condemnation experienced by the lost when their naked sinfulness is exposed before their horrified faces.

The Desire of Ages, p. 162:

Christ spoke with the authority of a king, and in His appearance, and in the tones of His voice, there was that which they had no power to resist. At the word of command they realized, as they had never realized before, their true position as hypocrites and robbers. When divinity flashed through humanity, not only did they see indignation on Christ's countenance; they realized the import of His words. They felt as if before the throne of the eternal Judge, with their sentence passed on them for time and for eternity.

For a time they were convinced that Christ was a prophet; and many believed Him to be the Messiah. The Holy Spirit flashed into their minds the utterances of the prophets concerning Christ. Would they yield to this conviction?

Try to estimate the awesome power resident in a person with the capacity of almost instantly awakening quite a crowd to a true sense of their actual spiritual condition, thus bringing them to deep conviction!

As we have seen from the way in which Christ handled the money changers and merchants at the temple, He certainly was blessed with mighty spiritual power. What an achievement that was, as, in complete mastery of the situation, He faced the guilty, hostile crowd, and drove everyone in undignified haste from the temple.

There is no wonder that diseases disappeared at His touch;

the cripple's wasted muscles were restored at His command; sinners abandoned their iniquity under the application of His sure promises; the blind were made to see as His light shone into their souls; and so forth. There was no sickness or sinfulness which could resist Him.

Near the very close of His earthly life, Jesus returned to the temple and found it in a worse state than when He cleansed it the first time. For the second time, the Messiah swept all before Him.

The Desire of Ages, p. 590-591:

Again the piercing look of Jesus swept over the desecrated court of the temple. All eyes were turned toward Him. Priest and ruler, Pharisee and Gentile, looked with astonishment and awe upon Him who stood before them with the majesty of heaven's King. Divinity flashed through humanity, investing Christ with a dignity and glory He had never manifested before. Those standing nearest Him drew as far away as the crowd would permit. Except for a few of His disciples, the Saviour stood alone.

Every sound was hushed. The deep silence seemed unbearable. Christ spoke with a power that swayed the people like a mighty tempest: "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves." His voice sounded like a trumpet through the temple. The displeasure of His countenance seemed like consuming fire. With authority He commanded, "Take these things hence."
John 2:16.

Those apostate priests, rulers, rabbis, traffickers and other desecrators of the temple, found the power emanating from Christ to be quite incomprehensible. They marveled that they had fled the first time, and were confident that it would never happen again, only to find that their second flight was more desperate than the first. They made no allowance for what had happened to Christ and themselves in the intervening years. Both had increased in power during that time. The

power in Christ was much greater, while the wickedness of the apostate had also markedly strengthened. Consequently, the confrontation was so much more spectacular.

The Desire of Ages, p. 591-592:

Three years before, the rulers of the temple had been ashamed of their flight before the command of Jesus. They had since wondered at their own fears, and their unquestioning obedience to a single humble man. They had felt that it was impossible for their undignified surrender to be repeated. Yet they were now more terrified than before, and in greater haste to obey His command. There were none who dared question His authority. Priests and traders fled from His presence, driving their cattle before them.

This story is one of many in the Scriptures which reveals the greatness of the heights at which we are to aim. While we can never equal the Pattern, we can certainly copy it. In doing so, we shall neither be a disappointment to God, nor robbers of His glory.

A true medical missionary is an individual of great power, for it is a position which no weak person can fill. Even so, there are many aspirants for this position, for which so few are qualified.

14. Power to Penetrate Barriers

IN THE previous chapter we faced the question as to how to gain an accurate concept of the power required to rise above those lowly levels where we are a disappointment to God and a robber of His glory, and cannot qualify as being true medical missionaries.

We saw that to achieve this requires among other things, that we study the manifestations of divine power as revealed in the life and ministry of Christ. Accordingly, we gazed intently on Christ's successfully commanding the clearance of all merchandising from the temple courts, and I hope that, under the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit, we were awed with wonder and amazement at how great and effective was the power abiding in our Saviour, and which God intends shall likewise fill us.

We will now turn to another and somewhat different manifestation of that same power—the dramatic conversion of the woman at the well in Samaria. Here, there were no buyers and sellers in noisy, distracting disputation; no stubborn, hardened resisters of the divine influences for the right; no need for Christ in tones of authority to order their departure.

Yet, the conversion of that woman was just as much a manifestation of divine power as was the cleansing of the temple, and therefore provides a most important lesson for all those who have covenanted with their Maker for Him to be their Doctor, and for them to be His true medical missionaries.

There is a great deal which has been penned by Inspiration on the subject of true medical missionary work where it is stressed that this is the very work which the Church should be successfully doing.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 62:

We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work. The world is a lazar house filled with victims of both physical and spiritual disease. Everywhere people are perishing for lack of a knowledge of the truths that have been committed to us. The members of the church are in need of an awakening, that they may realize their responsibility to impart these truths. Those who have been enlightened by the truth are to be light bearers to the world. To hide our light at this time is to make a terrible mistake. The message to God's people today is: "Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you."

True medical missionary work, although it certainly has much to do with caring for the physical needs of the diseased, the sick, and the dying, is not confined to that work, but deals with the comprehensive work of deliverance from physical, mental, and spiritual bondages of the individual seeking the missionary's aid.

When Jesus ministered to the woman at the well in Samaria, He was living out the role of a true medical missionary even though no healing from a life-discomforting disease was involved. Even so, it was no easy task which confronted Him.

Those who in the past have set out to minister to the sick, have experienced great disappointment on finding that those in need of help are content with relief from the *effects* of their sinful living without caring about forsaking their sinfulness and living righteously. Thousands flock to receive treatment which relieves them of pain, only to return to the continuation of their evil practices. No permanent revival and reformation is put into effect either spiritually or physically. Thus a great deal of effort is expended for very little result.

There is good reason for this. While in our work we under-

stand health principles, carry compassion, love, and dedication in our hearts, and work selflessly in our ministry for others, unless the living power of God is present to penetrate every barrier, those who come seeking relief will never be awakened to an essential awareness of their need, and will never know how great is the salvation being offered them. Under these conditions, there will never be either physical or spiritual healing for those needing our ministry.

The First Task

In reaching a needy soul, the first task of the true medical missionary is to penetrate through apathy, disillusionment, unbelief, prejudice, ignorance, blindness, satanic delusions, and so forth, in order that the mind and heart of the sufferer might be opened to see both a true picture of his desperate condition, and the gloriously complete answer to it. Such a worker must know by living, practical, personal experience that:

Signs of the Times, April 14, 1881:

Faith is the living power that presses through every barrier, overrides all obstacles, and plants its banner in the heart of the enemy's camp.

Never was that power to penetrate through the darkness of a prejudiced mind needed so much as when Jesus met the woman at the well. Here, let all those who aspire to be true medical missionaries gather for the lesson of all lessons in the Scriptures on how to go about this work as taught by the greatest of all teachers—Christ Himself.

Through long-standing, systematically inculcated, and deeply-rooted prejudice, this woman as a Samaritan, was as effectively closed against Christ whom she mistook to be just another Jew, as any person could be against another, for there were no nationals so hostile and hateful towards one another as were Jews and Samaritans.

The Desire of Ages, p. 183:

The Jews and the Samaritans were bitter enemies, and as far as possible avoided all dealing with each other. To trade with the Samaritans in case of necessity was indeed counted lawful by the rabbis; but all social intercourse with them was condemned. A Jew would not borrow from a Samaritan, nor receive a kindness, not even a morsel of bread or a cup of water. The disciples, in buying food, were acting in harmony with the custom of their nation. But beyond this they did not go. To ask a favor of the Samaritans, or in any way seek to benefit them, did not enter into the thought of even Christ's disciples.

Let there be added to this the fact that she was a woman and he was a man meeting as complete strangers in this lonely spot. Could she trust Him, or was He a threat to her? For all she knew, He could have taken advantage of the opportunity the situation afforded Him. Therefore, she further shut Him out of her world of that moment, and this made contact with her just that much more difficult. She was alone in a potentially dangerous situation especially as there was no one who would hear and respond to her call for help. No one else came to the well at this time of day when "the sun of noontide beat upon Him." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 183.

The rest of the villagers did not come during the heat of the day, so she chose to come then, not to avoid the sun, but to avoid other people for some reason or another. That reason is not hidden from us, for the Saviour spelled it out in these words describing her immoral past:

The Desire of Ages, p. 187:

Jesus now abruptly turned the conversation. Before this soul could receive the gift He longed to bestow, she must be brought to recognize her sin and her Saviour. He said unto her, "Go, call your husband, and come hither." She answered, "I have no husband." Thus she hoped to prevent all questioning in that direction. But the Saviour continued, "You have

well said, I have no husband; for you have had five husbands; and he whom you now have is not your husband: in that you said truly.

Because of her sinful relationship with the man with whom she was then living, she had suffered much from condemnation, shame, and embarrassment, and desired intensely to escape from all the dwellers in the village. She just longed to be left completely alone.

Though He was the One above all others to whom, right then, she most needed to turn to for deliverance, she did not want to talk with anyone that day, least of all a Jew. Yet, there He was, waiting patiently for someone to come and draw water. Carefully avoiding eye-contact with Him, she drew her supply and turned to leave.

The Desire of Ages, p. 183-184:

As Jesus sat by the well-side, He was faint from hunger and thirst. The journey since morning had been long, and now the sun of noontide beat upon Him. His thirst was increased by the thought of the cool, refreshing water so near, yet inaccessible to Him; for He had no rope nor water jar, and the well was deep. The lot of humanity was His, and He waited for some one to come to draw.

A woman of Samaria approached, and seeming unconscious of His presence, filled her pitcher with water. As she turned to go away, Jesus asked her for a drink. Such a favor no oriental would withhold. In the East, water was called "the gift of God." To offer a drink to the thirsty traveler was held to be a duty so sacred that the Arabs of the desert would go out of their way in order to perform it.

The hatred between Jews and Samaritans prevented the woman from offering a kindness to Jesus; but the Saviour was seeking to find the key to this heart, and with the tact born of divine love, He asked, not offered, a favor. The offer of a kindness might have been rejected; but trust awakens trust. The King of heaven came to this outcast soul, asking a service at her hands. He who made the ocean, who controls

the waters of the great deep, who opened the springs and channels of the earth, rested from His weariness at Jacob's well, and was dependent upon a stranger's kindness for even the gift of a drink of water.

What a seemingly impossible task for any medical missionary to undertake! Barrier after barrier, and obstacle after obstacle had been erected between that needy soul and her Saviour, until the penetration of her mind and heart with saving truth seemed to be nothing short of an impossibility.

We know by experience how tough it is to excite the interest of the average person of the world in spiritual things even when they have much less resistance to the truth than did this woman. Reaching modern man with the gospel is difficult enough unless one has the living, attention-commanding power of God in him with which to arrest the downward plunge of those in great personal need.

The people of the present generation view religion as a farce, a great hypocrisy which leaves a person worse than when it found him. Two world wars have distorted still further the prevailing misunderstandings of God's character who is viewed as a harsh, judgmental, all-powerful despot who does little if anything to relieve the sufferings of humanity. The very mention of God's name, or of religion, is all that is needed to completely shut down the hope of a missionary contact.

This is the scenario with which we are all too familiar, the blame for which we place on "the hardness" of the hearts of the modern generation, as if those conclusions explained everything.

At this point, let us meditate on the situation at the well and put ourselves in the position occupied by Christ. Try to make an accurate assessment of the barriers you would have to overcome just to get her attention, how much more to sus-

tain it, and how much more still to bring to life such faith as generated the new birth experience in her. Ask yourself whether you have the power to do all that, while remembering that in less than an hour she passed from being an unbeliever to being truly converted.

I am speaking here, not of conversion reaching only as far as a new code of intellectual persuasion is concerned, but of the conversion which involves the eradication of the old sin-master, and its replacement with a new spiritual nature altogether, even the life of Christ Himself. Of every one who has passed through this transition, it can be truly said that he is a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Spiritual Strength in Weak Humanity

It is worthy of notice that, while Christ had the power to penetrate her prejudices and capture her attention, as well as the capacity to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, restore the cripples' wasted muscles, stop demon-possessed men in their tracks, and even raise the dead, He could not supply Himself with a drink of water from the well unless He had a pitcher and a rope, or someone else to draw water for Him.

How are we to understand this seemingly odd imbalance of forces under His command? On the one hand He was all-powerful; but on the other as weak as humanity generally speaking.

The answer lies in the truth that there are two general powers within the Christian which are at his disposal—the physical, and the spiritual. The far less powerful of these as they were found in Christ was the power of His physical nature. Here He was limited to the general lot of mankind. He would have been stronger than most, but weaker than some others such as the very fit Roman soldiers, and the contestants at the Olympic games.

Christ is the most powerful human being ever to walk on this earth. There was no disease of which He was afraid to come in contact; there were no demon-possessed from whom He fled; nor did He quail when confronted by priests, rulers, Roman soldiery. And raging storms at sea such that pictured here had no way of terrifying Him. He was the Master of them all.



But when we consider Christ's spiritual powers, we quickly arrive at the conclusion that there was not another man on earth who was endowed with power such as He had. Here was living, creative might with those marvelous capacities we have looked at so far, and which were the cause of so much wonder and amazement on the part of the populace, among whom...

Signs of the Times, June 17, 1889:

...He went about doing good, and healing all those who were oppressed of the devil. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for he had passed through them and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of his divine anointing.

Achieving Conversion

So it was that at the well of Sychar, Jesus first captured the attention of the Samaritan woman, and from there went on to achieve her conversion. How did He do such a marvelous thing? How did He get so far, so quickly? Was it by a display of knowledge, or by making specific offers of advantages to

her, or by the presentation of powerful arguments, or by displaying a stunning personality before her?

It was none of these! Waiting on her arrival at the well for her to fill her water pitcher, and then to turn her back on Him to initiate her return to her village, He gently asked her for a drink of water. He instantly secured her attention, and held it. But how under these very difficult circumstances was He able to achieve this?

The woman herself attributed the break-through to Him, a Jew, asking a favor of her, a Samaritan, for her curiosity was sufficiently aroused for her to stop and look back at Him:

The Desire of Ages, p. 184:

The woman saw that Jesus was a Jew. In her surprise she forgot to grant His request, but tried to learn the reason for it. "How is it," she said, "that You, being a Jew, ask drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?"

Had Jesus been an ordinary Jew with the hostility of his race in his heart, His request, which he would not have placed before her anyway, would have markedly worsened the estrangement between them. Coldly and firmly would she have turned away and left Him without saying a word in response. It would not have mattered how dutifully, sincerely, and earnestly he had tried to establish a missionary contact with the woman, she would have left him alone too, while he pondered what went wrong with that missionary contact.

But there was a powerful added factor in the request when Christ made it. When He spoke, there was winsome, attractive power in that spoken word, and it was by the living power in that word that Jesus penetrated the barriers, and overrode the obstacles which stood between Him and her needy soul.

Of course, she was not able to adequately identify a force

which was unfamiliar to her by virtue of her never having been introduced to such a power before. It was new, but very appealing and attractive to her, and it was this factor which generated so definite a response in her.

It is essential that today that power has lost none of its potency, for it is a life-force which must be present in every contact made between us and our Doctor. If we are without it, there is no possibility of receiving healing ourselves, or of being true medical missionaries from whom healing will flow into others. Not only must we know the promises in the Scriptures, but we must know the power in that word.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 122:

The same power that Christ exercised when He walked visibly among men is in His word. It was by His word that Jesus healed disease and cast out demons; by His word He stilled the sea and raised the dead, and the people bore witness that His word was with power. He spoke the word of God, as He had spoken to all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament. The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ.

The Scriptures are to be received as God's word to us, not written merely, but spoken. When the afflicted ones came to Christ, He beheld not only those who asked for help, but all who throughout the ages should come to Him in like need and with like faith. When He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins be forgiven you;" when He said to the woman of Capernaum, "Daughter, be of good comfort: your faith has made you whole; go in peace," He spoke to other afflicted, sin-burdened ones who should seek His help. *Matthew 9:2; Luke 8:48.*

So with all the promises of God's word. In them He is speaking to us individually, speaking as directly as if we could listen to His voice. It is in these promises that Christ communicates to us His grace and power. They are leaves from that tree which is "for the healing of the nations." *Revelation 22:2.* Received, assimilated, they are to be the strength of the character, the inspiration and sustenance of the life.

Nothing else can have such healing power. Nothing besides can impart the courage and faith which give vital energy to the whole being.

In His communication with her, there was the actual presence of His grace and power. It was all there in the word of Christ as spoken to the Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar. There was as far as she could discern it, the indefinable quality of infinite love, goodness, and power which penetrated to the depths of her being and opened her heart in response to the divine love calling on her to come to the water of life.

What an achievement by which He could accomplish so much so soon! Just how did He do it? It was by His outreach to her of the incredibly beautiful and living powers within Him. We are to understand and never forget that, without that tremendous power being present in Him, our Maker certainly cannot be our Doctor, nor can we be true medical missionaries to the sick and dying unless we are likewise filled with that same power.

Having brought her thus far, the groundwork was laid for the further progression of the work of winning her to the gospel by which her new birth would be achieved. So, in response to her question as to how it was that He being a Jew asked a Samaritan woman to supply Him with a drink of water, Christ came directly to the spiritual implications of His request:

The Desire of Ages, p. 184:

Jesus answered, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give me to drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water." You wonder that I should ask of you even so small a favor as a draught of water from the well at our feet. Had you asked of me, I would have given you to drink of the water of everlasting life.

The conversation at this stage was less than a minute old, provided that all that which was said and done by the well was reported by John, yet Christ was already plunging into deep spiritual truths, even the water of everlasting life.

The average medical missionary from the knowledge gained from previous experience in soul-winning, would judge this approach as being too much, too soon. But there is a reason for this. When words such as Jesus spoke are spoken by those professed missionaries who do not have God's life in them, they do not sound real and have no convincing power. The listeners discern the terrible absence of life and power in the presentation and are left with no other option than to classify the message as death-dealing error.

Gospel Workers, p. 253:

The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, pierces the heart of the sinner, and cuts it in pieces. When the theory of the truth is repeated without its sacred influence being felt upon the soul of the speaker, it has no force upon the hearers, but is rejected as error, the speaker making himself responsible for the loss of souls.

But His words as they came across from Jesus to the woman at the well, carried the power of an authority, a truthfulness, a quality, which left no doubt as to their inestimable worth.

The Desire of Ages, p. 184:

The woman had not comprehended the words of Christ, but she felt their solemn import. Her light bantering manner began to change.

It is evident that the power in the words from Christ was getting through the barriers and obstacles and reaching her. Being unable at this stage to comprehend the deep, spiritual messages in Christ's pronouncements led her to grapple with old ideas in the light of new concepts. She pondered the

thought that this man before her was only a...

The Desire of Ages, p. 184:

...thirsty traveler, wayworn and dusty. In her mind she compared Him with the honored patriarch Jacob. She cherished the feeling, which is so natural, that no other well could be equal to that provided by the fathers. She was looking backward to the fathers, forward to the Messiah's coming, while the Hope of the fathers, the Messiah Himself, was beside her, and she knew Him not. How many thirsting souls are today close by the living fountain, yet looking far away for the wellsprings of life!

Jesus was now very much in command of the situation. With her interest thoroughly aroused and all thought of national hostilities being far from her mind, she sought eagerly for the water of everlasting life, the only one which gives eternal satisfaction.

Conviction Brings Repentance

Having captured her intense interest, and having established a yearning in her for the salvation He desired to implant within her heart and mind, He next had to reveal her true spiritual condition to her, so that He could generate in her a great sense of personal need for the pardoning of her sinfulness. Accordingly He directed her attention to her living in sin with a man who was not her husband. While she tried to prevent all further questioning on that subject, Jesus demonstrated His intimate knowledge of her case by providing her with correct details, even though He had never met her before. How then did He know these things?

The Holy Spirit supplied this information. He was another of those mighty powers who increased the effectiveness of Christ's ministry, and is offered to us to give the power we need to make our ministry the success which Christ's was.

The Desire of Ages, p. 672:

Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord's promise; they talk *about* Christ and *about* the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us.

Through the Spirit, God works in His people "to will and to do of His good pleasure." *Philippians* 2:13. But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception.

This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive.

The ministry of power in Christ through the Holy Spirit was very successful in bringing positive conviction to her heart and mind as is revealed in these words:

The Desire of Ages, p. 187-188:

The listener trembled. A mysterious hand was turning the pages of her life history, bringing to view that which she had hoped to keep forever hidden. Who was He that could read the secrets of her life? There came to her thoughts of eternity, of the future judgment, when all that is now hidden shall be revealed. In its light, conscience was awakened.

She could deny nothing; but she tried to evade all mention of a subject so unwelcome.

To do so she turned to topics of religious controversy. Patiently, the Saviour permitted her to...

The Desire of Ages, p. 188:

...lead the conversation whither she would. Meanwhile He

watched for an opportunity of again bringing the truth home to her heart.

As He talked with her and she with Him, the power of conviction fixed itself ever more firmly on her mind and heart, and thus prepared her to receive the revelation that He was her Saviour. When the time came for this wonderful light to be seen by her, she would have to make her decision to either accept or reject it.

The Desire of Ages, p. 189-190:

As the woman talked with Jesus, she was impressed with His words. Never had she heard such sentiments from the priests of her own people or from the Jews. As the past of her life had been spread out before her, she had been made sensible of her great want. She realized her soul thirst, which the waters of the well of Sychar could never satisfy. Nothing that had hitherto come in contact with her had so awakened her to a higher need. Jesus had convinced her that He read the secrets of her life; yet she felt that He was her friend, pitying and loving her.

While the very purity of His presence condemned her sin, He had spoken no word of denunciation, but had told her of His grace, that could renew the soul. She began to have some conviction of His character. The question arose in her mind, "Might not this be the long-looked-for Messiah?" She said to Him, "I know that Messias comes, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things." Jesus answered, "I that speak unto you am He."

From the human point of view, this could only be an unsubstantiated claim. How could such an obscure-looking individual, dusty, worn, and footsore with travel, accompanied by a few very common disciples, dressed in very ordinary coarse garments, without the means of supplying Himself with a cool drink from the well, ever successfully claim to be the Messiah?

To make matters worse, there were others who made the

same claim. Some of these turned out to be violent men during whose brief days of glory, attacked the Romans and lost their lives. None of them had much to recommend them. All proved to be a disappointment to those who risked all to follow them.

As the woman at the well looked upon Jesus, she saw a man who was much more than a dusty traveler. She saw one instead in whom resided the living power of the gospel, and faith took hold of that power. It was by that outreach that she grasped the strong arm of Omnipotence, and the wonderful event of the new birth took place within her.

The Desire of Ages, p. 190:

As the woman heard these words, faith sprang up in her heart. She accepted the wonderful announcement from the lips of the divine Teacher.

This woman was in an appreciative state of mind. She was ready to receive the noblest revelation; for she was interested in the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit had been preparing her mind to receive more light. She had studied the Old Testament promise, "The Lord your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, like unto me; unto Him you shall hearken." *Deuteronomy* 18:15. She longed to understand this prophecy. Light was already flashing into her mind. The water of life, the spiritual life which Christ gives to every thirsty soul, had begun to spring up in her heart. The Spirit of the Lord was working with her.

Preliminary Work by the Holy Spirit

Prior to Jesus' meeting with her, the Holy Spirit had been preparing her to receive the seed of truth which Christ would implant in her mind and heart. This preliminary groundwork is very essential to success in soul-winning. I have personally found that, unless this vital ministry of thorough preparation has been performed by the Holy Spirit before I even meet the person concerned, the individual in question is quite unable to

receive the eternal truths and enter into the new birth experience.

An Abundant Harvest

In the meantime, Christ's disciples had gone into the village of Sychar, and had contact with a number of people. They expected no missionary contacts, for they saw only prejudice against them as Jews, and, as Jews against Samaritans, returned the hostility. Lacking in themselves sufficient power to overcome all the partition walls between Jew and Samaritan, they did not have the needed faith to see what Christ could see. He beheld a glorious and abundant harvest only waiting to be gathered in.

The next step in the revelation of how productive the harvest was, was the excited return of the woman to the village where, in a wonderfully powerful manner, and with uninhibited sincerity, she proclaimed the lovely virtues of her precious Saviour.

The Desire of Ages, p. 191:

"Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did," she said to the men of the city. "Is not this the Christ?" Her words touched their hearts. There was a new expression on her face, a change in her whole appearance. They were interested to see Jesus. "Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him."

Thus she bore positive witness to a reclaimed life through the saving ministry of the gospel, and people took notice of her that she was transformed. Where all apart from Christ saw that there was nothing for the reapers, the Saviour saw an abundant harvest waiting to be gathered in. Soon visual confirmation replaced the witness of faith, as many interested souls left the village to gather round Him as He taught them the everlasting gospel.

The Desire of Ages, p. 192:

In the words spoken to the woman at the well, good seed had been sown, and how quickly the harvest was received. The Samaritans came and heard Jesus, and believed on Him. Crowding about Him at the well, they plied Him with questions, and eagerly received His explanations of many things that had been obscure to them. As they listened, their perplexity began to clear away. They were like a people in great darkness tracing up a sudden ray of light till they had found the day. But they were not satisfied with this short conference. They were anxious to hear more, and to have their friends also listen to this wonderful teacher. They invited Him to their city, and begged Him to remain with them. For two days He tarried in Samaria, and many more believed on Him.

From its beginning to its ending, this is a wonderful success story. It began with Jesus seeing a bountiful harvest in a single person, the woman at the well, although no one else shared His perception, no one else saw souls on the verge of the kingdom only waiting to be gathered in. It soon developed to the point where the village was open to the Saviour, and eager listeners were drinking in the words of life emerging from within Him.

The Harvest Before Us

Truly, there was a great and wonderful harvest brought to view through Christ's personal ministry at this time, but we tend to look upon this achievement as something which though possible to Him, is far beyond our capacity to emulate. It is true as mentioned earlier in this chapter, that we cannot equal the Pattern, but we certainly can and must copy it.

It is also true that, during the coming outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power, God's people will be filled with wonderful might, and will achieve glorious success in the battle against the beast and his image. At that time there

will be a vast harvest of souls as thousands upon thousands are drawn out of the world and take their stand on the side of righteousness.

But we do not have to wait for the latter rain to fall to become soul-winners, for we are to engage in that work now. We may protest that we find no access to souls who will respond, so we await a future more favorable date. In reply, Jesus says as He leads the way into the harvest fields all white and ready for the reapers:

The Desire of Ages, p. 191:

As Jesus still sat at the well-side, He looked over the fields of grain that were spread out before Him, their tender green touched by the golden sunlight. Pointing His disciples to the scene, He employed it as a symbol: "Do you not say, There are yet four months, and then comes harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." And as He spoke, He looked on the groups that were coming to the well. It was four months to the time for harvesting the grain, but here was a harvest ready for the reaper.

Today, there is a great harvest waiting at our very doors and we should not think only of the future time when the Church will be endowed with great power from on high which will give its members the capacity to be very successful soul-winners indeed. We seem to be saying:

"There are yet four months and then comes harvest."

But Jesus speaks the truth when He says:

John 4

³⁵ Do you not say, There are yet four months, and then comes harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 109:

There are many who are reading the Scriptures who can-

not understand their true import. All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in.

For those of us who lack the power by which our Saviour drew men and women to Him, these words will be difficult to believe, but they are true nonetheless. Therefore, no longer say the harvest lies entirely in the future, for there is a great reaping awaiting us today.

But before we can go to work successfully, we must become acquainted with the power available by beholding it in action in the life of Christ, and by that personal communion which floods our souls with light and power. Ours must duplicate the experience of Christ:

The Desire of Ages, p. 363:

In Christ the cry of humanity reached the Father of infinite pity. As a man He supplicated the throne of God, till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that should connect humanity with divinity. Through continual communion He received life from God, that He might impart life to the world. His experience is to be ours.

15. All Things New

The Unlimited Power of Christ

IN THE last two chapters, we have considered the glorious truth that Christ had in Himself the measureless power of the everlasting gospel, which power, exercised according to the principles of righteousness, placed Him where He was always in total command of every situation in which He was involved.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 91:

Over the winds and the waves, and over men possessed of demons, Christ showed that He had absolute control. He who stilled the tempest and calmed the troubled sea spoke peace to minds distracted and overborne by Satan.

This remained true even when, after His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, He permitted His hands to be bound, until Peter rashly struck off the high priest's servant's ear.

The Desire of Ages, p. 696:

When Jesus saw what was done, He released His hands, though firmly held by the Roman soldiers, and saying, "Suffer you thus far," He touched the wounded ear, and it was instantly made whole.

It must be eternally understood that His was a voluntary sacrifice which He made for the salvation of lost and perishing mankind. No one or nothing compelled Him to pay the price except His infinite love. Of this incredible sacrifice Jesus testified:

The Desire of Ages, p. 484:

"I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." While as a member of the human family He was mortal, as God He was the fountain of life for the world. He could have withstood

the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but voluntarily He laid down His life, that He might bring life and immortality to light. He bore the sin of the world, endured its curse, yielded up His life as a sacrifice, that men might not eternally die.

It is therefore true that Christ's voluntary sacrifice by which He came under the power of death, did not indicate any weakening of His wonderful powers which He could have called in at any moment to effect His own personal salvation. The entire Roman army could not have withstood Him.

His disciples had personally witnessed revelation after revelation of the workings of those righteous forces, and they clearly understood that their commission to circle the globe with salvation from sinfulness, sickness, and death, could never be achieved without the unlimited endowment of God's power on all of His earthbound, born-again children. To confirm this principle, He stressed before returning to heaven, that all power in heaven and earth was given to Him, and that what was given to Him was given to those ardent followers, the apostles, and to each one of us who are faithful to the truth. Therefore they, and we, are to evangelize the world.

The Desire of Ages, p. 818:

Standing but a step from His heavenly throne, Christ gave the commission to His disciples. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," He said. "Go you therefore, and teach all nations." "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." *Mark 16:15*. Again and again the words were repeated, that the disciples might grasp their significance. Upon all the inhabitants of the earth, high and low, rich and poor, was the light of heaven to shine in clear, strong rays. The disciples were to be co-laborers with their Redeemer in the work of saving the world.

Our Need of the Same Strength

All this reiterates the solemn truth that it is right and nec-

essary for Christ's ambassadors to be a powerful people, even as He was a powerful Person, for our foes are very strong and very determined, and will not yield the struggle until totally defeated. Even then, until they are so utterly vanquished that they can do nothing more, they will still act as though they were the victors in the struggle.

The deadly threats issued by Jezebel against Elijah, when to all appearances she was utterly defeated and doomed to destruction, are a warning to us of our enemy's capacity to fight back even when we deem him done. In that hour when Elijah thought her influence had been totally destroyed, she rose up and acted as though she, and not the Lord, had won the battle on Mt. Carmel. Elijah, thoroughly intimidated by this "unexpected" capacity to fight back when all seemed lost, fled for his life. We must be on guard against this happening to us, for Satan is very skilled in the use of this weapon of intimidation. It must be recognized that to successfully withstand the power and cunning of our deadly opponent will require such great abilities as only the Holy Spirit can supply.

Review and Herald, November 6, 1894:

The great work committed to them required great efficiency, even the endowment of the Holy Spirit; for the tide of evil ran strong against them. A determined, vigilant leader was in command of the agencies of evil, and the followers of Christ could resist and overcome the powers of darkness only through the help that God could give them. But through the power of the Holy Spirit they were to be successful witnesses of Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth. Beginning at Jerusalem, they were to widen the scene of their operations until all nations should hear the sound of the gospel.

