

The Gospel According to John

6-12-2019

1. Last week I completed a study of the *Doctrine of Witnessing* and when the clock tolled 7:45 P.M. we were in the process of reviewing the *Doctrine of Health and Healing*.

2. Before we return to the departure of Jesus from Samaria and our review of the categorical study of health and healing, I want to give you opportunity to use 1Jo 1:9 as may or may not be necessary.

3. Jesus leaves Sychar and enters the city of Capernaum where Jesus encounters a royal official whose son lies deathly ill.

4. Joh 4:43-54 Introduced us to the *Doctrine of Health and Healing*.

Joh 4:43 After the two days he left for Galilee.

Joh 4:44 (Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.)

Joh 4:45 When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, for they also had been there.

Joh 4:46 Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum.

Joh 4:47 When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

Joh 4:48 "Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

Joh 4:49 The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

Joh 4:50 Jesus replied, "You may go. Your son will live." The man took Jesus at his word and departed.

Joh 4:51 While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living.

Joh 4:52 When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour."

Joh 4:53 Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and all his household believed.

Joh 4:54 This was the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed, having come from Judea to Galilee.

Doctrine of Health and Healing

1. Principles of Health

1.1 The Bible has much to say about health and healing. Throughout its pages may be found many sound principles for healthful living. The physical strength and well-being of the body is never despised or dismissed.

3Jo 2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and **be in health**, even as thy soul prospereth.

1.2 The Law of Moses set forth specific regulations which served to prevent disease and continues to be "a model of sanitary and hygienic insight."

1.3 A Doctor's Testimony:

"The Mosaic sanitary code provided for periodic physical rest through observance of the Sabbath; dietary rules which diminished the possibility of tapeworm infestation and trichinosis; prohibitions against the eating of animal fat; sexual prohibitions against incestuous relationships common among neighboring peoples; cleanliness through washing the body and clothing; sanitary procedures for armies in the field that prevented the outbreak of epidemics of infectious diseases."

1.4 Prevention of psychosomatic illnesses is assured by obedience to the Word of God. Pro 3:7-8

1.5 The phrase in Pro 3:8 "health to thy navel" is an interesting idiom meaning a cure and source of physical strength for the entire body. The concept of health includes all areas of the individual's existence – body, mind and spirit as the psalmist suggests:

Psa 42:11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

1.6 The redemptive work of Christ for the believer is the greatest healing force known to man.

2. Divine Healing

2.1 The Bible teaches that human beings may look to God for direct healing.

2.1.1 Divine healing is a subject over which differences of opinion have existed from early in the history of the Christian church. Protestants and Roman Catholics have claimed to practice healing as well as Christian Scientists and many of the ancient pagan mystery religions. Bible believing Christians agree the Bible teaches God has healed and can heal every kind of disease. More importantly no one is healed unless God permits it, whether with or without means.

2.2 In proclaiming "I am the Lord, your healer," God promised the Israelites that in consequence of their obedience He would put upon them none of the diseases of the Egyptians. Exo 15:26

2.3 David testified regarding the God-fearing man. Psa 41:3-4

2.4 The psalmists in Psalm 30 repeatedly thanked God for his healing:
Psa 30:2 O LORD my God, I called to you for help and you healed me.

2.5 Obedience to God's Word can result in healing and health. Pro 4:20-21

3. Some of the healings recorded in the Bible were with means as in the case of Hezekiah where the means used was a poultice of figs, wine was a means in the case of Timothy and music in the case of Saul.

2Ki 20:7 Then Isaiah said, "Prepare a poultice of figs." They did so and applied it to the boil, and he recovered.

1Ti 5:23 Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

1Sa 16:16 Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the harp. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes upon you, and you will feel better."

3.1 Others were without any means as in the case of Miriam.

3.2 Certainly the Bible is not opposed to the use of means for healing since Christ Himself considered it normal for people to go to a doctor.

Mat 9:12 On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."

3.3 In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus states that oil and wine were poured on the wounds of the beaten traveler.

3.4 It is significant that Paul chose Luke, a physician as his traveling companion, given the fact Paul was never a healthy man.

3.5 There is also a class of healings in which certain additive factors have a part, though many are not of themselves actually therapeutic but rather symbolic of deeper meaning. For example, in the healing of Naaman, the Syrian General with leprosy and his stepping into the river Jordan appear to speak of faith on the part of Naaman, cleansing on the part of God and selection of Israel as His priest nation.

