

**PRE-MINISTERIAL AND CHRISTIAN WORKERS
BIBLE COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE COURSES**

COURSE NUMBER ONE:

HEALTH, HEALING, HOLINESS

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LESSON ONE

INTRODUCTION

In offering these Pre-ministerial and Christian Workers' Bible College Courses, we are impelled by a sense of urgency to get the God-called layman and the ineffectual minister into an active, demonstrated, deliverance ministry with signs following.

Whom God called He qualified and if God called you He put within you the ability to attain to the ministry of your calling. That does not mean that you need not do the things the Bible says you must do, such as, "study to shew thyself approved unto God, ... rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15) Or in the day that you seek Him, "thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul." (Deuteronomy 4:29) It does mean when you have sought God in fasting and prayer and in His written Word - when you have put on the whole armour of God - when you have made a perfect consecration - you shall have power to deliver the people and to do the work of the ministry.

BUT, my dear Christian friend, I believe with all my heart that you **MUST MOVE NOW**. **MIRACLE RESTORATION REVIVAL** was breathed into my soul while slain by the Lord during our International Convention and Winter Camp Meeting 1965. In a vision I was shown that the world was placed in my hands. I saw revival fires burst forth in many, many places on the globe. Other people came to me for a flame of fire and then went forth with their lighted torch to set other places afire. This is what I wish to do for you - give you a flame of revival fire in order that you may help me set the world aflame for **JESUS. THIS IS GOD' S LAST CALL**. If you expect to fulfil His call on your life, I believe you must prepare **NOW**.

To make it possible for you to have this preparation, I have made available seven Pre-ministerial Courses. I have put into these courses every bit of the "know-how" that God has given me during 25 years of preaching and ministering to the sick and oppressed. Now I offer it to you **ABSOLUTELY FREE. HOW COULD YOU REFUSE IT, OR FAIL TO TAKE IT?**

TAKE HOLD OF INSTRUCTION

"Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life!" (Proverbs 4:13)

Your health, your healing, even your very life may depend upon the manner in which you grasp the instructions given in the lessons of this course.

No doubt, thousands who are now in their graves would be enjoying perfect health and happiness today had they received and believed and acted upon the right instructions dealing with the subject of divine healing, God' s promises concerning health, and His requirements of those who would receive the blessing of His promises.

God' s Word declares, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." (3 John 2)

It is not God's will that any person should be sick, any more than it is His will that any soul should be lost. Yet not all people are well and prosperous, any more than all people are righteous. There is a reason. It is the purpose of this course to help you to find and know and understand that reason (or reasons) as they apply first to your own case, and then to your family, your friends, and to the entire world.

The answers will be given from the Bible, in God's own words, and not from speculation and theorising. From time to time, authenticated testimonies will be given as confirmation of the manner in which God has promised to deal with certain situations, and has kept His promise. You are encouraged to examine the occurrences in your own life and in the lives of those you know well in the light of these amazing scriptural truths. Discover the parallels that exist and the amazing accuracy of God's Word in twentieth century surroundings, even though the writing of the Bible was completed more than nineteen centuries ago!

ALL THINGS BY FAITH

Whatever we receive from God is received by, through, or because of FAITH.

“Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” (James 1:6-7) Are you sick? Do you need healing? Then you are in need of faith. Jesus would say to you, as to the woman who touched the hem of His garment: “Thy faith hath made thee whole.” (Mark 5:34)

Do you feel that you DO have faith, and yet the desired healing does not come? Then you need to re-examine your faith, and do something about your faith!