Knowing this, Jesus recognized the necessity for His people to be infused with the same mighty powers with which He had been endowed and which, among other factors, had guar-

anted Him the victory. Accordingly, He directed them to remain in Jerusalem until the promised power arrived. Afterwards they were to extend their ministry from Jerusalem throughout Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 30:

Christ's visible presence was about to be withdrawn from the disciples, but a new endowment of power was to be theirs. The Holy Spirit was to be given them in its fullness, sealing them for their work. "Behold," the Saviour said, "I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high." *Luke 24:49*. "For John truly baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "You shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." *Acts 1:5, 8*.

Obtaining the Holy Spirit

Every dedicated medical missionary longs with the most intense desire for the infilling of the Holy Spirit, for they are acutely aware that without this gift, they will always be frustrated in their work by the prince of darkness, and time will linger on. The question then which urgently needs answering is:

"How do we obtain this precious endowment, this all conquering power?"

This question has been answered in part in the previous two or three chapters where the point was made that by beholding the incredible manifestations of that power in the ministry of Jesus, we are enabled to gain adequate concepts of the magnitude and effectiveness of that power as it was in Him, and should be in us.

For instance, it was when I was assembling the information to make up the past several chapters together with this one, that I realized that Christ was in absolute control of every situation with which He was ever faced. Not once did He ever run from anything or anyone.

The next step after observing this almighty power which kept Christ in total command of every situation, is to personally experience it, an advancement which calls for the implantation of Christ's own life in the soul, which experience is known as "the revival."

As thoroughly studied in the book, *Revival and Reformation*, revival is resurrection to the new spiritual life, after which the long process of reforming our individual lives follows. Only when a true reformation follows the revival, can the work of God's grace be done in the soul, and a person become fitted for everlasting life in heaven.

It is by the same processes of revival and reformation that we are delivered from the bondage of disease, and kept free from sickness. This should be easy to understand by those who have been through the spiritual resurrection by which they entered into the newness of the life of God in them, and it is, for the revival in the realm of the spiritual, is identical to the revival in the physical or natural kingdom.

From the earliest days in the history of the present proclamation of the fourth angel's message, it has been strongly and repeatedly stated that we are to live lives which are free from sin. We accepted that this was possible because the gospel is the power of God dedicated to the saving from sin of everyone with the faith to believe in its adequacy for the task. Thus this Scripture became the battle-banner of our cause:

1 Corinthians 15

³⁴ Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

Now we have come to the time when the message has opened up to the place where we are privileged to understand and experience the application of the same gospel to our physical deliverance from disease. Now our battle-banner is to also bear the words:

“Awake to health, and do not be sick, for some do not have the knowledge of God; I speak this to your shame.”

If we find this difficult to believe, we have but to ponder the testimony of Jesus who amply demonstrated that He was as free from sickness as He was from sin, and thereby removed all excuse from everyone who might claim he could justify his being in the bondage of disease.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 51:

Jesus was an earnest, constant worker. Never lived there among men another so weighted with responsibilities. Never another carried so heavy a burden of the world's sorrow and sin. Never another toiled with such self-consuming zeal for the good of men. Yet His was a life of health. Physically as well as spiritually He was represented by the sacrificial lamb, “without blemish and without spot.” *1 Peter* 1:19. In body as in soul He was an example of what God designed all humanity to be through obedience to His laws.

At the same time, for reasons given in the book, *Entering into God's Sabbath Rest*, we do recognize that God does not always heal. There are situations when, in order to fulfill certain essential purposes, the heavy hand of sickness is left upon the child of God for a time. This is so effective in creating in the suffering one a sense of utter humility, and total dependence on God that, for a season, the Lord permits its presence.

The Revival Experience

That point we will leave till later while we now concentrate on the revival, what it is, and how to enter into it. In doing so, I will again quote the statement which is the basis of the

book, *Revival and Reformation*, and which shows the relationship existing between revival and reformation, and the special role of each.

Review and Herald, February 25, 1902:

A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.

Except in its effects, a resurrection is not an ongoing thing, but is the work of a moment. God speaks the word of power and the new life is there, whether it be physical, mental, or spiritual. Consider this short list of physical revivals otherwise known as healings or restorations to perfect health noting that each were achieved in the same moment in which God in Christ gave the command:

Luke 5

¹³ I will, be you clean.

There was the woman who had been cursed with the pain and misery from an issue of blood for twelve years. When the new physical life came to her,

The Ministry of Healing, p. 60:

Instantly she felt the thrill as of an electric current passing through every fiber of her being. There came over her a sensation of perfect health.

Next we will note the same promptness with which healing came to the Roman centurion's servant. Christ spoke the word of healing might,

The Ministry of Healing, p. 65:

And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

Already, in this book, we have looked together at the incredible healing of the first leper to be cleansed during Christ's ministry on earth. In response to this man's plea for deliverance, Christ replied,

Luke 5

¹³ I will, be you clean.

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

Immediately a change passed over the leper. His flesh became healthy, the nerves sensitive, the muscles firm. The rough, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy disappeared, and a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy child, took its place.

Then there was the case of the man let down through the roof. When Christ spoke resurrection life and power into him,

The Ministry of Healing, p. 76:

The man's physical pain is gone, and his whole being is transformed.

Perhaps the most unforgettable case is that of the paralytic who was healed at the pool of Bethesda. He had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years before Jesus told him to arise, pick up his bed and walk.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 84:

The cripple's faith takes hold upon Christ's word. Without question he sets his will to obey, and, as he does this, his whole body responds.

Every nerve and muscle thrills with new life, and healthful action comes to his crippled limbs. Springing to his feet, he goes on his way with firm, free step, praising God and rejoicing in his new-found strength.

Let us now add to our list, the deliverance of the two demons on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. Immediately

upon the disembarkation of Christ and His followers, two demon-possessed men, rushing out from among the tombs along the shore, put all of Christ's company to flight except for the Saviour Himself. He stood before them with the same up-raised hand as had stilled the storm the previous night, and they could come no further.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 96:

They stand before Him, raging but helpless.

Jesus then orders the demons to come out of those poor men, and wonderful is the immediate transformation of the two of them as they enter the new life.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 97:

The evil spirits are forced to release their victims, and a wonderful change comes over the demoniacs. Light shines into their minds. Their eyes beam with intelligence. The countenances so long deformed into the image of Satan become suddenly mild, the bloodstained hands are quiet, and the men lift their voices in praise to God.

This is indeed a short list of the many who would be included to complete the long list of those millions who have experienced the revival in their physical, mental, and spiritual domains, but, no matter how long or short the list might be, the picture is always that of an instant transformation. That was the case in the deliverances listed above and it will always be the case.

It is in the work of reformation that the changes proceed more slowly, occupying as they do, the remainder of one's lifetime. It is most important that this distinction be very clearly kept in mind, or we shall fail to understand what constitutes a balanced and successful Christian life.

A Complete Work

Not only is revival the work of a moment, it is always a

complete work. These texts and statements which I will now quote, support no other view. If these statements are new to you or if you have found them too difficult to understand, then they will seem unrealistic, too good to be true. But do not let this trouble you, for there is no conflict here with reality. Here is the first one:

Signs of the Times, June 4, 1902:

As the sinner, drawn by the love of Christ, approaches the cross, and prostrates himself before it, there is a new creation. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require. God Himself is “the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.” And “whom He justified, them He also glorified.” Great as is the shame and degradation through sin, even greater will be the honor and exaltation through redeeming love. To human beings striving for conformity to the divine image, there is imparted an outlay of heavenly treasures, an excellency of power, that will place them higher than even the angels who have never sinned.

This sounds like instant perfection—once saved, always saved—for it states that:

“Holiness [the standard of which is God’s holy law] finds that it has nothing more to require.”

How are we to understand this? That is accomplished by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Consider this one:

The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885:

The Holy Spirit operates the same the world over. When it is received into the heart, the whole character is changed. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” Old habits and customs and national pride and prejudice are broken down. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” When these are abiding in the soul, there will be unity of

thought and action.

As we ponder these statements, let it be kept firmly in view that they are as applicable to the breaking of the bondage to disease as they are to breaking the thralldom of sin. How then do these statements explain each other?

The main point in the first statement is that when a man is born again, he is a new creation, of which holiness finds that it has nothing more to require. Old things have passed away and all things have become new. The revival in men and women can be accomplished only by the exercise of creative power.

The Desire of Ages, p. 172:

The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.

The unenlightened human mind, so given to the acceptance of misconceptions in regard to God, the gospel, and salvation, misreads the words:

“There...is a new life altogether,”

to mean:

“There is a new *way of life* altogether.”

Now there is a difference between a new *way of life* and a new life. Certainly, the new life will produce a new way of life which means that the true child of God has both, as can be quite readily demonstrated.

Here for instance is a man whose life is charged with hatred and pride among other related evil characteristics. No special abilities are needed to identify his way of life for what it is, for it will be plainly seen that it is an expression of his

evil nature.

Let us say he becomes truly converted to Christ, by which he is given a new and different life altogether, the characteristics of which are love and humility in the place of hatred and pride. How obvious it is that his new life will produce a different *way of life* altogether from that which he formerly lived. So then, the Christian's life is "a new life altogether," which in turn produces an entirely new *way of life*.

But why stress and clarify this point? It is because too many are contented with modified improvements of the old life when nothing less than a completely new life should satisfy them.

So, the Christian life is a new life altogether, which is brought into existence by an act of creative power, and which never previously existed. Now then, there are two points to be noted in regard to a product of creation—it is perfect and it is complete, or whole. That is the way it was on every successive day of creation, and that is how it has been ever since. God said: "Let there be light," and in the same instant, the fullness of perfect light was there. It did not begin shining as a faint, but ever increasing glow until reaching its full glory, however short or long a time that might have taken.

All Things Have Become New

Apply these principles to the revival of spiritual life in one who becomes a believer in Jesus. Of such a man it is written that he is a new creation, old things having all passed away, all things having become new. *2 Corinthians* 5:17. Note carefully that he is not a re-constructed *old* creation, but a new one altogether which had no previous existence whatsoever.

But how is it that, while we must accept this as true because it comes to us with the authority of the word of God, yet we still suffer mortality, and find ourselves beset by the

confusion of old habits and practices, ideas and theories? Why is there a seeming contradiction between the reality of the Scriptures and actual experience? If for those who are new creatures in Christ Jesus, old things have passed away and all things have become new, why are there so many old things around which have not passed away?

It is because all things of all things have not passed away, nor do the Scriptures say they have. Instead, we are to understand that all things of only one of our natures have passed away, and all things in that same nature have become new. But which of the three natures which together make a complete person, is the recipient of this glorious transformation during our earthly sojourn?

In the Garden of Eden, God gave man three wonderful and essential gifts, the first of which was a beautiful home, namely this earth. This had to be provided first, for, the moment man was created, he had to have a home in which were installed all the necessary life-support systems. We do not need to be told here that mankind is only capable of existing either on the surface of the earth or very close to it. Therefore, such living conditions as those in which he could survive had to be waiting for him when he was created.

Next, God created for man a beautiful and highly efficient human body, capable of living forever, provided no sin was ever permitted to enter it. Unfortunately, it did and death has reigned ever since.

Thirdly, God infused man with His own lovely spiritual life and the three works of creation were perfect and complete.

With the incursion of sin, man was deprived of these precious gifts in the reverse order from which they were given in the first case. That is to say, firstly he lost his spiritual life; then he was compelled to yield up his human nature unto death; and thirdly, he will witness the utter destruction of his

home at the close of the one thousand years.

Through the gospel of Jesus Christ, by the creative power of which all good things shall be given back to God's children, these three blessed inheritances shall be fully restored to mankind, but in the reverse order of which they were given to him. Whereas the earth as man's wonderful home was the first to be created, it will be the last to be returned to humanity. The great event will take place at the end of the millennium.

In that coming grand spectacular manifestation of creative power, nothing will be done in the creation of the new earth until the old is utterly consumed. Only when this globe is reduced to ashes, will God call the new into existence.

The same principles of operation apply in the restoration of the body which for the most part will take place at the various resurrections. Exceptions to this are the direct translations of Enoch and Elijah. In their cases, all the old things were removed, and the new installed in their places so immediately, that it was impossible to detect the changeover. It must have looked to those few who saw these men depart into the heavens, that nothing more was accomplished than to glorify and immortalize their existing bodies, whereas in fact, their old sinful, mortal bodies were disposed of in their entirety, and their new ones took their places in the same instant of time.

Never let it be forgotten that sinful flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven as it is written:

The Great Controversy, p. 322-323:

We have seen by the scriptures just given that when the Son of man comes, the dead are raised incorruptible and the living are changed. By this great change they are prepared to receive the kingdom; for Paul says: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit

incorruption.” *1 Corinthians* 15:50. Man in his present state is mortal, corruptible; but the kingdom of God will be incorruptible, enduring forever. Therefore man in his present state cannot enter into the kingdom of God. But when Jesus comes, He confers immortality upon His people; and then He calls them to inherit the kingdom of which they have hitherto been only heirs.

As already stated, there are three natures making up the existence of man—the physical, the mental, and the spiritual. Each of these natures may be holy and immortal, or they may be unholy and mortal. In the work of salvation, so far as it takes us in this life, only one of these three, namely the unholy spiritual nature, is replaced by the sinless new spiritual nature by an act of creation. Our flesh and blood bodies are not exchanged for sinless, holy flesh until the resurrection morning, so that, while we may have holy characters living in sinful, mortal flesh, we cannot have holy characters dwelling in sinless, immortal flesh and blood.

Therefore, the words describing the believer as being a new creation, from whom all the old has been taken away, and in whom all things are made new, are not true in regard to the physical nature, nor to the mind, nor to the earth. They will eventually be true in all of these domains each in their turn, but we must wait until they are.

In the meantime, the particular one out of the three where this transition from old to new is seen most clearly, is in the loss of the human body in the grave, and its replacement on the resurrection morning with a new one altogether. In the handful of dust which was once an active, living, human body, is seen that from which all things have passed away, while the beautiful body which will be given to us when Christ shall call forth the sleeping saints, is one of which all things will be made new.

When it is stated in the Scriptures that for the man who is a

new creature in Christ Jesus, old things have passed away, and all things have become new, we know from many other Scriptures that the text is referring to only one of the three areas of human existence, namely, the spiritual life, and does not include the mind or the body. It cannot be the flesh and blood body, or we would find ourselves teaching holy, immortal flesh.

This we cannot and must not do unless we subscribe to the position held by the papacy on the subject of the “Immaculate Conception,” for not even Christ walked in holy flesh while on earth. Holy flesh is sinless, immortal, and incorruptible and will not be given to us until Christ comes once again.

A Holy Nature in an Unholy Nature

The particular point to be understood and remembered is that, in respect to the spiritual experience of a truly born again Christian, a holy, spiritual nature dwells in an unholy one. That is wonderful enough, but what makes it more marvelous, is the fact that it is done without the holy one becoming contaminated by the unholy one.

The clearest revelation of this truth, and the most convincing evidence of this marvelous, soul-saving mystery, is provided in the incarnation of Christ who came to the sin-cursed earth and tabernacled His spotless, sinless, perfect divinity in sinful, mortal flesh and blood, without the slightest stain of that sinfulness ever attaching itself to Him. Over and over again, the words of Inspiration declare in emphatic terms, that Christ was so totally free from sin that not even a thought of it was ever permitted to enter His mind. Here is one such statement:

Review and Herald, November 8, 1887:

Would that we could comprehend the significance of the words, “Christ suffered, being tempted.” While he was free from the taint of sin, the refined sensibilities of his holy na-

ture rendered contact with evil unspeakably painful to him. Yet with human nature upon him, he met the arch apostate face to face, and single-handed withstood the foe of his throne. Not even by a thought could Christ be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foot-hold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of himself, "The prince of this world comes, and has nothing in me." The storms of temptation burst upon him, but they could not cause him to swerve from his allegiance to God.

That is a mighty truth, so mighty in fact that it is declared to be...

The Desire of Ages, p. 412:

...the foundation of the believer's faith. It is that which Christ Himself has declared to be eternal life.

The foundation is that upon which all the remainder is built, and determines the shape of that superstructure. It is the foundation truth which makes access to all the blessings of the plan of salvation possible because it provides the divine-human structure which establishes the connection between heaven and earth.

Now then, so that it may never be forgotten, let the living and altogether wonderful truth be repeated that the sinless, spiritual, divine nature dwells or tabernacles in the fallen, sinful, mortal human nature without suffering any contamination whatsoever. This beautiful truth is illustrated by the pure water lily which maintains its spotless loveliness in a world of slime.

Bible Echo and Signs of the Times, April 1, 1889:

God would have us learn lessons from the water-lily that opens its pure white blossoms upon the bosom of the lake. The flower reposes in spotless loveliness while all around it, in the water, may be unseemly and obnoxious things. The

lily strikes its roots deeper and still deeper into the rich soil far beneath the surface of the lake, and, refusing everything that would taint and pollute its purity, draws to itself only those properties that will aid its development into a spotless and beautiful flower.

Education, p. 119:

Many are the lessons that may thus be learned. Self-reliance, from the tree that, growing alone on plain or mountainside, strikes down its roots deep into the earth, and in its rugged strength defies the tempest. The power of early influence, from the gnarled, shapeless trunk, bent as a sapling, to which no earthly power can afterward restore its lost symmetry. The secret of a holy life, from the water lily, that, on the bosom of some slimy pool, surrounded by weeds and rubbish, strikes down its channeled stem to the pure sands beneath, and, drawing thence its life, lifts up its fragrant blossoms to the light in spotless purity.

Thus we are informed of the truth that purity can dwell in an impure nature without becoming contaminated thereby. This is as true in the physical nature as it is in the spiritual. Even so, care must be taken to ensure that this principle is not taken too far, for it does not cover nor protect us when we enter unguided by God into social intercourse with those who are not blessed with the love of the truth. We must shun evil companions, or their influence will be most detrimental.

The healing power in the Great Physician was so powerful that He could actually lay His hands on the leper without experiencing any defilement, becoming infected, or in any way endangering His health. He certainly was a beautiful white water-lily growing in a terrible pit filled with highly contagious diseases without His contracting either the least or the greatest of them.

The Desire of Ages, p. 266:

The work of Christ in cleansing the leper from his terrible disease is an illustration of His work in cleansing the soul

from sin. The man who came to Jesus was “full of leprosy.” Its deadly poison permeated his whole body. The disciples sought to prevent their Master from touching him; for he who touched a leper became himself unclean. But in laying His hand upon the leper, Jesus received no defilement. His touch imparted life-giving power. The leprosy was cleansed. Thus it is with the leprosy of sin,—deep-rooted, deadly, and impossible to be cleansed by human power. “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.” *Isaiah* 1:5, 6. But Jesus, coming to dwell in humanity, receives no pollution. His presence has healing virtue for the sinner. Whoever will fall at His feet, saying in faith, “Lord, if You will, You can make me clean,” shall hear the answer, “I will, be made clean.”

In this chapter we have learned that any man who is in Christ is a new creation. Old things have passed away so far as his evil nature is concerned, and where the vacuum has been created, all things have become new. Of the condition of things in the new heart it is declared that holiness finds that it has nothing more to require.

It was also stated that there has to be a revival experience followed by a thorough reformation in the physical realm as much as it is in the spiritual, and this point will be further developed in the next chapter.

16. The Healing Revival

BY THIS TIME, if you have thoroughly studied and actually entered into the experience of the spiritual revival—the one from which your previously resident sin-master was eradicated and replaced by a new creation—you will have a clear view of what is involved in coming into possession of this heavenly gift, and of the wonderful benefits it provides.

As well, you will be in the position, whether you realize it or not, where you will be able to understand the revival of disease-free, physical life in the same sinful, mortal flesh and blood bodies. In other words, the righteousness of God and its being tabernacled in our sinful, mortal flesh and blood bodies, so that we can lead lives free from sinning, prepares us to understand and receive the revival of God's health in our fleshly members, so that we can lead lives free from disease, as well as from sinfulness. This is so because the operating principles which are applicable to the one, are as applicable to the other.

In Christ's ministry, He healed both the soul and the body by the same procedures, but in neither case did He impart sinless, holy, immortal flesh and blood to the recipient of His saving might in order to achieve this result. He can impart a disease-free, sin-free life to all who grasp this mighty truth, without providing them with immortal, holy flesh. In all cases, the flesh remained unholy and mortal, the change being in what was resident in that flesh, not in the flesh itself.

Spiritual and Physical Revival

Let us compare the physical and spiritual natures of various individuals both before and after they have been blessed with the physical and the spiritual revival, or resurrection of the new life within.

Firstly, we will consider the unregenerate individual who

has never experienced the change effected by a revival to the resurrected new life in his soul. He is not born again, and, no matter how earnest his profession to the contrary may be, is not a child of God. This man has sin dwelling in and controlling his sinful, mortal flesh and blood. It is important that a clear distinction be maintained between sin and the sinful, mortal flesh and blood in which he tabernacles. They are not one and the same thing, but are two distinct entities, just as the thorn bush and the sin-cursed soil in which it grows are two different entities, each one of which is complete in itself.

In the revival experience, sin is entirely removed and replaced by a new life altogether, even the life of God Himself. When this has been accomplished, the person so blessed is “revived” or “resurrected”, according to *Romans* 6.

This is a profound mystery for a number of reasons, not the least of which being that it is very difficult to accept that an immaculate God can dwell in a human or any tabernacle composed of sinful, mortal elements. In fact, it can only be accepted by faith in God’s word that it is so.⁴

So then, the situation is that sin *and* the new man dwell successively, but not concurrently, in mortal, sinful flesh. It will help if you think of the *thorn bush* and the *apple tree* growing successively in the same garden spot, but not at the same time.

As sin resides in and rules over the entire man, so does disease rule over the entire person. Let us consider cancer, one of the fearful, “incurable” manifestations of disease scourging mankind today. Cancer itself is the malady which resides in and controls the flesh, but is not the flesh itself. It is critically important that this be distinctly understood, for otherwise it

⁴ This subject is more comprehensively presented in the books, *The Three Temples*, and *The Destiny of a Movement*. I recommend that these books be studied most diligently.

will be impossible to understand God's solution to the problem of disease.

Once it is realized that the disease is a bond-master ruling over and destroying the flesh, it is obvious that the divine solution to the problem is the same as for spiritual disease—the eradication of this power and its replacement with God's life and health without the removal of the flesh itself. There will be the added need to repair damage done to the flesh during the duration of the reign of the disease as in the case of the first leper to be healed in the days of Christ's ministry of healing.

For so long had leprosy held him in its clutches that he had been severely damaged and needed both the eradication of the disease itself, and the repair of the damage done. This Christ effected when He spoke the creative word to the poor suffering leper:

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

Immediately a change passed over the leper. His flesh became healthy, the nerves sensitive, the muscles firm. The rough, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy disappeared, and a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy child, took its place.

This man was certainly delivered from the reign of sin, from the reign of the disease, and from the damage done by both. No longer helpless and disfigured, he again took his place in society, the wonder of all who saw him. In reference to these wonderful, healing ministries of Christ, it is stated that:

The Desire of Ages, p. 269-270:

It required nothing less than creative power to restore health to that decaying body. The same voice that spoke life to man created from the dust of the earth had spoken life to the dying paralytic. And the same power that gave life to the body had renewed the heart. He who at the creation "spoke, and it was," who "commanded, and it stood fast," (*Psalm*

33:9), had spoken life to the soul dead in trespasses and sins. The healing of the body was an evidence of the power that had renewed the heart. Christ bade the paralytic arise and walk, “that you may know,” He said, “that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins.”

The exercise of creative power to eradicate sin, or disease, and replace them with new life and health, requires nothing less than creative power. That is what this man received.

It requires an intelligent outreach of faith to experience this kind of deliverance. Of the many who seek this wonderful salvation, but few pursue the matter through until they truly receive God’s solution to the problem. Instead, when their search is not rewarded with immediate deliverance due to some error or the other on their part, they hunt around for some other way than God’s way, even though it is the only provision by which they can be set free, for there is no alternative, no other choice, no other option than the one. It will forever be the truth that:

The Ministry of Healing, p 115:

The life of God in the soul is man’s only hope.

It is our privilege to have the blessing of disease-free bodies. Deliverance from disease is acquired in precisely the same way as that in which we gained deliverance from sin, the procedure being spelled out in clear, practical terms in the book, *Freedom from Sin*.

The very first step is to understand just what the problem is. And what is the problem? It is the presence in our sinful, mortal flesh of a disease which rules over and ruins the body. The only products of this reign in us are *dis*-ease, suffering, destruction, and death.

The only solution is the eradication of this evil force, and its replacement with God’s own life and health, the result of this being a disease-free life. Let it be stressed that the human na-

ture in which resided disease, is not changed into holy flesh, but is the same sinful, mortal flesh and blood in which disease dwelt.

Once you have recognized that this eradication and replacement program is the only possible solution to the problem, it becomes very important that you realize that it is far beyond your limited power to evacuate the intruder. The fact is that you are entirely helpless in its grip. You just simply cannot save yourself from this deadly, remorseless enemy, so do not waste your time attempting it, or you will find yourself passing through a *Romans* seven frustration experience of trying and failing over and over again.

Yet it seems that those seeking salvation all pass over this ground in order to learn how helpless they really are. To help shorten this experience, take time to ponder the futility of trying to prevent a thorn bush from producing thorns; or of trying to compel a wolf to behave like a lamb; or of trying to halt the advance of leprosy, cancer, or AIDS; and you will assist yourself in learning how utterly helpless you really are.

There are only three beings, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who, because they have infinite creative power, can handle the terrible problem of both sin and disease, and they are most eager to do so as the following paragraph verifies:

Desire of Ages, p. 266:

In some instances of healing, Jesus did not at once grant the blessing sought. But in the case of leprosy, no sooner was the appeal made than it was granted. When we pray for earthly blessings, the answer to our prayer may be delayed, or God may give us something other than we ask, but not so when we ask for deliverance from sin. It is His will to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. Christ “gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will

of God and our Father.” *Galatians* 1:4. And “this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” *1 John* 5:14-15. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” *1 John* 1:9.

Jesus declared of Himself as the Great Physician,

John 10

¹⁰ I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Many of us have developed the concept about God that He is reluctant to bless us with the outpouring of His life and health, but this is directly contrary to His own testimony regarding Himself when He declared:

John 5

⁴⁰ But you are not willing to come to me that you may have life.

The fact that we are at a great distance from God where our hold on the mighty Healer is weak, is not because He holds us far off from Himself, but because we fail to urge ourselves into His presence where light, life, and healing are to be found. It breaks His heart to see us thus depriving ourselves of the glory, joy, and accomplishments which are our inheritance in Christ Jesus, while He constantly calls:

Matthew 11

²⁸ Come unto me!

He came to this sin-cursed earth with the specific purpose of bringing health and happiness to the physical, mental, and spiritual natures of mankind, and He was entirely successful to whatever degree simple, living faith took hold on those promises God has made for our salvation. Wonderful were the results, but even so, they fell far short of their full potential,

due to the unbelief of those to whom He ministered.

Ministry of Healing, p. 116:

Although for ages sin has been strengthening its hold on the human race, although through falsehood and artifice Satan has cast the black shadow of his interpretation upon the word of God, and has caused men to doubt His goodness; yet the Father's mercy and love have not ceased to flow earthward in rich currents. If human beings would open the windows of the soul heavenward, in appreciation of the divine gifts, a flood of healing virtue would pour in.

Thus it is testified that God is not unwilling, but eager to remove our sicknesses and to fill our bodies with glowing health. If you would successfully experience the revival or resurrection experience in your physical nature, you must believe that with all your heart and mind. Faith is an essential element without which healing is an utter impossibility. Large faith brings large results, while meager faith brings inconsequential and unsatisfactory effects.

There is a faith which is living and powerful with an infinite capacity for doing only good to a breathtaking degree. Those who are charged with this compelling, spiritual force to the same extent that Christ was, will find all things possible:

The Desire of Ages, p. 490:

With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us.

There is also faith which goes so far as to merely believe that Christ is the Saviour of the world, but this can never bring healing to anyone, even though he may think he has faith. This vital but poorly understood truth is affirmed in the following words describing the healing of the woman whose long-standing flow of blood was stopped when she touched Christ's passing garment:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 62-63:

To the curious crowd pressing about Jesus there was imparted no vital power. But the suffering woman who touched Him in faith received healing. So in spiritual things does the casual contact differ from the touch of faith. To believe in Christ merely as the Saviour of the world can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere assent to the truth of the gospel.

True faith is that which receives Christ as a personal Saviour. God gave His only-begotten Son, that *I*, by believing in Him, “should not perish, but have everlasting life.” *John* 3:16. When I come to Christ, according to His word, I am to believe that I receive His saving grace. The life that I now live, I am to “live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.” *Galatians* 2:20.

Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which, through the grace of Christ, the soul becomes a conquering power.

Faith is a mightier conqueror than death. If the sick can be led to fix their eyes in faith upon the Mighty Healer, we shall see wonderful results. It will bring life to the body and to the soul.

In working for the victims of evil habits, instead of pointing them to the despair and ruin toward which they are hastening, turn their eyes away to Jesus. Fix them upon the glories of the heavenly. This will do more for the saving of body and soul than will all the terrors of the grave when kept before the helpless and apparently hopeless.

A Covenant with Our Doctor

Once the role of disease has been clarified in your mind, and you are established in the saving faith that the merciful Saviour, can and will...

Hebrews7

²⁵ ...save to the uttermost those who come to God through

Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them,

—the time has come to enter into a personal covenant with the almighty Healer. But what is a covenant? It is a contract, an agreement between two people, a bond or a compact. In such an arrangement, each of the two parties assumes certain responsibilities, and agrees to bear them, no matter what the cost might be.

The Master of all diseases offers to enter with us into a free contract or covenant with Him in which He makes Himself entirely responsible for taking care of all the problems created by the reign of disease. Not only does He invite us to make this covenant, but openly declares His position in that contract, in which He is the Lord, our Doctor. Here is His statement of promise as it was reiterated to the children of Israel:

Exodus 15

²⁶ If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, and will do that which is right in His sight, and will give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon you, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that heals you.

In a number of European language translations, the last few words of this text are translated a little more forcefully as follows:

“I am the Lord, your medical Doctor.”

This translation appeals to me very strongly, for it positively designates God’s personal role in the covenant formed to combat the terrible workings of disease. So effective is this contract, that, if we receive it and faithfully fulfill the conditions on which it is based, we are promised a disease-free life history even though we are still cursed with sinful, mortal flesh and blood, and have no choice other than to live in an

environment loaded with infectious contaminations, germs, and viruses. As mentioned earlier, Christ demonstrated this by living a sin-free and disease-free life while still on this sin-cursed earth.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 51:

Jesus was an earnest, constant worker. Never lived there among men another so weighted with responsibilities. Never another carried so heavy a burden of the world's sorrow and sin. Never another toiled with such self-consuming zeal for the good of men. *Yet His was a life of health.* Physically as well as spiritually He was represented by the sacrificial lamb, "without blemish and without spot." *1Peter* 1:19. In body as in soul He was an example of what God designed all humanity to be through obedience to His laws.

But, there are conditions to the contract, one of which is that God alone is our Doctor. To make this point clear, let us return in our considerations of God being our Saviour from sin.