3.5.1 For the blind man from Bethsaida Jesus made a salve of clay and spittle; an ancient custom and means of healing, e.g., Tacitus writes of Vespasian in Alexandria Egypt, being asked to sprinkle the eyes of a blind man ..." The healing of the blind man of Bethsaida was unique in that it consisted of two stages. After the first, the man saw people indistinctly as moving objects, like trees walking. The second stage of healing was the touching of the eyes. Given the context of Mar 8:17-22, the gradual healing was meant to symbolize the slowness of the twelve disciples in attaining spiritual insight. They got their eyes opened very gradually like the blind man of Bethsaida.

3.5.2 The laying on of hands upon the sick both by Jesus and by the disciples and anointing the sick person with oil were symbols of a divine presence and healing power though the use of oil was also a therapeutic means.

Mar 6:13 They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

4. Many false concepts about healing have developed. For example:

4.1 When a person seeks healing from God, some conclude he is making a choice between God and the doctor. Christian Scientists go so far as teaching that the use of a doctor is a sin.

4.1.1 In the case of Asa which has been quoted as an example of how choosing a doctor over God reflects a lack of faith on the part of the believer. Asa's choice was one of choosing the equivalent of "witch doctors" over God. The word in the NIV translated physicians might better be rendered "pagan sorcerers."

2Ch 16:12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet. Though his disease was severe, even in his illness he did not seek help from the Lord, but only from the physicians.

4.2 Some believe that physical healing is as much a part of the salvation purchased by Christ on the cross as is the forgiveness of sin. Isa 53:4a and 5c are often quoted as proof of such a position. Most evangelicals disagree, however, with such an exegesis and analysis.

Isa 53:4a and 5c "Surely he took up our infirmities ... and by his wounds we are healed."

4.2.1 In only one other place in the New Testament is there any suggestion of healing in the atonement. Peter in 1Pe 2:24 connects "by whose stripes ye were healed" with Christ's sacrificial death on the cross, but there is no explicit mention of physical sickness and most would agree 1Pe 2:24 is used metaphorically.

4.3 There are also those who contend healing was a first installment of the resurrection promised for our mortal bodies through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

4.3.1 Most evangelicals believe the reference to "life to your mortal bodies" refers to temporal sanctification.

4.4 There are those who contend that sickness is always the result of sin. This is the view of the Christian Scientist. The Christian Scientist, like the cereal Grape Nuts, is neither Christian nor Scientific.

4.4.1 While it is true that many sicknesses are a punishment sent by God for sin; e.g., the plagues which struck Israel when they rebelled against God in the wilderness journey.

Num 14:36 So the men Moses had sent to explore the land, who returned and made the whole community grumble against him by spreading a bad report about it –

Num 14:37 these men responsible for spreading the bad report about the land were struck down and died of a plague before the LORD.

Num 25:1 While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women,

Num 25:2 who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate and bowed down before these gods ...

Num 25:6 Then an Israelite man brought to his family a Midianite woman right before the eyes of Moses and the whole assembly of Israel while they were weeping at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

Num 25:7 When Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw this, he left the assembly, took a spear in his hand

Num 25:8 and followed the Israelite into the tent. He drove the spear through both of them -- through the Israelite and into the woman's body. Then the plague against the Israelites was stopped;

4.4.2 There are still other sicknesses which are used uniquely for His glory. Joh 9:1-3

Joh 9:1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth.

Joh 9:2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

Joh 9:3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."

4.4.3 Then there are sicknesses directly used for the good of the sufferer.

2Co 12:7 To keep me (Paul) from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

2Co 12:8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

2Co 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." ...

4.5 That sickness is to be attributed to the devil is also a fairly popular contention. Those of this persuasion base their argument on what Peter said to the Gentiles concerning Jesus' ministry, "He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil."

4.5.1 While it is clear from Scripture that Satan often does inflict sickness upon men, it is equally clear that this occurs only with God's permission. God as sovereign can and does use all manner of suffering for His own purposes and glory.

Rom 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

5. Cause of Sickness

5.1 Suffering in general is the consequence of the curse that came upon man after the Fall.

5.1.1 In this sense, all sickness stems from man's first sin, though it does not follow that an individual's personal sickness is due to his own personal sin. Prior to the fall man had a means of maintaining health and longevity by eating from the tree of life. A similar tree will also exist in the Millennium.

Gen 2:9 And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground -- trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ...

Gen 3:22 And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

Gen 3:23 So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

5.1.2 There is also a similar tree with all manner of fruits for the healing and enjoyment of the millennial citizens.

Eze 47:12 Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for enjoying the perfect environment of the Millennium.

Rev 22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

Rev 22:2 down the middle of the great street of the city (*the New Jerusalem*). On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree provide pure deliverance from the ills of life which characterized their lives before Christ's millennial reign.