- (1) Is your faith dead? “Faith without works is dead.” (James 2:26) This may be paraphrased without changing its meaning: “Faith that DOESN'T WORK is dead!”
- (2) It may be that your faith is alive and strong, but is easily shaken when the answer is delayed. “Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. (Hebrews 10:36)
- (3) It may be that your faith is starving. Your faith can only grow and be kept alive as you heed the admonition of 1 Peter 2:2 - “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” Do not expect to have effective faith if you neglect to seek it at its proper source. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17)
- (4) It may be that your faith is being weakened and destroyed by incomplete obedience. Real faith is not a matter of simply taking the benefits God offers through believing that they will come, nor even through believing His promises. Real faith is believing everything God says - His commands and His warnings as well as His promises!

GOD'S PROMISES CONCERNING HEALTH AND HEALING ARE DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH HIS COMMANDS CONCERNING HOLINESS!

The purpose of the Pre-ministerial and Christian Workers' Bible College Correspondence Courses is to present the Scriptures in such a manner that every student of the courses will have acquired a firm foundation for his own faith, and will be able to receive healing when needed. Or better still, to fulfil his days of service for the Lord in a state of perfect health, and will at the same time acquire a strong and abiding faith in order to be able to bring health and healing to others. Laymen, exhorters and ministers will find the lessons of this course to be an untold blessing.

GOD HAS GUARANTEED TO HEAL YOU!

It is only when you are aware of this that you can confidently expect that God WILL heal you. Without this knowledge, you may plead with Him to heal you, and you may hope that He will consent to do it. You may believe that He is ABLE to heal you. That is not enough. If He is able but not willing, that will do you no good. You may KNOW that He has healed others. That means little to you. But when you know that He is not only able but also willing to heal YOU, then you can pray with absolute assurance. Therefore, we shall find proof in the Scriptures that (1) God is ABLE to heal anyone whom He chooses to heal; (2) that it is His will to heal EVERYONE - including YOU! Then we shall show from the Scriptures why, under these circumstances, there are some who are not healed.

Among the questions answered in the course will be:

How can I know that it is God's will to heal me?
How can I overcome my doubts, and be sure of effective, unwavering faith?
Why do some apparently sincere, devout Christians remain sick, even after prayer?
Did the gift of healing cease when the apostles died?
Who has power to heal the sick today? Can I have that power?
Why did Job, called by the Bible a perfect man, have boils?
What was Paul's thorn in the flesh? Are some sick for the glory of God?
Is it possible for one whom God has healed to lose that healing? How is it possible to avoid this?
How can I have power in my own life to bring healing and deliverance to others?

HOW TO STUDY YOUR PRE-MINISTERIAL AND CHRISTIAN WORKERS' COURSES

The manner in which you prepare your Bible Course lessons will determine to a large extent the value of the lessons to you. Listed below are some helpful suggestions. You will also find that when you have completed your course, the same methods of study carried on into your independent study of the Word of God will bring forth much fruit.

PREPARATION FOR STUDY

First of all, before you can expect to acquire an understanding of God' s Word, you **MUST** meet God. Be sure that you have been born again. (See John 3:5) If you are not sure of this, we shall be happy to help you to make sure. Do this before you proceed any further.

Second, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (Acts 19:2) Jesus said, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26)

Third, **HUNGER AFTER GOD!** "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

Fourth, provide yourself with a good Bible, not too large to carry but large enough to be easily read. Select a study Bible with type that can be easily read. Avoid unnecessary notes and helps, which only serve to detract the reader into the pre-cut channels of interpretation. It is to be your purpose in this study to find your answers from **GOD' S WORD, AND TO ACCEPT THE WORDS THAT YOU FIND IN YOUR BIBLE AS THE FINAL AUTHORITY IN ALL THINGS.** Only the Word of God itself can measure up to that. Too many people have fallen short of God' s blessing because they have lived by the notes in their Bible instead of by God' s Word itself. You can not have effective faith unless you are ready to believe that God means exactly what He says!

Quotations in the lessons will be taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

If possible, choose a clear type Bible with only center column or marginal references and possibly a concordance. Many feel that even these helps are crutches, and that one knows his Bible better who can find his Scriptures without the use of such helps.

