



# The Gospel of Healing

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# The Gospel of Healing

**T**he medical missionary work is a very important part of the last work.

**Counsels on Health, p. 533**

I wish to tell you that soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work. The work of a minister is to minister. Our ministers are to work on the gospel plan of ministering...

The medical missionary work is called the gospel work. The gospel of healing and the gospel of teaching are not two separate works—they always go together.

**Counsels on Health, p. 533**

You will never be ministers after the gospel order till you show a decided interest in medical missionary work, the gospel of healing and blessing and strengthening. Come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty powers of darkness...

The world today is not used to talking about the medical work as the gospel work. This is a very strange proposal. Why? Because the two things have become very separate—healing and the gospel, or healing and teaching. By “teaching” we mean the message that is for the soul.

In hospitals today we have basically two departments that are kept strictly separate. One is for psychosomatic cases—for the soul—and the other is for the body.

I had a talk yesterday with a professor who works in both departments. He is a professor of psychosomatics, which deals with the soul, and for the body he is a professor of dermatology, which deals with the skin. He told me that he is head of the dermatology department, and while he is working in that department, he cannot treat the soul of his patients. He cannot talk with them about that. If he did, he would get into

trouble in spite of the fact that he is the head of that department. That is how strictly these two aspects of human nature are kept separate. While working as a dermatologist, he is only allowed to treat the body.

This was not the case with Jesus. Both of these things were bound together—very, very closely.

According to the statement we read at the beginning, the gospel of healing is the last gospel work to be done for the world. Therefore, we need to study the matter very deeply, and understand what it is we are to do and how we are to do it.

When we think of the gospel, we are reminded of the message given here:

#### **Revelation 14**

<sup>6</sup> Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—

<sup>7</sup> Saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

This gospel message that is preached—this everlasting gospel—is preached to everyone. It is not preached only in those countries where they like to hear preaching and healing together. It is also preached in countries where they don’t like to hear preaching and healing together. This gospel is very clearly described as the gospel of creation. It says to “worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

The gospel has a certain character, which means that it is not simply a message that people like to hear and then they feel better afterward. The gospel is something that actually creates new life in the hearer. And this gospel which creates new spiritual life, also create new physical life. The same power heals both sickness and sin. It also heals depression, that is, mental sickness. It heals spiritual, mental, and physical

diseases. The gospel claims to take care of all three.

When Jesus went about healing people, He was also preaching, which was the very reason that He got into trouble. If He had only healed people, nothing much would have been said against Him. But with every healing He also gave a certain message. Because of His preaching, He was accused of making Himself equal to God. He was accused of preaching that the Sabbath or the law in general was not valid any more. Because He combined healing with preaching, He got into trouble.

If we didn't combine these two things today, we would have no difficulties. Today, pastors are accepted in hospitals if they come as pastors. But when I come as a medical student, I am not accepted as a pastor under any circumstances.

This combination of both created difficulties in Christ's time, and it will create difficulties in the last days. You can be sure of this. But keeping the two together is the only way for us to do things. They are not to be combined just in theory. They are to be combined in practice. People must be vitally affected by the teaching and the healing work. This is important. There must be an actual change of life and health together.

Let us consider the gospel in creation. We understand that the creation took six literal days. This belief is rare today. There was a time when most Christians believed it, but not today. Even those Christians who say they believe in creation, usually don't believe that it happened in six literal days. They say that it took thousands or millions of years.

The fact that God created the world in six literal days shows that He is able to speak something into existence that did not exist before. He speaks, and it appears. He said, "Let there be light," and there was light. He said, "Let there be land," and there was land, and so it was for everything else He created.

The same word that spoke life to this world speaks life to the sinner and the sick today. This is the gospel, and it always does a double work—healing from sin and healing from sickness.

Now let's consider the second angel of Revelation 14:

### **Revelation 14**

<sup>8</sup> And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

What does it mean today that Babylon is fallen? When the gospel message is preached, there is always an effort made to counteract that message. This counterfeit looks like the real but actually works against it.

What will the substance of this counter-work or counterfeit be? The last work of preaching is medical missionary work. So what will its counter-work be? It must be a counterfeit medical missionary work, and this can be found everywhere in the world today. We don't need to look far. It is everywhere.

Why does it counteract the gospel? Because it is devoid of the gospel. It is devoid of the power of God to really and effectually heal.

I firmly believe that it is impossible for the last work (as it is described in *Counsels on Health*) to be done within the hospital system. The two ways are absolutely incompatible. The true medical work must be done somewhere outside of the hospital. Why? Because the counterfeit rules inside there. Babylon is called Babylon because it is a work that resists the work of God and works against it.

When Babylon falls, it falls because it has set itself up in opposition to the gospel work. This does not mean it was that way from the beginning. First of all the gospel needs to be preached. Then the counteraction to the gospel begins. It stands up and says, "We will do our work, and you have no place among us." And when this counter-work is set up, then



Babylon has fallen.

After that, the third message follows, because the counter-work is not set up just so that both can simply demonstrate their ways. The counter-work wants to be everything. It wants to be the only way in existence. We find this in the third message:

#### **Revelation 14**

<sup>9</sup> Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

<sup>10</sup> He himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation.

It is a warning against those who worship the image and the beast. What are the image, the beast, and the mark?

#### **Revelation 13**

<sup>11</sup> And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

<sup>12</sup> And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him, and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

<sup>13</sup> And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

<sup>14</sup> And deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that *they should make an image to the beast*, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

<sup>15</sup> And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not *worship the image of the beast* should be killed.

<sup>16</sup> And *he causes all*, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, *to receive a mark* in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

<sup>17</sup> And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Here we see a power in opposition to God's work. It commands worship in opposition to God's true worship. The third angel's message says that those who don't worship the beast and its image will not be allowed to buy or sell, and finally will be sentenced to death.

In other words, the counter-work or counterfeit is not satisfied with just setting itself up. It also wants to take over the work completely. It wants to be the only thing that is to be worshiped in this world. It wants to be everything.

There is a warning against worshipping that beast, and I really asked myself the question: How many people will have the strength to resist it?

Today we live in a relatively free society where we can live out our religion quite comfortably. There is no hindrance, and therefore the work of God can go forward. But when the opportunity is there for the beast to rule, the situation will be very, very different.

This week I was thinking about how things would be if our situation was like that of Nazi Germany. Let's suppose that we would have such a dictator here again. It's not impossible for this to happen. What do you think? How many would cry, "Hail the leader"? Just a few? No. Very, very many. I'm absolutely sure of this.

The stage is set, and you can feel it. You can sense it. You sense it when you realize how devoted people are to certain ways instead of standing for principle. No one stands for principle anymore. They just want to get through in this world somehow. Getting through is their main objective, and also making a career.

When I went back to school, I expected to find among students a spirit of self-reliance, a spirit that stands up and doesn't just accept everything that is said but thinks for itself. "I stand for principle and righteousness." I was thinking that students are always in the forefront of reform movements.

That used to be the case. Students were in the forefront during the protests against weapons in Germany. They were also usually in the forefront of peace protests and freedom of rights.

But I was sorely disappointed. I rarely found this spirit among the students. Most people are just satisfied if they gain good grades and get through, and if they have recognition from their superiors. Even though independent thinking is theoretically encouraged, it is not encouraged in practice, because as soon as you begin to act independently, you are judged as being out of line.

For that reason I will say this: If a situation like Nazi Germany occurred again, most people would support it. The question for us is: What would we do? How much do we stand for principle?

Nazi Germany is not what is coming again, according to prophecy, but rather the beast and its image.

#### **Revelation 14**

<sup>9</sup> And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

<sup>10</sup> The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

<sup>11</sup> And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.

The torment is the result of worshiping the beast. First the beast is worshiped, and then comes the resultant suffering. Immediately after worshiping the beast, there will be “no rest”. Worshiping the beast can have no other result. These worshipers might give the appearance of rest as though they were triumphant—but in reality, their conscience torments

them day and night, and they do not have rest.