It has become the long-established truth among God's people, and rightly so, that we are to look to Him alone as our Saviour from sin. Nobody is to take His place in that role. I am sure that those with a Christian background, who intelligently read these words, would not even consider seeking salvation through any other than Jesus.

Over and over it has been emphasized that salvation from both sin, and disease, can be accomplished only by the exercise of creative power, which power is vested in the Godhead alone.

So what then is the point in leaving the one doctor who can heal every disease presented to Him, in favor of those who cannot heal? Why abandon that which is sure and certain in favor of that which has no hope of meeting your needs? There is no sense in that.

To confirm this point, please consider the witness of Jesus, who never turned to any doctor other than His Father. As the Father always supplied the needs of His Son, so Jesus will always supply the needs of His people.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 17:

None who came to Him went away unhelped.

The Desire of Ages, p. 198:

The Saviour cannot withdraw from the soul that clings to Him, pleading its great need.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 221:

None who came to Him went away unhelped. To all He brought hope and gladness. Wherever He went He carried blessing.

Review and Herald, January 14, 1909:

I hardly know how to present these points; they are so wonderful, wonderful! Behold Him in the cities, and traveling from place to place, the crowds pressing Him on every side. He gave comfort and power to all who came to Him. None were sent away unhelped. He had brought this power from heaven for these very souls. And Christ was overcoming by His very deeds in behalf of men. So absorbed was He in the carrying out of His mission, that His own family could not draw Him away from His work.

So, you who have elected to enter into a covenant with God as your Deliverer from sin, the time is come for you to extend your commitment to Him as your Deliverer from disease.

But how does one enter into a covenant in which God is your Doctor? The immediate answer is that it must be done in the same way in which you entered into covenant relationship with God as your Deliverer from the bondage to sin.

Begin by making a careful and thorough study of what God has promised to do in order to eliminate disease from your life, and of what is required of you. Make sure that you under-

stand what the very nature of the problems are, how the Lord will solve them, and discover for yourself whether or not you truly believe that the Lord will really do what He has promised to do for you personally, grievous sinner though you have been!

As you study and pray for clearer and still clearer light on God being your Doctor, the time will come when the truth shall open up before you with greater brightness than before, and you will be inspired to reach out with the hand of faith and grasp the hand of Omnipotence.

Then, if you are troubled by disease, confess your problem as being the actual disease in command of your body, repent of its presence and of any sins that may have allowed it to rule, hand it over to the mighty Healer, and receive in its place, the life and health of your Creator, who has now become your Doctor. Then solemnly make your pledge to God that to Him alone will you bring all your health-related problems during the reformation period that follows.

Psalm 103

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!

² Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits:

³ Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases,

⁴ Who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

⁵ Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Many people feel during the vigorous days of their youth, that they are free from sickness of any kind and therefore should wait until a health problem begins to assert itself before entering into a covenant with God, but this is not the case. Even though the presence of disease may not rule for the moment, nevertheless, it is all around us, only waiting an op-

portunity to take it's place in the body. There is no time to lose. Make your covenant with the Lord just as soon as your faith is strong enough, and your mind clear enough to enter into the relationship.

Now that the Lord is your Doctor, be careful to:

John 5

¹⁴ Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you,

Through cooperation with Him, you will have perfect immunity against all diseases even as did our precious Saviour, together with the apostles and prophets.

Aids for Human Weakness

When it is asserted that God alone is to be our Doctor, the question is raised in regard to the use of spectacles, dentures, setting broken bones, suturing lacerations, and so forth, all of which are supplied by one branch of medical science or another.

In the first case, none of these is disease, but are either the results of accidents or the process of aging. Therefore these problems have not been the subject of this chapter. Yet, they are closely related, and your Creator, who is your Doctor should still be the only medical Practitioner to be called in.

For instance, we could never believe that, even today, Christ would say to a man with poor eyesight,

“There is an optician over in the next street who can measure your fading vision and write out a prescription for you!”

Nor would He send to the local doctor, a man with a broken arm, or one whose ear had been sliced off by a wayward sword, as happened on the night of Christ's arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane.

But, from our experience in regard to these problems, it

seems that, while we have experienced some remarkable healings from diseases, we have not been able to enjoy restorations from weak eyesight, dental cavities, serious lacerations, and broken bones.

We should expect that the aging process must go on for it is given to all of us to die should time linger long enough. In that case, let us be grateful that God has unfolded scientific information enabling man to ascertain how weak your sight has become, and just which corrective lenses are needed to enable you to still read.

So far too, we have found that we have been obliged to resort to dentists to repair decayed teeth, and to doctors to suture lacerations and set broken bones.

But when the flood-tide of power shall be unleashed during the outpouring of the Latter Rain, then we shall see accomplishments we have never thought possible. Every medical problem will succumb to the awesome power of your Doctor, God. In the meantime, let us work according to the level of our faith, while ever aiming to reach higher ground.

17. Reformation

THE moment that the revival has taken place, the reformation begins.

Old Ideas, Theories, Habits, Practices

As we have previously noted, the reformation is a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. When we leave the old, sinful life behind, we do not immediately separate ourselves from all the erroneous ideas and theories, habits and practices, which were inculcated during the pre-Christian period of our lives. There is so much that is fresh, interesting, and inspiring to the new believer as the message unfolds before him, that it is quite impossible for him to understand it all at once, and as immediately establish all the changes needed.

Instead, we bring through into the new life, erroneous concepts and opinions which not even the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost could immediately erase. In fact, the serious problems which caused considerable trouble in the early or Apostolic Church were due to the fact that many of the converts to the new faith clung to old ideas and theories, while continuing old habits and practices. I am not saying that *all* their old habits and concepts were brought over from the past, for this would not be true. Many of them were swept away in the glorious light which shone on and through the believers at that time.

One of the strongest misconceptions which gripped the minds of the Jewish Christians was the idea that salvation was only for the Jews. So entrenched were these concepts that when the Lord sent Peter to preach the gospel to Cornelius, the Roman centurion, he was sternly called to account by his own spiritual brethren. Only when he was able to show in-

controvertible evidence that the Lord Himself had sent him to the home of a Gentile, and that the same Lord had blessed the Gentiles with the same outpouring of the Holy Spirit as that given to the Jews, were the objections overruled.

Great blessings were the result of this liberation from Jewish exclusiveness, this step forward in the reformatory process. The Church prospered marvelously, and greatly increased in numbers and power. Everything looked as if her future was secure, and that she would forge ahead and triumph gloriously. But, old ideas and theories, habits and practices were not dead by any means, and, in their struggle for the mastery, won the day. In consequence came the great falling away from which we have not yet fully recovered.

In close connection with the problem of Jewish exclusiveness, was the rigid legalism from which the early believers emerged. Even those who were truly born again found a certain harmony of spirit with the keeping of the cold, dead letter of the law. This included the disposition of men to acquire positions of power and authority from which they were able to rule the lives of others.⁵

They are present in every one of us at the time of our conversion, no matter how sincere that conversion might have been, and even though we may have difficulty in detecting their presence. The older we are at the moment of our conversion, the more they are established, and the more difficult they are to detect and eradicate.

During the years prior to our being born again, we have made many decisions. Ideas have been accepted; others have been rejected. A pattern of thinking and of acting has been

⁵ This set of problems in the Christian Church has been studied in depth and detail in the book, *Entering into God's Sabbath Rest*, under the chapter titles, "Problems in the Early Church" and, "Another Reversion". Those chapters should be closely studied to gain an understanding of the peril invested in old ideas and theories, habits and practices.

developed and this becomes our comfortable and familiar way of life which we do not wish to have disturbed. To us it is the tried and proven lifestyle that we feel is best suited to ourselves. It is our identity; our statement of who we are.

So, we would be well-advised to make a stern resolution to the effect that every idea and theory, habit and practice that we have adopted and cherished for so long, be suspected, searchingly scrutinized, and, if necessary, ruthlessly eradicated to make a place for God's new and living thoughts and actions.

The point I am seeking to establish here is the inevitability of our having brought old ideas and theories, habits and practices, with us from the old life to the new. Furthermore, we tend to love and protect them because we feel that we can best understand ourselves when maintaining the old habitual patterns of behavior we have formed in childhood, and maintained ever since. Any failure on our part to defend this life-long way of living, we feel is a threat to our personal sense of security. That becomes a serious problem, for no one can be happy and insecure at the same time. This can lead to terrible battles before the victory is finally gained.

Have you ever noticed that the dietary habits of eating and drinking we prefer in our adulthood, are the same as we followed when we were children? In other words, if you were raised on a heavy diet of protein and vegetables, that is what you will feel most comfortable with all through life, unless a thorough reformation, if necessary, re-educates all that.

It could be that, in some cases, the childhood diet is reasonably satisfactory, in which case only limited reformation is needed, but, in most cases, it will be found that an entirely new habit pattern of eating and drinking is called for. This will be especially true where flesh foods, alcoholic beverages, and narcotics are concerned. Then the reformation becomes a very

real battleground.

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 141-142:

He who determines to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the powers and passions of an unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. Selfishness and pride will make a stand against anything that would show them to be sinful. We cannot, of ourselves, conquer the evil desires and habits that strive for the mastery. We cannot overcome the mighty foe who holds us in his thrall. God alone can give us the victory. He desires us to have the mastery over ourselves, our own will and ways. But He cannot work in us without our consent and co-operation. The divine Spirit works through the faculties and powers given to man. Our energies are required to co-operate with God.

Selected Messages, vol. 1, p. 380:

His power awaits the demand of those who would overcome. The reprover is to animate his hearers so that they shall strive for the mastery. He is to encourage them to struggle for deliverance from every sinful practice, to be free from every corrupt habit, even if his denial of self is like taking the right eye, or separating the right arm from the body. No concession or compromise is to be made to evil habits or sinful practices.

Man is to cooperate with God, employing every power according to his God-given ability. He is not to be ignorant as to what are right practices in eating and drinking, and in all the habits of life. The Lord designs that His human agents shall act as rational, accountable beings in every respect.

Control of the Physical Nature

Nowhere is there a greater need for strict reformation than in the realm of our physical natures, for:

The Desire of Ages, p. 122:

Of all the lessons to be learned from our Lord's first great temptation, none is more important than that bearing upon

the control of the appetites and passions. In all ages, temptations appealing to the physical nature have been most effectual in corrupting and degrading mankind. Through intemperance, Satan works to destroy the mental and moral powers that God gave to man as a priceless endowment. Thus it becomes impossible for men to appreciate things of eternal worth. Through sensual indulgence, Satan seeks to blot from the soul every trace of likeness to God.

This statement makes it very clear that the work of reformation in the physical nature is crucial to our spiritual advancement. Those who lose the battle by which the mastery over the appetites and passions is gained, will certainly fail to enter heaven. We need to develop an unshakable conviction that this is so, and refuse to be moved therefrom. Instead, let our evaluation of the vital importance of the reformation in our physical natures in contrast to our spiritual natures be significantly upgraded. Let the former elevate the latter.

Well might we ask at this point what the differences are between the physical and the spiritual reformations. In general terms there is very little; in principle, there is none; but there is a distinction to be made.

The spiritual reformation concerns the changing of ideas and theories, habits and practices in the spiritual areas of our lives such as our understanding of God's character. Reforms in this area produce much-needed changes in our dealings with our fellowmen. We see something of God's boundless mercy and become much more forgiving, gentle, and loving toward others. That is spiritual reformation.

The physical reformation concerns changing our physical habits such as our eating, dressing, cleanliness, and so forth. It is of the utmost importance that this truth be understood, for:

The Desire of Ages, p. 122:

In all ages, temptations appealing to the physical nature

have been most effectual in corrupting and degrading mankind.

If these are the temptations which have been the most effective in degrading humanity, then here is the area along with the spiritual nature, where reformation is most needed. Here must be the realms from which every wrong idea and theory, and consequent evil habit and practice must be cleansed away until it can be said of us as He said of Himself:

John 14

³⁰ The ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in me.

What does this mean? It means that the reformation in both the physical and the spiritual natures of Christ was so complete, and so firmly established, that Satan could find no point of access through the armor protecting Christ. That was an incredibly high standard of attainment, yet if we would successfully stand in and through the coming time of trouble, we have to come to the same faultless level of excellence.

The Great Controversy, p. 623:

Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: "The prince of this world comes, and has nothing in me." *John 14:30*. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble.

Today, it is God's intention that we concentrate every power of our being on building a fortress with the capacity

for coming through the approaching test soon to burst upon an unsuspecting world and on all too many unprepared Christians who should know much better.

What is not realized by God's children is the actual enfeebling effect of even the least sin. To stand firm in the end requires that day by day we are adding moral, physical, mental, and spiritual strength to added strength. The power to stand unflinchingly in the face of the threat of death as did Meshach, Shadrach, and Abed-Nego, is not acquired in a moment, but comes in response to a thorough work of dedicated reformation in the course of which, sin is being successfully eliminated, and righteousness enthroned in its place.

Those of us who have discovered the high cost of sin through bitter, personal experience, sadly wish it were possible to relive our lives again, this time resolutely committed to giving sin no place whatsoever. This repetition of one's life being impossible, the next best thing is to convincingly warn those who follow on after us, of the subtle, but far from harmless effects of even the least sin. It may look harmless and is decidedly beautiful in some of its alluring forms, but how deadly is its poison!

We are today approaching the final hours of human history when mankind will be at its weakest at the very time when Satan's temptations will be at their strongest. As never before, Satan has at his command every conceivable means of diverting the human mind from grappling with the issues of this final hour. Distracted by dazzling technological displays offering entertainment of incredible attractiveness to those who know not the love of God, mankind finds itself with neither time nor taste for the serious study of things of eternal value.

The effects of the indulgence of appetite is made even worse by the use of highly stimulating yet devitalized foods. Though men from the highest to the lowest are compelled to

recognize that many things are desperately wrong, they, in their grave spiritual blindness, are not able to identify the real cause of their troubles. New diseases are springing up for which neither cause nor cure can be found, while human resistance to these maladies becomes weaker and weaker. The nearer we approach the end of time, the more terrible will these conditions become.

The Desire of Ages, p. 122:

The uncontrolled indulgence and consequent disease and degradation that existed at Christ's first advent will again exist, with intensity of evil, before His second coming. Christ declares that the condition of the world will be as in the days before the flood, and as in Sodom and Gomorrah. Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart will be evil continually. Upon the very verge of that fearful time we are now living, and to us should come home the lesson of the Saviour's fast. Only by the inexpressible anguish which Christ endured can we estimate the evil of unrestrained indulgence. His example declares that our only hope of eternal life is through bringing the appetites and passions into subjection to the will of God.

Preparation for the Hastening Conflict

The need at the present time for the most thorough reformation of every idea and theory, habit and practice, is nothing short of desperate. Time is running out with great rapidity and soon every man's work will be tested to see if his preparation has been far-reaching enough to fit him to successfully meet the coming crisis.

A storm is coming relentless in its fury, and what a storm it will be! The grave question is:

“Will we be found prepared to meet it?”

Evangelism, p. 199:

The Lord wants all to understand His providential dealings

now, just now, in the time in which we live. There must be no long discussions, presenting new theories in regard to the prophecies which God has already made plain. Now the great work from which the mind should not be diverted is the consideration of our personal safety in the sight of God. Are our feet on the Rock of Ages? Are we hiding ourselves in our only refuge? *The storm is coming, relentless in its fury. Are we prepared to meet it?* Are we one with Christ as He is one with the Father? Are we heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ? Are we working in co-partnership with Christ?

We who are God's chosen people are firstly to really establish and advance the reformation in our own lives as a matter of the very greatest urgency. By this means we will develop mental, spiritual, moral, and physical strength, and will exhibit in our own lives such blessed results of the reformation as will recommend the program to all who are serious about obtaining the fitness for coping with the powers of darkness.

Furthermore, our consistent application of reformation principles of living, will provide effective support to the witness of our teaching of these truths. We shall be known as the people who practice what they preach.

Even so, the reformation principles and procedures are not the complete answer to achieving the levels of fitness required to meet the marshaled hordes of evildoers bent on destroying the righteous and their final witness. What is also needed is the uninhibited flow of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power to provide vitality to what would otherwise be an ineffective reformation.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 343:

At the transfiguration, Jesus was glorified by His Father. We hear Him say: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him." Thus before His betrayal and crucifixion He was strengthened for His last dreadful sufferings.

As the members of the body of Christ approach the period

of their last conflict, “the time of Jacob’s trouble,” they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His spirit. As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which *revives and strengthens* them to pass through the time of trouble. Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel.

I must emphasize that, without the most thorough reformation, the channels of grace by which the Holy Spirit finds open access to the souls of men remain blocked against admission of the Almighty Third Person of the Godhead. This does not mean that we must practice reformation without the Holy Spirit in order to open the doors to Him. The point is that when the Spirit comes to us to effect reforms, we must respond positively in order to obtain more of His presence and power in our lives.

Without the Holy Spirit’s might, any changes that we think we have made will lack the actual power necessary to make the work of reformation both truly effective and lasting. All this calls for us to work on the reformation as if everything depended on that, while, at the same time, striving to fulfill every condition necessary to flood our souls with the fullness of the Holy Spirit’s presence.

There is no need for me to lay out the steps to be taken in reformation in areas such as diet, dress, hygiene, social activities, orderliness, thought control, Sabbath-keeping, recreation, and many more, for these are all dealt with in such books as *The Ministry of Healing*, *The Desire of Ages*, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, *Education*, and *Early Writings*. These books I prefer to recommend together with others like them, because they are not compilations of extracts from widely scattered sources. The statements in these volumes in themselves are the truth, but, removed from their original context, can present them-

selves in a different light from that which God intended they should convey. I am not suggesting that the other books such as *Counsels on Health*, *Medical Ministry*, *Counsels on Diet and Food*, and *Evangelism*, be discarded. Instead, they should be read within their context wherever possible, and always with careful consideration of what their true meaning really is.

Under these terms, I prefer to recommend the books which are not compilations above the others. In these books, there is to be found a comprehensive concentration of information covering the various aspects of the work of the reformation of both the spiritual and the physical natures. These books should be read over and over again with the dedicated determination of bringing our lives into perfect harmony with God's standard for a reformed life.

Great diligence, total self surrender to God's will, unlimited self-sacrifice, and dedicated determination to succeed are essential requirements to successful achievement of the needed preparation for victory in the impending battle with the beast and his image. I am very sure that none of us understand what it will cost to gain an entrance into heaven, and for this reason there is the very real danger that we will fail to put forth the effort required to get there.

The Great Controversy, p. 622-623:

The "time of trouble, such as never was," is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess *and which many are too indolent to obtain*. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job" were in the land, "as I live, says the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." *Ezekiel 14:20*.

Diligence in Developing a Spiritual Connection

To impart to His people what He intended them to understand by the word “diligence” in the work of reformation, God spoke these words:

Deuteronomy 6

⁶ And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

¹⁷ You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you.

¹⁸ And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land of which the Lord swore to your fathers,

¹⁹ To cast out all your enemies from before you, as the Lord has spoken.

A life programmed to such levels of consecrated devotion to establishing, maintaining, and developing a living spiritual connection with the Lord, has no time to spare for trivialities, amusements, pursuit of fashion, indulgence of appetites and passions, concern over reputation, defense of one's rights, and such like. Much bigger things than these will wholly preoccupy and fully engage the attention to far greater profit.

Stern as the discipline required may be, the rewards will be found to be unbelievably great and certainly more than well worth the expenditure of time and effort. On the other hand, failure to make the most use of the present opportunities will be awfully costly.

There are correct and incorrect ways and means by which the instruction recorded in *Deuteronomy* 6 can be carried out. I made the acquaintance of one man who adopted a very literal interpretation by printing texts upon pieces of paper which he then nailed to the door posts of his house.

This certainly is not what the Lord intended when He gave those commands, for neither the one nailing the notes, nor the doorposts to which they are nailed, received any benefit thereby.

Others adopt a legalistic approach by which they recited Scripture all the day long. This came nearer the requirement but still fell far short of the mark. Those who seek to solve the problem in this way are usually not yet born again and these find such exercises to be tedious, self-defeating, boring, distasteful, and unproductive of any real good. It is the truth that the first condition to the successful application of these instructions is that each member of the family must have experienced the revival and be in love with the truth.

So it is that the first stipulation is that “these words which I command you today shall be *in your heart*.” Without the establishment of this condition, not even a true start can begin, but, once it has been, then, one pulse of harmony will bind all into one unified whole.

Then the true meaning of these counsels will manifest itself with clarity and power. Then it will be seen that true religion is not merely the occupant of one compartment of our lives, but is an all pervading influence which governs every detail of our service to God and man.

The Youth’s Instructor, May 30, 1895:

Bible religion is not one influence among many others, but its influence is supreme, pervading and controlling every other influence. Bible religion is to exercise control over life and conduct. It is not to be like a dash of color brushed here

and there upon the canvas, but its influence is to pervade the whole life, as though the canvas were dipped into the color until every thread of the fabric was dyed a deep, fast, unfading hue.

That is to say, when seated or standing, when lying down or standing up, there is never to be a moment of time when these things are not to be taught to the children. This teaching program is not to be one of continual lecturing. Rather, it will be one in which the young ones are to be immersed in a lovely spiritual atmosphere wherein the Holy Spirit lives, and works, and reigns. If they are born again, that is, if they have been truly revived, they will respond to this atmosphere just as the ripening fruit does to the life-giving rays of the sun.

Those who dedicate themselves without reserve to the work of both physical and spiritual reformation will find that wonderful healing will accompany these practices, procedures, and influences. Reformation has a definite role to fill in God's work as our Doctor. Though its processes are slow, they run deep and true, opening up the way of access for the imbuing of the entire physical and spiritual life with God's life and health.

The great tragedy is that God's people have been so reluctant to endure the unremitting discipline involved, that they have all too quickly relaxed their efforts with the result that they sink into apostasy, and Christ's coming is delayed once more.⁶

Reformation Completed Before Christ's Return

All these postponements of Christ's return are linked to the Church's failure to exhibit before the world the incomparable capacity for a true revival and reformation to provide the best health and wealth for mankind. Jesus cannot return to take

⁶ For statements informing us that there have been such delays in the past, see *Christ's Coming Delayed, Why?*

His people home until a truly convincing demonstration has been presented before the world of what will be achieved when a true and sustained reformation is correctly connected to a true revival. One would expect that the knowledge of this responsibility and of the marvelous rewards attending its being faithfully discharged would inspire God's people to put forth the utmost diligence to fulfill this charge. But again and again,

The Desire of Ages, p. 825:

God is disappointed, and robbed of His glory.

So often has this failure been so convincingly repeated, that the prospects of success ever being achieved seem to become more and more remote. Such is the ongoing witness of sight and circumstances, but, in the face of that, the Lord has repeatedly declared that the work of revival and reformation will be completed, and Christ shall return. Here are a few of the many assurances:

Romans 9

²⁸ He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because the Lord will make a short work upon the earth.

I have always been impressed, assured, and comforted by the text which reads:

The Southern Watchman, February 27, 1902:

The Lord is working. The Saviour has been promised the salvation of His people. "Your people shall be willing in the day of your power."

Unwilling as God's people may presently be to give total and unreserved dedication to the cause of revival and reformation under the leadership of their Doctor, the time will soon come when they will be pleased to give this level of commitment. How soon then will the work be finished! Of that wonderful day the Lord has revealed the following glori-

ous scene:

Counsels on Health, p. 580:

In visions of the night representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great day of Pentecost. Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God. I heard voices of thanksgiving and praise, and there seemed to be a reformation such as we witnessed in 1844.

Again is written of the wonders of that coming glory:

General Conference Bulletin, May 19, 1913:

I have been deeply impressed by the scenes that have recently passed before me in the night season. There seemed to be a great movement—a work of revival—going forward in many places. Our people were moving into line, responding to God's call. God calls upon those who are willing to be controlled by the Holy Spirit to lead out in a work of thorough reformation. I see a crisis before us, and the Lord calls for his laborers to come into line. Every soul should now stand in a position of deeper, truer consecration to God than during the years that have passed. Do not the Scriptures call for a more pure and holy work than we have yet seen?

How beautifully the Sabbath will then be kept, the poor taken care of, and God recognized as the only Plan-maker, Problem-solver, and Burden-bearer. Eating, drinking, and dressing will then be according to the rules of healthful living and not according to the indulgence of appetite and passion. God's character will be the model for ours, our relationship to

our fellowmen will be patterned after Christ's forgiving love toward us, and our missionary endeavors will reach souls and they be saved even as they were by Christ.

Something of the stern discipline required to eliminate wrong ideas and theories, habits and practices, is provided by the following experience as related by Ellen White.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, p. 371-372:

We want to work from the right standpoint. We want to act like men and women that are to be brought into judgment. And when we adopt the health reform we should adopt it from a sense of duty, not because somebody else has adopted it.

I have not changed my course a particle since I adopted the health reform. I have not taken one step back since the light from heaven upon this subject first shone upon my pathway. I broke away from everything at once,—from meat and butter, and from three meals,—and that while engaged in exhaustive brain labor, writing from early morning till sundown. I came down to two meals a day without changing my labor.

I have been a great sufferer from disease, having had five shocks of paralysis. I have been with my left arm bound to my side for months because the pain in my heart was so great. When making these changes in my diet, I refused to yield to taste and let that govern me. Shall that stand in the way of my securing greater strength, that I may therewith glorify my Lord? Shall that stand in my way for a moment? Never!

I suffered keen hunger. I was a great meat eater. But when faint, I placed my arms across my stomach and said: "I will not taste a morsel. I will eat simple food, or I will not eat at all." Bread was distasteful to me. I could seldom eat a piece as large as a dollar. Some things in the reform I could get along with very well, but when I came to the bread I was especially set against it. When I made these changes I had a special battle to fight. The first two or three meals, I could not eat. I said to my stomach: "You may wait until you can

eat bread.” In a little while I could eat bread, and graham bread, too. This I could not eat before; but now it tastes good, and I have had no loss of appetite.

So I might go on and on listing the large array of reforms which will appear in the lives of God’s people as we come down to the end of probationary time. All the messages which have come to us through the ministries of the four mighty angels, have called for changes to be made at every level of our existence, and therefore are reformation angels.

Reformation Brings Increasing Health

The more the changes made, provided they are made in response to the instruction of the angels’ messages, the nearer we come to God, and the healthier we shall be. Then we shall know the truth of the words:

Isaiah 58

⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

⁹ Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, Here I am.

¹⁰ If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday.

¹¹ The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

¹² Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.

¹³ If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing

your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words,

¹⁴ Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Anyone calling for changes outside those directed by the four angels, are teachers of fanaticism, which is deformation, the producer of sickness, and not of health.

One could easily write a library of books on reformation, provided of course that he had the time, which means that the subject cannot be covered in a single volume such as this one. But this does not limit the information available to us to this one book. To certify this we have but to remember that the entire Bible and every book by Ellen White, are studies on reformation. So too is most of that written by E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, and myself.

It will be that, when all the believers understand what revival and reformation are, and, in the life, light, and power of the Holy Spirit, learn to correctly relate them to each other and give them their divinely appointed places in their lives, then having your Creator as your Doctor will produce incredible results.

18. Natural Remedies

AFTER all that has been written in this book so far in which we have studied Christ's method of *speaking* life and health into the sick, it would seem that there would be no need for the use of natural remedies in Christ's method and ministry of healing.

As we have seen, all He needed to do was to speak the word of power, and the healing was instantly accomplished. In fact, I can recall only one recorded healing in which Christ employed a natural remedy, and that was the occasion when He plastered wet clay on the eyes of the blind man whom He then sent to wash in the Pool of Siloam.

The Desire of Ages, p. 824:

In the Saviour's manner of healing, there were lessons for His disciples. On one occasion He anointed the eyes of a blind man with clay, and bade him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.... He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing." *John* 9:7. The cure could be wrought only by the power of the great Healer, yet Christ made use of the simple agencies of nature. While He did not give countenance to drug medication, He sanctioned the use of simple and natural remedies.

In the writings of Ellen White, positive endorsement is given to the use of natural remedies, there being a number of statements to this effect. Let us note several of them:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 127:

Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies. Every person should have a knowledge of nature's remedial agencies and how to apply them. It is essential both to understand the principles involved in the treatment of the sick and to have a practical training that will enable one rightly to use this knowledge.

The use of natural remedies requires an amount of care and effort that many are not willing to give. Nature's process of healing and upbuilding is gradual, and to the impatient it seems slow. The surrender of hurtful indulgences requires sacrifice. But in the end it will be found that nature, untrammelled, does her work wisely and well. Those who persevere in obedience to her laws will reap the reward in health of body and health of mind.

Selected Messages, vol. 2, p. 286:

When the Lord told Hezekiah that He would spare his life for fifteen years, and as a sign that He would fulfill His promise, caused the sun to go back ten degrees, why did He not put His direct, restoring power upon the king? He told him to apply a bunch of figs to his sore, and that natural remedy, blessed by God, healed him. The God of nature directs the human agent to use natural remedies now.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 938:

God's miracles do not always bear the outward semblance of miracles. Often they are brought about in a way which looks like the natural course of events. When we pray for the sick, we also work for them. We answer our own prayers by using the remedies within our reach.

Water, wisely applied, is a most powerful remedy. As it is used intelligently, favorable results are seen. God has given us intelligence, and He desires us to make the most of His health-giving blessings. We ask that God will give bread to the hungry; we are then to act as His helping hand in relieving hunger. We are to use every blessing God has placed within our reach for the deliverance of those in danger.

Temperance, p. 85:

Make use of the remedies that God has provided. Pure air, sunshine, and the intelligent use of water are beneficial agents in the restoration of health. But the use of water is considered too laborious. It is easier to employ drugs than to use natural remedies.

There can be no denying the clarity of these statements

which require that we understand what natural remedies are, and how and when to apply them. It is clear that they have their place in the message that God is your Doctor. The great question is: What is that place? This is a simple question for which the answer is rather complex, so, let us begin our investigations of this important subject by looking at where the place for natural remedies *is not* to be found.

Where Natural Remedies Do Not Apply

The common misconception in this regard is based on the truth that violation of the laws of health will certainly bring on sickness and premature death. More and more, it is being realized even by men and women who care but little for Christian temperance, that disobedience of some physical laws at least will bring on related diseases. Of course *we* know that *all* violations of *all* physical laws bring on sickness and disease to a greater or lesser degree, but those who are not God's children only know this to a point.

Today, the connection between smoking and lung cancer, heart problems, and untimely deaths is accepted as incontrovertible by a very great number in the medical profession. Reduced salt and fat in the diet have become advertisers' points, and more and more food is being eaten because it is healthy, rather than because it is tasty and stimulating.

Thus it is that more and more people accept the truth that breaking the laws of God and of nature, takes away our health, and it is good that this fact is rightly understood. It is not so fortunate that men draw from this, not a correct, but an erroneous conclusion. Their all-too-common reasoning is that since the breaking of the law took away our health, the keeping of law will restore it to us again!

This certainly sounds logical enough, but it is quite untrue nonetheless. It is untrue because of what true restoration to

health is, namely, an act of creative power which the law cannot provide because it is not the Life-giver. Consider this point until it becomes a fixed principle in your mind.

*None of the laws of God,
be they moral, natural, civil, or anything else,
are, or ever can be, life-givers.*



Fresh, clean water skillfully applied is a powerful natural remedy, but it is a life-preserver, not a life-giver.