Fifth, set apart a time for study, as definitely as if you were attending a class, sitting with other pupils and listening to a teacher. Some will prefer to set this study time early in the morning; others may prefer to choose a later hour. Choose the time in which you are least likely to meet with distractions or necessary breaks in your schedule; then stick with it!

Sixth, start each class session with prayer. Your Bible and the lesson sheets are your textbooks. **THE HOLY GHOST IS YOUR TEACHER.** Be sure that you have invited His presence and yielded yourself into His hands as you search God' s Word. You will find every day' s study a time of spiritual refreshing as well as enlightenment.

Seventh, secure a loose leaf notebook, A4, either two hole or three hole: in which you can keep the lessons of your Bible Courses in order.

NOW YOU ARE READY FOR STUDY

Start at the first and read the lesson through quickly, keeping in mind the general

thought content. Mark portions that you feel are of particular interest to you, and which you feel you particularly desire to study deeply.

Re-read the lesson more slowly, making an outline consisting of the leading thoughts and contributing thoughts of each lesson. Such an outline will prove useful now in helping you to organise your thinking and understand thoroughly the subject matter. Later, you may find it an excellent basic sermon outline.

You will note that quotations from Scripture are set off by quotation marks, so that you will realise it is Scripture when you make your first hasty reading. But do not be satisfied with merely reading the quotations from the lesson sheet. Keep your open Bible beside you. Find each quotation in the Bible. Read the entire verse and the context. Discover for yourself that there has been no wresting of the meaning of the Scripture. (See 2 Peter 3:16) Be sure for yourself that the meaning attributed to the quotation in the lesson is the same as that intended by its author. Make this a practice in ALL your study of religious writings. If you will do this, you will not be led astray by false doctrines.

MEMORISE the principal Scripture quotations from each lesson, including the references. Effective faith is faith which has a broad and deep foundation of Scripture hidden away in the heart. Power filled preaching is preaching that comes out of a reservoir of Scripture, well learned, well understood, and firmly believed.

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” (Psalm 119:11)

Study hard, pray earnestly, and do your best. Purpose in your heart not only to learn the subject matter, but to put into practice EVERY DAY the new truths which you have learned, and to use them not only for your own blessing but to bring blessing to others.

RECOMMEND THE PRE-MINISTERIAL AND CHRISTIAN WORKERS' BIBLE COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE COURSES to your friends.

ARE YOU READY TO STUDY?

Lesson One will be a short lesson, since so much time has been spent in introduction and directions for study. But the truths presented in Lesson 1 will be the basic fundamentals upon which the entire course revolves. Start your memorisation program with the quotations listed in the introduction.

Memorise today: “Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life.” (Proverbs 4:13)

Question: How can I know it is God's will to heal me? Why is it important for my healing that I should know it is God's will to heal me? Should I pray for healing and include the words, “If it be Thy will”?

Millions who are sick today could be perfectly well. God laid the plan and purchased healing for them at great cost, and made it available to all His people for the asking.

Yet many of these sick people pray a great deal. Many of them have prayed for healing, and have passed through healing lines again and again in some of the most successful healing revivals of our time. They pray much but receive little.

Thus, practical experience and observation tell us that there is something more needed. Prayer alone is not enough to bring deliverance. And God's Word tells us the same thing. "Ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." (James 1:6-7)

Many of those who ask and fail to receive add to their prayer the words, "If it be thy will." They feel certain that this is the pattern of prayer that Jesus set for His people to follow. They fail to realise that when the disciples asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray," Luke 11:1, the pattern which Jesus set did not contain the word "if"! He did indeed include a petition that God's will should be done in earth. But every petition in the entire prayer is a positive request. Give us ... forgive us ... lead us ... deliver us.