So the choice is: will we belong to those who stand for the gospel in the last days, not just theoretically, but practically as Jesus did; or will we worship the beast? If we choose the beast we will be tormented as a result of worshiping it—not physically tormented, but we won’t be able to sleep peacefully or be restful day or night.

Will we stand for principle, or will we seek our own advantage? Receiving the mark, or worshiping the beast, is that spirit which does things for personal advantage—whether that advantage is small or great. And the whole world is geared up for this, which is why so many would hail a leader. Supporting such a leader would give them an advantage. I believe that we need to search our hearts on this point. This week I was confronted with many different situations, where it became so clear that we are driven by small advantages that we hope to gain here and there.

So receiving the beast and his image means to go after personal advantage, but the result is no rest—torment of spirit especially in the presence of the preaching of the gospel, the truth that is clearly and visibly there.

Again, the first step is the preaching of the gospel. We’ve already read from *Counsels on Health* that no work will be done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work—the gospel of healing. It is gospel medical missionary work, not just medical missionary work.

In every work that we do, we need constantly to ask: Is this the gospel? Is this really doing the gospel work? If not, it will not have the desired effect. It will not be offensive to Satan’s kingdom, and therefore there will be no counter-work against it.

### **Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 75**

Health reform is to stand out more prominently in the proclamation of the third angel’s message. The principles of health reform are found in the word of God. The gospel of

health is to be firmly linked with the ministry of the word. It is the Lord's design that the restoring influence of health reform shall be a part of the last great effort to proclaim the gospel message.

It is called "the gospel of health." It's not just health, but the gospel of health. This means the power that speaks things into existence. God speaks and it is done. When God speaks health, and health is there, then this is the gospel of health. "The gospel of health is to be firmly linked with the ministry of the word." Let's see what this means in the life and ministry of Christ.

#### **Matthew 4**

<sup>23</sup> And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

What did Jesus do? He preached the gospel of the kingdom and healed all kinds of sickness and disease among the people.

#### **Matthew 9**

<sup>35</sup> 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.

#### **Luke 4**

<sup>18</sup> The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed;

<sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

This is the work of Christ. He preached the gospel and healed the brokenhearted, gave sight to the blind, freed those who were oppressed, and so on. There is another text referring to the disciples when Jesus sent them out.

#### **Luke 9**

<sup>6</sup> So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

I really look forward to doing this work full time—preaching the gospel and healing everywhere. This is what will be done in the last work and nothing else.

So the disciples departed and went through the towns preaching the gospel and healing everywhere. I really wish that we would understand this and not base our hopes on false premises. This is not found in the medical work as practiced in the world. It is found in the word of God—in His power.

The message of the gospel is not only about the creative power of the word, but it is also about the work of reform.

**Medical Ministry, p. 159**

The sanitariums which are established are to be closely and inseparably bound up with the gospel. The Lord has given instruction that the gospel is to be carried forward; and the gospel includes health reform in all its phases. Our work is to enlighten the world; for it is blind to the movements which are taking place, preparing the way for the plagues which God will permit to come upon the world. God's faithful watchmen must give the warning.

The gospel includes health reform in all its phases.

## CHAPTER TWO

# Freedom in Health Work

**W**e briefly considered the “image of the beast” as a counterfeit that works against the true gospel. This doesn’t mean that Satan has only one counterfeit. He has many ways of working against the truth. They can be different in different countries and different in various situations, but they will always be a work that stands in the place of the gospel and takes the place of the gospel.

We have the freedom to live out the character of Jesus under all circumstances. But when it actually comes to full liberty to practice the gospel, we don’t have this at all times.

Let’s consider Joseph as an example. He was in Egypt, and while he was there in prison there were certain limitations placed on him, restricting what he could do. But it was good for him to be there. He was trained in Egypt to become its future prime minister and be a great blessing. But under the limitations of the prison, he couldn’t do much.

Let us think also of Daniel. During the initial stages of his captivity in Babylon, he actually had very little freedom to work out the plan of salvation for the people of Babylon. So there are certain restricting circumstances in which, as Christians, we can find ourselves. And what I meant was that I am looking forward to the time when these restrictions will be lifted from me.

But honestly I cannot understand how people can even think that you can do the last work in worldly institutions. You can’t. It’s impossible. You actually have to leave Babylon literally with its limitations in order to do the gospel work.

But now let me describe the character by which the work is done because this is the most important thing. If we do not understand the character of Jesus, we will not do that work.

So what is the character of Jesus?

First of all His work is selfless. He Himself says very clearly:

**Matthew 10**

<sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

This was when He sent out the disciples on their first missionary journey.

What does freely mean?

1. Without payment. That would be the most rudimentary form of understanding this word. But there must be a deeper meaning...
2. Without personal advantage. This is more precise. To do the work without receiving any personal advantage in return.

The personal advantage could be recognition in the sight of others. It could be money. It could be anything that is an advantage for me. It might be a little thing. I'm just thinking of Achan when he stole that Babylonian garment. If we could see that garment today, we would probably wonder why he put such effort into such a piece of cloth. Was it worth it? For him it seemed worth it.

It doesn't need to be a big advantage. When we think of people who take advantage of others, we think of the super-rich: those who build grand mansions for themselves, and own boats and airplanes, and so on. No. The advantage can just be "my advantage"—what I want.

Freely means no interest in self—not thinking of self or of getting anything.

In this context I think of the story of Gehazi.

**2 Kings 5**

<sup>1</sup> Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. He was



also a mighty man of valor, but a leper.

<sup>2</sup> And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife.

<sup>3</sup> Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy."

Even as a captive this young girl did a certain work—an important work. Her experience was not very pleasant. Yet she held no grudges against her masters, but only wished them the best and in a certain way actually brought them the health message. She said,

"There is a way of healing, and this way is to be found with God's people because they know the gospel."

They don't just know it as a theory, they have it as their experience and know how to apply it to others.

## **2 Kings 5**

<sup>4</sup> And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus said the girl who is from the land of Israel."

He must have been very desperate since he came to the point of actually deciding to go to the prophet in Israel.

## **2 Kings 5**

<sup>5</sup> Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing.

<sup>6</sup> Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy.

<sup>7</sup> And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me."

He came to God's people who should have had the gospel,

but they didn't. At least the king didn't have the gospel—even though he professed to be a part of God's people.

But I understand his answer. When people come who are very sick and there is no known cure and they say, "I've heard that you can heal," aren't you prone to say, "No. It's true that there is no known way for you to get better"? Wouldn't we say this? But let's see how the story goes on.

## **2 Kings 5**

<sup>8</sup> So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

That was not said to praise man. It was simply saying that there is a way of communication between God and man, and therefore he can be healed. Let him know that.

## **2 Kings 5**

<sup>9</sup> Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house.

<sup>10</sup> And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean."

<sup>11</sup> But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, Indeed, I said to myself, "He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy."

<sup>12</sup> "Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage.

His national pride rebelled against the idea of traveling so far only to end up being told to dip in some foreign water. There was no national honor in doing that. If the prophet would have given him an ointment made from a secret formula that he himself had made, or if he had spoken some special words while laying on hands, then Naaman would have agreed. But what's so special about the Jordan. Couldn't he go to any body of water?

## 2 Kings 5

<sup>13</sup> And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, Wash, and be clean?”

<sup>14</sup> So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

<sup>15</sup> And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, “Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant.”

<sup>16</sup> But he said, “As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing.” And he urged him to take it, but he refused.

<sup>17</sup> So Naaman said, “Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord.

<sup>18</sup> Yet in this thing may the Lord pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord please pardon your servant in this thing.”

<sup>19</sup> Then he said to him, “Go in peace.” So he departed from him a short distance.

Elisha insisted on receiving nothing. He had freely received, and he freely gave. He did not even want to give the appearance of seeking his own advantage for the work of healing. Freely you have received. Freely you give.

But now another element enters the story.

## 2 Kings 5

<sup>20</sup> But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, “Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him.”