Break them, and they become life-takers or, that is, destroyers, but never, life-givers. God alone has life to give, for He is the Source of all life, and therefore He alone can be the Life-giver, and thus He alone can restore to life and health once more.

Now comes the vital question:

“If the broken law of God is the life-taker, then what is the unbroken-law, which otherwise is classified as being obedience to the law?”

I have asked this question of audiences and individuals around the world, and with one exception, they all replied,

“It is the life-giver!”

Then I have followed this up with another question,

“Who then is God? Is He not the only Life-giver?”

To which question they had to answer:

“Yes, He is the only Life-giver.”

This still leaves the question:

“What then is the unbroken law?”

And the answer is that it is the life *preserver*.

To make the point quite clear let us consider the following possible situation, in which an aircraft with two men on board crashes in a desert area killing one of the two occupants. Under these conditions, the law requires that a certain minimum amount of water be drunk per hour in order to preserve life. Shall we say that there is plenty of water, seeing they crashed by an oasis, and the living man drinks all that he needs while awaiting rescue.

No one will have any difficulty in seeing that his obedience to the natural law of life and health covering the consumption of water will do nothing more than preserve the life which survived the crash. Drinking an adequate supply of fresh pure water is not going to give him a new life, but it will keep the existing life alive.

But what about the other man, the one killed in the crash? He has no life to preserve. Therefore, if it were physically possible for him to take in the same amount of water as the living man, it would change nothing, for the keeping of the law can never bring the dead to life. That can only be accomplished by the Life-giver Himself.

The use of natural remedies is an application of natural law, and therefore, seeing it is an operation of law, it cannot give life, which means that it cannot cure disease. This is because,

as was so plainly taught in earlier pages in this book, diseases are cured by another system than the application of natural law, namely by the flowing of a stream of life and health from the Life-giver, Jesus Christ, into the life-receiver, the sick and diseased who had faith enough to come to Him and claim and receive the promised blessing.

That this is the truth is confirmed in these words:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 243:

God alone is the One who can heal.

And again:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 115:

The life of God in the soul is man's only hope.

The healing ministry is one which God shares with no one,

“For, God alone is the One who can heal.”

The Place for Natural Remedies

What then is the place where natural remedies are to find and do their divinely appointed work? For, despite the fact that not they, but only God is the one who can heal, they are at times a vital factor in the healing procedure.

While natural remedies and treatments cannot heal, they can do much to alleviate suffering and greatly improve the patient's general health and quality of life. Furthermore, lives have frequently been preserved and prolonged by the skillful and intelligent application of natural treatments.

How is this accomplished? One way for example, is by the promotion of adequate circulation and respiration, especially through using hot and cold water, exercise, and cleansings of the body both internally and externally. Dietary reform will further improve the vitality, strengthen the body, and purify

the bloodstream. All this is the work of reformation as it involves the establishment of proper habits and practices in the life and will preserve whatever health is left after years of improper living.

At times the changeover from improper habits of life to the practicing of proper health principles, can produce results which are quite impressive, so much so that there will be a temptation to believe that, as a result of the application of natural remedies, the sick one has actually been healed of a life-threatening disease. We must guard against the temptation to come to this conclusion, ever remembering that God, not natural remedies, is the one who alone can heal. Nevertheless, there will be times when the witness of sight and circumstances will powerfully testify that, as a result of the application of natural remedies, an actual healing has taken place.

The question is:

“How can such a thing be possible to the point where it has the power to convincingly deceive sufferers and those looking on that an actual cure has taken place?”

It can easily happen and does at times. Please consider the following situation.

A very sick person comes to you, a medical missionary, and appeals to you for help. He is in very bad health due to a long period of irregular eating of all the wrong kinds of food. He has drunk too little if any water at all, while liberally imbibing tea or coffee, and intoxicating beverages of various kinds. Obviously, his body is in a serious state of ill-health. He is loaded with toxic waste, and is a disaster poised to happen at any time.

Surely enough, he eventually becomes very sick indeed. His entire physical system is raging with fever, his head throbs,

he sweats profusely, his muscles ache, and he is very miserable. This is a case needing natural remedies skillfully and effectively applied, especially as the patient needs to be taught through personal experience, that the causes he has established will always produce the same miserable breakdown of health. He is being blessed with the revelation that:

Galatians 6

⁷ God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Let this man now come under your care as a very skilled medical missionary. As such you recognize that his broken down state of health, is not in his case due to his being sick with an incurable disease, though it could develop into one, but because he is suffering from the immediate effects of the violation of natural law. If nothing is done to change his bad habits to good ones, he will find in due time that an incurable disease will have fastened its remorseless grip upon him. When that time comes, only his Maker can save him.

In the meantime, we are dealing here with a basically healthy person whose wrong living habits have begun to catch up with him. After a few hours to a day or so of administering the right treatment to this man, in the right places, in the right order, a remarkable change will have taken place:

- The patient is clean within and without
- His fever has abated;
- His temperature is normal;
- His head has stopped aching;
- His joints are no longer painful; and
- He sleeps very restfully.

Though a great deal has been achieved, however, he must be watched against the onset of a relapse which is often worse than the previous attack, due to the weakened condition in which the fever left him.

In the previous paragraph, I have not described the condition of a person suffering from one of the incurable diseases among which are cancer, leprosy, AIDS, and others. The person who comes to you with these problems certainly cannot hope to be cured by the use of natural treatments, no matter how skillfully they may be applied.

At the same time, natural remedies, skillfully applied, can make even a person dying from an incurable disease feel more comfortable, and definitely can prolong his life by preserving to some extent, as much of it as is left.

Christ, the model medical missionary who devoted much more time to healing than to teaching, so rarely used natural methods there is only one record that I know of his having done so. While this is true, it does not mean that we are to limit our use of natural remedies almost as entirely as He did, for the simple reason that we do not have the same level of creative energy which He exercised. It seems safe to conclude that, the less power we possess, the less we are able to administer creative vital force to those whose only hope is to flow the life and health into the sick and dying as occurred every time Christ healed someone.

This places us more and more in a position where we become increasingly dependent on natural remedies, assuming we have abandoned all trust in drug therapy. This is a serious situation, for, should our faith and spiritual strength fall below a certain point, we will lose all capacity to experience the revival and thus to receive actual healing. Instead, we shall find ourselves totally dependent upon the life-preserving effects which natural remedies can provide. We can be sure that

if this is our situation, we shall find ourselves cut off from the healing power of our Maker, our Doctor, and will never experience the divine touch of the Great Physician.

There is a direct relationship between our capacity to bring Christ's ministry of healing to the perishing, and our personal level of faith in God, our power to serve Him, and the purity of our personal experience. When these are alive and vibrant with faith and love, as they were in Jesus, there appears to be little or no need for natural remedies, but, when we have lost these treasures or have never found them in the first instance, then we have nothing else to which to turn.

The Laodicean Condition

Nowhere is this point better supported than in the situation in which we find the Laodicean Church whose appearance is prophesied in *Revelation* 3:14-22.

This is the church which is wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, but who does not know her sad condition, believing instead that she is rich and increased with goods, and has need of nothing. She is counseled to remedy this terrible situation by buying of the Lord gold, white raiment, and eyesalve.

The gold, as we know so well, is the faith which works by love and purifies the soul.⁷ The white raiment is the spotless, unblemished righteousness of Christ, and the eyesalve is spiritual discernment.⁸

Only a few short years elapsed after the 1844 great disappointment before the survivors sank into the Laodicean apostasy. It was in 1858 that Sister White wrote:

⁷ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 158.

⁸ For a more detailed and better documented presentation of these three symbols, see *The Destiny of a Movement*, chapter 17, "More on the Real Issues at Minneapolis."

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 186:

I was shown that the testimony to the Laodiceans applies to God's people at the present time...

It is a quagmire from which the advent people have not escaped, for, in the meantime, despite many calls to repentance, the church has sunk lower and lower without ever coming out of that appalling condition.

In 1904, these words were written to confirm that, at least till then, no victory over this condition had been realized:

Review and Herald, December 15, 1904:

The message to the Laodicean church reveals our condition as a people.

Since then, there certainly has been no change for the better, but only a further sinking into deeper and still deeper apostasy.

Therefore, she is a church destitute of the power of that faith and love which alone has the capacity to generate the revival in both the physical and the spiritual natures of men. We must be very clear on the point that it is utterly impossible for us to operate as medical missionaries according to the pattern revealed by Christ, if we do not have the spiritual power which He had.

The Laodicean walks separately from Christ, who stands outside the door of his heart, knocking for admission. Let us look again at the statement already quoted in this book wherein the point is clearly made that this living connection must be made and sustained if we are to practice true medical missionary work in the same way that Christ did.

The Desire of Ages, p. 825:

The power of love was in all Christ's healing, and only by partaking of that love, through faith, can we be instruments for His work. If we neglect to link ourselves in divine connec-

tion with Christ, the current of life-giving energy cannot flow in rich streams from us to the people. There were places where the Saviour Himself could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief. So now unbelief separates the church from her divine Helper. Her hold upon eternal realities is weak. By her lack of faith, God is disappointed, and robbed of His glory.

This truth is convincingly taught in the encounter with the demon-possessed boy whom Christ healed at the base of the mount of transfiguration. Prior to this, Christ, in recognition of His disciples having reached a certain spiritual level, gave them the power to heal the sick, restore sight to the blind, give strength to the crippled, and to set free those possessed of demons.

These wonderful works, they had successfully practiced, and, when faced with the demented child, were confident that they would cast the demon out of him as they had done so frequently before for other similarly afflicted ones. They had spoken the word of faith and power in Christ's name, and the response had been immediate.

Now they fully expected the same results when, in the name of Jesus, they commanded the demon to depart, but the evil spirit only mocked them.

The Desire of Ages, p. 427:

Authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, had been conferred on the disciples when Jesus sent out the twelve to preach through Galilee. As they went forth strong in faith, the evil spirits had obeyed their word. Now in the name of Christ they commanded the torturing spirit to leave his victim; but the demon only mocked them by a fresh display of his power.

The disciples, unable to account for their defeat, felt that they were bringing dishonor upon themselves and their Master. And in the crowd there were scribes who made the most of this opportunity to humiliate them. Pressing around

the disciples, they plied them with questions, seeking to prove that they and their Master were deceivers. Here, the rabbis triumphantly declared, was an evil spirit that neither the disciples nor Christ Himself could conquer. The people were inclined to side with the scribes, and a feeling of contempt and scorn pervaded the crowd.

The statement declares that the disciples were “...unable to account for their defeat.” That was most unfortunate, for, if we do not understand why we are unable, as medical missionaries, to operate as Christ did by exercising the word of creative power, we cannot take even the first step toward achieving the desired objective. No sick will recover; demons will not depart; the blind will not see; the crippled will not walk; no lepers will be cleansed, and God is disappointed and robbed of His glory.

It is my fervent hope that everyone who reads these pages can clearly see that every person in the Laodicean condition will have no hope of working with God as their doctor. The best that a person in the Laodicean state can do is to get the most and the best that he can from natural remedies, for he certainly will not have access to God’s creative power to heal him of all his diseases. Like the disciples at the foot of the mountain, he will long and expect to heal the sick, but will wonder why he cannot.

The best and kindest things which God could do for Laodiceans was to give them the most comprehensive knowledge possible of natural remedies and the principles of healthful living. By this means, they, with such an understanding of correct habits of eating, drinking, dressing, and so forth, could apply the law to their lives as a life-preserver and thus live better than the world around them. The end result placed them in the in-between position of not being abandoned to the unrestrained indulgence of appetite on the one hand, but on the other hand being destitute of the living, creative,

health-giving power in God's word.

Yet there was a blessing in the plan, for God's law, even when separated from His boundless grace has great power to preserve life, though not to conquer the last enemy, death.

This is proved by the witness of the Jewish nation, who fall into the in-between group. For almost their entire history, they were destitute of the life and health of God in them on the one hand, but not given to wanton indulgence of appetite on the other. This was not so when they first came out of Egypt, but became a fact as time went on. They became very strict indeed over the observance of every point of the law, and maintained their allegiance to it in a legalistic way, for centuries. To this Sister White attributes the powerful mental capacities and general vitality which mark the race to this day:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 562:

The angel's prohibition (concerning the diet of the forthcoming Samson), included "every unclean thing." The distinction between articles of food as clean and unclean was not a merely ceremonial and arbitrary regulation, but was based upon sanitary principles. To the observance of this distinction may be traced, in a great degree, *the marvelous vitality which for thousands of years has distinguished the Jewish people.*

The principles of temperance must be carried further than the mere use of spirituous liquors. The use of stimulating and indigestible food is often equally injurious to health, and in many cases sows the seeds of drunkenness. True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful.

There are few who realize as they should how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their character, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny. The appetite should ever be in subjection to the moral and intellectual powers. The body should be servant to the mind, and

not the mind to the body.

The Heights Attainable by Faith

When the disciples at the foot of the mount of transfiguration were once again alone with Christ, they asked Him the question:

Matthew 17

¹⁹ Why could not we cast him out?

It was the same question which we need to ask. In asking it, we must be careful about what we expect the answer to be. If we are looking for additional light on natural remedies; if we anticipate having revealed to us a hitherto hidden herb, or treatment, or diet which will drive out the demon, we shall have asked the question in vain. The answer which comes through must be the one returned by Christ.

The Desire of Ages, p. 429-431:

Jesus answered them, "Because of your unbelief; for verily I say unto you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goes not out but by prayer and fasting." Their unbelief, that shut them out from deeper sympathy with Christ, and the carelessness with which they regarded the sacred work committed to them, had caused their failure in the conflict with the powers of darkness.

It was lack of faith, not a better understanding of natural remedies which had caused their failure in their battle with the evil one. It was that kind of faith which is possessed only by those who have learned to fast and pray for it, as Christ had done throughout the hours of the previous night. Unfortunately those disciples who were appointed to wait at the base of the mountain, had neglected to fast and pray during those hours of opportunity. The result was that, without realizing it, they were so weakened spiritually and mentally, they

were unable to handle situations over which they previously had the mastery.

The Desire of Ages, p. 431:

The words of Christ pointing to His death, had brought sadness and doubt. And the selection of the three disciples to accompany Jesus to the mountain had excited the jealousy of the nine. Instead of strengthening their faith by prayer and meditation on the words of Christ, they had been dwelling on their discouragements and personal grievances. In this state of darkness they had undertaken the conflict with Satan.

In order to succeed in such a conflict they must come to the work in a different spirit. Their faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart. They must be emptied of self, and be filled with the Spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith,—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work,—can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places.

“If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed,” said Jesus, “you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove.” Though the grain of mustard seed is so small, it contains that same mysterious life-principle which produces growth in the loftiest tree. When the mustard seed is cast into the ground, the tiny germ lays hold of every element that God has provided for its nutriment, and it speedily develops a sturdy growth.

If you have faith like this, you will lay hold upon God's word, and upon all the helpful agencies He has appointed. Thus your faith will strengthen, and will bring to your aid the power of heaven. The obstacles that are piled by Satan across your path, though apparently as insurmountable as the eternal hills, shall disappear before the demand of faith. “Nothing shall be impossible unto you.”

Before us are two options. Like those disciples, we can be

men and women with low-level faith, in which case, we will, as they did, experience failure whenever we attempt to heal as did our Maker.

Or we can be like Jesus, the man of living faith who was the complete Master of all diseases no matter how deep seated, nor how long established, nor supposedly incurable they might reputedly be. The choice is ours.

We would not be expected to deliberately choose the way of unbelief, but we do not need to, for, all we have to do is to neglect to maintain our personal connection with Jesus, and unbelief would steal upon us unbidden and unnoticed, even as the disciples did not realize that they had exchanged living, effective faith for unbelief.

It usually happens as follows. After a series of failures at robbing disease of his prey due to unbelief, the human tendency is to turn to an alternative procedure through which it is hoped that the same or even better results might be achieved, because they have concluded that God's way cannot be relied upon to work. This is the downhill pathway into apostasy along which unbelief really flourishes.

There is no justification for doubting the message on God as your Doctor, for there is ample evidence supporting its divine origin and approval. Once the message bears the divine credentials, we are to place the blame for our failure to possess the victory, not on the message, but instead on the unbelief which shuts ourselves away from Christ's boundless mercy.

Furthermore, whenever it has been given the opportunity to prove itself in the atmosphere of living faith, it has always produced results which have been most satisfactory, and according to what has been promised. The sick have recovered; demons have been driven out; the blind have been made to see; the deaf have been enabled to hear; the crippled have danced for joy; and the lepers have been cleansed. No disease

could be found which could not be cured completely.

In the light of this powerful and effective provision for the restoration of health in the sick and suffering, it is unfortunate that, by all too many, natural remedies are accorded the status which should alone be given to God and His process of restoring the sick by flowing His life and health into them.

Natural Remedies as an Aid to Faith

Yet, despite this substitution of natural remedies for God's way, we cannot discard natural remedies, for, it must not be forgotten that they do have a divinely ordained place in the ministry of healing. When striving to understand their role, it must be forever remembered that natural remedies are not the healers, for only God can heal. Their role is that of helpers to the true medical missionary.

There are a number of ways in which they serve as helpers, an important one of which is by cleansing the body within and without so that God's presence may occupy the body temple and in that position, be set free to fill the faith-filled patient with God's life and health. It is a principle that the strictest cleanliness must be established before God can abide in the body temple. This truth is taught in the divine requirement to maintain the sanctuary in an absolutely spotless condition in order for God to dwell there among His people, physically as well as spiritually:

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 159:

The glory of God hallowed the sanctuary, and for this reason the priests never entered the place sanctified by God's presence with shoes upon their feet. Particles of dust might cleave to them, which would desecrate the holy place; therefore the priests were required to leave their shoes in the court before entering the sanctuary. In the court, beside the door of the tabernacle, stood a brazen laver, wherein the priests washed their hands and their feet before entering the

tabernacle, that all impurity might be removed. All who officiated in the sanctuary were required of God to make special preparation before entering the place where His glory was revealed.

How little we realize what it means to live in the sight of a holy God, it being no place for the careless or irreverent. It is no wonder that it required six days of preparation before Moses could enter into and spend forty days and nights in God's personal presence on Mt. Sinai.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 313:

This period of waiting was to him a time of preparation, of close self-examination. Even this favored servant of God could not at once approach into His presence and endure the exhibitions of His glory. Six days must be employed in devoting himself to God by searching of heart, meditation, and prayer before he could be prepared for direct communication with his Maker.

When Isaiah was permitted a revelation of God's unsullied purity and spotless perfection, at the time when he was given a view of the interior of the holy place, he appeared in his own eyes to be very unclean. So too was the reaction of Peter when the divinity of Christ was revealed to him in the miraculous draft of fishes. They and others such as Daniel and John were powerfully and deeply impressed with an understanding of what it means to be in the presence of the Almighty. As such, they were a very privileged people.

Every true medical missionary must seek to understand the essential need for a true conception of the standard of mental, physical, and spiritual spotlessness which must be achieved and maintained if our work for the sick and dying is to be successful. God cannot and will not heal through a person who knowingly retains uncleanness in his life, nor will He heal the person who fails to put away all known physical, mental, and spiritual impurity.

So then, cleansings of outward and inward pollution are essential helpers of God, the mighty Healer, for they establish the conditions under which the Lord can work. There will not always be time nor opportunity to effect an exhaustive cleansing preliminary to the actual healing, but the right intent must be there at least.

Likewise, all the other natural remedies may be classified as helpers, but never, except in a limited sense, as actual healers, for God alone is the only one who can heal. This is so because the Almighty alone has the creative might by which restoration can be achieved.

I could spend much time and many pages dealing with the various natural remedies as listed in:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 127:

Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies.

However this should not be necessary, for the same principles which govern the application of the one, are common to them all. They are all helpers to the Great Physician who is the actual Healer.

The Blessings of Temperance

Before closing this chapter, I will make two points. The first one is that the application of each of these helpers in the right place, in the right way, at the right time, brings soundness to the health, strength to the intellect, and freshness to the entire being, provided that they are firmly based on a true revival experience. Consider the extent of the wonderful promise contained in the following declaration:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 308-309:

Abstemiousness in diet is rewarded with mental and moral vigor; it also aids in the control of the passions. Overeating is

especially harmful to those who are sluggish in temperament; these should eat sparingly and take plenty of physical exercise. There are men and women of excellent natural ability who do not accomplish half what they might if they would exercise self-control in the denial of appetite.

Great blessings are possessed by those with mental and moral vigor, and control over their passions. These have a firmly laid foundation on which to build a life of health and righteousness.

Turning Away from False Gospels of Health

The other point I wished to make in closing this chapter is that the entire message of God as *Your Doctor*, is a presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ which is the creative power of God brought to needy mankind to save him from sickness and from sin. It is critically important that this truth be understood just now when so many books are being written about so many new remedies for every disease of which you have ever heard, and others of which we have never heard as yet.

Obviously, they cannot all be of divine origin, which raises the question as to which are, and which are not. This is a simple question to answer provided you understand and experience the gospel of Jesus Christ for yourself. When then, a new book on some new natural remedy is offered you, just check it out sufficiently at first to determine whether or not it is the actual gospel of Jesus Christ.

If it passes the test, cherish it, but if it does not, then resolutely reject it as Paul wrote:

Galatians 1

⁶ I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel,

⁷ Which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach any gospel to you other than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any gospel to you other than what you have received, let him be accursed.

19. Nature: God's Servant

THROUGHOUT the ministry of Christ, the greatest of all Healers, a strong emphasis was placed on living faith being needed by the one who was seeking restoration of health. When healing the blind man, for instance, Jesus said,

Matthew 9

²⁹ According to your faith let it be to you.

From this Scripture, we associate large faith with large results, while we have learned that limited faith brings defeat and disappointment. Thus, where there is an absence of faith, there is a dearth of healing. We are convinced therefore that a strong, active faith must be acquired before God can successfully bless our efforts at practicing the one way of the healing art of which Heaven approves.

This is largely true, but there is a healing ministry which is constantly going on without dependence on the faith of the recipient being involved. Millions every day are the beneficiaries of this blessing irrespective of their ignorance of God, His character and power, or His way of practicing the healing art. Even though they have no faith in the Almighty, and know practically nothing about Him, they are still wonderfully blessed in spite of their continued abuse of the sacred laws of health.

This marvelous provision on the part of our merciful Creator is described in this statement:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 112-113:

The Saviour in His miracles revealed the power that is continually at work in man's behalf, to sustain and to heal him. Through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. When any part of the body sustains injury, a healing process is at once begun; nature's agencies

are set at work to restore soundness. But the power working through these agencies is the power of God. All life-giving power is from Him. When one recovers from disease, it is God who restores him.

Injuries suffered by the human body include broken bones, bruising, lacerations and fevers. Once any one of these is sustained, the healing process is immediately and automatically put into operation. This is true whether the one who needs this ministry is a believer in Jesus or not. Indeed it is just as true if the injured one is a heathen, an atheist, an animal, or a tree in the forest.

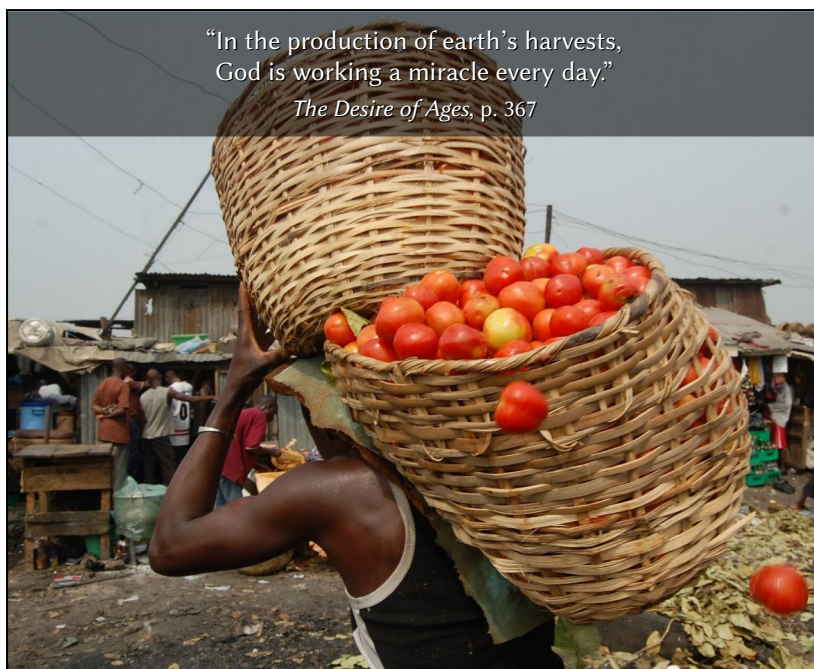
We are all familiar with the healing process which follows the opening of a wound on some part of our bodies. Provided the gash is kept clean and free from all infection, the injury will close over with scar tissue, and will present no further problem. Those of us who have had association with animals who have been similarly injured, will be familiar with the operation of the same healing processes there. When someone cuts a slash in the bark of a tree, the tree makes a slow but certain effort at growing at least some fresh bark over the damaged section. When an area of forest is cut down, nature proceeds to repair the gash in the landscape by promoting new growth from the forest floor.

In all these healing processes is the revelation of an all-powerful God actively and continually engaged in keeping us alive, in repairing us, and in building up and restoring us. Of this He is capable for, it is not by its own inherent energies that nature carries on its work. Instead it is the working of infinite power through the agency or instrumentality of nature by which the work is done.

Education, p. 99:

Upon all created things is seen the impress of the Deity. Nature testifies of God. The susceptible mind, brought in contact with the miracle and mystery of the universe, cannot

but recognize the working of infinite power. Not by its own inherent energy does the earth produce its bounties, and year by year continue its motion around the sun. An unseen hand guides the planets in their circuit of the heavens. A mysterious life pervades all nature—a life that sustains the unnumbered worlds throughout immensity, that lives in the insect atom which floats in the summer breeze, that wings the flight of the swallow and feeds the young ravens which cry, that brings the bud to blossom and the flower to fruit.



The Desire of Ages, p. 367-368:

In feeding the five thousand, Jesus lifts the veil from the world of nature, and reveals the power that is constantly exercised for our good. In the production of earth's harvests, God is working a miracle every day. Through natural agencies the same work is accomplished that was wrought in the feeding of the multitude. Men prepare the soil and sow the seed, but it is the life from God that causes the seed to ger-

minate. It is God's rain and air and sunshine that cause it to put forth, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." *Mark 4:28.*

It is God who is every day feeding millions from earth's harvest fields. Men are called upon to co-operate with God in the care of the grain and the preparation of the loaf, and because of this they lose sight of the divine agency. They do not give God the glory due unto His holy name. The working of His power is ascribed to natural causes or to human instrumentality. Man is glorified in place of God, and His gracious gifts are perverted to selfish uses, and made a curse instead of a blessing.

God is seeking to change all this. He desires that our dull senses shall be quickened to discern His merciful kindness and to glorify Him for the working of His power. He desires us to recognize Him in His gifts, that they may be, as He intended, a blessing to us. It was to accomplish this purpose that the miracles of Christ were performed.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1062:

God is perpetually at work in nature. She is His servant, directed as He pleases. Nature in her work testifies of the intelligent presence and active agency of a Being who moves in all His works according to His will.

It is not by an original power inherent in nature that year by year the earth produces its bounties and the world keeps up its continual march around the sun. The hand of infinite power is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God's power momentarily exercised that keeps it in position in its rotations. The God of heaven is constantly at work. It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears and every flower blooms.

It is not as the result of a mechanism, that, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. Every breath, every throb of the heart, is the continual evidence of the power of an ever-present God. It is God that makes the sun to rise in the heavens. He opens the windows of heaven and gives rain. He makes the grass to grow upon

the mountains. "He gives snow like wool: and scatters the hoarfrost like ashes." "When he utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens,...He makes lightnings with rain, and brings forth the wind out of his treasures."

Although the Lord has ceased His work in creating, He is constantly employed in upholding and using as His servants the things which He has made. Said Christ, "My Father works hitherto, and I work" (MS 4, 1882).

Not only has God the capacity to maintain His vast created works in perfect order, but He is able to accelerate any of the processes of nature such as the bringing of the grain from germination to maturity when His purposes are better served by His so doing. This is what He did in the feeding of the five thousand.

Normally, the time taken for grain to germinate and grow through the stages of filling the heads, and, under the ministry of the latter rain, and the summer sun, be brought to harvest readiness, takes a good part of the year. After that comes the grinding which produces the flour, and then the mixing of the dough, the rising, and the baking. Then at last the bread is ready for eating.

All that without the use of fire, Christ accomplished within the time it took to break the bread and serve it to the people. Christ that day certainly demonstrated that nature is the servant of the Most High, and that:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1062:

Although the Lord has ceased His work in creating, He is constantly employed in upholding and using as His servants the things which He has made.

The extent to which a person understands these principles of divine working, and by faith and obedience cooperates with them, determines how prosperous that person will be physically, mentally, materially, and spiritually.

Thus the farmer will have healthier stronger fields of grain, the gardener will have choicer vegetables, the shepherd will have more productive sheep, and the true medical missionary will enjoy better success in his efforts designed to preserve the existing health and strengthen that which remains.

In all this I am talking about the reformation or reconstruction phases of the ministry of healing, not the revival experience by which a new life of health takes the place of disease according to the principles laid down earlier in this book.

In God's use of nature as His servant, He invites our cooperation, so that in our care for our own bodies, we may reap the utmost blessing for our own health needs, and so that we can, as true medical missionaries, best serve our fellow-men.

20. God Does Not Always Heal

THROUGHOUT this book, God is consistently presented as the great Healer and as the only one who has the power to truly restore us. Over and over, His way of achieving such a blessing for His people is revealed as a procedure or a formula. It has been stressed that if we, in living faith, act our part of the formula, we can be certain of a successful outcome. Here is one such declaration:

Education, p. 257-258:

Prayer and faith are closely allied, and they need to be studied together. In the prayer of faith there is a divine science; it is a science that everyone who would make his life work a success must understand. Christ says, "What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them." *Mark 11:24*. He makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal.

It would be impossible to find a statement which could be clearer than this one by which we are assured that, once the conditions are met, the promises are unequivocal. This means that the fulfillment of the promise is not a hit-or-miss affair, but is a divine science working according to established and inviolable laws which cannot be changed, broken, or annulled.

This is how it must be, for as soon as God made a promise and then failed to keep it, He would totally discredit Himself and would have failed exactly how and where Satan declared He would. He would have demonstrated that He was unable to execute His will, govern His infinite kingdom, maintain His personal integrity, solve the dreadful problem of global iniquity, and save, protect, and sustain His people. If He proved incapable in these matters, then we are without God and

without hope in the world.

Elijah Was a Man Like Us

Capo 1

D
E^b

1. E - li - jah was a man like us,
2. Dan - iel pray'd to the liv - ing God,
3. Shad - rach, Me - shach, A - bed - ne - go,
4. To - day God needs E - li - jah's;

G
A^b

Asus⁴
B^bsus⁴

A
B^b

D
E^b

He prayed that it should not rain.
Pray'd three times in his up - per room.
Re - fused to pray to the gods of gold,
To - day God needs the Da - ni - els;

D
E^b

He prayed a - gain that it should rain,
Through liv - ing faith and con - stant pray'r,
Were thrown in - to the fur - nace fire,
Needs Shad - rach and his faith - ful friends,

A
B^b

G
A^b

A
B^b

D
E^b

And the rain did fall.
Hung - ry lion's mouths shut.
The liv - ing God saved them.
Men of un - wav - 'ring faith.