Many have quoted Christ's prayer in the garden, when He cried out in agony of soul, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." (Luke 22:42) Let it be remembered that Christ was not praying to change anything. He had known from the foundation of the world that He must drink this cup. He had chosen before He came into the world to drink it. He was compelled by His love for lost humanity to pass through this bitter agony. Nevertheless, He declared that He could yet have been spared. In Matthew's account: "Thinkest thou that I can not now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matthew 26:53-54)

"This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us:" (1 John 5:14) You can not even be assured that God hears your prayer unless you know that you have prayed in His will.

"And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (1 John 5:14-15)

So then, all that is necessary in order to receive healing - or any other petition that we might ask of God - is to be assured that our prayer has been heard. And all that is needed to be sure the prayer is heard is to be **ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN** that we have asked a thing which God wills to give us. It is that simple.

We are dealing with the subject of **HEALING**. A man is sick. He longs to be well. His suffering has become unbearable. He has prayed again and again, "Oh God, if thou wilt, thou canst make me whole! If it be thy will, heal me!"

The person who prays for healing and then adds the words, "If it be thy will," is openly confessing that he is not at all sure of receiving healing. The "if" in your petition denotes doubt. That sort of prayer can not possibly be classified as asking "in faith, nothing wavering." Time spent in praying this way is time wasted, so far as obtaining your healing is concerned, for God has said of such a prayer, "Let not that man think

that he shall receive anything of the Lord!” (James 1:7)

In fact, such a prayer is an insult to the character of God. None of you, as Christians, would dare declare that God COULD NOT heal you if He so desired. You know that He created the worlds with a word, and hung the stars in space. You know that He made the first man out of the dust of the earth, formed perfectly every nerve and sinew, and then breathed into his nostrils the breath of life so that he was no longer a lump of clay nor a natural brute beast, but a living soul. You know that whatever He willed to do with man, He has the power to do it. Yet you feel that, having that power, He might as a matter of caprice prefer to see His creature suffer? What would you think of a man who enjoyed seeing his servant suffer? “Cruel! Sadistic!” you would say. Yet that is the accusation that many thoughtlessly make against the character of God.

Let me put you on notice, and I will give you the Scripture to prove it, that God is not such a God!

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” (3 John 2)

“For there is no respect of persons with God.” (Romans 2:11)

“Is ANY sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith SHALL save the sick, and the LORD SHALL RAISE HIM UP.” (James 5:14-15)

When Jesus was upon earth in the flesh, there is no record that He ever refused to heal anyone who came to Him for healing.

“And great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all.” (Matthew 12:15)

“And Jesus went about all the cities ... healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” (Matthew 9:35)

“And he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed ALL that were sick:” Matt. 8:16.

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.” (Acts 10:38)

Health and healing were God’s will for His people before Jesus came to earth.

Nearly 1500 B.C., God promised, “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight ... I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.” (Exodus 15:26)

By believing God’s promises today, God’s people can still be as healthy and strong today as His people were in 1500 B. C. , for we are still serving the same God. But we

are under “a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” (Hebrews 8:6)

UNDER THE OLD COVENANT, GOD PROMISED HIS PEOPLE:

(1) Health

“Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily.” (Isaiah 58:8)

“If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.” (Exodus 15:26)

“Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.” (Psalm 91:10)

(2) Healing

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;” (Psalm 103:2-3)

“Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them ALL.” (Psalm 34:19)

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14)

“For I am the Lord that healeth thee.” (Exodus 15:26)

The Old Testament is filled with accounts of healings: Naaman, the leper (2 Kings 5); Job and his friends (Job 42); the Shunamite’s son (2 Kings 4).

Nearly three million people comprised the Israelites at the time that they came out of Egypt. God had said to them, “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight ... I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.” (Exodus 15:26) God was faithful to His covenant, for we read, “There was not one feeble person among their tribes.” (Psalm 105:37)

Nevertheless, when some among them failed to keep their part of the covenant, they learned to their sorrow that God was not blind, and that He meant what He said! This will be taken up in a later lesson.

(Find and list with references, as many healings and promises of healing in the Old Testament as you can. You will find some through your own searching that you will want to add to your memory files.)