<sup>21</sup> So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, “Is all well?”

<sup>22</sup> And he said, "All is well. My master has sent me, saying, Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments."

<sup>23</sup> So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed them to two of his servants; and they carried them on ahead of him.

<sup>24</sup> When he came to the citadel, he took them from their hand, and stored them away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed.

What did this heathen soldier do? He was liberal. He willingly gave more than was requested. Gehazi did not have to twist his arm to obtain what Naaman gave. Naaman didn't say,

"Wow, that's expensive."

If anything, He would have said,

"Wow, that's cheap. Here. Take it. Please take it."

But the very fact that Gehazi took it shows that he was seeking his own advantage. Even though it was freely given to him, it was not right to take it because what is freely received is to be freely given.

## **2 Kings 5**

<sup>25</sup> Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, "Where did you go, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant did not go anywhere."

He added lying to his covetousness. But the real root of the problem was his greed. The love of money is the root of all problems.

## **2 Kings 5**

<sup>26</sup> Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants?"

<sup>27</sup> Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever." And he went out from his pres-

ence leprous, as white as snow.

This story is given to us to show that it is impossible to do the medical missionary work and simultaneously seek our own advantage. There is only one way it can be done, and that is the way of Jesus which is absolutely selfless—without any self-interest.

So this is the first and most important characteristic—freely you have received, freely give. Give without any thought or action to advantage yourself. Only if that character is there can we do the work.

And I hope now that everyone understands that medical missionary work is not just done by a few who have made that subject a matter of special study. Medical missionary work can be done by everyone. Think of the young girl who was taken captive and placed in a basically Babylonian environment. Even though she was very restricted, she did medical missionary work—preaching and healing.

Her healing work did not consist of actually taking Naaman to the Jordan and assisting him. Naaman's servants did that. Her medical missionary work consisted of simply telling Naaman that there is a prophet in Israel. That was enough. That was her part in the medical missionary work.

Another story that is a great warning to us is that of Simon the sorcerer. You know that he tried to buy the ability to lay hands on the sick and give them the Holy Spirit, and he was very strongly rebuked for requesting this. He was trying to combine personal advantage with the gospel message, and this does not and cannot work, because the gospel is a selfless work.

There is another important characteristic which I would like to consider with you. When you do nothing for your own advantage, you are also very respectful of others and their property and their tasks. You will not force yourself upon others. I need to say this because human nature has a tendency to

control others. When we tell someone something, we also want them to accept it, and we want to make sure that they accept it. For this reason, we tend to grab them and hold them until they accept what we say. This is not the way of the gospel.

I would like to read three statements about this. The first clearly describes the way of the gospel:

### **2 Corinthians 3**

<sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

This means that there is no coercion on the part of the medical missionary. That needs to be really emphasized because we will experience rejection of our beliefs by some people. Think of Naaman, for example. He did not like the idea of dipping in the Jordan, and Elisha did not force him. Elisha did not run after Naaman until he agreed. It was up to Naaman to accept what Elisha said. It was Naaman's servants who persuaded him.

When Jesus sent out His disciples, He plainly told them that they should not force their presence on anyone.

### **Matthew 10**

<sup>23</sup> When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Don't force your presence where it is not wanted, but go to another place. We need to understand that God is respectful. If He wanted to force Himself on anyone, He certainly has had many opportunities. He might place unavoidable messages in the windows of every house. He could work miracles. He could send overpowering angels to demand submission, but He doesn't do any of this. God is respectful, and this will be seen in His messengers.

I would like to consider Jesus Himself who also practiced what He taught about fleeing to another town when you are persecuted where you are.

### **The Desire of Ages, p. 241**

Again as they listened to His words the Nazarenes were moved by the Divine Spirit. But even now they would not admit that this Man, who had been brought up among them, was other or greater than themselves. Still there rankled the bitter memory that while He had claimed for Himself to be the Promised One, He had really denied them a place with Israel; for He had shown them to be less worthy of God's favor than a heathen man and woman. Hence though they questioned, 'Whence hath this Man this wisdom, and these mighty works?' they would not receive Him as the Christ of God. Because of their unbelief, the Savior could not work many miracles among them. Only a few hearts were open to His blessing, and reluctantly He departed, never to return.

Here, again, we see that Jesus didn't force Himself upon anyone, but was respectful of the people and their territory. This is another reason why the last work cannot be performed in the hospitals of this world. It wouldn't work because of the character of God. Those who make God's character their own won't force themselves where they are not wanted.

This doesn't mean that we can't reach anyone in worldly institutions. We certainly can, but the full work cannot be done in that environment. It can't because God's messengers will not force themselves where they are not wanted. Jesus did not do this, and His followers will not either.

Finally I would like to say that both the spirit of liberality and the spirit of selflessness combined make up true love, and it is that power of love that was in all of Christ's healing. And this power will actually work. It does work. It works even in a small beginning—as a seed. And this work of love is the gospel.





## Teaching and Healing

**T**here is a co-working between teaching and healing. There was a co-working between teaching and healing in every instance of Jesus' life.

### **The Review and Herald, September 10, 1908:**

The Lord Jesus is our example. He came to the world as the servant of mankind. He went from city to city, from village to village, teaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing the sick. Christ spent more time in healing than in teaching.

He spent "more time in healing"? What does this mean? It does not mean that at times He healed and at other times He taught, because whenever He taught He was always healing too. His words were like a soothing balm that was poured into the hearts of the people, and they were healed, not only from their spiritual maladies but also from their physical and mental maladies. Whenever Jesus was preaching, He was also healing.

The Sermon on the Mount is an example of this. He proclaimed that "nobody can serve two masters." Jesus really described the cause of stress, the cause of disease. And then He explained the solution. And as He preached, the people who were listening understood, "That is my problem!" And right then and there they gave themselves over to the Lord to care for them, instead of caring for themselves—for their clothes, for other material things, or for recognition. They were healed at that moment.

And so, likewise, when Jesus was healing, every instance of healing was a lesson. Since we have these healings written down in the Bible, whenever we read the story of a healing, we learn something, don't we? So, every teaching was a healing and every healing was a teaching.

Now what does it mean that He spent more time healing than teaching? Well, it simply means that at certain times, the people saw Him healing, even though He was teaching a lesson by it, and at other times people saw Him teaching, even though He was healing at the same time. It does not mean that He separated the two. That's important to understand. With Jesus, teaching and healing went hand in hand.

Let's read a statement now which talks of the future:

**Early Writings, p. 33:**

I saw that God had children who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They have not rejected the light upon it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and *proclaimed the Sabbath more fully*. This enraged the churches and nominal Adventists, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth.

This refers to the beginning of the time of trouble. In chapter 1 we looked at the first, second, and third angel's messages in *Revelation 14*, and saw that:

1. The first angel's message proclaims the gospel;
2. The second angel's message is the anti-gospel, Babylon; and
3. The third angel's message is the force that those who erect the anti-gospel then exercise. But they have no rest day and night even as they do it.

Now the order is the same here.

"And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost..."

That is the first angel's message. That is the preaching of the gospel in power.

"We were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully."

What does it mean to preach the Sabbath more fully? In the past, we considered this to mean the message on Sabbath Rest, since that's a more comprehensive understanding of the

Sabbath. That message reveals that Sabbath observance is not just the keeping of a day—it is a principle living in the heart that is there on all seven days. That is one meaning—but we will see that there is another meaning to this as well.

To preach the Sabbath more fully means that the creative power of God is in the Sabbath. The Sabbath would have no meaning if there was no creation. What do we keep the Sabbath for if there was no creation? The Sabbath is the memorial day of creation. In other words, it's impossible to see any meaning in the Sabbath without creation.

So if we cease to believe that God created the earth in six days, then we do not need to keep the Sabbath anymore. Why would we? But if we believe that God created the earth in six days, then the Sabbath receives its significance, because every Sabbath we remember that God created the world in six days with His word. He spoke and it was done—out of nothing. That is how God acts.