D
E^b

A
B^b

E - li - jah was a man of pray'r,
Da - niel stood firm on his be - lief,
Through their pray'rs, and a liv - ing faith,
Let us not give our God a rest,

D
E^b

A
B^b

D/A
E^b/B^b

A
B^b

D
E^b

He nev - er ceased un - til the an - swer came.
Ig - nored the king's com - mand and trust - ed God.
The fi - ery fur - nace nev - er shook their faith.
Let's pray un - til the Ho - ly Spir - it comes.

Refrain

A⁷
B^{b7}

D
E^b

G
A^b

D
E^b

Prayer and faith close - ly al - lied, they need be stud - ied to - ge - ther.

G
A^b

D
E^b

G⁶
A^{b6}

D/A
E^b/B^b

D
E^b

In the pray'r of ____ faith, there is di - vine ____ science.

The mighty promises of our glorious Ruler of the universe are just as valid for the most insignificant person on earth, as they are for the greatest men of living faith. If Jehovah were to refuse to keep His word to either one of these, provided that that one had fulfilled the conditions, His kingdom, which is built on love, trust, and faith, would disintegrate.

All this means that when you bow in prayer, you are to realize that, provided you have fulfilled the conditions, then God is bound by His own integrity to answer your prayer. Once He utters the promise, He will fulfill it.

Men utter promises which they regret. If this regret is serious enough, then they withdraw their pledged word. Sad to say, Christians have also done this even though there is a blessing pronounced on him...

Psalm 15

⁴ ...who swears to his own hurt and does not change.

But with God it is entirely different. He never makes a promise that He does not delight to honor, and there is not a being who has ever lived on the earth who can truthfully claim that God has ever failed to keep His word to him or kept it reluctantly or grudgingly.

God's Faithfulness at Ziklag

It was this realization which stabilized David in the faith when, on returning to Ziklag, he found all the women and children taken captive and the city burned to the ground. While David's men sought relief from their emotions in rage and lamentation, David remembered God's faithfulness to His promised word.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 692-693:

In this hour of utmost extremity David, instead of permitting his mind to dwell upon these painful circumstances, looked earnestly to God for help. He "encouraged himself in

the Lord.” He reviewed his past eventful life. Wherein had the Lord ever forsaken him? His soul was refreshed in recalling the many evidences of God’s favor. The followers of David, by their discontent and impatience, made their affliction doubly grievous; but the man of God, having even greater cause for grief, bore himself with fortitude. “What time I am afraid, I will trust in You” (*Psalms* 56:3), was the language of his heart. Though he himself could not discern a way out of the difficulty, God could see it, and would teach him what to do.

That fact that God had never failed him in the past was a powerful basis for the conviction that He would care for him in the present and the future. By living faith in the divine assurances, He grasped the right hand of Omnipotence and utterly triumphed over his enemies before he even went out after them.

Faith Lays Hold of the Victory

It is very important that the child of God has the truth indelibly imprinted on his mind that he, as a child of God, does not go forth to conquer the devil, for he is a foe already vanquished. Instead, he firstly lays hold of the victory gained for him by Christ on Calvary, and then advances into the work of each day already possessing the total victory over sin, disease, and Satan himself. He faces each of these forces, not as foes to be conquered, but as deadly enemies already defeated.

Toward the end of His earthly ministry, with prophetic vision Jesus looked into the future and saw Satan as one already conquered:

The Desire of Ages, p. 490:

Beyond the cross of Calvary, with its agony and shame, Jesus looked forward to the great final day, when the prince of the power of the air will meet his destruction in the earth so long marred by his rebellion. Jesus beheld the work of evil forever ended, and the peace of God filling heaven and

earth.

Henceforward Christ's followers were to look upon Satan as a conquered foe. Upon the cross, Jesus was to gain the victory for them; that victory He desired them to accept as their own. "Behold," He said, "I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you."

The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. Not one that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. The Saviour is by the side of His tempted and tried ones. With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. When temptations and trials come, do not wait to adjust all the difficulties, but look to Jesus, your helper.

This attitude of positive confidence in what Jesus accomplished for us on Calvary is an essential element in the true science of prayer. Let us again consider the statement which is quoted at the head of this chapter:

Education, p. 257-258:

Prayer and faith are closely allied, and they need to be studied together. In the prayer of faith there is a divine science; it is a science that everyone who would make his life work a success must understand. Christ says, "What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them." *Mark* 11:24. He makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal.

Firstly, it is stated that, "In the prayer '*of faith*,' there is a divine science." The statement confines the subject under consideration, not just to prayer, but to the prayer *of faith*. This makes the important point that this is the only kind of prayer worth understanding and employing, for it is the only type of

prayer which will produce the desired results. In that kind of prayer, there is a divine science.

The Science of Effective Prayer

There are two points to be noted here. The first is that effective prayer is a science, which means that its application is according to fixed, reliable, and understandable principles of operation. It cannot be according to the changeable responses of emotionalism which are so unreliable as to be utterly useless.

But then, what else could you expect were it not a *divine*, but merely a *human* science? It is not given to humanity to structure the science of the prayer of faith. It is fortunate that this is so, for mankind does not have the capacity to formulate such a science. To be effective, it must be a *divine* science—divine in design, and divine in its execution.

On this theme much could be written, and will be as time goes by, but we will consider only the paragraph which sums up the finally successful appeal of the man from Capernaum who came to Christ to receive healing for his dying son.

The Desire of Ages, p. 200:

The nobleman wanted to see the fulfillment of his prayer before he should believe; but he had to accept the word of Jesus that his request was heard and the blessing granted. This lesson we also have to learn. Not because we see or feel that God hears us are we to believe. We are to trust in His promises.

When we come to Him in faith, every petition enters the heart of God. When we have asked for His blessing, we should believe that we receive it, and thank Him that we *have* received it. Then we are to go about our duties, assured that the blessing will be realized when we need it most.

When we have learned to do this, we shall know that our prayers are answered. God will do for us “exceeding abundantly,” “according to the riches of His glory,” and “the working of His mighty power.” *Ephesians* 3:20, 16; 1:19.

Here is outlined the procedures which make up the true science of prayer:

1. I must know the promises of God as if they were written for me personally, as in fact they are. This requires that I be very much aware of the living power of God which is in those promises—power sufficient to create the universe.
2. I must trust in those words of almighty capacity, believing that every petition enters the heart of God and that He has personally heard my pleas.
3. I must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever I receive must be used in doing His will.
4. I must specifically ask for the blessing needed.
5. I must consciously receive the blessing so that it becomes my personal possession.
6. I must thank Him that I *have* received it, and go my way knowing I shall realize the possession of it when I need it most.

These are the general rules to be followed whenever we petition the throne of grace according to the true science of prayer and,

Education, p. 258:

The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal.

There Are Exceptions

So, one would expect that it would require only the simple but faithful application of these conditions, and healing is guaranteed with no exceptions. And, our first reaction is that this is how we would like it to be, even the way it is described in this declaration:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 226:

God is just as willing to restore the sick to health now as when the Holy Spirit spoke these words through the

psalmist. And Christ is the same compassionate physician now that He was during His earthly ministry. In Him there is healing balm for every disease, restoring power for every infirmity. His disciples in this time are to pray for the sick as verily as the disciples of old prayed. And recoveries will follow; for “the prayer of faith shall save the sick.”

We have the Holy Spirit’s power, the calm assurance of faith, that can claim God’s promises. The Lord’s promise, “They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (*Mark 16:18*), is just as trustworthy now as in the days of the apostles. It presents the privilege of God’s children, and our faith should lay hold of all that it embraces. Christ’s servants are the channel of His working, and through them He desires to exercise His healing power. It is our work to present the sick and suffering to God in the arms of our faith. We should teach them to believe in the Great Healer.

But, inconsistent and surprising as it may seem to be, God does not always heal even the most righteous of men. This includes prophets and apostles rich in faith and in the power of the Holy Spirit, who have done a mighty work of preaching to thousands, many of whom have accepted salvation, and who have healed many and have raised others from death to life. One would expect that persons of such powerful spiritual lives, would themselves be free from sickness, but this was not always so. One such person whom we know lived a life of victory over sin, disease, and over the temptations of Satan, was the illustrious apostle Paul.

During his earthly ministry, he raised to life Eutychus who was killed after falling from a window when Paul was preaching late at night.

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 391:

In one of the open windows sat a youth named Eutychus. In this perilous position he went to sleep and fell to the court below. At once all was alarm and confusion. The youth was taken up dead, and many gathered about him with cries and

mourning. But Paul, passing through the frightened company, embraced him and offered up an earnest prayer that God would restore the dead to life. His petition was granted. Above the sound of mourning and lamentation the apostle's voice was heard, saying, "Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him." With rejoicing the believers again assembled in the upper chamber. They partook of the Communion, and then Paul "talked a long while, even till break of day."

Of this man Paul, whom we would expect to find in excellent health, we read:

Sketches from the Life of Paul, p. 147⁹:

And while thus battling against opposition, and with untiring zeal pushing forward the gospel work and guarding the interests of a church yet young in the faith, Paul was bearing upon his soul the burden of all the churches. Nor was he released even from the tax of physical labor. Here, as at Corinth, he worked with his own hands to supply his necessities. In weariness and painfulness from unceasing toil and constant danger, *enfeebled by disease*, and at times depressed in spirits, he steadfastly pursued his work.

There is no indication given in the statement as to whether the disease was present with him and kept him enfeebled, or whether it had been a past problem which had left him enfeebled, but no such mystery enshrouds another very wonderful prophet, namely Elisha, who eventually passed away, the victim of a long, lingering disease.

Prophets and Kings, p. 263-264:

It was not given Elisha to follow his master in a fiery chariot. Upon him the Lord permitted to come a lingering illness. During the long hours of human weakness and suffering his faith laid fast hold on the promises of God, and he beheld ever about him heavenly messengers of comfort and peace. As on the heights of Dothan he had seen the encircling hosts

⁹ The same statement can be found in *Review and Herald*, September 14, 1911.

of heaven, the fiery chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof, so now he was conscious of the presence of sympathizing angels, and he was sustained.

Throughout his life he had exercised strong faith, and a he had advanced in a knowledge of God's providences and of His merciful kindness, faith had ripened into an abiding trust in his God, and when death called him he was ready to rest from his labors.

There is a natural tendency on the part of humans to reason that the presence of sickness in the life is indicative of the presence of unforsaken sinfulness. While this is true in some cases, it is not necessarily so, even though sickness exists because of sin.

That it is not necessarily so is proved by the life of Elisha who was a man of great faith, unwavering loyalty to God, with the spiritual power to heal the sick and raise the dead. Even through his long suffering, he maintained his hold on Omnipotence, and remained faithful to the end.

Prophets and Kings, p. 263:

With the counsel and encouragement given Joash, the work of Elisha closed. He upon whom had fallen in full measure the spirit resting upon Elijah, had proved faithful to the end. Never had he wavered. Never had he lost his trust in the power of Omnipotence. Always, when the way before him seemed utterly closed, he had still advanced by faith, and God had honored his confidence and opened the way before him.

In the light of these inspired words, no one could say that Elisha had failed to meet the conditions which were required to clear the way for divine healing to be experienced. He trusted in the promises of the Almighty, yet died from a lingering disease which the Lord permitted to come upon him.

Such an outcome upon so pure, powerful, and illustrious a life, seems to negate the message of this book, but it does not

in fact do so¹⁰ as will shortly be shown. But firstly we will continue making a short list of those who met the conditions for healing, but, like Elisha, were denied the deliverance which to our finite judgment, they ought to have received.

An outstanding case is that of Lazarus. Jesus deliberately remained away from his friend's bedside in order to ensure that he would pass away, which he surely did.

The Desire of Ages, p. 528:

Had Christ been in the sick-room, Lazarus would not have died; for Satan would have had no power over him. Death could not have aimed his dart at Lazarus in the presence of the Life-giver. Therefore Christ remained away. He suffered the enemy to exercise his power, that He might drive him back, a conquered foe. He permitted Lazarus to pass under the dominion of death; and the suffering sisters saw their brother laid in the grave.

Christ knew that as they looked on the dead face of their brother their faith in their Redeemer would be severely tried. But He knew that because of the struggle through which they were now passing their faith would shine forth with far greater power. He suffered every pang of sorrow that they endured. He loved them no less because He tarried; but He knew that for them, for Lazarus, for Himself, and for His disciples, a victory was to be gained.

Mary and Martha wanted Jesus to visit them, but had Christ entered the sick room, Lazarus would not have died. Jesus could also have spoken the word of healing from his location in Bethany, and Lazarus would have lived. But it was not God's plan that Lazarus be saved from dying. His fate rested not in the power of God, but in His will. The power was more than adequate, but the will of God denied there would be a deliverance from the disease which took his life. It all ap-

¹⁰ This problem has already been addressed in the book, *Entering into God's Sabbath Rest*, in the chapters entitled, "God's Witnesses," and "The Resurrection of Lazarus."

peared as if the promise of God was of no effect.

Then there was the case of Job, from whom God withdrew His protection, leaving him to be afflicted with terrible boils from head to foot. Eventually he recovered, but not before he had suffered beyond description.

A case rather easily overlooked is that of Timothy who suffered from physical infirmities.

Sketches from the Life of Paul, p. 321:

Timothy suffered from physical infirmities, and the apostle, tender and compassionate as he was, felt it necessary to warn him to neglect no duty on this account.

A more recent example is that of Ellen White from whose pen flowed the words of life being studied in this book. Yet she was repeatedly struck down with serious, crippling, and painful illnesses which sometimes lasted for weeks at a time.

So then, it is clear that God does not always heal the sick even though there is a very large number of promises which seem to guarantee He will, provided the conditions are faithfully met.

Divine Reasons for Not Healing

How shall we relate to this problem? Shall we conclude that God is not true to His Word of integrity and honor? No! It would be an entirely fatal mistake to come to this conclusion. Instead we are to maintain our complete confidence in the wonderful truth that there is not a single contradiction in God's word. He is the Truth.

From that point, we must advance to the place where we accept the fact that there has to be another qualifying factor in the message that God is *Your Doctor*, as there surely is. It is the saving truth which John the Baptist came to understand when he beheld from his death-cell, the ministries of healing

performed by Jesus.

Like the rest of the Jews, though on a much higher and holier level, he expected the Messiah to appear as a mighty man of war who would re-establish Israel's supremacy as a righteous nation, and fill the earth with justice and peace.

The Desire of Ages, p. 215:

Like the Saviour's disciples, John the Baptist did not understand the nature of Christ's kingdom. He expected Jesus to take the throne of David; and as time passed, and the Saviour made no claim to kingly authority, John became perplexed and troubled. He had declared to the people that in order for the way to be prepared before the Lord, the prophecy of Isaiah must be fulfilled; the mountains and hills must be brought low, the crooked made straight and the rough places plain.

He had looked for the high places of human pride and power to be cast down. He had pointed to the Messiah as the One whose fan was in His hand, and who would thoroughly purge His floor, who would gather the wheat into His garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Like the prophet Elijah, in whose spirit and power he had come to Israel, he looked for the Lord to reveal Himself as a God that answers by fire.

That solution, to human nature, is the preferred one, and, if you think about it, our interest in being healed from disease likewise follows this preferred route so long as we have not yet experienced the same deliverance from this imbalanced thinking as John the Baptist did. When afflicted with sickness with its life-threatening power, pain, suffering, and frustrating loss of valuable time, the one thought which dominates is the desire for immediate deliverance from these undesirable problems. We tend to show no desire for, nor even interest in, the priceless education to be acquired only from a sick-bed.

Signs of the Times, February 21, 1900:

Because a man is sick, God does not lay him aside; He

makes use of the sickness. The man who exercises unshaken faith under suffering, exercises a more telling influence than he could possibly do in health. Often the afflicted one can preach a more effectual sermon from his sick-bed than ever he preached from the pulpit. And it is on the sick-bed that the sustaining power of God is magnified. When we are pressed by suffering or bereavement, God sends the needed help. His promises are proved to be steadfast and unfailing.

John, earnestly seeking answers to his troubled thoughts, sent several of his disciples to question Christ as to whether He was in fact the Messiah or not. Jesus met them with instructions to watch Him at work during the day. At the end of the day,

The Desire of Ages, p. 217:

Jesus called them to Him, and bade them go and tell John what they had witnessed, adding, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me." *Luke 7:23, RV*

Then it was that John understood the real nature of God's kingdom and how it was to be built, and gladly accepted the principles involved.

The Desire of Ages, p. 218:

Understanding more clearly now the nature of Christ's mission, he yielded himself to God for life *or for death*, as should best serve the interests of the cause he loved.

This sentence reveals the existence of a vital condition which must be established before God is free to work His wise will in any given situation. We must be yielded *for life or for death, health or sickness*, according to God's judgment of which option will best serve the interests of the cause we love. If, with true unselfishness, we really love God's cause with all our hearts, we will find no problem with the fact that God does not always heal as we would so much like him to do.

The Desire of Ages, p. 224-225:

God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him. Not Enoch, who was translated to heaven, not Elijah, who ascended in a chariot of fire, was greater or more honored than John the Baptist, who perished alone in the dungeon. "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." *Philippians* 1:29. And of all the gifts that Heaven can bestow upon men, fellowship with Christ in His sufferings is the most weighty trust and the highest honor.

Because in the life of a true Christian, the decision as to whether we are raised to health, or are permitted to die, rests with the Lord, it is not a lack of faith to set your affairs in order for departure from this earthly scene when praying for healing from sickness.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 231:

Often there is danger of error here. Believing that they will be healed in answer to prayer, some fear to do anything that might seem to indicate a lack of faith. But they should not neglect to set their affairs in order as they would desire to do if they expected to be removed by death. Nor should they fear to utter words of encouragement or counsel which at the parting hour they wish to speak to their loved ones.

Apart from the reason just given as to why God does not always heal, there are others also which I will mention briefly:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 230:

God knows the end from the beginning. He is acquainted with the hearts of all men. He reads every secret of the soul. He knows whether those for whom prayer is offered would or would not be able to endure the trials that would come upon them should they live. He knows whether their lives would be a blessing or a curse to themselves and to the world. This is one reason why, while presenting our petitions

with earnestness, we should say, “Nevertheless not my will, but Yours, be done.” *Luke 22:42.*

Jesus added these words of submission to the wisdom and will of God when in the Garden of Gethsemane He pleaded, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” *Matthew 26:39.* And if they were appropriate for Him, the Son of God, how much more are they becoming on the lips of finite, erring mortals!

The consistent course is to commit our desires to our all-wise heavenly Father, and then, in perfect confidence, trust all to Him. We know that God hears us if we ask according to His will. But to press our petitions without a submissive spirit is not right; our prayers must take the form, not of command, but of intercession.

A Bible example of a great man who succumbed to this temptation was good King Hezekiah.

Prophets and Kings, p. 340:

In the midst of his prosperous reign King Hezekiah was suddenly stricken with a fatal malady.

God sent Isaiah to confirm to the king that the illness was indeed his last. The king heard the sentence of death, and was not prepared to trustingly submit to it, but protested with sore weeping. The Lord heard his pleas, and through Isaiah, announced there would be a fifteen year extension of his life confirmed by a remarkable sign in the heavens. The shadow on the sun-dial was to go backward ten degrees. This was noted by Babylonian astronomers who came to Jerusalem to learn more about the God of the Hebrews who possessed the creative power to control nature's forces.

This was a splendid opportunity for the king to reveal the gospel to these powerful and covetous men. Instead, the king showed his hoarded treasures to those men who saw in these riches the means of enriching Babylon.

Signs of the Times, September 1, 1902:

His indiscretion prepared the way for national disaster. The ambassadors carried to Babylon the report of Hezekiah's riches, and the king and his counselors planned to enrich Babylon with the treasures of Jerusalem.

Thus, instead of giving his visitors the inestimable treasures of the gospel, he showed them his priceless hoard of gold, silver, and precious stones. Rather than having their attention being drawn to Christ and His salvation, they made mental notes to visit the place again as plunderers of all they had seen. This they did at the cost of all that treasure and countless lives senselessly and needlessly slaughtered.

Think about this. Suppose you were placed in King Hezekiah's position with death imminent, or, alternatively, another fifteen years of life being offered you. However, before you made your choice, you were told that if you lived, you would make a fearful mistake which would cost countless lives? What choice would you make?

Hard as it would be to make it, the correct decision would be to accept death now rather than dishonor later. This is one reason why God does not always heal and we should be submissive to His wisdom, and thankful that it is in love that He operates as our perfect Plan-maker.

Two men whom the Lord laid in the grave to save them were brethren Fitch and Stockman, both of whom will definitely be in the kingdom by virtue of their being laid in the grave instead of being sustained to live longer lives as is verified by these words:

Early Writings, p. 17:

We all went under the tree and sat down to look at the glory of the place, when Brethren Fitch and Stockman, who had preached the gospel of the kingdom, *and whom God had laid in the grave to save them*, came up to us and asked us

what we had passed through while they were sleeping.

Another reason for God not always healing is to deliver His faithful servants from needless persecution, and so that their death may accomplish that which their lives have failed to do, as the following paragraph teaches:

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 418:

Satan is constantly working through his agents to dishearten and destroy those whom God has chosen to accomplish a great and good work. They may be ready to sacrifice even life itself for the advancement of the cause of Christ, yet the great deceiver will suggest to their brethren doubts concerning them which, if entertained, would undermine confidence in their integrity of character, and thus cripple their usefulness. Too often he succeeds in bringing upon them, through their own brethren, such sorrow of heart that God graciously interposes to give His persecuted servants rest. After the hands are folded upon the pulseless breast, when the voice of warning and encouragement is silent, then the obdurate may be aroused to see and prize the blessings they have cast from them. Their death may accomplish that which their life has failed to do.

Thus we are to understand that, while the Lord possesses all power in heaven and on earth so that He has the unlimited capacity to completely restore anyone from sickness and death, He is too wise and loving to do so indiscriminately.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 120-121:

Every saint who comes to God with a true heart, and sends his honest petitions to Him in faith, will have his prayers answered. Your faith must not let go of the promises of God, if you do not see or feel the immediate answer to your prayers. Be not afraid to trust God. Rely upon His sure promise: "Ask, and you shall receive." God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from His saints that walk uprightly.

Man is erring, and although his petitions are sent up from an honest heart, he does not always ask for the things that

are good for himself, or that will glorify God. When this is so, our wise and good Father hears our prayers, and will answer, sometimes immediately; but He gives us the things that are for our best good and His own glory.

God gives us blessings; if we could look into His plan, we would clearly see that He knows what is best for us and that our prayers are answered. Nothing hurtful is given, but the blessing we need, in the place of something we asked for that would not be good for us, but to our hurt.

It should be noted as we close this chapter that the subject of this book is not whether God can and will heal, but rather how we are to practice the healing art.

21. The Last Enemy

THE work of the reformation made possible by the establishment of the new life in the believer through the revival, continues on until the resurrection of those who are accounted righteous, and fit to be inhabitants of God's kingdom. It will be at this time and not before, that immortality will be conferred upon His people. This will follow their glorification.

God's life is immortal. Therefore it could be reasoned that, when a person receives an infusion of God's life and health into his body, he is receiving the immortalizing of his humanity. Think again of the leper whose decaying flesh was horrible to look upon, and who was the first leper to be healed since Elisha's day. When Christ spoke the healing power of God and laid His hands upon the man, a powerful stream of life flooded into the leper, who, in that instant was made well again.

That life was from God, was therefore immortal life, and could not die, or so it would seem. But there is an alternative conclusion which can be drawn, which is that the life of God enters into a sick human being as a creative force with the capacity to rebuild and restore without *exchanging mortality for immortality*, or mortal flesh and blood for immortal flesh and blood.

This principle is made clear in the distinction between the resurrection of Lazarus to continued mortal life, and the resurrection of the saints to immortal life.

The Desire of Ages, p. 786:

During His ministry, Jesus had raised the dead to life. He had raised the son of the widow of Nain, and the ruler's daughter and Lazarus. But these were not clothed with immortality. After they were raised, they were still subject to death. But those who came forth from the grave at Christ's

resurrection, were raised to everlasting life. They ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave. "These," said Christ, "are no longer the captives of Satan, I have redeemed them. I have brought them from the grave as the first-fruits of my power, to be with me where I am, never more to see death or experience sorrow."

So then, we are not to draw the attractive conclusion that, prior to the special, and soon thereafter general resurrections of the righteous, every act of healing is the conferring of immortality on the recipient. Christ could and did even go so far as to raise the dead without the one resurrected thereby becoming immortal.

In our efforts to understand this subject, we must be careful to maintain the distinction between immortal spiritual life which we gain at the new birth, and immortal physical life which we do not get until the resurrection. In between these two times we have reformation. During this time we receive physical life and health from God, but this is not immortal life, even though a fresh endowment of physical, mental, and spiritual power is provided for God's true children every day, as Jesus "gives them the breath of His own spirit, the life of His own life":

The Desire of Ages, p. 827:

All who consecrate soul, body, and spirit to God, will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical and mental power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind. The grace of God enlarges and multiplies their faculties, and every perfection of the divine nature comes to their assistance in the work of saving souls. Through cooperation with Christ they are complete in Him, and in their human weakness they are enabled to do the deeds of Omnipotence.

The first is creative power by which healing comes, but

which is not immortality, and heals and resurrects without conferring immortality, while the other, being the actual life of God, is eternal life. This distinction is kept clearly in mind in the following statement:

Signs of the Times, February 13, 1912:

“In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.” It is not physical life that is here specified, but eternal life, the life which is exclusively the property of God. The Word, who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual received. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Life-giver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life.

But the life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. “I lay it down of myself,” He said. In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. He cannot earn it; it is given him as a free gift if he will believe in Christ as his personal Saviour. “This is life eternal, that they might know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” *John* 17:3. This is the open fountain of life for the world.

Because this eternal, immortal life is in Christ, when He was a man on earth, He could have resisted the advances of death and never come under its dominion.

Bible Echo and Signs of the Times, September 15, 1892:

As a member of the human family, He was mortal; but as God, He was the fountain of life to the world. He could, in his divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but voluntarily He laid down his life, that He might give life, and bring immortality to light. He bore the sin of the world, and endured the penalty, that rolled like a mountain upon his divine soul. He yielded up his life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. He died, not through being compelled to die, but by his own free will. The whole treasure of heaven was poured out in one gift to save fallen man.

At the present time, for the wonderful reasons that are explained in the book, *The Seven Angels*, we cannot yet have the victory over death. The first-fruits have not been gathered, and, until they are, the glorious gospel harvest cannot be physically gathered from their dusty beds.

In the meantime, the gift of total spiritual victory over sin is ours if we claim it by faith. Likewise, complete victory over disease is also ours when grasped by faith, as is also complete victory over all our earthly foes. These are not the last enemy to be vanquished, however, for that position is reserved to death. *It will be the last enemy to be conquered.*

1 Corinthians 15

²⁵ For He must reign, till He has put all enemies under His feet.

²⁶ The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

What a glorious day that will be when all the saints of God shall know death no more. But, when shall this be?

- When will there be no more any death and its attendant loss, sorrow, suffering, darkness, and bereavement?
- When will be introduced to the bodies of the saints the vital and perfectly glorious energies such as only are available in the immortal experience?
- When will the bestowment of all this call forth rapturous praise from redeemed ones charged with deepest gratitude for their eternal deliverance?
- When will the health of the righteous be so abundant that they will experience total immunity from weariness and sickness of any kind?

With ears tuned to hear, we listen with longing for the answer, while our heart cry rings out:

“Let it be soon!”

Sadly, it cannot be today, for there is too much of the prophetic scroll yet to be unrolled; too many events scheduled to happen yet.

During the period leading up to the downpour of the latter rain, the weapon of the death decree is yet to be used against those who will refuse to support the image of the beast, and there will be many, who at the cost of their lives will bear witness to the truth.

Selected Messages, vol. 3, p. 397-398:

The two armies will stand distinct and separate, and this distinction will be so marked that many who shall be convinced of the truth will come on the side of God's command-keeping people. When this grand work is to take place in the battle, prior to the last closing conflict, many will be imprisoned, many will flee for their lives from cities and towns, and many will be martyrs for Christ's sake in standing in defense of the truth....You will not be tempted above what you are able to bear. Jesus bore all this and far more...

The last closing conflict is otherwise known as "The Time of Jacob's Trouble," the timing of which is after the close of probation. We know that once the door of mercy is forever closed, no lives will be lost from among the living righteous.

The Great Controversy, p. 634:

The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. Like the captive exile, they will be in fear of death by starvation or by violence. But the Holy One who divided the Red Sea before Israel, will manifest His mighty power and turn their captivity. "They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spares his own son that serves him." *Malachi* 3:17.

If the blood of Christ's faithful witnesses were shed at this time, it would not, like the blood of the martyrs, be as seed sown to yield a harvest for God. Their fidelity would not be a

testimony to convince others of the truth; for the obdurate heart has beaten back the waves of mercy until they return no more. If the righteous were now left to fall a prey to their enemies, it would be a triumph for the prince of darkness. Says the psalmist: "In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me." *Psalm 27:5*. Christ has spoken: "Come, my people, enter into your chambers, and shut your doors about you: hide yourself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. *Isaiah 26:20-21*. Glorious will be the deliverance of those who have patiently waited for His coming and whose names are written in the book of life.

The decree granting the multitudes of the earth freedom to slaughter those who will refuse to bow to the image of the beast, though written into law before probation closes, will be scheduled for execution after its close. This will mean that the wicked will correctly regard the instrument of death, not as a weapon destroyed, but as a valuable solution to acquiring the victory in this final conflict. Therefore, when we come to the time of Jacob's trouble, the last enemy, death, has not yet been destroyed.

Though long-delayed, its destruction will come. To that truly wonderful event,

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 320-321:

The apostle (Paul), carried the minds of the Corinthian brethren forward to the triumphs of the resurrection morn, when all the sleeping saints are to be raised, henceforth to live forever with their Lord. "Behold," the apostle declared, "I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put

on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?" *1 Corinthians* 15:51-56.

There is no doubt about when the last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. It will be when the Lord calls forth the sleeping saints to be forever with their Coming King. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." For death up to be swallowed up, can only mean that it does not exist anymore so far as those who have the victory over it are concerned. Well might the inspired writer exultantly cry out:

1 Corinthians 15

⁵⁶ O death, where is your sting? O grave where is your victory?

There is no longer any sting, nor is there any more the victory of the grave. At this time they are gone for eternity. This is when the last enemy, death, has been everlastingly vanquished, and God's people set free for evermore.

Let us now briefly survey the events leading up to and climaxing in that glorious moment when death itself is destroyed by God, who is our Doctor. We will begin with the outpouring of the latter rain by which the final warning shall be given to mankind as it teeters on the very edge of self-destruction.

But the perishing will utterly reject the warning and react by trying to silence the messengers of mercy. To achieve this they set up the image of the beast whose ultimate recourse is to execute the death decree against the saints of the Most High. Probation closes and then begins the seven last plagues.

During this terrible period, death continues to be apparently invincible, as millions of God's true people remain

locked in their tombs, and those still living seem about to join them.

Under the seventh plague is the mighty earthquake which opens the graves of two special classes of people, those who have died in the faith of the third angel's message:

The Great Controversy, p. 637:

Graves are opened, and "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth... awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." *Daniel* 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. "They also which pierced Him" *Revelation* 1:7, those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient.