A BETTER COVENANT

Much religious teaching today would make God merely the once-great "I Was." But we are told: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Heb. 13:8, and: "am the Lord, I change not." (Malachi 3:6)

So then, if He has never changed He is still the great "I AM."

By believing God's promises - and His commands and warnings as well - we can still be as healthy today as His covenant people were 1500 years ago. If the people of God's church would believe His promises and obey His commands, there need not be one feeble person among their number. We are still serving the same God, but under "a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." (Hebrews 8:6)

"For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." (2 Corinthians 3:11)

The new covenant is a covenant of salvation for the soul and healing for the body of the believer, simply on the basis of faith in and acceptance of the atonement brought about by Christ's suffering and death as our substitute.

In the beginning the death penalty was pronounced against man because of sin. (See Genesis 2:17.) God in His holiness could not tolerate sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4) Death is the price of sin. But Christ paid the price for us - for you and for me.

The old covenant, expressed and carried out through the Old Testament, was a covenant of continual sacrifices, offering year by year continually, the blood of bulls, goats and turtle doves which were merely symbols of a greater sacrifice to come. (Read Hebrews 9)

The new covenant is a covenant of simple faith. It is expressed in Mark 16:16-18:

"He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark 16:16-18)

Millions are sick today because they refuse to believe God's promises:

"The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." (James 5:15)

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24)

"Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." (Matthew 8:17)

When Jesus was on earth, he went everywhere healing the sick. The four gospels

record more healings than salvation sermons. His ministry of healing was the means of both drawing the attention of the people, and of proving to them that He had power on earth to forgive sins.

“ Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.” (Mark 2:9-11)

Before He returned to heaven, He gave His disciples a commission: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Among those things “whatsoever he had commanded” is found in the following:

“Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.” (Matthew 10:8)

As the disciples went forth teaching, as He had commanded, and laying hands on the sick as commanded in Mark 16:18, the Lord was true to His Word.

“And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.” (Mark 16:20)

What signs? Read again, Mark 16:16-18. Then read the book of Acts and list one example of each of the signs mentioned having been in evidence in the life and ministry of Paul or the apostles.

“EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD” (Matthew 28:20)

The healings, signs, wonders and miracles listed in the book of Acts are merely a sample of the things which Jesus began to do in working with His disciples through the power of the indwelling Holy Ghost after He had gone back to heaven. Nowhere in the Word of God is there any Scripture which states or implies that He would cease to be with His disciples (those who believe), and to confirm the Word with signs following, before the end of the age! He is still healing the sick today. As believers lay hands upon them in faith, the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, and all manner of disease is healed.

Many receive healing as they reach out to God by faith through their own prayers.

Handkerchiefs and bits of cloth are taken from those whom God is using today to bring healing and deliverance and healing comes to many who can not reach the great healing campaigns.

There are many methods that God has set out in His Word whereby those in need of healing may avail themselves of His promises. These will be discussed in a later lesson.

One thing that they all have in common is: FAITH IS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY.

Nothing can be received from God without faith. Faith must be based upon promises. Promises are of no value unless they are made by one who is faithful.

We can safely place our confidence in Him and in His promises.

“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)” (Hebrews 10:23)

RECOMMENDED MEMORY WORK FOR THIS LESSON:

* Proverbs 4:13	Romans 2:11	* Psalms 103:2-3
* 3 John 2	* James 5:14-15	Psalms 34:19
* James 1:6-7	Matthew 12:15	2 Chronicles 7:14
Hebrews 10:36	Matthew 9:35	* Hebrews 13:8
1 Peter 2:2	Matthew 8:16	2 Corinthians 3:11
Romans 10:17	* Acts 10:38	* Mark 16:16-18
John 14:26	* Exodus 15:26	* 1 Peter 2:24
Matthew 5:6	Hebrews 8:6	Matthew 8:17
Psalms 119:11	* Isaiah 58:8	Mark 2:9-11
* 1 John 5:14-15	* Psalms 91:10	* Matthew 28:19
Mark 16:20	Psalms 105:37	* Matthew 10:8

References marked (*) are especially important. Do not consider the work of this lesson satisfactorily completed until these quotations have been hidden away in your heart.