But God did more than just create the earth so many years ago. He is still creating today. He creates new hearts. He creates health. He creates new minds. That is what He does even today, not just six thousand years ago.

At the time God gave the report of creation, there was a very significant reason to give it. A highly significant reason indeed! It was the time when Israel was in captivity to Egypt and needed to be delivered. And it was only by the creative power of God that Israel could be delivered. Therefore, God gave them the record of creation. But it was not just a record. That record was to be the spoken word to them that would deliver them from captivity—from that slavery. For this reason God told the Israelites not just to keep the Sabbath because of creation, but also because they were delivered from Egypt. When He repeated the Ten Commandments, He said,

“Keep the Sabbath because you were once slaves in Egypt and I delivered you.”

Today we keep the Sabbath because of creation, but we also keep it because of deliverance from sin, which is the same work of creation, or maybe because of deliverance from sickness, which is also the same work. The fuller proclamation of the Sabbath has something to do with that.

Furthermore we read here,

“This enraged the churches and nominal Adventists, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth.”

You can refute any theory. Any theory at all! You can have long disputations, but you cannot refute the power of God becoming visible. You cannot refute the manifestation of creative power. That’s impossible. And we will demonstrate this.

So this means that when the Sabbath is preached more fully, the Sabbath is preached with power. There is a certain character behind that preaching, but there is also a power in it. This power becomes visible when we are healed from disease.

Now let’s turn to a story in the New Testament. It’s a story of an instance of Jesus healing, but as you know, healing and teaching were the same thing, so while He was healing, He was teaching also.

### **Mark 2**

<sup>1</sup> And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.

<sup>2</sup> Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.

<sup>3</sup> Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men.

<sup>4</sup> And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

<sup>5</sup> When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.”

What was Jesus doing here? Was He healing or preaching when He said this? You know now—He was doing both. But what would a person say who was looking at the case from the outside? They would say He was preaching.

But it was not just empty preaching. When He said, “Son, your sins are forgiven you,” what happened? What happened at that moment? The power of creation touched that man, and what happened within him? He was given peace; that’s right. He got peace of mind. Before that, he had been troubled. He was troubled because of His past sins. What else did he receive? His heart was cleansed. He was delivered from the power of the sin he had committed. From that point on he no longer lived in that sin, whatever it was.

Let’s suppose he was a person who tended to take things that belonged to other people—a thief. What would happen after this word from Jesus? He would never rob anyone anymore, or take things away from other people. What would he do instead? Give. That’s right—the opposite of a thief. He’d become a giver. And it would be very, very obvious and evident that there was nothing left of his former habit of stealing things.

Or if he was a liar, He would now tell the truth, even to his own disadvantage. He would speak the truth, no matter what. That would be his character now, all because of Jesus’ words: “Your sins are forgiven you.”

Those words really had a creative effect on his heart, and they created peace of mind and deliverance from sin. He was now energized to be a totally different person. That was the work of healing which now became visible; but if you had been watching, you would have said he was just teaching.

Forgiveness is not just wiping away the past and not talking about things anymore. We like to think of forgiveness as:

“Well, don’t talk about the past anymore. We’re looking forward now, not backward.”

But that is not forgiveness. Forgiveness means deliverance from the power of the sin. Consider the apostle Paul. When he was delivered from being a persecutor of the disciples, he was no longer a persecutor, but a defender of the disciples. He became such a defender that he would prefer to go even to death himself rather than deliver one of the disciples up to death. He would stand for the last fellow believer with all his personality. And he would stand for the cause of God with all his personality. This was the kind of different person that he was.

When Paul looked back he would say,

“Yes, I was a persecutor. And because I was a persecutor, I am now a debtor to all people.”

He would make this completely clear. He would *not* say,

“I am just looking forward now. I don’t want to talk about my past anymore.”

Not at all. Instead, he would say,

“Yes, let’s talk about my past—that’s what I was.”

He was not ashamed to proclaim the change of life, as an evidence of the power of God to deliver.

So forgiveness means much more than many think. Forgiveness does not just pardon the past. It also changes the person for the present and the future. Forgiveness goes deeper than just the wiping away of past sins. When Jesus said, “My son, your sins are forgiven you,” He was really creating a new person. It is creative power. Now let’s read on:

## **Mark 2**

<sup>6</sup> And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,

<sup>7</sup> “Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

So some people didn’t like His words. They were against them. But so far it was only teaching in their eyes, wasn’t it? And teaching you can refute. They could have said,

“It doesn’t do anything when Jesus says something, because He doesn’t have any power. He doesn’t have any authority to say what He’s saying.”

But now something happened that really made them angry. And what was that?

## **Mark 2**

<sup>8</sup> But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?”

<sup>9</sup> “Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, Your sins are forgiven you, or to say, Arise, take up your bed and walk?”

<sup>10</sup> “But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic,

<sup>11</sup> “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

<sup>12</sup> Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”

Now the Pharisees were angry. Can you imagine this? Until that point their anger was contained to some degree, because they could still refute Him. Could they refute Him now? Not anymore, because the power of God was totally visible.

And Jesus even challenged them. He said, “Which is easier? To teach or to heal?” What do you think? Which is easier? To teach without healing is easier than to heal without teaching, but you can’t really heal without teaching. That’s not possible.

Well, to teach without healing is very easy. Everybody can do this. And you can also refute one another. Logic can always be counteracted, regardless of how logical your message is. I’ve experienced it. I thought that our message is very logical, and I was very proud of the logic of the message and would pass it on to others, but I saw again and again that it was refuted.

But what makes teaching and healing together so difficult? It is impossible for humans to do without the power of God. Without creation it’s impossible. So when the paralytic came

to the Pharisees, they would say he's incurable. It's not possible. Jesus would ask, "Is it difficult to heal him?" They would say, "It's very difficult. In fact it's impossible."

The point that Jesus wanted to make was to show them that in His teaching there was a power that was deeper than they perceived, much deeper. And for that reason, He said to the man, rise up, take your bed and go. He wanted to show to them the power of the gospel.

Now Jesus preached forgiveness with power, and this enraged the nominal Jews in His time. So, similarly today, teaching and healing together will enrage the nominal Christians. Teaching has to be accompanied by the power of healing in order to be effectual.

That is the reason why, in chapter 1, we considered the statement that said in the last days there is only one work and this true medical missionary work. But it's not just superficially, on the outside, that this is to be done. It is a work done with power—with the power of creation—the power of the gospel.

So now we come to the Sabbath and healing. What do the Sabbath and healing have to do with each other? Why are they mixed together? The Sabbath will be preached with power, we read. In this connection we want to read some scriptures first—to see what Jesus did on the Sabbath.

### **Luke 6**

<sup>1</sup> Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate them, rubbing them in their hands.

<sup>2</sup> And some of the Pharisees said to them, "Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?"

<sup>3</sup> But Jesus answering them said, "Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him:

<sup>4</sup> How he went into the house of God, took and ate the show-bread, and also gave some to those with him, which is not



lawful for any but the priests to eat?”

<sup>5</sup> And He said to them, “The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

<sup>6</sup> Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered.

<sup>7</sup> So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him.

<sup>8</sup> But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, “Arise and stand here.” And he arose and stood.

<sup>9</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?”

<sup>10</sup> And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

<sup>11</sup> But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

What did Jesus do here? Did He teach or did He heal? Again, obviously, both. But to the outward observer what did He do first? He taught. Because He taught something about the Sabbath. First of all when the disciples plucked the grain and the Pharisees accused Him of breaking the Sabbath, then Jesus quoted scripture and said because of this and this scripture, what they did is okay. That was a clear teaching. But it could be refuted. I can imagine the Pharisees sitting now and opening another scripture and saying:

“But the scripture also says this!”

You can refute everything—everything. Regardless of what you say, it can be refuted. Even if it is very logical and scripture-based. It does not matter. You can refute it.

Then the next opportunity came, and the reason why this story follows the other is this: Jesus wanted to teach them not only through teaching, but He wanted to teach them also

through healing. The same truth—namely how the Sabbath is to be kept.