We call this the "first" or special resurrection, and it takes place before Christ appears in the clouds of heaven. This great special coming forth from their tombs by those who died in the faith of the third angel is not greeted by them with a shout of victory over death, but by the shout of victory over the beast and his image. In other words, they are not even prepared as yet to give voice to the proclamation of victory over death. Instead, they announce that theirs is the victory over their terrible enemies—the beast and his image. They bore triumphal testimony to what they knew by experience—their personal victory over their deadly enemies, the beast and his image, but had nothing to say about the victory over mortality which they were yet to experience.

Note carefully that their failure at this point to acknowledge victory over death, is because they have not yet experienced it. This is the fact of the case even though they have been raised from their graves as living, human beings. Surely then, some will ask,

“Is not that victory over death?”

No! It is not! This, the “special” resurrection is the same as that experienced by Lazarus. Before he died, his was mortal flesh and blood which reigned in his body which was therefore subject unto death. So it was that he died. When Christ called him forth from the grave, He did not give him immortal flesh and blood, but put life into mortal flesh and blood once more.

If He had so blessed him with immortal flesh and blood as He obviously must have done in the cases of Moses, and of the multitude who were raised up to go to heaven with Christ after His resurrection, he would never have died again as we read that he did. It is clear then that, to have victory over death requires that we receive more than was given to Lazarus, Jairus’ daughter, and the son of the widow from the village called, Nain. We must have immortality in order to have victory over death.

This, those who shall be raised in the special resurrection will not have when they come forth from their graves. They will have total victory over sin, over disease, and over their terrible enemies, the beast and his image, but not yet over death, for it will not be until the general resurrection when Christ personally calls forth the sleeping saints, that they will be immortalized. This distinction is made clear in the following statement:

The Great Controversy, p. 645:

The living righteous are changed “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” *1 Corinthians* 15:52. At the voice of God they were glorified; now they are made immortal and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. Angels “gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” *Matthew* 24:31. Little children are borne by holy angels to their mother’s arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to

part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the City of God.

Victory over death completes the work of our Doctor whose medicine is the gospel, the living power of God bringing victory over sickness, sin, our enemies, and finally over death itself. Utter perfection will mark the results of Christ's six thousand year long ministry of healing. It will render this earth a paradise of wonders and delight such as no pen could portray.

The Great Controversy, p. 676:

Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of heaven. There will be no more tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying:...for the former things are passed away. The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." *Revelation 21:4; Isaiah 33:24.*

22. Psalm 91

THE human race is presently facing the greatest insoluble health crisis in the six thousand years of its troubled history.

In increasing numbers, new maladies are appearing which are not mere diseases, but must be classified as terrible, incurable scourges. In increasing numbers, men, women, and children are seen listlessly lying on hospital beds, their life forces more drained than they were the day before. They lie there, like the man at the pool of Bethesda, hoping for a miracle to deliver them from their nightmare, but, unlike the man at the pool, they wait in vain.

But, bad as conditions are, they are prophesied to become worse, as it is written:

The Great Controversy, p. 656-657:

“The Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” *Isaiah* 26:21.

“And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold everyone on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor.” *Zechariah* 14:12-13.

In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God’s unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth—priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low. “And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried.” *Jeremiah* 25:33.

This is the horrible description of the appalling conditions which will prevail at the actual second coming of Christ. The whole land will be strewn with unburied corpses, to whom those who are still living will pay no attention even if the fallen one was a person dearly loved. Those still able to stagger around will be either sick or very sick, with many of them suffering from their flesh being consumed upon them, while their eyes in their sockets and their tongues in their mouths, will be rotting away. Imagine if you can, the stench thrown off both by those dead on the ground, and those decaying while still able to walk around.

What fearful diseases these must be, described as they are as being “the awful outpouring of God’s *unmingled* wrath.” In other words, while today, the sufferings endured by the perishing are reduced somewhat by the holding back of the winds of strife and by the use of drug medication, sedatives, and pain-killers, when that fearful time comes, there will not be enough medication to go around, and many diseases will be beyond the reach of medical science.

Furthermore, the diseases themselves will have reached full maturity, and will be completely out of all control, including God’s control in particular. Men will have so totally cut themselves off from all access to their Maker who alone is their Doctor that He will be able to do absolutely nothing for the least or the greatest of them. It is utterly impossible for anyone to portray with pen or voice, the unmitigated agony and horror of that day of coming judgment.

David, when under deep conviction for his sin with Bathsheba, experienced a measure of what the unsaved will have to endure. He was fortunate in that he chose to exercise submissive faith in God, who was thereby able to heal him. Read *Psalms* 51 very carefully as a description of David’s agony and of God’s healing mercy.

Then let us turn our attention more specifically to the unlimited health problem confronting the lost during the final days of human history. It is then that they will need Him most, but, sad to say, they will then be the farthest from Him and His healing power.

Foreseeing the extreme need of that awesome time, God has uttered the most precious and powerful of promises to assure us of complete protection from the coming tribulations, together with total immunity from even the most contagious of diseases. Nowhere are these promises better presented than in the 91st *Psalm*. The entire *Psalm* should be thoroughly memorized so that it can be recalled at any moment of need. Here is the complete *Psalm*:

Psalm 91

¹ He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

² I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust.

³ Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.

⁴ He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

⁵ You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.

⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you.

⁸ Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked.

⁹ Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place,

¹⁰ No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;

¹¹ For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you

in all your ways.

¹² They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

¹³ You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

¹⁴ Because he has set his love upon me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known my name.

¹⁵ He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him.

¹⁶ With long life I will satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

This *Psalms* is loaded with powerful promises, not the least of which are the assurances that no plague will come near nor into our places of abode. Unlimited numbers of the victims of diseases of every kind will be falling all around those who have made God to be their Doctor, but they will not themselves suffer. Only with their eyes will they see the reward meted out to the ungodly. It will be a marvelous experience to be under such complete protection in the midst of multitudes with no protection at all.

Then we shall remember that Christ walked the earth totally immune to all danger of infection, when sickness and disease were at their contagious worst; a time second only to what is so soon to be when God's wrath unmingled with mercy will plague the entire world. By living faith in God being our Doctor and all that this means, we will understand why none of us who are true believers will become infected by the germs and viruses with which the air will be saturated.

No believer in Jesus will be stricken with sickness during the falling of the seven last plagues, because each will have made God to be his one and only Doctor. He will have made certain that he has received the fullness of God's life and health into himself, knowing that:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 115:

The life of God in the soul is man's only hope.

He will have put on the whole armor of God, there will be no cracks in his defenses which will give access to the enemy, and he will be certain to stand, never ever to fall again.

When Christ was on this earth, He understood what it costs to make a preparation for coming crises, how that hours must be spent in agonizing prayer, importuning the throne of grace and mercy, and how this praying must be continued until our entire beings become charged with a living current of life and power which connects divinity with humanity.

But while the Saviour prayed, His disciples slept, even though He warned them, counseled them, and appealed to them to devote time as He did to the most earnest supplication of the throne of the infinite God.

The more clearly I personally understand what is so soon to burst on the earth's peoples as a vast overwhelming surprise, the more I feel the deepest concern over the lack on our part of the most earnest possible preparation for what is coming. We have no real awareness of how weak we are on the one hand, nor how searching and severe the test will be on the other.

Oh! That we might be awakened to a true understanding of our great need, and of what it will cost, and how long it will take to satisfy that need. It must be obvious that only those who look to God alone as their Doctor during the seven last plagues will survive that awesome ordeal.

What is not so clear is the fact that we cannot come to that frightening hour unprepared, weak, and vulnerable, and expect to make up the deficiencies then. As foolish virgins we shall come begging for oil when the doors on heaven's storehouse will be forever closed.

The message that God is *Your Doctor*, is not confined to receiving healing from all our diseases and maintaining sound health day by day. That would be too limited a view to take.

Rather, in addition, it embraces the obtaining of that complete fitness to cope with the demands of the period of the latter rain, the seven last plagues, Jacob's trouble, and to have the capacity for enduring the brightness of our Saviour's glorious second advent.

23. A Problem Statement

THERE is a statement describing the role of God, the Doctor, during the loud cry period which, until rightly understood, causes problems in the minds of some students of the health message. It reads as follows:

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 16:

Satan is a diligent Bible student. He knows that his time is short, and he seeks at every point to counterwork the work of the Lord upon this earth. It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended. They will walk in the light proceeding from the throne of God. By means of the angels there will be constant communication between heaven and earth.

And Satan, surrounded by evil angels, and claiming to be God, will work miracles of all kinds, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. God's people will not find their safety in working miracles, for Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought. God's tried and tested people will find their power in the sign spoken of in *Exodus* 31:12-18. They are to take their stand on the living word: "It is written." This is the only foundation upon which they can stand securely. Those who have broken their covenant with God will in that day be without God and without hope.

A summary of this paragraph reads as follows:

"It will be during this time when the Holy Spirit shall be poured out in limitless measure, that Satan will counterfeit miracles of all kinds to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Therefore, during that time, God's people will not find their safety in working miracles."

In the last day events, Satan, according to the following paragraph, will anticipate the falling of the latter rain, and, before it comes, will introduce a counterfeit of it:

The Great Controversy, p. 464:

Notwithstanding the widespread declension of faith and piety, there are true followers of Christ in these churches. Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children.

At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming.

The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and *before the time for such a movement shall come*, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world.

So it will be that when the real loud cry begins, Satan will have seemingly preoccupied the field of miracle working with his counterfeit displays of healing power. Therefore, it has been concluded by some, that the people of God, deprived of this witness, will be obliged to resort to some other healing process in order to distinguish their ministry from that of Satan through the fallen churches.

This will mean, it is argued, that healings achieved by the infusion of God's life into the sick will be afforded little if any space in the end of time events. Such healings, it is believed by some, will be rarities rather than comprehensive revelations of God's position as our Doctor. Instead, that alternative,

it is thought, will be reliance on natural treatments whose day, they will believe, will have come at last.

It is time then to re-examine this statement in the light of the issues and developments of the rapidly approaching final events, so that we might correctly understand what is written here.

Firstly, there is no declaration in this statement or anywhere else in the sacred writings that, during the loud cry, there will be few if any healings achieved by the flowing of divine life into the sick and diseased. On the contrary, there are, even in this paragraph, undeniable statements to the effect that there will be wonderful healings during the loud cry period. For instance, it is written that:

“Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought.”

Now then, if there are no healings being performed during the falling of the latter rain, there will be none for Satan to counterfeit. Therefore, there would be neither true nor counterfeit miracles being produced at this time. But there will be counterfeits, so there must also be the genuine.

Nor is this the only reference stating the truth that during the loud cry there will be many sick people healed in a most remarkable display of divine power. Here is another:

Early Writings, p. 278:

Mighty miracles were wrought, the sick were healed, and signs and wonders followed the believers. God was in the work, and every saint, fearless of consequences, followed the convictions of his own conscience and united with those who were keeping all the commandments of God; and with power they sounded abroad the third message. I saw that this message will close with power and strength far exceeding the midnight cry.

A check on the context of this statement confirms that it is

part of a description of the sounding forth of the loud cry. It is at this time that mighty miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Here is yet another one bearing the same glad tidings:

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 126:

In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. *The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought....*Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God.

So then, what does the expression mean: "God's people will not find their safety in working miracles"? To find the answer to this question, we will turn to one or two of the great healings of Christ, the time when the greatest visible manifestation of divine power was exposed to human view. That was when Jesus walked among men performing wonders of deliverance from disease and resurrections of the dead. Thus He set His work apart from that of Satan the destroyer who was not then able to match this convincing performance with his own array of counterfeit healings. People found their safety in identifying themselves with the mighty Healer, for they recognized that such exploits were possible only by the power of the almighty God.

Outstanding among the wonderful healings which established Christ's authority as the One bearing the divine credentials was the calling back to life of Lazarus. The spectators looked on the scene in silent awe as Christ called forth the sleeping dead. The success or failure of His mission hung in

the balance that day. His only safety was in successfully performing the miracle. To have failed to do so would have discredited Him and destroyed the plan of salvation.

The Desire of Ages, p. 536:

“And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.” His voice, clear and penetrating, pierces the ear of the dead. As He speaks, divinity flashes through humanity. In His face, which is lighted up by the glory of God, the people see the assurance of His power. Every eye is fastened on the entrance to the cave. Every ear is bent to catch the slightest sound. With intense and painful interest all wait for *the test of Christ’s divinity, the evidence that is to substantiate His claim to be the Son of God, or to extinguish the hope forever.*

I must hasten to acknowledge that the ultimate witness to the validity of Christ’s ministry is not found in what He did by working spectacular miracles of physical healing. The credulous crowd could behold Him touch the revolting body of the decaying leper, and see the instant change take place, and still be members of the credulous crowd desperately but unknowingly needing the ministry of the Saviour. There are many today who think that, if only they could see Jesus personally and witness Him in action healing the sick and raising the dead, they would become dedicated, faithful believers.

But God is not providing such witnesses designed to convert men and women today. Instead, He reveals through His Word what transformations of character will bring true peace and living restorations of the sanctified life. That is the miracle which truly counts as it is written:

The Desire of Ages, p. 407:

When the message of truth is presented in our day, there are many who, like the Jews, cry, “Show us a sign. Work us a miracle.” Christ wrought no miracle at the demand of the Pharisees. He wrought no miracle in the wilderness in an-

swer to Satan's insinuations. He does not impart to us power to vindicate ourselves or to satisfy the demands of unbelief and pride.

But the gospel is not without a sign of its divine origin. Is it not a miracle that we can break from the bondage of Satan? Enmity against Satan is not natural to the human heart; it is implanted by the grace of God. When one who has been controlled by a stubborn, wayward will is set free, and yields himself wholeheartedly to the drawing of God's heavenly agencies, a miracle is wrought; so also when a man who has been under strong delusion comes to understand moral truth.

Every time a soul is converted, and learns to love God and keep His commandments, the promise of God is fulfilled, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." *Ezekiel 36:26*. The change in human hearts, the transformation of human characters, is a miracle that reveals an ever-living Saviour, working to rescue souls. A consistent life in Christ is a great miracle.

In the preaching of the word of God, the sign that should be manifest now and always is the presence of the Holy Spirit, to make the word a regenerating power to those that hear. This is God's witness before the world to the divine mission of His Son.

So, it will be that, in the last conflict, the performance of wonderful miracles will not be the proof needed to indicate where we shall in safety stand even though very many mighty miracles will be performed even as they were subsequent to the outpouring of the former rain. These would provide a safe haven if they were the only place where miracles were being wrought. But, every miracle wrought by God's true people will be matched by counterfeits so closely resembling the true that it will be almost impossible to distinguish between them.

The Great Controversy, p. 593:

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not accord-

ing to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” *Isaiah* 8:20. The people of God are directed to the Scriptures as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness. Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions.

At every revival of God’s work the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.

It should now be clear that in the last great conflict, “*God’s people will not find their safety in working miracles,*” as they would do if Satan were unable to produce what will seem to be perfect reproductions of the same healings as those performed by God through His true people.

24. More On the One Way Heaven Approves

WHEN the Lord declares that there is only one way by which He practices the healing art, it is because there is only one way by which it can be successfully accomplished.

Simply stated, it is that all things were brought into existence in the first case through the creative process. And why was it done by this process? It was because there was no other way available. Therefore, all things can only be restored by the creative process in the second case. This means that we do not have any real choice as to what course we shall follow in our determination to exercise the true healing art. Either we work according to the creative process or we work outside of it.

This does not mean that human beings actually become creators. That is a role only God is equipped to fill. He is not the helper, but the One who does all things according to His just and righteous will. Created beings are the helpers. For that we were specifically created. We of course, are incapable of being anything more than that, for we cannot even explain the work of creation or of redemption, as Jesus said to Nicodemus:

John 3

⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 414-415:

The work of creation cannot be explained by science. What science can explain the mystery of life?

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen are not made of things which do appear.” *Hebrews 11:3*.

In the creation of the earth, God was not indebted to pre-existing matter. “He spoke, and it was;...He commanded, and it stood fast.” *Psalm 33:9*. All things, material or spiritual,

stood up before the Lord Jehovah at His voice and were created for His own purpose. The heavens and all the host of them, the earth and all things therein, came into existence by the breath of His mouth.

The next several paragraphs in *The Ministry of Healing* detail the two phases in the creation of man. First, there was the forming of his body in all its wonderful construction, but which left him lacking the infusion of life needed to make him fully functional. So, the next phase was to endow him with the spirit of life which, when infused into him, made him to be a living being. Here is a clear revelation of that wonderful event:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 415:

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were set in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the faculties of the mind, all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Christ the Word, a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power.

So incredible are God's capacities that the next short paragraph can be written of Him, but not of anyone else:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 415:

Our substance was not hid from Him when we were made in secret; His eyes saw our substance, yet being imperfect, and in His book all our members were written when as yet there were none of them.

It was at conception that we were made in secret, for no one knows the exact moment at which conception takes place, yet the Lord saw it all and, before we even existed, He

had recorded all our details in His book. See *Psalm* 139. An excellent example of this is provided in the prediction of Jeremiah's ministry, every detail of which was laid open before God and recorded in His book of records before he was even conceived.

Jeremiah 1

⁴ Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying:

⁵ Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.

With such infinite capacities at His command, God could very easily have set the entire world on to automatic navigation through space, and thereafter have flown blithely and impersonally into the future forever. That was an option open to Him but which, for good reason, He would not accept. With God, only that which is the very best will He accept for His children. Therefore, a particular point is made of the fact that this earth with all its operations of material and spiritual laws, is not run by a mechanism which when once set in motion, thereafter controls every function of life. Here are the statements verifying this:

The Ministry of Healing, p. 416:

God is constantly employed in upholding and using as His servants the things that He has made. He works through the laws of nature, using them as His instruments in the work both of creating and of healing. They are not self-acting. Nature in her work testifies of the intelligent presence and active agency of a Being who moves in all things according to His will.

"Forever, O Lord, your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness is unto all generations: You have established the earth, and it abides. They continue this day according to Your ordinances: For all are Your servants." "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He In heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places." "He commanded, and they were

created. He has also established them for ever and ever: He has made a decree which shall not pass.” *Psalms* 119:89-91; 135:6; 148:5-6.

At this point it is necessary to emphasize that God remains in complete control of the universe at all times, and the only way of healing art which recognizes this absolute sovereignty is the only one which heaven approves. Any theories which declare that the operations of nature are controlled by a programmed mechanism, are thereby transferring the authority from God to a mechanism; from the Master, God, to the servant, man. This could never be, either in seeking the restoration of health or any other blessing God has promised.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 417:

It is not by inherent power that year by year the earth yields its bounties and continues its march around the sun. The hand of the Infinite One is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God’s power continually exercised that keeps the earth in position in its rotation. It is God who causes the sun to rise in the heavens. He opens the windows of heaven and gives rain. “When He utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, And He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightnings with rain, And brings forth the wind out of His treasures.” Psalm 147:16; Jeremiah 10:13. “He gives snow like wool: He scatters the hoarfrost like ashes.” It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears, every flower blooms, every fruit develops.

The mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not as the result of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. The beating heart, the throbbing pulse, every nerve and muscle in the living organism, is kept in order and activity by the power of an ever-present God.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 417:

The Bible shows us God in His high and holy place, not in a state of inactivity, not in silence and solitude, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy beings, all waiting to do His will. Through these messengers He is in active communication with every part of His dominion. By His Spirit He is everywhere present. Through the agency of His Spirit and His angels He ministers to the children of men.

Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best.

What Shall We Say Then?

These paragraphs from *The Ministry of Healing*, are a marvelous revelation of how God Himself practices the healing art, and how we are to be co-workers with Him in that work. In the first instance, we are to recognize that it is a stream of life under God's absolute personal control which flows from Him into every animate creature, and not a mechanism which, once set in motion, causes the pulse to beat, and breath to follow breath. There is not a single function in the life of any living thing which could continue its existence and fulfill its divinely appointed role in the grand scheme of things, without this constant inflow of life from Him in whom we live, and move, and have our being.

This thought is repeatedly emphasized in these several pages from *The Ministry of Healing*. The thought comes through again and again that every function of human, animal, and plant life, is sustained by a personal God who works through the laws of nature, using them as His instruments.

This happens, remember, not by the performance of a mechanism, which once set in motion, continues by its own inherent energy to keep all life's operations in continual life sustaining activities.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 416:

It is not by inherent power that year by year the earth yields its bounties and continues its march around the sun. The hand of the Infinite One is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God's power continually exercised that keeps the earth in position in its rotation. It is God who causes the sun to rise in the heavens. He opens the windows of heaven and gives rain.

If these challenging truths were brought to the attention of the Christian farmer or gardener, that on his land, "it is by "God's" power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears, every flower blooms, every fruit develops;" if then, the Christian gardener or farmer would become very much aware of these principles, would see that all agencies including man, were created to be God's intelligent servants, that they are not self-acting, and would act accordingly from faith to ever increasing faith, what wonderfully, productive lands would he have.

If he were to keep the channels of his soul ever open heavenwards, he would find himself advancing from strength to greater strength. His soul would be a living fortress of righteousness, and an effective bulwark against evil, and furthermore, our lands would become more fertile, and our bodies more free from disease.

On the other hand, if God were to completely withdraw His perpetual management of life forces from plant, animal, and human life, the termination of all life would soon eventuate. We are totally dependent on these resources for even our continued existence.

It is obvious from our study of God's character of love, that He will not force these services on anyone, and that He is not obliged to supply these life-supporting forces to those who are so blinded by sin that they are prepared to repudiate life and choose death. This is so because they have been per-

suaded by the great deceiver, that he has a better way to eternal life than God offers.

So as to clarify God's reason for approving of but one way of practicing the healing art, I will now direct your attention to a comparison between what has been quoted above from *The Ministry of Healing*, and the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. What we have to see and understand was that God's role through Christ was identical in both situations. He was the Creator on His Father's behalf.

Firstly, I will repeat the main points.

God has not implanted into every seed a growth mechanism which will cause the plant to grow to maturity independent of God Himself. Nature is neither self-sustaining nor self-acting. God is correctly pictured as He who is in complete control of all that He has created, and does everything according to His perfect will. That will is spelled out in His holy law which is the expression of His character of righteousness, justice, and truth. There have been more than one special revelation of God's role of supreme Ruler of the universe. One of them is found in the feeding of the five thousand:

The Desire of Ages, p. 367-368:

In feeding the five thousand, Jesus lifts the veil from the world of nature, and reveals the power that is constantly exercised for our good. In the production of earth's harvests God is working a miracle every day. Through natural agencies the same work is accomplished that was wrought in the feeding of the multitude.

Men prepare the soil and sow the seed, but it is the life from God that causes the seed to germinate. It is God's rain and air and sunshine that cause it to put forth, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." *Mark* 4:28. It is God who is every day feeding millions from earth's harvest fields.

Men are called upon to co-operate with God in the care of

the grain and the preparation of the loaf, and because of this they lose sight of the divine agency. They do not give God the glory due unto His holy name. The working of His power is ascribed to natural causes or to human instrumentality. Man is glorified in place of God, and His gracious gifts are perverted to selfish uses, and made a curse instead of a blessing.

God is seeking to change all this. He desires that our dull senses shall be quickened to discern His merciful kindness and to glorify Him for the working of His power. He desires us to recognize Him in His gifts, that they may be, as He intended, a blessing to us. It was to accomplish this purpose that the miracles of Christ were performed.

The miracle of instantly supplying the five thousand with enough to satisfy their hunger from five little barley loaves and two small fish was a miracle but no more or less than the feeding of millions every day from earth's harvest fields. Let us compare the two events.

Both processes produced the same end result by the same means. The end result in those two cases was ready-to-eat nourishing food in the hands of the people. In the hands of Christ, the loaves and fish multiplied at a great rate, but only within the process of the laws of growth which were under the command of the Creator. That process was greatly accelerated, however, for what normally required quite a duration of time to achieve, was here accomplished as quickly as it was spoken,

Psalm 33

⁹ For He spoke and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast.

But the fact that the feeding of millions every day takes much longer to accomplish is only according to the choice and the wisdom of God. He can just as easily feed millions in a single day as He can feed five thousand in the same period

of time. Therefore, it is not the length of time which determines whether or not the procedure is a work of creation or not.

In other words, we do not say that the feeding of the five thousand was a miracle of creative power because it was accomplished by being instantly performed, or that the feeding of millions every day was not a work of creation because it involved a much longer period of time. The fact remains that God can and does work at any speed He chooses. Before Him is nothing. Behind Him is plenty of everything.

For instance, it would seem that the fastest speed of His of which we know is the six-day creation of this earth. The next speed level of which we have knowledge, is the healing of injuries such as lacerations, bruises, fractures, and such like. Except when God decides the existing situation calls for an instant solution, the rate of healing will require but a few days, but it is still a work of creation.

The Ministry of Healing, p. 112-113:

The Saviour in His miracles revealed the power that is continually at work in man's behalf, to sustain and to heal him. Through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. When any part of the body sustains injury, a healing process is at once begun; nature's agencies are set at work to restore soundness. But the power working through these agencies is the power of God. All life-giving power is from Him. When one recovers from disease, it is God who restores him.

Finally, there is the longest period of all three being referred to here, which begins with the forces of nature emerging into the light after which a rough average of a year is needed to begin feeding those hungry millions. Now, I can better understand A. T. Jones when he proclaimed that God

works only by creation.¹¹

If, on the other hand, the functions of nature and our bodies are controlled by a mechanism which can be set and left to run, there would be no flexibility, no variety, no change, and no effective, successful plan of salvation. This is not saying too much. For the plan of redemption to be successful, it must be adapted to meet the needs of different people in different situations such as, for instance, the feeding of the multitude.

The Call by the Sea

The call by the sea when the miraculous draught of fish was taken in bright daylight when it was normally impossible to catch fish, is a second witness to the truth that God through Christ...

The Desire of Ages, p. 246:

...held all nature under His control.

This is what Peter saw, and therefore, he must also have seen it as being a remarkable revelation of that inspiring truth that nature is not self-acting, and that the operations of nature are under God's control, and that they were all created to be His servants.

It was when this miracle was opened to his mind, that a great sense of personal, spiritual uncleanness overwhelmed Peter which caused him to fall awestruck at the Saviour's feet. The power and intensity of that revelation to Peter's mind was so great that he exclaimed,

Luke 5

⁸ Depart from me; for I am a sinful man;

The Desire of Ages, p. 246:

...yet he clung to the feet of Jesus, feeling that he could not be parted from Him.

¹¹ See the booklet, Why Genesis, by A. T. Jones.

Peter and the other disciples had witnessed many miracles during their association together, but Peter classed this one as the one which superseded all those he had witnessed so far, as it is written:

But Peter was unmindful now of boats or lading. This miracle, above any other he had ever witnessed, was to him a manifestation of divine power. In Jesus he saw One who held all nature under His control. The presence of divinity revealed his own unholiness. Love for his Master, shame for his own unbelief, gratitude for the condescension of Christ, above all, the sense of his uncleanness in the presence of infinite purity, overwhelmed him. While his companions were securing the contents of the net, Peter fell at the Saviour's feet, exclaiming, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

It was a highly significant moment in the history of the church which Christ had come to establish.

The Desire of Ages, p. 246-249:

Until this time none of the disciples had fully united as co-laborers with Jesus. They had witnessed many of His miracles, and had listened to His teaching; but they had not entirely forsaken their former employment. The imprisonment of John the Baptist had been to them all a bitter disappointment. If such were to be the outcome of John's mission, they could have little hope for their Master, with all the religious leaders combined against Him. Under the circumstances it was a relief to them to return for a short time to their fishing.

But now Jesus called them to forsake their former life, and unite their interests with His. Peter had accepted the call. Upon reaching the shore, Jesus bade the three other disciples, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left all, and followed Him.

To achieve the enlistment of these men into full-time service was Christ's objective that morning though His audience

was unaware of this. He began the work by preaching the gospel in great power to the large group of listeners who had gathered to hear His words of life, though His special purpose was undiscerned by those sitting before Him. After presenting the truth verbally, He acted it out by working His way through an object lesson of the truth He had just been teaching.

In this object lesson, we are guided in our understanding of what each of the symbols mean by reference to other such lessons. In particular, in this case, the parable of the fishing net supplies the information needed to understand this precious light. It is found in *Matthew* 13:47-50 and in *Christ's Object Lessons* 122-123. From these references we learn that the casting of the net is the preaching of the gospel and the boat into which those are gathered who accept the gospel, is the church.

At the time when Christ made the call by the sea, the prospects for a goodly harvest of souls were very unlikely indeed. All night Peter had pondered the situation facing the establishment of the truth of God and had found it to be discouraging beyond words.

The Desire of Ages, p. 245:

The discourse ended, Jesus turned to Peter, and bade him launch out into the sea, and let down his net for a draught. But Peter was disheartened. All night he had taken nothing. During the lonely hours he had thought of the fate of John the Baptist, who was languishing alone in his dungeon. He had thought of the prospect before Jesus and His followers, of the ill success of the mission to Judea, and the malice of the priests and rabbis. Even his own occupation had failed him; and as he watched by the empty nets, the future had seemed dark with discouragement. "Master," he said, "we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."

It was by faith in the prophetic word that Christ directed Peter to let down the net, and it was by faith in Christ that Peter obeyed. The results were overwhelming. So many fish were enclosed in the net that it began to break and the boat to sink. Thus, through the mission of the gospel, the church would become so filled with believers that it will be classified as an unqualified success.

But the witness of history testifies that the larger the membership, the more difficult it becomes to maintain its power and purity, and therefore, the greater the danger of apostasy. But, never once has the ship ever sunk completely in the past, nor will it in the future when the tested, proven, and shaken church, though appearing as if about to fall, does not fall, but, instead, emerges triumphant without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

We tend to think that there is no possibility of God losing the battle against the devil and his armies, but he will come terrifyingly close to it. So it was that the boat on to which Peter's catch was being loaded came close to sinking. The possibility for the church of God failing in the last days is made very real in the following statement:

The Great Controversy, p. 618:

As Satan influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God's people in the time of trouble. And as he accused Jacob, he will urge his accusations against the people of God. He numbers the world as his subjects; but the little company who keep the commandments of God are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete.

As certainly as there is a possibility of Satan's triumph being complete, so surely the possibility for God's losing the great controversy must also exist. We have the positive assurance that He will vanquish all of His enemies, in spite of the repeated defeats caused by those who have chosen to follow

where He leads the way.

Selected Messages, vol. 2, p. 380:

Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as supreme. The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths. We must be divested of our self-righteousness and arrayed in the righteousness of Christ.

On that eventful day when Christ called those disciples to full-time ministry, they were in need of healing—not physical, but spiritual. That required Christ to practice on those men, the one way which heaven approves for healing physical, mental, and spiritual disorders. And so we find that He opened to their minds and to Peter in particular, the living truth that He and His Father held all nature under their control, that none of the powers in the universe operated by their own inherent potential, that God had created all of His creatures to be coworkers with Him in servicing all His dominions everywhere, and that, it was by His infusion of His life-force into each one of them, that they could even exist, let alone function as effective ministries.

When by the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the heavenly angels, Peter was granted an insight into these marvelous mysteries, He was so awestruck with wonder and amazement that he fell down before His Saviour, and by faith obeyed the command to follow Christ as the living exponent of the word of the living God. As he saw his own need fully supplied, he knew that the needs of every man, whether it be material, physical, mental, spiritual, or any other need, will be fully met.

