

**When God is
the Doctor ...**



“Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all His benefits:
who forgives all your iniquities,
who heals all your diseases.”

Psalms 103,2. 3



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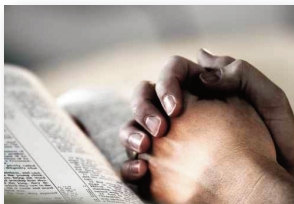
I was in the midst of preparing for the state examinations in medicine. Innumerable diseases and the various ways of diagnosing them filled my thoughts. I made desperate efforts to memorize the names of medications and their efficacy. But at the same time I also thought of the limitations of medicine. Who has enough time and knowledge to care for all these illnesses? And even if there was a doctor who could, there are billions of people who need caring for—many of whom would not even accept the help offered.

Then I thought of Jesus Christ. He healed the people He came in contact with. So much so, that in some villages there was not a single sick person after He had passed through. And He healed them thoroughly—in body, soul, and mind. Yet His methods were so simple: He spoke a word and it happened.



When God is the Doctor

The thought came up in my mind, "Why should this not be possible today?"



We can still pray today.
And the words of the
Bible are just as valid as
they were back then.
For example, in the
gospel commission:

"And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ... lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.'" *Mark 16:15, 18.*

This is what happened when Jesus sent the disciples out to preach the gospel. "Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick."

Luke 9:1, 2.

Later, He also sent out the seventy. "After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.... 'Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you.'"

Luke 10:1, 8, 9.

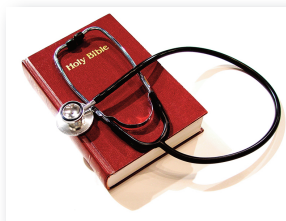
Paul and Peter also healed many sick people. And James gives some simple suggestions for dealing with the sick. "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

James 5:14–16.



When God is the Doctor

While I was contemplating these cases, a friend of mine related his own faith in Jesus Christ as his Doctor and drew my attention to the Bible verse: "For I am the Lord who heals you." *Exodus 15:26*. Words cannot describe the tide of joy that flowed through me at that moment: The word of God is still valid! God still heals us today as He did back then! An entirely new hope filled my



heart—the hope of meeting the needs of the suffering sick was foremost in my mind. It was as clear as day to me that I wanted to get to know this way of practicing medicine.

In the years that followed I had many opportunities of learning God's way of healing, of myself and others. And I still vividly recall my experience when I became sick with Lyme disease. I applied various forms of natural remedies, but the healing came only when I was able to accept God's word as being spoken to me personally.

My experience with Lyme disease

I had suffered for months from a continual pain in my left knee. But as I had previously had problems with my joints when I put a heavy strain on them, even as a child and youth, I thought that this must be the case again. And at that time I was in fact in the midst of renovating my home, holding a full-time job, and doing a lot of overtime as well as some voluntary work.

In the middle of all these activities we visited some friends in central Italy for three or four days. During this time, the pain in my knee increased, and a local massage did not bring any relief. On the contrary the disease really broke out at this point. When I arrived back home I was unable to continue working. My knee continued to swell and the pain increased.



My experience with Lyme disease

Compresses, plant remedies, and other natural applications all brought no relief. Finally, I decided to take a blood test for Lyme disease. The results were quite clear: I had an acute inflammation which was caused by Borellia, the bacteria transmitted by infected ticks. Immediately I saw a whole array of dangers and therapies before me. These bacteria can destroy everything in the body, and the only known treatment consists of large doses of antibiotics.

At this stage we decided to pray once again before taking any further therapeutic steps. Several weeks had passed since our trip to Italy and nothing had improved. In fact, the pain had become almost unbearable.

One evening I was close to despair. I prayed, "What is hindering You from healing me? I only want to support Your work. I am not concerned about myself ..."

I seldom cry, but now the tears flowed like water. Shortly after this I received a telephone call from a friend. Although not all his thoughts were edifying, one of his questions did help me: "Has God not given you a promise? Has He not spoken to you?"

Indeed, God had given me a word several months earlier, when the joint pains began. "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones." *Proverbs* 3:7, 8. But at that time I did not understand this promise. After the phone call I remembered this Bible text very clearly. If God had spoken to me through these words at that time, it was still valid now, for when God speaks it is done. (See *Psalms* 33:9.) It was not so much an intellectual conviction that I had, but an inward assurance—I now knew that God held my disease in His hands, and that He would strengthen me. Immediately the pain began to dissipate and I felt relief.



My experience with Lyme disease

But of course, I had to cooperate in this work. As soon as I was able, I let a doctor colleague puncture my knee to relieve the tension. He respected my wish not to take any penicillin.

After this the healing process made rapid progress and I was soon on my feet again. In a few weeks I was even able to do some extra work as a hiking guide, although I still felt some pain for quite a while afterwards. It was some months before I could bend my knee again without any pain, and take weight on it.

Today, ten years later, my knees are still as able to bear loads as back then. After bending my legs for a significant period of time I do feel some pain, but this is quite normal at fifty-four years of age. Apart from this, my disease is a thing of the past. Through this experience I have come to know God—His love, His care, and His healing power—much better.

"Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones." *Proverbs 3:7, 8*. This text has been a constant companion to me ever since this experience. If I depend on my own wisdom and my own strength, I will become sick. But now I have learnt to rely much more on God and to cooperate better with Him. This has been really beneficial for me, and strengthened my bones. At the same time I know that I have my limits, and that I can only tax my body to a certain extent. God has to bear the burden of my work, otherwise I will become ill again.



Jesus used natural remedies

"In the Saviour's manner of healing there were lessons for His disciples. On one occasion He anointed the eyes of a blind man with clay, and bade him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.... He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.' *John* 9:7. The cure could be wrought only by the power of the Great Healer, yet Christ made use of the simple agencies of nature. While He did not give countenance to drug medication, He sanctioned the use of simple and natural remedies." *The Desire of Ages*, 824.1.

I experienced the benefit of natural remedies when I suffered a pronounced case of hay fever, which in its acute phase brought on asthma-like conditions. This was another vivid illustration which taught me more of God's healing power. By changing to a vegetarian diet, regular and light jogging, and prayer, there was a marked improvement and finally an extensive healing.



God wants to make us perfectly healthy

“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.” *3 John* 1:2.

When Jesus cared for the sick, He was concerned with much more than just the healing of physical sickness. He has higher goals than this for humanity. He wants us to have peace. And the foundation of this peace is deliverance from the power of sin; for sin is, in fact, the root of unrest and disease.

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” *1 Thessalonians* 5:23.

The Bible is full of promises that God will take care of our sicknesses. Another example of this is our leading text, *Psalms* 103:2, 3: “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases.”



My testimony

For many years I have seen how God takes care of us in sickness. He is the same today as when He walked this earth personally among humans. I have witnessed healing from many minor sicknesses, as well as life-threatening crises. And I have seen His help and comfort when individuals have prepared themselves for their demise in cases of terminal illness. They were able to die in peace, and were not tried beyond their ability.

None who came to Him went away unhelped. Some of them were healed; all were strengthened and comforted. Unfortunately, not everyone accepted His help.

And so I can report, through personal experiences with my own health, through events in the life of my family and the church, and through years of experience as a practicing doctor, that Jesus cares as much for the sick today as He did two thousand years ago. He does not turn anyone away who comes to Him. He hears every sincere prayer.

Dr. med. Joachim Schwarz

"Surely He has borne our griefs and
carried our sorrows."

Isaiah 53:4

"Come to Me, all you who labor
and are heavy laden, and I will
give you rest."

Matthew 11:28.



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