The Sabbath is not to be kept by refraining from healing. Quite the opposite. The Sabbath and healing go together because the Sabbath is God's day of creation—God's day of the memorial of creation. That is the Sabbath. Therefore healing is very fitting on the Sabbath, because healing is also a memorial of creation.

Every time a person is healed from sickness, they are a witness of God's creative power—that He created the world in six days. Each time this is the case.

So there was the man with the withered hand. The scribes and Pharisees were there and they were watching—they would look now to see what Jesus would do. And Jesus intentionally and deliberately healed that man on the Sabbath. He could have waited one more day to avoid the controversy. But no, He needed to do it now. And why? Because a lesson had to be taught. And the lesson was that the Sabbath and healing go together. This enraged these Jews.

Can you now see how the Sabbath was preached more fully by Jesus? It was preached more fully than by the Jews in His time—definitely. And this enraged the Jews who also preached the Sabbath. But they preached in a different way. For them it was an argument. With Jesus it was power. That is a different teaching.

Let us turn to another scripture. Once you start to research Jesus and healing on Sabbath you will find many, many instances. We will look at just a few.

### **Luke 13**

<sup>10</sup> Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

<sup>11</sup> And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.

<sup>12</sup> But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to

her, “Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.”

<sup>13</sup> And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

<sup>14</sup> But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.”

And then Jesus answered and said, “Hypocrite,” and then He explained the lesson of the oxen and so forth. He added a teaching to this healing, but His teaching about the oxen falling into the pit and getting them out and so forth, this teaching had power because of his action—because of what He did, in healing that woman.

Again here, healing and teaching were together and it was on the Sabbath day—especially on the Sabbath. Now the leader of the synagogue said,

“Aren’t there six days to do this?”

Why did Jesus do it on the Sabbath and not on the other six days? The answer is very clear. Because the Sabbath is the memorial of God’s creation. It’s the day of power. That is the day when God in a special sense exercises His power today, and this is what Jesus clearly taught.

Later we want to look at the reason why Jesus did this on Sabbath, but now let’s look at two or three more texts about Sabbath and healing—still in the book of Luke.

#### **Luke 14**

<sup>1</sup> Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely.

<sup>2</sup> And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy.

<sup>3</sup> And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”

<sup>4</sup> But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go.

<sup>5</sup> Then He answered them, saying, “Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?”

<sup>6</sup> And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

He taught the same lesson here as in the previous story. In the book of Luke, many of the healing miracles recorded are connected with the Sabbath and with a teaching about Sabbath—with the teaching that Sabbath and healing go together. That is the fuller preaching of the Sabbath. Now let’s turn to the book of John.

### **John 5**

<sup>8</sup> Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.”

<sup>9</sup> And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.

<sup>10</sup> The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed.”

<sup>11</sup> He answered them, “He who made me well said to me, Take up your bed and walk.”

<sup>12</sup> Then they asked him, “Who is the Man who said to you, Take up your bed and walk?”

<sup>13</sup> But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place.

<sup>14</sup> Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.”

<sup>15</sup> The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

<sup>16</sup> For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.

Here we see again the rage of the nominal Jews, because Jesus had preached the power of the Sabbath. He had preached the Sabbath more fully. And for this reason they were absolutely furious.

He was also teaching, clearly. He said,

“Go and sin no more, lest something worse happens to you.”

While Jesus was speaking that word, what was happening in that man? It was not just an admonition which we so often give, “My child, please don’t do this again,” and so forth, and the child does it anyway. No. When Jesus spoke this word, there was power in it. And this power changed that man. How do we know? Because the man was healed from His sickness. It was the same word that spoke healing from sin and healing from sickness—the same word precisely.

Let us look now at the healing of the blind man:

### **John 9**

<sup>1</sup> Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.

You remember this story, don’t you? On what day did He heal that blind man? Of course on the Sabbath day. We should know by now because the Sabbath is the special day of creation. That is how Jesus preached the Sabbath more fully. Let’s read on:

### **John 9**

<sup>2</sup> And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.

<sup>4</sup> I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.

<sup>5</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

<sup>6</sup> When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.

<sup>7</sup> And He said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, “Is not this he who sat and begged?”

<sup>9</sup> Some said, “This is he.” Others said, “He is like him.” He said, “I am he.”

<sup>10</sup> Therefore they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?”

Just by the way, have you read anything that mentions the Sabbath here? No?

### **John 9**

<sup>11</sup> He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, Go to the pool of Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and I received sight."

<sup>12</sup> Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

<sup>13</sup> They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees.

<sup>14</sup> Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.

So in the last verse we read it. If that verse wasn't there, would you know that this was a preaching about the Sabbath? Yes, because creation goes together with Sabbath. It was a teaching about Sabbath, very clearly.

<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

<sup>16</sup> Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath."

The healing was also a clear teaching about the Sabbath, because it caused opposition. And when such a thing causes opposition then you know there is a lesson in it. And that lesson was about the Sabbath.

<sup>16</sup> ...Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.

<sup>17</sup> They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

<sup>18</sup> But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight.

The rest of the story is very interesting, for it reveals the rage of the Pharisees now as they tried to refute the Sabbath truth, but they could not. Why couldn't they? Because the

same word that said in the beginning, “Let there be light, and there was light”—the same word spoke to this man and there was light. For him there was light. Everybody knew that he couldn’t see before and everyone realized that this man could now see. This could not be refuted. The creative power of God could not be refuted at all. They tried to refute it. They tried hard but they were not able. This is what you read in this story.





## CHAPTER FOUR

# The Sabbath and Healing

**N**ow let's turn back to *Luke* 13, when Jesus healed on the Sabbath day:

### **Luke 13**

<sup>14</sup> But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.

Yet Jesus intentionally healed on the Sabbath day, as we have seen. So what is the difference between the six days and the Sabbath? In the six days, we earn our living. On the seventh day, we remember God's creative power. Very simple.

Let me explain. When Jesus commanded His disciples to go out and heal, what did He say?

### **Matthew 10**

<sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

Freely you have received, freely give. The emphasis is on freely. In chapter 2 we studied the story about the greed of Gehazi, who was Elisha's servant, and also about Simon Magus, who offered money for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter was very stern with Simon and told him to go away, because the Holy Spirit has nothing to do with money. It is a free gift from God. And it is the same with healing from disease, or forgiveness of sin. They are free gifts. "Freely you have received; freely give." This power is not to be used in order to take any advantage.

This is very different from the situation in the world today, and this is why the world will be enraged, because the world uses these gifts in order to gain an advantage. In the case of forgiveness, churches become richer and richer, as you know.

And those who offer healing and are successful at it also become richer and richer. But when true healing and forgiveness appear, these will understandably enrage them, because this will undermine their support. But I'll come back to that a little later.

First of all, we need to see that the principle of the gospel is always: "Freely you have received, freely give." Let's think about this a little. What do we receive freely?

For instance, I suppose you will go and eat lunch today. Was the food on your table received for free, or do you pay something for it? Obviously you pay for it. We live in our houses. Were these houses built for free, or did they cost money? They cost money. So what do you receive freely?

Water is still free...well in some countries, it's not really free—it costs money. But air—at least air is free! Well, maybe somebody will invent a way to make money from air eventually too. But right now air is still free.

Sunshine is still free. Our health is free, our thoughts are free because no one can control them or read them. But let's think about this. "Freely you have received, freely give." What does that mean? The things that we have received freely, we also give freely. That means we give them without money.

### **1 Chronicles 29**

<sup>14</sup> For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You.

Let's think about this some more. God gives certain things to all people freely, and if somebody then comes and wants to put a price on them, that person is really receiving something freely from God but not passing it on freely. Let's imagine that what we get, we do not freely pass on. This is the problem—things are received freely, but they are not passed on freely.

The Sabbath was given to us freely. That really needs to be understood. The Sabbath is a free gift.

## **Mark 2**

<sup>27</sup> And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.”