Does any one then need healing from any kind of sickness, the all-mighty Saviour has the power and the authority to direct the application of the healing virtue directly to the suffering one. This is accomplished in the divine order without being channeled through a mechanism programmed to automatically supply the required treatment, no matter how efficient the program might be.

By Faith

Faith in the divinely designed system becomes critically important, for without it, there is no hope of grasping the deliverance from sickness or sin.

Hebrews 11

⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Those words must not be taken lightly, for they constitute a solemn warning which cannot be lightly ignored.

Romans 1

¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

To demonstrate the power in this truth, after Christ had successfully healed one person, it is written that:

Matthew 9

²² But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well. And the woman was made well from that hour.

Again it is written,

²⁹ Then He touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith let it be to you.

This announces a vital relationship between the level and the intensity of our faith and the results which will be ob-

tained. Large faith brings great results; little faith brings meager rewards. The question then is how does one gain on his very first contact with the Saviour, sufficient strength of faith to totally cure from blindness as in the cases of the two men to whom Christ spoke these words.

Let us consider the case of the man who lay helpless by the pool of Bethesda for thirty-eight years. During all of that time, his mind was focused on being healed by being the one who was able to be the first to fling himself into the agitated pool. Actually, he was fortunate to have been unsuccessful, for you can imagine how he would surely have drowned under a stack of people each of whom was possessed with one thought—to be the first into the water. That meant first to the bottom of the pool, which was no problem provided you were strong and well. He was neither fit nor well.

When Jesus approached him, He did not set to work carefully and thoroughly instructing the man in the details of the one way of practicing the healing art which has heaven's approval. This does not mean that the impotent man was already well versed on these principles, and therefore did not need to be taught them. On the contrary, he had a background of thirty-eight years of complete ignorance of God's way of healing as is proven by his being confined to a sad state of complete impotence during that period.

The Desire of Ages, p. 202-203:

Jesus does not ask this sufferer to exercise faith in Him. He simply says, "Rise, take up your bed, and walk." But the man's faith takes hold upon that word. Every nerve and muscle thrills with new life, and healthful action comes to his crippled limbs. Without question he sets his will to obey the command of Christ, and all his muscles respond to his will. Springing to his feet, he finds himself an active man.

By whose faith did this man take hold upon the word of Christ? It was by the faith of the man himself. What an in-

credible transformation! Up until a very precise moment of time, the man's life was dark with unbelief. There is no record of a gradual awareness of faith breaking through the shadows as in the case of the paralytic who was let down through the roof to Jesus feet. Instead, there was the instant penetration of the darkness with the light. The word of God was spoken, the man believed, in response he set his will to obey, God chose to send a flood of healing virtue into him, and he was instantly made whole.

But, again we ask, How was it that this man became an instant believer? The answer is that the change came in the same way in which it always does—by the word of the living God, though it is usually by a much slower process of time.

Romans 10

¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

But there was no preaching of the Scriptures beside the pool of Bethesda, that Sabbath morning long ago, either by Christ or anyone else. Just as certainly, the inspiration for his faith did not come from within the man himself either, for that is an impossibility. No proof-texts were quoted, no promises were claimed, and no examples appealed to. His faith was real enough, but it appeared to have no source, and no scriptural basis. It seemed to have suddenly appeared from nowhere.

But to be of the right order and be the only one by which sin and sickness can be successfully eliminated, it must find its source in the Word of God. The sudden faith which the man at the pool exercised did, in fact, possess the faith which was of the right order. This he had because it came from Christ. What is more, it came from Christ directly with no links in between. In the presence of the Deliverer, that man was conscious of an atmosphere of incredible power so that

when Jesus commanded him to take up his bed and walk, he absolutely knew that this was the Word of God to him personally, which he had to obey and did.

It was the powerful influence of creative might which surrounded Jesus at all times which enabled Him to generate living faith in the needy ones who came to Him for healing. When a person came to the Saviour for salvation from sickness, he came in many cases because the faith of his friends had inspired him with hope that he might experience relief from his maladies. Once in the Saviour's presence, the mighty atmosphere of power in which he found himself took him beyond hope into living, active faith, and there the miracle took place.

Miracles of physical and spiritual healings will continually take place when once again the atmosphere surrounding each believer in Jesus becomes as charged with living power as it was in Jesus when He was upon this earth. Once again, the sinful and those burdened with disease will come to the medical missionary *hoping* that in him he will find deliverance. Once again, he will find himself in an atmosphere so charged with healing power that faith will be generated to the point where his sins will be washed away, disease will be excluded, and a new day of righteousness and perfect health will begin.

As Christ progressively took the subjects of His ministry from hoping, to believing, to actual receiving, so must we do likewise in our work for the perishing. This is our sacred responsibility as laid out before us in the following paragraphs. They should be considered very carefully, understood most thoroughly, and applied with the greatest diligence.

The Desire of Ages, p. 824-825:

And we should teach others how to preserve and to recover health. For the sick we should use the remedies which God has provided in nature, and we should point them to

Him who alone can restore. It is our work to present the sick and suffering to Christ in the arms of our faith. We should teach them to believe in the Great Healer. We should lay hold on His promise, and pray for the manifestation of His power. The very essence of the gospel is restoration, and the Saviour would have us bid the sick, the hopeless, and the afflicted take hold upon His strength.

The power of love was in all Christ's healing, and only by partaking of that love, through faith, can we be instruments for His work. If we neglect to link ourselves in divine connection with Christ, the current of life-giving energy cannot flow in rich streams from us to the people. There were places where the Saviour Himself could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief. So now unbelief separates the church from her divine Helper. Her hold upon eternal realities is weak. By her lack of faith, God is disappointed, and robbed of His glory.

It is in doing Christ's work that the church has the promise of His presence. Go teach all nations, He said; "and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." To take His yoke is one of the first conditions of receiving His power. The very life of the church depends upon her faithfulness in fulfilling the Lord's commission. To neglect this work is surely to invite spiritual feebleness and decay. Where there is no active labor for others, love wanes, and faith grows dim.

25. A Survey of Healings

In the Ministry of Ellen & James White from 1844 to 1877

I HAVE stressed the point that, during the ministry of the fourth angel's movement, the message of deliverance from bondage to the sin master is of no value unless it actually does take away our sinfulness, and fills our lives with righteousness, instead.

The same principle is valid in the matter of deliverance from disease. In other words, if the message does not work, provided that all the conditions have been fulfilled, discard it. On the other hand, if it does work, then we have before us a very definite confirmation that we have the truth. Let me stress however, that we do not prove the messages by the miracles, but we are provided with confirmations of the truth of the messages by the miracles.

The principle involved is stated very clearly in the following words describing the events yet to transpire when the coming hour of latter rain power floods the earth with unlimited power and light. Of that time it is written:

Early Writings, p. 278:

Mighty miracles were wrought, the sick were healed, and signs and wonders *followed*, [that is, did not precede] the believers.

The sequence mentioned here is the truth. The signs and wonders *followed* the believers. This means that firstly the individuals concerned have become believers, not because they had seen the manifestation of the miracle, but because they had seen and accepted the truth in the message. Then, having become endued with power from on high, they went forth preaching the truth in the message. As they did so, conversions and healings followed among those who had already received the truth.

Thus it was that firstly Ellen White learned and accepted the truth of the Advent message before she experienced miracles of healing, but once having accepted it and thus becoming a believer filled with the power of it, miracles soon followed and continued throughout her lifetime.

The following reports of many of those deliverances from death in her own life and in the lives of those under her ministry are compiled in the following pages. Every one of these is from *Life Sketches of Ellen G White*. They are presented here in the same chronological order in which they are recorded in *Life Sketches of Ellen G White*, though the date for each incident is not always recorded.

The Healing of Sister Howland

Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, p. 74-75:

In the spring of 1845 I made a visit to Topsham, Maine. On one occasion quite a number of us were assembled at the house of Brother Stockbridge Howland. His eldest daughter, Miss Frances Howland, a very dear friend of mine, was sick with rheumatic fever, and under the doctor's care. Her hands were so badly swollen that the joints could not be distinguished. As we sat together speaking of her case, Brother Howland was asked if he had faith that his daughter could be healed in answer to prayer. He answered that he would try to believe that she might, and presently declared that he did believe it possible.

We all knelt in earnest prayer to God in her behalf. We claimed the promise, "Ask, and you shall receive," John 16:24. The blessing of God attended our prayers, and we had the assurance that God was willing to heal the afflicted one. One of the brethren present cried out, "Is there a sister here who has the faith to go and take her by the hand, and bid her arise in the name of the Lord?"

Sister Frances was lying in the chamber above, and before he ceased speaking Sister Curtis was on her way to the stairs. She entered the sickroom with the Spirit of God upon

her, and taking the invalid by the hand, said, "Sister Frances, in the name of the Lord arise, and be whole." New life shot through the veins of the sick girl, a holy faith took possession of her, and obeying its impulse, she rose from her bed, stood upon her feet, and walked the room, praising God for her recovery. She was soon dressed, and came down into the room where we were assembled, her countenance lighted up with unspeakable joy and gratitude."

The next morning she took breakfast with us. Soon after, as Elder White was reading from the fifth chapter of *James* for family worship, the doctor came into the hall, and, as usual, went upstairs to visit his patient. Not finding her there, he hurried down, and with a look of alarm opened the door of the large kitchen where we were all sitting, his patient with us. He gazed upon her with astonishment, and at length ejaculated, "So Frances is better!"

Brother Howland answered, "The Lord has healed her," and the reader resumed his chapter where he had been interrupted: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him." James 5:14. The doctor listened with a curious expression of mingled wonder and incredulity upon his face, nodded, and hastily left the room.

The same day Sister Frances rode three miles, returning home in the evening, and although it was rainy, she sustained no injury, and continued to improve rapidly in health. In a few days, at her request, she was led down into the water and baptized. Although the weather and the water were very cold, she received no injury, but from that time was free from the disease, and in the enjoyment of her usual health.

The Healing of Brother Hyde

Life Sketches, p. 75-76:

At this time Brother Wm. H. Hyde was very sick with dysentery. His symptoms were alarming, and the physician pronounced his case almost hopeless. We visited him and prayed with him, but he had come under the influence of certain fanatical persons, who were bringing dishonor upon

our cause. We wished to remove him from among them, and petitioned the Lord to give him strength to leave that place. He was strengthened and blessed in answer to our prayers, and rode four miles to the house of Brother Patten, but after arriving there he seemed to be rapidly sinking.

The fanaticism and errors into which he had fallen through an evil influence seemed to hinder the exercise of his faith, but he gratefully received the plain testimony borne him, made humble confession of his fault, and took his position firmly for the truth.

Only a few who were strong in faith were permitted to enter the sickroom. The fanatics whose influence over him had been so injurious, and who had persistently followed him to Brother Patten's, were positively forbidden to come into his presence, while we prayed fervently for his restoration to health. I have seldom known such a reaching out to claim the promises of God. The salvation of the Holy Spirit was revealed, and power from on high rested upon our sick brother and upon all present.

Brother Hyde immediately dressed and walked out of the room, praising God, and with the light of heaven shining upon his countenance. A farmer's dinner was ready upon the table. Said he, "If I were well, I should partake of this food; and as I believe God has healed me, I shall carry out my faith." He sat down to dinner with the rest, and ate heartily without injury. His recovery was complete and permanent.

Ellen White Personally Healed

Sometime later after making a number of visits to various places, she returned to Gorham, Maine, where she became very, very ill. Of that experience she wrote as follows:

Life Sketches, p. 98-99:

On our return, I was taken very sick, and suffered extremely. My parents, husband, and sisters united in prayer for me, but I suffered on for three weeks. I often fainted like one dead, but in answer to prayer revived again. My agony was so great that I pleaded with those around me not to

pray for me; for I thought their prayers were protracting my sufferings. Our neighbors gave me up to die. For a time it pleased the Lord to try our faith.

Brother and Sister Nichols, of Dorchester, Mass., had heard of my affliction, and their son Henry came to Gorham, bringing things for my comfort. During his visit, my friends again united in prayer for my recovery. After others had prayed, Brother Henry Nichols began to pray most fervently; and with the power of God resting upon him, he arose from his knees, came across the room, and laid his hands upon my head, saying, "Sister Ellen, Jesus Christ makes you whole," and fell back, prostrated by the power of God. I believed that the work was of God, and the pain left me. My soul was filled with gratitude and peace. The language of my heart was: "There is no help for us but in God. We can be in peace only as we rest in Him and wait for His salvation."

This is a shining example of the effectiveness of importunate prayer. We must learn the value of clinging to the promises until heaven hears.

Prophets and Kings, p. 157:

Faith such as this is needed in the world today—faith that will lay hold on the promises of God's word and refuse to let go until Heaven hears. Faith such as this connects us closely with Heaven, and brings us strength for coping with the powers of darkness. Through faith God's children have "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." *Hebrews* 11:33-34. And through faith we today are to reach the heights of God's purpose for us. "If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes." *Mark* 9:23.

Their Son, Henry, Stricken and Delivered

The time came when their son, Henry was stricken by a very serious life-threatening illness which refused to respond

to unspecified remedies, and whose recovery was pronounced doubtful by a person experienced in treating sicknesses of various kinds. Even prayer brought no relief from their agony. Here is their recital of the event.

Life Sketches, p. 106-107:

Little Henry was soon taken very sick, and grew worse so fast that we were much alarmed. He lay in a stupid state; his breathing was quick and heavy. We gave remedies with no success. We then called in a person of experience in sickness, who said that his recovery was doubtful. We had prayed for him, but there was no change.

We had made the child an excuse for not traveling and laboring for the good of others, and we feared the Lord was about to remove him. Once more we went before the Lord, praying that He would have compassion upon us, and spare the life of the child, and solemnly pledging ourselves to go forth trusting in God, wherever He might send us.

Our petitions were fervent and agonizing. By faith we claimed the promises of God, and we believed that He listened to our cries. Light from heaven was breaking through the clouds and shining upon us. Our prayers were graciously answered. From that hour the child began to recover.

Healing of Gilbert Collins

Life Sketches, p. 121:

One morning in February, 1849, during family prayers at Brother Howland's, I was shown that it was our duty to go to Dartmouth, Mass. Soon after, my husband went to the post office, and brought a letter from Brother Philip Collins, urging us to come to Dartmouth, for their son was very sick. We went immediately, and found that the boy, who was thirteen years old, had been sick for nine weeks with the whooping cough, and was wasted almost to a skeleton. The parents thought him to be in consumption, and they were greatly distressed to think that their only son must be taken from them.

We united in prayer for the boy, and earnestly besought

the Lord to spare his life. We believed that he would get well, though to all appearances there was no possibility of his recovery. My husband raised him in his arms, exclaiming as he walked the room, "You will not die, but live!" We believed that God would be glorified in his recovery.

We left Dartmouth, and were absent about eight days. When we returned, little Gilbert came out to meet us. He had gained four pounds in weight. We found the household rejoicing in God over this manifestation of divine favor.

Healing of Sister Temple

Life Sketches, p. 121-122:

Having received a request to visit Sister Hastings, of New Ipswich, N. H., who was greatly afflicted, we made the matter a subject of prayer, and obtained evidence that the Lord would go with us. On our way we stopped at Dorchester, with Brother Otis Nichols's family, and they told us of the affliction of Sister Temple of Boston. On her arm she had a sore, which caused her much anxiety. It had extended over the bend of the elbow. She had suffered great agony, and had in vain resorted to human means for relief. The last effort had driven the disease to her lungs, and she felt that unless she obtained immediate help, the disease would end in consumption.

Sister Temple had left word for us to come and pray for her. We went with trembling, having sought in vain for the assurance that God would work in her behalf. We went into the sickroom, relying upon the naked promises of God. Sister Temple's arm was in such a condition that we could not touch it, and were obliged to pour the oil upon it. Then we united in prayer, and claimed the promises of God. The pain and soreness left the arm while we were praying, and we left Sister Temple rejoicing in the Lord. On our return, eight days later, we found her in good health, and hard at work at the washtub.

The Family of Leonard Hastings

Life Sketches, p. 122-123:

We found Brother Leonard Hastings' family in deep affliction. Sister Hastings met us with tears, exclaiming, "The Lord has sent you to us in a time of great need." She had an infant about eight weeks old, which cried continually when awake. This, added to her wretched state of health, was fast wearing away her strength.

We prayed earnestly to God for the mother, following the directions given in James, and we had the assurance that our prayers were heard. Jesus was in the midst of us to break the power of Satan and release the captive. But we felt sure that the mother could not gain much strength until the cries of the child should cease. We anointed the child and prayed over it, believing that the Lord would give both mother and child peace and rest. It was done. The cries of the child ceased, and we left them both doing well. The gratitude of the mother could not be expressed.

Our interview with that dear family was very precious. Our hearts were knit together; especially was the heart of Sister Hastings knit with mine as were those of David and Jonathan. Our union was not marred while she lived.

Return to New York

Life Sketches, p. 135:

After five weeks' absence, we returned to New York. At North Brookfield we found Sister Bonfoey and little Edson. The child was very feeble. A great change had taken place in him. It was difficult to suppress murmuring thoughts. But we knew that our only help was in God, so we prayed for the child, and his symptoms became more favorable, and we journeyed with him to Oswego to attend a conference there.

Satan's Efforts to Hinder

Life Sketches, p. 136-138:

My child grew worse, and three times a day we had seasons of prayer for him. Sometimes he would be blessed, and

the progress of disease would be stayed; then our faith would be severely tried as his symptoms became alarming.

I was greatly depressed in spirit. Such queries as this troubled me: Why was God not willing to hear our prayers and raise the child to health? Satan, ever ready with his temptations, suggested that it was because we were not right. I could think of no particular thing wherein I had grieved the Lord, yet a crushing weight seemed to be on my spirits, driving me to despair. I doubted my acceptance with God, and could not pray. I had not courage so much as to lift my eyes to heaven. I suffered intense anguish of mind until my husband besought the Lord in my behalf. He would not yield until my voice was united with his for deliverance. The blessing came, and I began to hope. My trembling faith grasped the promises of God.

Then Satan came in another form. My husband was taken very sick. His symptoms were alarming. He cramped at intervals, and suffered excruciating pain. His feet and limbs were cold. I rubbed them until I had no strength to do so longer. Brother Harris was away some miles at his work. Sisters Harris and Bonfoey and my sister Sarah were the only ones present; and I was just gathering courage to dare believe in the promises of God. If ever I felt my weakness it was then.

We knew that something must be done immediately. Every moment my husband's case was growing more critical. It was clearly a case of cholera. He asked us to pray, and we dared not refuse. In great weakness we bowed before the Lord. With a deep sense of my unworthiness, I laid my hands upon his head, and asked the Lord to reveal His power. A change came immediately. The natural color of his face returned, and the light of heaven beamed upon his countenance. We were all filled with gratitude unspeakable. Never had we witnessed a more remarkable answer to prayer.

That night we were awakened by the screams of our little Edson, who slept in the room above us. It was about midnight. Our little boy would cling to Sister Bonfoey, then with both hands fight the air, and then in terror he would cry, "No, no!" and cling closer to us. We knew this was Satan's

effort to annoy us, and we knelt in prayer. My husband rebuked the evil spirit in the name of the Lord, and Edson quietly fell asleep in Sister Bonfoey's arms, and rested well through the night.

Then my husband was again attacked. He was in much pain. I knelt at the bedside and prayed the Lord to strengthen our faith. I knew God had wrought for him, and rebuked the disease; and we could not ask Him to do what had already been done. But we prayed that the Lord would carry on His work. We repeated these words: "You have heard prayer. You have wrought. We believe without a doubt. Carry on the work You have begun!" Thus for two hours we pleaded before the Lord; and while we were praying, my husband fell asleep, and rested well till daylight. When he arose he was very weak, but we would not look at appearances.

Pressing On

Life Sketches, p. 144-145:

We toiled on in Rochester through much perplexity and discouragement. The cholera visited the city, and while it raged, all night long the carriages bearing the dead were heard rumbling through the streets to Mount Hope Cemetery. This disease did not cut down merely the low, but took victims from every class of society. The most skillful physicians were laid low, and borne to Mount Hope. As we passed through the streets in Rochester, at almost every corner we would meet wagons with plain pine coffins in which to put the dead.

Our little Edson was attacked, and we carried him to the great Physician. I took him in my arms, and in the name of Jesus rebuked the disease. He felt relief at once, and as a sister commenced praying for the Lord to heal him, the little fellow of three years looked up in astonishment, and said, "They need not pray any more, for the Lord has healed me." He was very weak, but the disease made no further progress. Yet he gained no strength. Our faith was still to be tried. For three days he ate nothing.

We had appointments out for two months, reaching from Rochester, N. Y., to Bangor, Maine; and this journey we were to perform with our covered carriage and our good horse Charlie, given to us by brethren in Vermont. We hardly dared to leave the child in so critical a state, but decided to go unless there was a change for the worse. In two days we must commence our journey in order to reach our first appointment. We presented the case before the Lord, taking it as an evidence that if the child had appetite to eat we would venture. The first day there was no change for the better. He could not take the least food. The next day about noon he called for broth, and it nourished him.

We began our journey that afternoon. About four o'clock I took my sick child upon a pillow, and we rode twenty miles. He seemed very nervous that night. He could not sleep, and I held him in my arms nearly the whole night.

The next morning we consulted together as to whether to return to Rochester or go on. The family who had entertained us said that if we went on, we would bury the child on the road; and to all appearance it would be so. But I dared not go back to Rochester. We believed the affliction of the child was the work of Satan, to hinder us from traveling; and we dared not yield to him. I said to my husband: "If we go back, I shall expect the child to die. He can but die if we go forward. Let us proceed on our journey, trusting in the Lord."

We had before us a journey of about one hundred miles, to perform in two days, yet we believed that the Lord would work for us in this time of extremity. I was much exhausted, and feared I should fall asleep and let the child fall from my arms; so I laid him upon my lap, and tied him to my waist, and we both slept that day over much of the distance. The child revived and continued to gain strength the whole journey, and we brought him home quite rugged.

Conversion of the Office Foreman

Life Sketches, p. 145-146:

While we were absent from Rochester on this Eastern tour,

the foreman of the Office was attacked with cholera. He was an unconverted young man. The lady of the house where he boarded died with the same disease, also her daughter. He was then brought down, and no one ventured to take care of him, fearing the disease.

The office hands watched over him until the disease seemed checked, then took him to our house. He had a relapse, and a physician attended him, and exerted himself to the utmost to save him, but at length told him that his case was hopeless, that he could not survive through the night.

Those interested in the young man could not bear to see him die without hope. They prayed around his bedside while he was suffering great agony. He also prayed that the Lord would have mercy upon him, and forgive his sins. Yet he obtained no relief. He continued to cramp and toss in restless agony.

The brethren continued in prayer all night that he might be spared to repent of his sins and keep the commandments of God. He at length seemed to consecrate himself to God, and promised the Lord he would keep the Sabbath and serve Him. He soon felt relief.

The next morning the physician came, and as he entered, said, "I told my wife about one o'clock this morning that in all probability the young man was out of his trouble." He was told that he was alive. The physician was surprised, and immediately ascended the stairs to his room. As he felt the pulse, he said: "Young man, you are better, the crisis is past; but it is not my skill that saved you, but a higher power. With good nursing you may get well." He gained rapidly, and soon took his place in the Office, a converted man.

Delivered From High Fever

Life Sketches, p. 148-149:

After Nathaniel's death in May, 1853, my husband was much afflicted. Trouble and anxiety of mind had prostrated him. He had a high fever, and was confined to his bed. We united in prayer for him; but though relieved, he still remained very weak. He had appointments out for Mill Grove,

N. Y., and Michigan, but feared that he could not fill them. We decided, however, to venture as far as Mill Grove, and if he grew no better, to return home. While at Elder R. F. Cottrell's at Mill Grove, he suffered much extreme weakness, and thought he could go no farther.

We were in much perplexity. Must we be driven from the work by bodily infirmities? Would Satan be permitted to exercise his power upon us, and contend for our usefulness and lives, as long as we should remain in the world? We knew that God could limit the power of Satan. He might suffer us to be tried in the furnace, but would bring us forth purified and better fitted for His work.

I went into a log house near by, and there poured out my soul before God in prayer that He would rebuke the disease and strengthen my husband to endure the journey. The case urgent, and my faith firmly grasped the promises of God. I there obtained the evidence that if we should proceed on our journey to Michigan, the angel of God would go with us. When I related to my husband the exercise of my mind, he said that his own mind had been exercised in a similar manner, and we decided to go, trusting in the Lord. My husband was so weak that he could buckle the straps to his valise, and called Brother Cottrell to do it for him.

Every mile we traveled he felt strengthened. The Lord sustained him. And while he was preaching the Word, I felt assured that angels of God were standing by his side.

Deliverance from Disease

Life Sketches, p. 152-153:

In the winter and spring I suffered much with heart disease. It was difficult for me to breathe while lying down, and I could not sleep unless raised in nearly a sitting posture. I had upon my left eyelid a swelling which appeared to be a cancer. It had been gradually increasing for more than a year, until it had become quite painful, and affected my sight.

A celebrated physician who gave counsel free visited Rochester, and I decided to have him examine my eye. He

thought the swelling would prove to be a cancer; but upon feeling my pulse he said: "You are much diseased, and will die of apoplexy before that swelling shall break out. You are in a dangerous condition with disease of the heart." This did not startle me, for I had been aware that without speedy relief I must go down to the grave. Two other women who had come for counsel were suffering with the same disease. The physician said that I was in a more dangerous condition than either of them, and it could not be more than three weeks before I would be afflicted with paralysis.

In about three weeks I fainted and fell to the floor, and remained nearly unconscious about thirty-six hours. It was feared that I could not live, but in answer to prayer I again revived. One week later I received a shock upon my left side. I had a strange sensation of coldness and numbness in my head, and severe pain in my temples. My tongue seemed heavy and numb; I could not speak plainly. My left arm and side were helpless.

The brethren and sisters came together to make my case a special subject of prayer. I received the blessing of God, and had the assurance that He loved me; but the pain continued, and I grew more feeble every hour. Again the brethren and sisters assembled to present my case to the Lord. I was so weak that I could not pray vocally. My appearance seemed to weaken the faith of those around me.

Then the promises of God were arrayed before me as I had never viewed them before. It seemed to me that Satan was striving to tear me from my husband and children and lay me in the grave, and these questions were suggested to my mind: Can you believe the naked promise of God? Can you walk out by faith, let the appearance be what it may? Faith revived. I whispered to my husband, "I believe that I shall recover." He answered, "I wish I could believe it."

I retired that night without relief, yet relying with firm confidence upon the promises of God. I could not sleep, but continued my silent prayer. Just before day I fell asleep.

I awoke at sunrise, perfectly free from pain. O, what a change! It seemed to me that an angel of God had touched me while I was sleeping. The pressure upon my heart was

gone, and I was very happy. I was filled with gratitude. The praise of God was upon my lips. I awoke my husband, and related to him the wonderful work that the Lord had wrought for me. He could scarcely comprehend it at first; but when I arose and dressed and walked around the house, he could praise God with me. My afflicted eye was free from pain. In a few days the swelling disappeared, and my eyesight was fully restored. The work was complete.

Again I visited the physician, and as soon as he felt my pulse he said, "Madam, an entire change has taken place in your system; but the two women who visited me for counsel when you were last here are dead." After I left, the doctor said to a friend of mine: "Her case is a mystery. I do not understand it."

Satan Attacks

Life Sketches, p. 162-163:

On the arrival of the train at Jackson, we went to Brother Palmer's. We had been in the house but a short time, when, as I was conversing with Sister Palmer, my tongue refused to utter what I wished to say, and seemed large and numb. A strange, cold sensation struck my heart, passed over my head, and down my right side. For a time I was insensible, but was aroused by the voice of earnest prayer. I tried to use my left limbs, but they were perfectly useless. For a short time I did not expect to live. It was my third shock of paralysis; and although within fifty miles of home, I did not expect to see my children again. I called to mind the triumphant season I had enjoyed at Lovett's Grove, and thought it was my last testimony, and felt reconciled to die.

Still the earnest prayers of my friends were ascending to heaven for me, and soon a prickling sensation was felt in my limbs, and I praised the Lord that I could use them a little. The Lord heard and answered the faithful prayers of His children, and the power of Satan was broken. That night I suffered much, but the next day I was sufficiently strengthened to return home.

For several weeks I could not feel the pressure of the hand

or the coldest water poured upon my head. In rising to walk, I often staggered, and sometimes fell to the floor. In this afflicted condition I began to write on the great controversy. At first I could write but one page a day, and then rest three days; but as I progressed, my strength increased. The numbness in my head did not seem to becloud my mind, and before I closed that work [*"Spiritual Gifts,"* Vol. 1], the effect of the shock had entirely left me.

At the time of the conference at Battle Creek, in June, 1858, I was shown in vision that in the sudden attack at Jackson, Satan intended to take my life, in order to hinder the work I was about to write; but angels of God were sent to my rescue. I also saw, among other things, that I should be blessed with better health than before the attack.

The Sickness of Elder James White

Life Sketches, p. 168-169:

One morning, as we were taking our usual walk before breakfast, we stepped into Brother Lunt's garden, and while my husband attempted to open an ear of corn, I heard a strange noise. Looking up, I saw his face flushed, and his right arm hanging helpless at his side. His attempt to raise his right arm was ineffectual—the muscles refused to obey his will.

I helped him into the house, but he could not speak to me until in the house he indistinctly uttered the words, 'Pray, pray.' We dropped on our knees and cried to God, who had ever been to us a present help in time of trouble. My husband soon uttered words of praise and gratitude to God, because he could use his arm. His hand was partially restored, but not fully.

My husband and myself felt the need of drawing near to God. And as by confession and prayer we drew near to God, we had the blessed assurance that He drew near to us. Precious, exceedingly precious, were these seasons of communion with God.

The first five weeks of our affliction we spent at our own home. For wise purposes our heavenly Father did not see fit

to raise my husband to immediate health in answer to our earnest prayers, although He seemed precious near to comfort and sustain us by His Holy Spirit.

Sojourn at Dansville, N. Y.

Life Sketches, p. 169-170:

We had confidence in the use of water as one of God's appointed remedies, but no confidence in drugs. But my own vital energies were too much exhausted for me to attempt to use hydropathic remedies in my husband's case; and we felt that it might be duty to take him to Dansville, N. Y., where he could rest, and where we could have the care of those well skilled as hydropathic physicians. We dared not follow our own judgment, but asked counsel of God, and after prayerful consideration of the matter, decided to go. My husband endured the journey well.

We remained in Dansville about three months. We obtained rooms a short distance from the institution, and were both able to walk out and be in the open air much of the time. Every day, excepting Sabbath and first day, we took treatment.

Some may have thought that when we went to Dansville and placed ourselves under the care of physicians, we had given up our faith that God would raise my husband to health in answer to prayer. But not so. While we did not feel like despising the means that God had placed in our reach for the recovery of health, we felt that God was above all, and that He who had provided remedial agencies would have us use them to assist abused Nature to recover her exhausted energies. We believed that God would bless the efforts we were making in the direction of health.

Seasons of Prayer and Blessing

Life Sketches, p. 170-172:

Three times a day we had special seasons of prayer for the Lord to restore my husband to health, and for His special grace to sustain us in our affliction. These seasons of prayer were very precious to us. Our hearts were often filled with

unspeakable gratitude that in our affliction we had a heavenly Father in whom we could trust without fear.