LESSON TWO

PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL CAUSES OF SICKNESS

When any good physician sets to work on a case, the first thing he does is to ascertain the possible or probable causes of the sickness, and then eliminates those causes.

Even so, when we come to God for healing, we find that He deals not so much with symptoms as with causes.

The pain of an acute attack of appendicitis may be eased temporarily by the use of narcotics, but as a result of this false relief the appendix may burst even while the person is unaware of pain, and death may result. Carelessness in finding the cause of suffering has resulted in great damage being done, or even in the loss of life. Finding and relieving the cause is more important than relieving the pain.

Much harm has also been done because some who have encouraged men and women to believe that God heals have failed to note the conditions which must be met before God can be expected to heal. Many have lost confidence in God and in His promises because of failure to remove the cause of the sickness; failure to meet God's conditions for healing; failure even to understand that God has made conditions which must be met.

In seeking healing through faith, it is just as urgent to remove the spiritual causes of sickness as to remove the physical causes. Failure to comply with the natural laws of health, which God Himself ordained, may prevent a person from receiving healing, or from keeping his healing after it has been received.

SIN - THE CAUSE OF SICKNESS

It may be said without fear of contradiction that in a very real sense, SIN is the cause of the existence of SICKNESS in the world.

There was no sickness in the Garden of Eden before the first sin was committed. None of us expect to find sin in heaven, nor do we expect to find sickness there. Where sin is, there is sickness.

On the day that Eve yielded to the suggestion of Satan and took the fruit that God had forbidden her to eat, both sin and sickness entered the world for the first time.

“Sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” (Romans 5:12)

Sickness is death beginning to work in the human body. In this sense ALL sickness is the result of sin.

In some cases a specific sickness or disease can be readily traced to a specific sin. Perhaps the best example of this is the so-called “social diseases,” the venereal diseases that haunt those whose lives are immoral.

In many other cases, the connection is not so readily apparent, especially to those who can not discern the things of the Spirit.

But God has said: “If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law ... then the Lord will make thy plagues ... great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sickness, and of long continuance ... Moreover, he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; ... Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee.” (Deuteronomy 28:58-61)

(Are you studying with your Bible open? Turn to Deuteronomy and read the entire 28th chapter. Never forget the amazing truths found there.)

SIN AND SICKNESS ARE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Sin and sickness are as closely associated in the New Testament though as in the Old.

Jesus Himself, in healing one who was sick, said, “Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.” (Mark 2:5)

To another He said, “Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” (John 5:14)

James admonishes the sick, “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” (James 5:16)

His instruction to those who are in need of healing is: “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; AND IF HE HAVE COMMITTED SINS, THEY SHALL BE FORGIVEN HIM.” (James 5:14-15)

GOD HAS NOT CHANGED

The testimony of David, speaking by inspiration of the Holy Ghost: “Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all maimer of meat; and they draw near into the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses. He sent his word, and healed them.” (Psalm 107:17-20)

In Numbers 12 there is a story which brings God’s people a very solemn warning.

Miriam, a sister of Moses and a prophetess, who had been greatly blessed and used of God, became lifted up with pride and was “Not afraid to speak against my servant, Moses.” (Numbers 12:8) God heard her evil speaking, and the anger of the Lord was kindled (Numbers 12:9) against Miriam and against Aaron, her brother, who had entered with her into criticism against Moses. As a result of her sin, Miriam became leprous, as white as snow, and would have remained so had Moses not prayed for her deliverance.

How marvellous that God will forgive the cry of the repentant, and that He would hear the prayer of Miriam's forgiving brother, Moses, and heal her. But note that Miriam would never have needed this healing if she had not sinned.