<sup>28</sup> “Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” In other words, the Sabbath is a free gift to us. “Freely you have received, freely give.” It does not cost any money.

Suppose we would put a tax on the Sabbath. Maybe it would occur to someone to do such a thing. No—it is received absolutely free of charge. God requires nothing for it—He has given it to us as a gift. And together with the Sabbath, He has given us creative power. He has given us healing from disease and forgiveness of sin. Therefore, the Sabbath was made for man as a free gift.

Now what we receive freely, we are also to pass on freely. Let us read a story which shows this:

## **Matthew 18**

<sup>21</sup> Then Peter came to Him and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?

<sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

<sup>23</sup> Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

<sup>24</sup> And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

<sup>25</sup> But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.

<sup>26</sup> The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, “Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.”

<sup>27</sup> Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

<sup>28</sup> But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, “Pay me what you owe!”

<sup>29</sup> So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him,

saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you all."

<sup>30</sup> And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

<sup>31</sup> So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.

<sup>32</sup> Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, "You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

<sup>33</sup> Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?"

<sup>34</sup> And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

<sup>35</sup> So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.

Here we see very clearly that forgiveness is not just a judicial act. It's really something that delivers the person. When we see it in this context, it becomes interesting. How was the man's debt canceled? It was canceled freely. He was freely delivered from his debt with no further obligations. In the same way, the king expected his servant to pass the gift on freely, but he would not.

"Freely you have received; freely pass it on."

What have we received from God that we are to pass on freely? First of all forgiveness, as we read in this story. Forgiveness is the creative power of God, which we have received. Can we pass this on without being God? Or would people react as they did toward Jesus, and ask, "Hey, are you God, that you can forgive sins?"

We see that the forgiveness of sin and the healing of disease is the same work. If we have received healing from sickness, can we pass this on? Let's read about this:

**The Desire of Ages, p. 823:**

"They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."  
This world is a vast lazar house, but Christ came to heal the sick, to proclaim deliverance to the captives of Satan. He was

in Himself health and strength. He imparted His life to the sick, the afflicted, those possessed of demons. He turned away none who came to receive His healing power. He knew that those who petitioned Him for help had brought disease upon themselves; yet He did not refuse to heal them. 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?

This statement is a commentary on *Mark* 16, which is about the same topic. Jesus tells His disciples to go preach the gospel to all nations and describes the signs which will follow them. But it's also about the text we read from *Matthew* 10: "Freely you have received, freely give."

How did Jesus heal sick people? The procedure is told us precisely here. "He was in Himself health and strength." As a human being, where did Jesus receive health and strength from? From His Father. As God, Jesus had eternal life from the beginning. But as man, He received health and strength the same way as we do; namely, from His Father. In exchange for what? Did He work for it? Did He earn it? No—He received it freely.

Similarly, we receive health and strength freely. We receive these things because Christ has died for us. Our debt has been paid. We have received it freely, without having deserved it or earned it. If we tried to deserve and earn it, we would utterly fail. It's not a payable gift. It's free.

So Christ was in Himself health and strength. Then we read: "He imparted His life to the sick, the afflicted, those possessed of demons." So what He received freely, He passed on freely. He received it from His Father and passed it on to others. As freely as He received it, He passed it on. This is the principle of the gospel.

It works the same way with forgiveness as it works with healing. In the very way we receive forgiveness, we pass it on

to others. Not that they are our debtors in reality—they are debtors to God. But in this sense, we also are to forgive them. We are to pass on the power we received from God to them. That doesn't make us God, but it makes us channels—channels of communication between God and humanity. This is our work. "Freely you have received, freely give."

As soon as we would start to take advantage of being a channel, we would lose the gift. We couldn't pass it on any more. And if you try to take advantage of the power of forgiveness or of healing, you thereby show that you have not received it freely from God. You no longer deserve it, and you will die. You will lose your health, and you will lose your life, which Christ so abundantly gave to all people in the beginning, because "with the same measure that you use, it will be measured unto you."

The question is: Have we made that health our own? Is it in us? If we have received God's creative power, then we can pass it on to others as freely as we have received it.

**Christ's Object Lessons, p. 251:**

We are not forgiven because we forgive, but as we forgive. The ground of all forgiveness is found in the unmerited love of God, but by our attitude toward others we show whether we have made that love our own. Wherefore Christ says, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matthew 7:2.

The first disciples of Jesus really practiced this. We can read about it in Acts. Peter and John met a lame man at the temple gate after Christ's resurrection. It is the first instance reported when the disciples healed after Christ was gone. The man was a beggar. Peter said to him,

**Acts 3**

6 Silver and gold I do not have [These things I did not receive freely. Do we receive these things for free? No.], but what I do have [what I have received freely] I give you [freely]: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.

What I have received freely, I give freely. This is the principle of the gospel. I would like to pose the question again:

“Why were the religious leaders so enraged when Jesus preached the Sabbath more fully?”

We have already answered that they had personal interests in things that were lost to them through Jesus’ work. But what we need to realize is that those religious men were leaders. This means the people were following them. So it was a matter, not only of money, but of security, of fame, of being at the top. The people were following them—and don’t forget that they had invested quite a lot to make these people their followers. Jesus talks about this in Matthew:

### **Matthew 23**

<sup>15</sup> Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

The main thing here is that they traveled land and sea to win one proselyte. In other words, they took great pains just to win a follower. Now they had those followers, and didn’t want to lose them. If you put so much effort into something, you certainly don’t want to lose it! That’s the reason why the Jewish leaders wanted to preserve their clientele. But they were about to lose their followers to Jesus, and they felt this very keenly. When Jesus preached the Sabbath more fully and with power, they recognized that they were losing their followers.

Let’s read a text that describes how losing followers created envy:

### **John 4**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John

<sup>2</sup> (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples),

<sup>3</sup> He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.

This clearly states that Jesus baptized more people than

John. There is always this kind of competition. Who has more followers? Which church is greater? Who has more members, and who baptizes more people? Now it so happened that Jesus baptized more people than John. And how did people feel about it?

### **John 3**

<sup>26</sup> And they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!”

John’s disciples were saying:

“Everybody’s going to Him! That’s not right. You know, we are losing our followers here.”

And the disciples of John felt the same way as the Pharisees. “Everybody’s going after Jesus!”

### **John 12**

<sup>19</sup> The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, “You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!”

“Everyone is running after Him—what a catastrophe!” That’s how they were feeling. They felt that they had lost, and He had won.

John the Baptist had a different attitude. When his disciples came to him with the statement that everyone was running after Jesus, he told them that this was as it should be.

“He must increase, I must decrease.”

John was absolutely happy about it and had no sense of envy in himself whatsoever. That was completely gone. He was nothing; Christ was everything. But not so with the Jewish leaders. They were in themselves everything, and Christ was nothing. They were driven by sheer envy.

And they could not refute His power. They could not refute His fuller preaching of the Sabbath. That is why they were enraged. Then the man who was born blind and was healed on the Sabbath became the target for all their rage. They finally



cast him out of the synagogue, and there Jesus met him and spoke with him in a friendly way.

But do you understand now why the nominal Adventists will be so enraged? It is because they will lose their following. When the Sabbath is preached with power, they will lose their followers.

Now who are the nominal Adventists at the commencement of the time of trouble? They are not just Adventists. It will be the entire world. It will include those who practice within the healthcare system and get an advantage from it, be it a personal advantage, monetary advantage, or whatever else. They will be angry when the world follows the power of the Sabbath and receives the gospel freely. That will be a real point of contention with them, and it will fulfill what is written in *Early Writings*, page 33, when the Sabbath is being preached more fully. This is the way we should do right arm work.

The right arm work is the gospel. It is not just something we do in addition to the gospel; it *is* the gospel. If it is not the gospel, then stop doing it! The gospel is the power of God.

Of course there are certain things we buy from some and sell to others as well, but that's not our main work. Our most important work is to pass on freely what we have freely received, which is mostly forgiveness and also healing—and to do this especially on the Sabbath day.