Dec. 4, 1865, my husband passed a restless night of suffering. I prayed by his bedside as usual, but the Lord was not pleased to send relief. My husband was troubled in mind. He thought that he might go down into the grave. He stated that death had no terrors for him.

I felt intensely over the matter. I did not believe for a moment that my husband would die. But how was he to be inspired with faith? I prayed God to guide me, and not suffer me to take one wrong step; but to give me wisdom to choose the right course. The more earnestly I prayed, the stronger was my conviction that I must take my husband among his brethren, even if we should again return to Dansville.

In the morning Dr. Lay called, and I told him that unless there should be a decided improvement in the case of my husband in two or three weeks, at most, I should take him home. He answered: "You cannot take him home. He is not able to endure such a journey." I answered: "I shall go. I shall take my husband by faith, relying upon God, and shall make Rochester my first point, tarry there a few days, and then go on to Detroit, and if necessary, tarry there a few days to rest, and then go on to Battle Creek."

This was the first intimation my husband had of my intentions. He said not a word. That evening we packed our trunks, and the next morning were on our way. My husband rode comfortably.

During the three weeks that we were in Rochester, much of the time was spent in prayer. My husband proposed sending to Maine for Elder J. N. Andrews, to Olcott for Brother and Sister Lindsay, and to Roosevelt, requesting those who had faith in God, and felt it their duty, to come and pray for him. These friends came in answer to his call, and for ten days we had special and earnest seasons of prayer. All who engaged in these seasons of prayer were greatly blessed. We were often so refreshed with heavenly showers of grace that we could say, "My cup runs over." We could weep and praise God for His rich salvation.

Those who came from Roosevelt were soon obliged to re-

turn to their homes. Brother Andrews and Brother and Sister Lindsay remained. We continued our earnest supplications to heaven. It seemed to be a struggle with the powers of darkness. Sometimes the trembling faith of my husband would grasp the promises of God, and sweet and precious was the victory then enjoyed.

Christmas evening, as we were humbling ourselves before God and earnestly pleading for deliverance, the light of heaven seemed to shine upon us, and I was wrapped in a vision of God's glory. It seemed that I was borne quickly from earth to heaven, where all was health, beauty, and glory. Strains of music fell upon my ear, melodious, perfect, and entrancing. I was permitted to enjoy this scene a while before my attention was called to this dark world. Then my attention was called to things taking place upon this earth.¹² I had an encouraging view of the case of my husband.

Circumstances did not seem to favor our starting for Battle Creek, but my mind seemed fixed that we must go. We were prospered on our journey. On the arrival of the train at Battle Creek, we were met by several of our faithful brethren, who received us gladly. My husband rested well through the night.

The next Sabbath, although feeble, he walked to the meetinghouse, and spoke for about three quarters of an hour. We also attended the communion season in the evening. The Lord strengthened him as he walked out by faith.

The long sickness of my husband was a heavy blow, not only to myself and my children, but to the cause of God. The churches were deprived both of my husband's labors and of my own. Satan triumphed as he saw the work of truth thus hindered; but, thank God! he was not permitted to destroy us. After being cut off from all active labor for fifteen months, we ventured out once more together to work among the churches.

¹² A portion of the instruction given during this memorable vision, urging the establishment of a health institution by the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, is given in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 485-495, 553-564.

Caring for the Sick

Life Sketches, p. 185:

We returned home from this tour just before a great fall of rain which carried off the snow. This storm prevented the next Sabbath meeting, and I immediately commenced to prepare matter for Testimony No. 14.

We also had the privilege of caring for our dear Brother Seneca King, whom we brought to our home with a terrible injury upon the head and face. We took him to our house to die, for we could not think it possible for one with the skull so terribly broken in to recover. But with the blessing of God upon a very gentle use of water, a very spare diet till the danger of fever was past, and well ventilated rooms day and night, in three weeks he was able to return to his home and attend to his farming interests.

He did not take one grain of medicine from first to last. Although he was considerably reduced by loss of blood from his wounds and by spare diet, yet when he could take a more liberal amount of food he came up rapidly.

The death of James White occurred after all these experiences in August 6, 1881 and of Ellen G White, July 16, 1915. As we clearly see it, they were both steadfastly faithful to the end of their lives, and provide us with many examples of finding deliverance from disease.

26. The Laying on of Hands

JUST before Jesus ascended on high after His resurrection, He issued a number of directives to His followers who were to be His representative workers in bringing the light of the gospel to the perishing. Those directives were designed to increase the effective working of the application of the gospel. None of them can be said to be of greater or lesser importance and authority than any of the others.

One of them is baptism; another is ordination; another is the foot washing; another is the Lord's supper; still another is anointing with oil; and yet another the laying of hands on the sick.

The observance of each of these is commanded by the Saviour, the one true Head of the church, when He gave His followers the great commission to go into all the world preaching the gospel. None of them is of human origin. None of them is traditional. None of them is to be omitted. The purpose of each is revealed in the Word of God. In all cases, they are communicated to us by example with additional words of explanation provided on the spot, or elsewhere in the sacred writings. To establish this truth, let the main points of each be summarized.

Baptism

We will begin with baptism. The actual performance is entirely symbolic, signifying the death and burial of the old sinner, followed by the resurrection of the new man to take the place of the old. Baptism possesses no power in itself to effectively produce those things which it symbolizes. Rather, it provides the believer in Jesus with two facilities. Firstly, it is a step by step guide for him to unerringly follow on his journey from sinfulness to righteousness. Then, secondly, it pro-

vides him with the means of giving his own witness before the church that what he has performed in symbolic steps, has already happened within him.

It is vitally important that the experience portrayed by the symbols be real. No place is to be provided for cold dead formalism in the witness given by the individual through the service of baptism. The old sin-master must be dead in fact. He must be truly buried, and as certainly a new life must be raised in resurrection power to take its place.

It is in *Romans* 6:1-14 that God, through Paul, reveals the message contained in baptism. The church is greatly blessed and enriched by the institution of this service. Could you imagine a church deprived of this service? At the same time how great would be the loss felt by the believers if the church were to be stripped of all its ceremonies such as ordination, the foot washing, the Lord's supper, anointing with oil, and the recovery of the sick by the laying on of hands.

Ordination

We will now consider ordination. Once again, this service contained no power within itself whereby the ordained one became charged with special powers as the following paragraph declares:

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 161-162:

Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office and a recognition of one's authority in that office. By it the seal of the church was set upon the work of God.

While there was no special virtue or power transmitted to the one ordained, the authority of the church and of its ministers is significantly strengthened by this service. Satan is ever seeking to weaken the Lord's work. What he cannot achieve

in any other way, he will attempt to make of none effect by attaching to it an importance which God Himself has never bestowed upon it.

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 162:

To the Jew this form was a significant one. When a Jewish father blessed his children, he laid his hands reverently upon their heads. When an animal was devoted to sacrifice, the hand of the one invested with priestly authority was laid upon the head of the victim. And when the ministers of the church of believers in Antioch laid their hands upon Paul and Barnabas, they, by that action, asked God to bestow His blessing upon the chosen apostles in their devotion to the specific work to which they had been appointed.

At a later date the rite of ordination by the laying on of hands was greatly abused; unwarrantable importance was attached to the act, as if a power came at once upon those who received such ordination, which immediately qualified them for any and all ministerial work. But in the setting apart of these two apostles, there is no record indicating that any virtue was imparted by the mere act of laying on of hands. There is only the simple record of their ordination and of the bearing that it had on their future work.

God expects us to keep our balance whenever we encounter perversions of truth such as this where men expect to receive a special endowment of power from heaven by their being ordained. We must therefore guard against withdrawing the true ordination simply because of the intrusion of the false version.

Footwashing

There is a great deal more which can be written in respect to ordination, but we will pass on to the service of the foot-washing. This is familiar ground.

As in the cases of the other services mentioned, that the foot-washing has no power resident within itself ready and

waiting to engulf the believer with supernatural energies. It is also a symbolic role which is to be acted out by the believer as he gives his witness that he has become aware of his recurring sins which needed to be washed from him before he can enter into sweet fellowship with his Saviour. As under the searching glance of the Holy Spirit he views his guilt, he is led to the Crucified One who cleanses him of it. Thus he is prepared to enter into communion with Christ.

The Desire of Ages, p. 646-649:

These words mean more than bodily cleanliness. Christ is still speaking of the higher cleansing as illustrated by the lower. He who came from the bath was clean, but the sandaled feet soon became dusty, and again needed to be washed. So Peter and his brethren had been washed in the great fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Christ acknowledged them as His. But temptation had led them into evil, and they still needed His cleansing grace.

When Jesus girded Himself with a towel to wash the dust from their feet, He desired by that very act to wash the alienation, jealousy, and pride from their hearts. This was of far more consequence than the washing of their dusty feet. With the spirit they then had, not one of them was prepared for communion with Christ. Until brought into a state of humility and love, they were not prepared to partake of the paschal supper, or to share in the memorial service which Christ was about to institute. Their hearts must be cleansed.

Pride and self-seeking create dissension and hatred, but all this Jesus washed away in washing their feet. A change of feeling was brought about. Looking upon them, Jesus could say, "You are clean." Now there was union of heart, love for one another. They had become humble and teachable. Except Judas, each was ready to concede to another the highest place. Now with subdued and grateful hearts they could receive Christ's words.

Like Peter and his brethren, we too have been washed in the blood of Christ, yet often through contact with evil the heart's purity is soiled. We must come to Christ for His

cleansing grace. Peter shrank from bringing his soiled feet in contact with the hands of his Lord and Master; but how often we bring our sinful, polluted hearts in contact with the heart of Christ! How grievous to Him is our evil temper, our vanity and pride! Yet all our infirmity and defilement we must bring to Him. He alone can wash us clean. We are not prepared for communion with Him unless cleansed by His efficacy.

The next service which we will consider is the Lord's supper which was so clearly a symbol of the sacrificial death which Christ was to suffer on the following day. The unleavened bread and the pure grape juice are emblems of the body and the blood of Christ.

The Desire of Ages, p. 661:

As we receive the bread and wine symbolizing Christ's broken body and spilled blood, we in imagination join in the scene of Communion in the upper chamber. We seem to be passing through the garden consecrated by the agony of Him who bore the sins of the world. We witness the struggle by which our reconciliation with God was obtained. Christ is set forth crucified among us.

Looking upon the crucified Redeemer, we more fully comprehend the magnitude and meaning of the sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven. The plan of salvation is glorified before us, and the thought of Calvary awakens living and sacred emotions in our hearts. Praise to God and the Lamb will be in our hearts and on our lips; for pride and self-worship cannot flourish in the soul that keeps fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary.

He who beholds the Saviour's matchless love will be elevated in thought, purified in heart, transformed in character. He will go forth to be a light to the world, to reflect in some degree this mysterious love. The more we contemplate the cross of Christ, the more fully shall we adopt the language of the apostle when he said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." *Galatians*

Anointing with Oil and Laying on of Hands

We come now to the main subject of this chapter, the anointing with oil, and the laying on of hands for the recovery of the sick. It appears that we have two procedures at our disposal for the healing of the sick. Firstly we will list the anointing of the sufferer with oil as instructed in:

James 5

¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? 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.

¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

The second provision for the restoration of the sick is the laying on of hands as commanded by Christ before His trans-lation:

Mark 16

¹⁸ They will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

This, as the following paragraphs confirm, was just as much the commission or the command of Christ as are any of the other divine directives issued by Him before His return to heaven.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 225:

When he sent out his disciples, he *commissioned* them to heal the sick as well as to preach the gospel. When he sent forth the seventy, he *commanded* them to heal the sick, and next to preach that the kingdom of God had come nigh unto them. Their physical health was to be first cared for, in order that the way might be prepared for their minds to be reached by those truths which the apostles were to preach.

The Saviour of the world devoted more time and labor to healing the afflicted of their maladies than to preaching. *His last injunction to his apostles*, his representatives upon the earth, was to lay hands on the sick that they might recover. When the Master shall come, he will commend those who have visited the sick and relieved the necessities of the afflicted.

Let us first examine the anointing of the sick person with oil, after which we will study the laying on of hands. From the practical point of view, the anointing with oil is much more time-consuming than the simple, direct, laying on of hands. Imagine the time it would have cost the great Healer if He had been limited to the anointing with oil of everyone who came to receive His healing ministry. Think too of the large volume of oil which would have been needed to satisfy every request. The days would never have been long enough, nor the supply of oil large enough to satisfy the needs of all. Of course, Christ would have been able to miraculously supply the oil as He did the loaves and the fish.

There seems to be something of a preconceived idea that the calling in of the elders to anoint the sufferer with oil and pray for him, is a last resort to be carried out only when all else fails. However, this is not the position of Sister White who wrote:

Medical Ministry, p. 16:

I understand the text in *James* is to be carried out when a person is sick upon his bed, if he calls for the elders of the church, and they carry out the directions in *James*, anointing the sick with oil in the name of the Lord, praying over him the prayer of faith. We read, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

This statement does not convey the thought that there is a boundary line on one side of which it is proper to anoint the

sick and pray over them, but on the other side of which the sickness is not serious enough to warrant praying and anointing with oil. At the same time, it does not instruct the sick to run to the elders with every minor ailment which may afflict them.

Medical Ministry, p. 16-17:

It cannot be our duty to call for the elders of the church for every little ailment we have, for this would be putting a task upon the elders. If all should do this, their time would be fully employed, they could do nothing else...

Counsels on Health, p. 457:

Why is it that men are so unwilling to trust Him who created man and who can, by a touch, a word, a look, heal all manner of disease? Who is more worthy of our confidence than the One who has made so great a sacrifice for our redemption? Our Lord has given us definite instruction, through the apostle James, as to our duty in case of sickness. When human help fails, God will be the helper of His people.

“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.” James 5:14, 15.

If the professed followers of Christ would, with purity of heart exercise as much faith in the promises of God as they repose in satanic agencies, they would realize, in soul and body, the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit.

The main burden of the message of this quotation is the question why it is that men are more willing to trust to satanic agencies than in the God who can heal all kinds of diseases. Then follows the Bible texts which instruct them as to what their duty is. Note the positive language in these words of Inspiration:

“Our Lord has given us definite instruction, through the apostle James as to our duty in case of sickness.”

So, it is a positive duty on the part of the church to anoint the sick and pray over them, not as a desperate last resort, but as the first and only resort, provided that proper preparation has been made.

Of course, we are not to enter lightly and without proper preparation upon this work of praying for the sick and anointing them with oil. Every day, through the closest communion with God, we are to replenish our supply of living spiritual power which is so essential to success in the ministry of healing of the body, the soul, and the mind.

But then, this same solemnity must attend our attitudes and behavior whenever we are on the hallowed ground of all of the other injunctions Christ has bequeathed to us such as baptism, the Lord's Supper, ordination, or the foot-washing, for instance.

These truths are so clear and real to us that we do not need to consider them all once more, but I do suggest that you meditate on each one to confirm that, within yourself, the spirit of reverence, solemnity, gratitude to God, and praise, abide.

The anointing with oil, like the other injunctions on our list, is purely a symbolic performance within which there is no actual healing power whatsoever. Yet there is re-creative power in abundance, but that power is in Christ of whom it is written:

Matthew 28

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.

All the power and authority are resident in Christ through whom it is made available to us by the ministry of the Holy Spirit whose almighty healing power is the active agency who puts the Saviour's will into effect.

Christ's Object Lessons, p. 121:

The Spirit awaits our demand and reception.

The necessity for the use of the oil as a symbol, is to teach the lesson of deliverance by faith, and thereby provide one very effective means of strengthening the faith of both those who pray for the sick and those who are to receive the ministry of healing through the prayer of faith.

It is the sick one, not somebody else, who is to call for the elders to come to be healed. His very act in doing so is the evidence that there is already a measure of faith within him. His first steps in this direction encourage him to reach a little higher and then still higher in order to gain the heavenly healing.

This principle of faith building on faith is well illustrated by the story of the man let down through the roof to be healed at Jesus feet:

The Desire of Ages, p. 268:

The discourse was interrupted. The Saviour looked upon the mournful countenance, and saw the pleading eyes fixed upon Him. He understood the case; He had drawn to Himself that perplexed and doubting spirit.

While the paralytic was yet at home, the Saviour had brought conviction to his conscience. When he repented of his sins, and believed in the power of Jesus to make him whole, the life-giving mercies of the Saviour had first blessed his longing heart.

Jesus had watched the first glimmer of faith grow into a belief that He was the sinner's only helper, and had seen it grow stronger with every effort to come into His presence.

Every step taken by this very sick man to avail himself of the healing ministry of Christ was taken by the man himself, and every step so taken strengthened him until he was prepared to tear a house to pieces in order to be transformed from sinfulness to righteousness, and from sickness to health.

Carefully consider and ever remember the last sentence in the paragraph just quoted which reads:

“Jesus had watched the first glimmer of faith grow into a belief that He was the sinner’s only helper, and had seen it grow stronger with every effort to come into His presence.”

Therefore, we who are fit and well are not the ones to call the elders. That is the responsibility of the sick person himself, though he may need one of the elders to drive him to the geographical place where the miracle is to take place. In other words, he may need someone to tear up the roof and let him down. Stand back and let the Saviour draw all men unto Him as it stands written:

John 12

³² And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to myself.

While we who are fit and well are not the ones to call the elders, we are not to stand back as silent observers in the prayer of faith which will heal the sick either. There is much that we are to do which is vital to the success of the mission.

Firstly, we are to make certain that we are so charged with power of heavenly origin that when the sick are in our presence, they will be inspired to believe in the true Source of actual healing. To attain to an effective concentration of divine power, requires a great deal of time be spent in importunate prayer by which the believer becomes saturated with the living power of God even as was Jesus when He healed from sickness. When He was in that condition, there was nothing which could withstand Him.

We are to carefully instruct the suppliant in the knowledge of the glorious promises and provisions of the saving, healing power of the Holy Spirit which only awaits our demand and reception. We are to instruct him as to the cause of disease,

and warn him as did Jesus that he is to sin no more lest a worse thing should come upon him. It rests with him whether or not he will have the faith and the acceptance to turn away from all earthly procedures, and cling to the truth alone as his first and last resort.

Jesus warned those to whom He ministered that the healing depended on the faith of the sick person. For this reason, Jesus asked two blind men if they believed that He had the power to give them sight. In response they declared that they believed He could.

Matthew 9

²⁹ Then He touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith let it be to you.

That then was all that was needed to restore sight to those sightless eyes. Today, if we are able to possess and exercise the same faith, we will likewise experience the same healings. There can be no alternatives, for there is only one way which heaven approves. The promise is clearly written:

James 5

¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

The question is: Do we really believe the words of Christ?¹³ Let it be clearly understood that it is the prayer of faith by which he will be raised up, not the prayer of unbelief.

The sad thought has been expressed that there are some who have felt reluctant to participate in such a deliverance from sickness, for the solemn, impressive procedure would

¹³ Editor's note: E. J. Waggoner also writes upon this verse from the book of *James*, in the article "Is Any Afflicted? Let Him Pray," contained in the collection of articles, *Leaves from the Tree of Life*. His thoughts do not contradict those of Fred Wright here, but add some further meaning. This article is available in the [Appendix](#).

tend to inspire the sick person to reach out with the highest expectations of being healed. However, when these failed to mature, the crushing disappointment would be so great that it would destroy faith in the person so long as his life would last.

That is the pathway of unbelief which consists of waiting to see if the son was healed before he should believe. See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 200. God gave us the command to anoint the sick with oil and pray over him in the name of the Lord, and therefore we can proceed with this course of action knowing it is being done under His command, and according to His way of kingdom-building. This assures us that God accepts full responsibility for the outcome. The conditions met, the promise is fulfilled; the sick are healed.¹⁴

While we are to keep this and other factors in mind, our faith is intended to reap a rich harvest of souls delivered from sickness and from sin. Sometimes we will be granted the positive assurance that it is God's plan for us to be healed, but on many other occasions, we will have to step out in naked faith in the promises of God.

Early Writings, p. 72-73:

True faith lays hold of and claims the promised blessing before it is realized and felt. We must send up our petitions in faith within the second veil and let our faith take hold of the promised blessing and claim it as ours. We are then to believe that we receive the blessing, because our faith has hold of it, and according to the Word it is ours.

“What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.” *Mark* 11:24. Here is faith, naked faith, to believe that we receive the blessing, even before we realize it. When the promised blessing is realized and enjoyed, faith is swallowed up.

But many suppose they have much faith when sharing

¹⁴ There are special cases such as Job and Lazarus whose witness is discussed in chapter 19, “God Does Not Always Heal.”

largely of the Holy Spirit and that they cannot have faith unless they feel the power of the Spirit. Such confound faith with the blessing that comes through faith. The very time to exercise faith is when we feel destitute of the Spirit. When thick clouds of darkness seem to hover over the mind, then is the time to let living faith pierce the darkness and scatter the clouds. True faith rests on the promises contained in the Word of God, and those only who obey that Word can claim its glorious promises.

“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.” *John* 15:7. “Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His *commandments*, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” *1 John* 3:22.

The whole objective of the ministry of the sick in the anointing with oil, and the laying on of hands, is not merely to bring relief to suffering humanity, but to preach the gospel, and bring to the end the long night of sin. In that work, the laying on of hands is to be found along with the rest of the instructions belonging to the great commission which reads as follows:

The Desire of Ages, p. 823:

When the Saviour said, “Go,...teach all nations,” He said also, “These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” The promise is as far-reaching as the commission.

Not that all the gifts are imparted to each believer. The Spirit divides “to every man severally as He will.” *1 Corinthians* 12:11. But the gifts of the Spirit are promised to every believer according to his need for the Lord’s work. The promise is just as strong and trustworthy now as in the days of the apostles.

“These signs shall follow them that believe.” This is the privilege of God’s children, and faith should lay hold on all

that it is possible to have as an endorsement of faith.

What a powerful paragraph that one is! It certifies the truth that those who preach the gospel in the final work will be able to lay hands on the sick and see them recover. Not only will they be able to do so but it will be their duty to do so.

Let us then abandon the dark pathways of unbelief, and walk in the radiance of His plans and promises. Never has the church been so rich in the knowledge of the truth as it presently is, and never have we needed that light so much as now and in the immediate future. Let us therefore...

“...lay hold on all that it is possible to have as an endorsement of faith.”

The Gospel Jesus Taught

C F C G

1. The gos - pel Je - sus taught on earth, and prac - ticed, while He preach'd;
 2. This gos - pel has not changed with time, but stands for - ev - er sure;
 3. The life of Je - sus in the soul is true, un - fail - ing health;
 4. Then seek Him while He may be found, He is not far a - way;

C F G C

Brought health to bod - y, mind, and soul of those whom sin had reach'd.
 It's built on God's al - might - y word, which ev - er will en - dure.
 It frees from slav - ish hab - its, and it can't be bought with wealth.
 Put not your faith in hum - an skill, let God pre - scribe to - day.

F G Am F C G Am F C

His word cleansed from dis - ease and sin and nev - er lost a case;
 God's prom - is - es still have the key of life, and health, and peace;
 It is a heal - ing foun - tain that re - news the nerves and brain;
 Then will the life of Je - sus flow in streams so rich and broad,

F G Am F C G C

A stream of life from heav'n to earth for all the hu - man race.
 For Je - sus on - ly, on - ly He, is all the cure they teach.
 A fore - taste of that world to come, where there will be no pain.
 And you will see, and hear, and know, your Sav - iour, Doc - tor, God!

Appendix: Is Any Afflicted? Let Him Pray

The Medical Missionary, October 1905

Author: E. J. Waggoner

James 5

¹³ Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

¹⁴ 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;

¹⁵ And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

THE second part of this portion of Scripture has been often quoted and acted upon by believers in prayer for the sick; and it is not proposed at present to dwell upon it any more than is necessary in order to bring the first part sharply into prominence: for it seems as if the attention of believers has been directed to the latter part almost to the overlooking of the first.

It is evident at a glance that two different conditions are here presented, and these conditions are respectively indicated by the words rendered “afflicted” and “sick.” It is also evident that the condition indicated by the word “sick” is more serious than that indicated by “afflicted.” In the first instance, the individual’s own prayer is sufficient: but in the second the case is so grave that the combined prayers of the elders of the church are needed, and anointing with oil is added.

Notice further that the promise in the case of prayer by the elders of the church with anointing is explicit and unequivocal. There is nothing conditional. That is, when the given conditions—prayer by the elders and anointing—are met, there is no doubt as to the result.

“The prayer of faith shall heal the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.”

There is no intimation in this case that the elders are to pray that the sick one may be raised up, if it be the Lord’s will, and are then to wait and see what He will do; the instruction and promise are positive: pray, and the Lord shall raise him up.

How is this? Are we to understand that there is ever a time when we are warranted in praying, regardless of the will of God? that we can ever, under any conditions, make a request in the shape of a demand to God, and expect that He will unconditionally yield to our ultimatum? Not by any means.

There is no ground for expecting an answer to any prayer that does not contain through it all, “Your will be done.” *Matthew* 6:10. God works all things after the counsel of His own will (*Ephesians* 1:11), and His will must be done, and will be done, in spite of all opposition.

Our only ground of positive confidence in any prayer at any time is this:

1 John 5

¹⁴ If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us;

¹⁵ And if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.

What, then, is the conclusion as to the case before us? Simply this, that when the elders are called for, and anointing takes place with the prayer, positive evidence has been received beforehand that it is the Lord’s will that the person prayed for should be raised up at that particular time.

Those praying having received the assurance that it is the Lord’s will to raise up this particular person at this particular time,—the individual himself having received the same personal assurance before sending for them,—all that they have

to do is to make their request in harmony with the Lord's plainly expressed will. Having the positive assurance that it is the Lord's will to do a certain thing, it would be a manifestation of unbelief if they should say:

"Lord, if it be your will, let this be done."

This is more apparent when we take into consideration the promise that is coupled with the promise of healing: Let us read them both together.

James 5

¹⁵ The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Suppose anybody, acknowledging that he has sinned, should pray:

"Lord, if it be your will, forgive my sins."

Would it not be evident that he did not know the promise of God, or else did not fully believe it? The publican did not pray:

"Lord, if it be your will, be merciful to me, a sinner."

If he had so prayed, he would not have gone down to his house justified. God is good, and ready to forgive, and plentiful in mercy to all that call upon Him.

There are to be no conditions in our prayer for the pardon of our sins; our sincere prayer itself is the only condition, because we have beforehand, each one individually, the positive assurance that it is God's will that we should be saved from sin. Even so it is in the case referred to in *James 5:14-15*.

Just how any sick person may know positively what is the Lord's will in his case, is not a matter for discussion. No one could tell another how he may know, and nobody who knows

could tell anybody else how he knows. It is a personal matter between the individual himself and the Lord. But...

Luke 18

¹ ...men ought always to pray.

Therefore:

James 5

¹³ Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.

For what shall he pray? For relief, of course, and he should expect to get it, too; for surely we would not be told to pray, if nothing were to come of it.

Isaiah 45

¹⁹ I said not to the seed of Jacob, Seek me in vain.

It will be noticed that there has been no attempt in this article to distinguish between and to define the two different states indicated in *James* 5:13-15 by the terms “afflicted” and “sick.” All that is desired is that it shall be recognized that there are two different conditions, and that in any case prayer is to be made to God.

The relation of prayer to the healing of disease has been much misunderstood, even by many believers in the efficacy of prayer. Too often it is regarded as a last resort. How often words like these are heard:

“We have done everything, and tried every remedy that we know, and now there is nothing left to do but to pray.”

The idea seems to obtain that prayer is another remedy, to be used when all others fail; that the Lord is merely a consulting physician, to be called in only in an extremity, when the regular physician’s skill is exhausted. This is a great mistake.

God is the physician, and there is none besides Him that can heal. But God accepts whosoever will, as “workers to-

gether with Him" (2 *Corinthians* 6:1), and He imparts to the sons of men wisdom, and knowledge of His ways, according to their willingness and ability to receive.

Whenever any person is healed of any disease, it is because the Lord healed him; and whenever any nurse or physician, or any minister of any kind, is instrumental in the recovery of the sick, it is only because such ones have applied the Lord's remedies, or have cooperated with God in the application of them.

When this is fully recognized, there will be no question as to the use of "means" for the restoration of the sick. Prayer for the sick does not necessitate the abandoning of personal effort for them, any more than prayer that God will "give us this day our daily bread;" means that we are to fold our hands and expect God to drop the food into our mouths.

It is God's will that men in this world shall eat bread in the sweat of their face; but however hard they work, and however much they sweat, it is God alone who gives them their food, and to Him and Him alone are thanks due.

When God rained down bread from heaven for the Israelites, they had to gather it. He can feed us without any effort on our part, as in the case of Elijah in the wilderness; but His usual way is through the sowing of the seed and the cultivation and harvesting of it by man.

Our work, however, does not shut out prayer. Both are in harmony, and both, with the well-instructed person, indicate submission to the will of God. Even so should it be in the case of sickness.

This subject has recently come into especial prominence in medical circles. There have always been Christian physicians, who believed in prayer, and who, however blindly they have worked, have regarded themselves as only working under a

Chief Physician, who alone had the power to heal: but probably never before the present year has prayer been mentioned in a medical society as a therapeutic agent.

That, however, has been done, and in no obscure corner. At the recent annual meeting of the *British Medical Association*, Dr. Theodore B. Hyslop, superintendent of *Bethlehem Royal Hospital*, who has a high reputation as a specialist in neurology, and in the treatment of mental disease, gave the following testimony to the therapeutic value of prayer:

“As an alienist, and one whose whole life has been concerned with the sufferings of the mind, I would state that of all hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depressed spirits, and all the miserable sequels of a disturbed mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple habit of prayer.

“Let there be but a habit of nightly connection, not as a mendicant or repeater of words more adapted to the tongue of a sage, but as a humble individual who submerges or asserts his individuality as an integral part of a greater whole. Such a habit does more to clean the spirit and strengthen the soul to overcome mere incidental emotionalism than any other therapeutic agent known to me.”

No doubt the doctor's language, and probably his ideas, may be open to criticism; nevertheless, we have here a recognition by a scientist, in an assemblage of scientific men, of the fact that the principles of the gospel are in the highest sense scientific.

There is much “science falsely so-called;” but there is real science, nevertheless, and that science consists primarily in recognizing that “there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all,” and that “of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things.”

Dr. Hyslop speaks only of prayer in nervous and mental

diseases, because that is his specialty; but what he says may be applied to all cases. The effect is not imaginary: it is real. We all know the comfort and help there is in mere human sympathy. The mother's loving embrace and kiss have soothed the real pain of many a child.

Think, then, of what must be the effect upon one who is racked by physical pain, when his mind grasps the truth that "underneath are the everlasting arms" to soothe him, "as one whom his mother comforts:" when he knows of a surety that this One sympathizes with him to the full, because He actually suffers with him.

And when the sufferer can realize that God does not merely share his suffering, but that God bears it all, and that he himself only shares a portion of God's sufferings, this knowledge can cause him so to sink out of himself and be swallowed up in God, that he will lose all consciousness of his own pain in the contemplation of the sufferings of His Saviour; and this relief may be not merely temporary, but permanent.

This has been the personal experience of many; and it is a cause for rejoicing that there is one medical college in the world, having a reputation in the world as a scientific institution, where God is recognized as the one healer; and where, both in the simple case for which the divinely ordained remedy is plainly apparent, and also in the complicated case which leaves human skill utterly at fault, prayer to God is recognized and taught as the first scientific requisite.

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