5.1.3 Let's analyze categorically Eze 47:12 and Rev 22:1-2 that tell us that there is a tree in the garden which provides healing:

- We could conclude there will be no healing in the eternal state because there will be no sickness. This assumption overlooks the fact there are children born during the Millennium and some will not believe.
- This would logically follow given the fact that the original citizens of eternity future are recipients of the new covenant thus are perfect.
- Walvoord writes in his book *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* "The intimation of the above passages is that while it is not necessary for the believers in the eternal state to sustain life in any way by physical means, they can enjoy that which the tree provides."

5.2 There are many cases in time where sickness is caused by man's ignorance and also by his own carelessness. Again we must understand all things take place by the permissive will of God.

5.3 Sickness may be directly caused by man's sin, as in the spread of venereal disease, or chronic illnesses resulting from alcoholism, etc.

5.3.1 Sickness may, however, be sent by God as punishment, e.g., King Uzziah's sin.

2Ch 26:16 But after Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall. He was unfaithful to the LORD, and entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense ...

2Ch 26:18 They (*the priests*) confronted him and said, "It is not right for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD. That is for the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who have been consecrated to burn incense. Leave the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful; and you will not be honored by the LORD God."

2Ch 26:19 Uzziah, who had a censer in his hand ready to burn incense, became angry. While he was raging at the priests in their presence before the incense altar and, leprosy broke out on his forehead.

5.3.2 Christ commanded one of the ill men whom He healed at the pool of Bethesda. "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. (Joh 5:14)

5.4 Sickness may work as a chastisement for the development of character. That an illness or accident might be used to train and develop the child of God cannot be ignored. It is the one whom the Lord loveth that God chasteneth. Heb 12:6

Heb 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourges every son whom he receivedth.

5.4.1 The believer is to count it all blessing when he enters into various trials and testings (which may include sickness), because if he bears them patiently, they produce the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

Jam 1:2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

Jam 1:3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

5.4.2 Job was brought to recognize his pride and self-righteous attitude through his afflictions, and repented in dust and ashes.

5.4.3 Paul as we have seen saw his thorn in the flesh as something used to buffet him. He also saw in it something God used to keep him humble.

2Co 12:10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

5.4.4 The fact that sickness may be used of God to develop character, faith and humility in His own children makes it impossible to conclude that it is always the immediate result of sin.

5.4.5 Jesus not only healed the sick but also often forgave them their sins, as with the paralytic who was let down through the roof.

Mat 9:2 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

5.4.6 This in itself did not prove that man's sickness was due to his sin, or that the cures for sin and sickness are both in the cross, but that Christ was exercising His own prerogative as the Godman.

5.4.7 Though Paul healed many while he himself was not delivered.

1Co 12:7-9

Acts 19:11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul,

Acts 19:12 so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

5.4.8 This further proves that healing does not depend on our faith in God, it is dependent on God's will. From His omniscience His sovereignty chooses to answer.

6. The healings of Christ and of the early church:

6.1 Because sickness was not part of original creation but a later product of disobedience, Jesus healed many sick to document the coming Kingdom and fulfil prophecy.

6.2 When a leper questioned if it would be His will to cleanse him of his disease, Jesus immediately healed the man.

Mar 1:40 A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."

Mar 1:41 Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!"

Mar 1:42 Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.

6.2.1 This also shows that Jesus was full of compassion but always constrained by God's purpose and plan for His life.

6.3 In one sense Christ's healings must be regarded as being in a special category.

6.3.1 In them He demonstrated and proved that He was the Son of God.

6.3.2 He performed them in His own peculiar power and that of the Holy Spirit which He possessed without measure. A concept unknown to man then or since; since our Lord had neither sin nor wrong doing nor evil as we also designate it in His life.

6.3.3 All of His miracles confirmed His person as well as His power.

Luk 4:14 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.

Luk 4:15 He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

Luk 4:16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read.

Luk 4:17 The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

Luk 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,

Luk 4:19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luk 4:20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,

Luk 4:21 and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

Mat 11:2 When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples

Mat 11:3 to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"

Mat 11:4 Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see:

Mat 11:5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

Mat 15:30 Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them.

Mat 15:31 The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

6.3.4 The gifts of healing of the disciples and the early church were similar, to the extent that the miracles proved these men were true followers of Christ, and thus corroborated them and their ministry.

1Co 12:8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,

1Co 12:9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,

1Co 12:28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

1Co 12:29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?

1Co 12:30 Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

1Co 12:31 But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.

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