When the Sabbath again becomes the symbol of God's creative power in this way, there will also be room for healing on the other six days of the week. Certainly Jesus also healed people on the other six days. But He especially made the Sabbath day the mark of His healing. There is no other day mentioned by name in the Bible on which He healed. We don't read any instances stating that Jesus healed on the first day, or on the second day. But we do read of His healing on the Sabbath. So the Sabbath is the symbol which shows us God's creative power. This is what Christ did, and we are to do the

same.

On Sabbath we don't sell things, do we? So the Sabbath is a special opportunity for freely passing on what we have received. The question we need to ask ourselves now is:

"What have we received freely?"

Have we really received healing? Do we have health and life in ourselves? Do we have forgiveness in ourselves? Then pass it on. And in the way we pass it on, we show in what way we have received it. If we don't pass it on, then we haven't received it. And if we haven't received forgiveness, health, and life, then we are the poorest of all, because we are preaching something we have not experienced. That would be a real catastrophe.

I wish to mention one more point we contemplated at the breakfast table this morning. Some of us are a little older. We're between the ages of thirty and sixty or so. I don't think many of us are over sixty here. When we think of our childhood, did we have computers? No. We did not even think of computers in those days. I still remember when I was about twenty-five and we saw a computer for the first time. It was a typesetting computer—a huge machine with a little screen that had white, blinking letters. It was quite an advancement already. Before that, there were computers with only one written line. Now would we have thought that someday we would have tiny tablet computers like this one? Our children growing up with these tablets today take them for granted. Of course you have little screens where you can look up your Bible and so forth! Maybe one day we won't have them anymore, but just think of how quickly technology has advanced in this respect.

The question now is:

"Have we advanced in the gospel truth to the same extent as technology has advanced during those years?"

Think about it. Can we look back and compare our past

with our present today, and say that we have made the same progress as people have made in technology?

Why did people make this progress in technology? There were a few dedicated people who really gave their whole heart into the matter. They made programs; they developed circuits and kept making them smaller and smaller. They put a lot of money into it too, and a lot of brainpower.

Where are the people who put the same amount of brainpower into the advancement of the gospel? We need to ask ourselves this question. And if we look at what can happen in the world as far as computer advancement is concerned, then we gain a vision of what can happen in the spiritual work of passing on freely what we have freely received. The same can happen here with even greater speed. Only pass on freely what we have freely received. This is my prayer for us.



# Self-Examination and Healing

## 1 Corinthians 11

<sup>17</sup> Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.

<sup>18</sup> For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.

<sup>19</sup> For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.

**P**aul is not discouraged by the difficulties that exist. He says this is a process that must happen in order for certain things to be revealed. We may ask the question:

“Why is the work delayed so long? Why hasn’t God finished it?”

Well, the reason is to place everything on a good foundation. Things must be revealed. At times we must have patience until things become clear.

We have a certain sense, a certain feeling, that this or that is going wrong, but we can’t really pinpoint it. At those times we want to go in and hit it, and grab it. But that would be wrong, because things must reveal themselves. It is a hard lesson at times to stand back and wait until things reveal themselves. At other times, you cannot wait. You must act quickly. When to act and when to wait is a matter in which the Holy Spirit needs to guide, and in which we need a lot of experience and wisdom. But God has the patience to wait.

Now Paul turns to the Lord’s Supper.

## 1 Corinthians 11

<sup>20</sup> Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper.

<sup>21</sup> For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

The word “drunk” does not mean what it means in modern

English. Rather, it means satisfied or full.

<sup>22</sup> What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.

<sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

<sup>24</sup> And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

<sup>25</sup> In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

<sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

What does “in an unworthy manner” mean? When we really think about it, who is worthy? I’m reminded of a text in *Revelation 5* where the question is asked,

“Who is worthy to open the scroll?”

The answer is that the Lion of the tribe of Judah is worthy. There is only One who is worthy—no one else could be found. John was very sad at first that no one could be found to open the seals. Then the answer came that only One is worthy (see *Revelation 5:2-5*).

Nonetheless there is a difference between the unworthiness everybody has and the unworthiness described here by Paul. It is true that we are unworthy, but Christ has made us worthy through His blood. He sees much more in us—for He has made us worthy. Now if we refuse that gift of Christ, we are indeed unworthy.

We can make ourselves unworthy. If we do not admit the message God is giving to us—the message on Laodicea—and if

we do not apply it in our lives, then we are unworthy.

If we think we can come to the marriage supper of the Lamb as we are, without receiving the wedding garment from Christ, then we are unworthy.

You will recall the story of the man who refused the wedding garment. He was then asked, “Friend, how did you come in here?” This is the unworthiness Paul is talking of. It is a willing unworthiness. That really needs to be understood.

### **1 Corinthians 11**

<sup>28</sup> But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

This afternoon we want to contemplate this text. How do we examine ourselves? Before we discuss it, I will read on.

### **1 Corinthians 11**

<sup>29</sup> For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.

<sup>30</sup> For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

<sup>31</sup> For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

<sup>32</sup> But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

<sup>33</sup> Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

<sup>34</sup> But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

These words should really speak to us.

“If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.”

How do you understand this? Do you want to judge yourself? Why? So that you will not be judged? Why don’t you want to be judged?

Normally we read this text as follows:

“I will judge myself so that I am not judged, because judgment is unpleasant to me. I don’t want to be chastened by the

Lord! I'd rather judge myself beforehand."

And that's the reason why many of our talks come into being. That is the reason for many confessions. We judge ourselves so that we are not judged. We quickly tell the worst things we can think of about ourselves in order to avoid the judgment of others, because receiving that judgment is unpleasant. Yes, of course it is. I don't want to be judged. Who wants to be judged?

Some people want to be judged. "Please, Lord, search my heart." But the point Paul makes here is that if we would judge ourselves, God would not need to judge us. God will be spared the process of judging us, which is painful to Him. He takes no pleasure in judging us or in telling us that we are unworthy.

So if our motive in judging ourselves is to spare God the labor of judging us, then we have the right motive. But if our motive is to judge ourselves in order to escape judgment, then it is the wrong motive. Ask yourselves what your motive is. These are the two ways, and there is no way in between. Why do I judge myself?

Now let us come to the question:

"What does it mean to judge myself, or to examine myself?"

The two are the same thing. To examine or judge myself can be understood only when we are thinking, not of ourselves, but of the labor that we cause God if we do not judge ourselves. If your mind is on God and His work, and if you really have a desire to please Him and to make the work as easy as possible for Him, then you have the right basis to begin judging yourself. Everything else will not lead to any result.

If you just want to escape judgment, and because of this you judge yourself, you will come to a very, very complicated self-judgment, and a wrong one too, which will not lead to any result. So we need to understand how to judge ourselves.



How? In the context of what we studied today, judgment is the same as creation. Read the text differently:

“When we judge ourselves, we are created anew, and we allow God’s creation to manifest itself in us.”

That is self-examination. Self-examination is *not* to search and look hard into my own past, trying to find things I can’t find and becoming desperate because I can’t find more. That is not the way it happens—yet that is what you will do if you just want to escape the judgment of God for your own sake.

But if you think of God, you will have a different basis. Think about this: God wants to create you anew. And how does He do it? How does God create? Through His word. He speaks, and it is done. Let’s read this again:

### **Genesis 1**

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.

<sup>2</sup> And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Another word for “hovering” is “brooding.” The parallel text we are pointed to, by a sermon of A.T. Jones, is found in Matthew. Jesus says about Jerusalem,

### **Matthew 23**

<sup>37</sup> How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks...

How often did I want to brood over you! To brood over means to create the conditions necessary for creation to come forth. A hen broods over her eggs so that the chicks can eventually hatch. Likewise, the Holy Spirit broods over the world so that when God speaks, it comes into being.

We have two elements here:

1. The brooding of the Holy Spirit;
2. The word of God.

This is important for us to understand because when we

read the word of God, we also need the brooding of the Holy Spirit over that word, so that it can create something. Both elements are necessary.

### **Genesis 1**

<sup>3</sup> Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

<sup>4</sup> And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

<sup>5</sup> God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

<sup>6</sup> Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters."

<sup>7</sup> Thus God made the firmament...

We keep reading, "God said. God said. God said." When was this report written down? When Moses was in Midian.

And where was Israel? In Egypt. And what was Israel while they were in Egypt? They were slaves. And being slaves, they needed deliverance.

How did God deliver them? By Moses. Moses was the one who gave them the word he had received from God.

And how did He deliver them? He delivered them through the word that He gave to Moses—through the report of creation which we read here. Because when Israel learned how God created the world, they would simultaneously learn how He would create them. And the very word that created the world would create them.

When Jesus spoke to the blind man, He said to him: "Let there be light!" and there was light for the blind man. He saw light for the first time in his life. There was darkness; God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. That was the same word.

So Christ spoke light just as He spoke light at the beginning of the world. It was the same word. And this word was written for us also. It is a word which can create us anew.

Let's think about this some more. The word creates anew. This very word is the basis for self-examination. So if you

want to examine yourself, how do you do it? You need to go to the word. You need to go to it and really see what it says about you. And believe me, you will always find a word when you go to the word in faith and under the brooding of the Holy Spirit.

We would have not one single study here if we didn't practice this. We wouldn't have any studies because I wouldn't know what to say. The Bible is full of words, but which ones shall I read to you? I could say, "I don't know; let me quickly look!" But I pray first. I pray and ask the Lord to please give us a word. And you must do this for yourselves too, every one of you.

Some people are reluctant to use a word that we hear in the sermon. That is wrong. We should not be reluctant, because when the Holy Spirit broods over an assembly, and we hear the word and it speaks to our heart, we can say, "Yes! That word is for me!" and we can repeat that word for ourselves. But some people say, "No, that word was not for me, because it was for everyone. And if it wasn't for me, then I can't use it. I must find my own word." But the same word which was spoken during the study can be your own word.

Or perhaps we have studied a word on the Sabbath, but then we think, "Oh, no; that's past. That's not my word." But it may be just the word for you! Don't be hesitant—don't be reluctant. Let the Holy Spirit work. God is constantly seeking after you. He wants to give you His word. But because you run away and think, "No, no; it must be complicated for me," therefore you don't find the word. That is not right. And in this way your self-examination will become very complicated, and unfortunately you will not reach any aim whatsoever.

So let me repeat again what is necessary for self-examination:

1. Examine yourself because you love God, and not because you want to escape punishment for yourself.

2. You must understand that it is only by the word of God that you can be examined.
3. You need the brooding of the Holy Spirit over that word.

Many people have testified that when they heard the word of God in a sermon, they were convicted of a sin. This experience does not happen because of any human ability—it happens because the Holy Spirit is present. It's not because someone is clever enough to find the right word for everyone. That's not the case. Rather, it's because the Holy Spirit has prompted that word to speak, and the Holy Spirit is brooding over you and you receive that word. That is the reason, and nothing else.

Then let it work in your heart. Allow it to work. And when you allow it to work, and you realize that it is so, then express it also with your mouth. This fact is very clearly mentioned:

#### **Romans 10**

<sup>9</sup> ...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

<sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

<sup>11</sup> For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

<sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

<sup>13</sup> For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

So when you allow the Holy Spirit to work in your heart, to let this conviction sink in, then also speak it out. Say something. Confess it. Make it clear. This is important because such impressions of the Holy Spirit through His word will fade away again if you do not really fix them firmly. That is your part. Speak with your mouth.

This is really where we can be disappointed at times. But the procedure is so clear. We go to the word; we let the word

convict us; and then we can speak out. For example, when we sing the song, “Set my heart on fire,” and we really see that this song is the word of God for me now, then my heart is set on fire. And then I will express with my mouth that my heart is set on fire, because the word of God has said so—because He speaks.

Similarly, when the word of God clearly points out any particular weakness or sin of ours, then let us also clearly say so and not beat around the bush, try to justify ourselves, or make things milder by explaining the surrounding circumstances or any such thing. Just say,

“This is so, because the word of God has said so.”

Without the word of God, there is no possibility of self-examination. You can see yourself as you are, only in the presence of God’s word. Was this your procedure for preparing for the Lord’s Supper? This is the procedure. This is how it works. The problem is that many people put aside the Bible when they examine their hearts because they say,

“Well, the Bible talks about the good things. Here is my heart, and it’s full of bad things, so now I’ll deal with the bad things in my heart.”

But that is not how it works. You have to bring the two together, and it is the word of God alone which shows you what you are. Laodicea, of course, has this very character. It goes away from God’s word. The word tells Laodicea,

“You are neither hot nor cold.”

But Laodicea answers,

“I don’t see it. I search my heart every day, but I don’t see it.”

The word of God says so, yet they examine themselves and don’t see it. Why don’t they see it? Because they refuse God’s word, which tells them clearly that it is so.

Let’s return now to *1 Corinthians* 11, so that we clearly see

what Paul means:

### **1 Corinthians 11**

<sup>27</sup> Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

This is a very serious statement.

<sup>28</sup> But let a man examine himself...

Everyone has a real responsibility to practice this and let the word of God examine your heart.

<sup>28</sup> ...and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

<sup>29</sup> For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

<sup>30</sup> For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

Paul was somewhat frustrated, but we need to understand that the Corinthian church came out of great darkness. They were the capital of heathenism—of the Greek culture and civilization, with all its abuses and degradation. They worshiped gods and had very licentious worship rituals, and that was where they came from. Now the believers had received the gospel in the beginning, but after a while they fell back into their old ways. Paul had to rebuke them severely. Their old ways are described here. They were becoming selfish again. He says,

“For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.”

But Paul doesn't give up. And when I speak of Paul, then I am talking about God. God is not giving up.

### **1 Corinthians 11**

<sup>31</sup> For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

He encourages them: Let the word of God judge you. Turn to the word of God. It would be such an encouragement for the whole church if the confessions of sin we make would al-

ways have a pointed word as their basis—a word that really points to the sin. That would make us Bible students.

We can experience this. If you go into prayer and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you, you will certainly come to the point where you see it. Then we will have many pointed words in our confessions, in our experiences, and so forth.

I am looking forward to this kind of self-judgment. It will be refreshing. It won't be just a recital of our past sins, which can be very discouraging, because you wonder:

“And what now?”

No, it will be a pointed rebuke by the word of God, which rebukes selfishness. At the same time, the word of God also shows the way out of it. Therefore, it will be a recital of the gospel, of creative power. And what a strength and encouragement this will be for others!

At our lunch table today, we talked about what our Sabbath-keeping will be like when this creative power is really in it. In Jesus' case we read of many healings. He healed the paralytic, He healed the woman, He healed the blind man. He healed many people on the Sabbath. That was how He kept the Sabbath.

What will our Sabbath-keeping be like? We certainly will not work in hospitals, that's for sure. Let's suppose we would invite sick people to our meeting and tell them,

“Here you will hear the teaching that will give you health.”

But that teaching won't be given by one person from the pulpit, believe me. That teaching will come through the living experiences of the members. That's the only way. If we can really apply the word of God in our lives as it was applied in the days of creation, if we would give such testimonies to each other, what an encouragement it would be for other people!

And I tell you, the same thing would happen here today as

happened in the time of Jesus, because whenever He taught, He healed. Perhaps His healing wasn't so visible when He was teaching, but He healed nonetheless, because every one of His words was a healing balm for the people. So, likewise, people will be healed today too.

And when God actually uses us to heal others, we will teach a lesson by this as well. Healing and teaching will always go together. This is the vision I have of our Sabbaths in the future. They will be healing sessions.

This can happen, and it will happen when we learn to apply the word of God. Let us begin to learn this by examining ourselves in such a way that His word can give a pointed rebuke to the very problem. Then everybody will say "Amen" because we'll all understand that it fits, and that it is from God indeed.