CRITICISM IS SIN!

Sin breaks down the hedge that God builds around you to protect you, thus permitting Satan to afflict you.

Satan's complaint in Job's case was, "Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land." (Job 1:10)

"There is no respect of persons with God." (Romans 2:11)

If God would make a hedge about Job and his household, God will make a hedge around about YOU! Satan can not enter that hedge from the outside, until it has first been broken down from the inside by sin, ignorance, fear, or unbelief.

Job broke down the hedge through fear. "The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me," (declared Job). (Job 3:25)

Miriam broke down the hedge through the sin of murmuring.

YOU CAN REPAIR THE HEDGE

God has given us instructions in His Word to build the hedge.

"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee." (Exodus 15:26)

"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:" (Deuteronomy 28:1)

Promises of health are given specifically with the giving of certain commandments.

"Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." (Ephesians 6:2-3)

If it is not well with you (physically) your sickness could be the result of breaking this commandment, or it could be the result of breaking other commandments, or of disregarding the plans and purposes of God in some way.

GOD PINPOINTS A CURSE OF SICKNESS IN OUR AGE

In the book of 1 Corinthians, Paul deals very specifically with the subject of sickness among Christian people.

“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.” (ie. Die prematurely.) (1 Corinthians 11:30)

This entire chapter deals with one of the most perpetual and important ordinances of the church, the Lord’s Supper, or Communion. Instituted by the Lord, the same night in which He was betrayed, this ordinance became to the followers of Jesus the visible symbol of all He has purchased for us: salvation through the shedding of His blood, and healing through His sufferings at the whipping post. It is essential to the believer’s life to become a partaker of these sacraments.

Since the Word of God points to a definite cause and declares, “For this cause ...” (1 Corinthians 11:30), certainly we must give attention to this explanation in any attempt to discover the causes of sickness. Before proceeding with the study of this lesson, turn, therefore, to 1 Corinthians 11, and read the entire chapter.

Now take special note of those verses that state the cause, the reason why many are weak and sickly among God’s people, and many even “sleep.”

“Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” (1 Corinthians 11:27-28)

Many professing Christians have refused to take the Lord’s Supper, because of this warning. They fear that because of some unworthiness, known or unknown, they would bring a curse upon themselves should they partake. Remember this: if you are unworthy to partake of the SYMBOLS of His blood and body, surely you are even more unworthy to be a partaker of His blood and body in reality. If you are unworthy to partake of the Communion, how can you expect to have part in the Rapture? Do not expect to stay out of trouble by a passive, neutral refusal to partake of the visible symbols. The only way to be sure of being right is to search out carefully the points that make you unworthy, and remedy those things.

Worthiness does not imply that one is sure he has fully attained the goal of sinless perfection, and can no longer find any room for improvement and growth. Christ Himself served the first Communion to twelve men who very quickly demonstrated the fact that they were still subject to human weaknesses, and short of perfection. (See Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 18 and 21)

You may say, “Then what does it imply?” The word “worthiness” as used here has a threefold implication:

(1) Attitude

First and most simple is the attitude of the believer at the time of partaking of the

symbols. There should never be any frivolity nor irreverence at such a solemn time. Never should it be approached lightly, nor as a mere formal ceremony. In partaking of these emblems, we “do shew the Lord’s death till he come.” (1 Corinthians 11:26) The thought of the suffering and death of Christ for our sakes should surely be a solemn thought.

By all means, a worthy attitude would never be a proud, haughty spirit, characterised by a superior or worthy feeling, but rather a deep realisation of the individual’s great need of a redeemer. Humility at the foot of the cross, sorrow for that sinful nature which made it necessary that the spotless Christ should be required to die for our sins, the just for the unjust (1 Peter 3:18). This is a necessary part of the attitude of one who may partake worthily of the symbols of Christ’s suffering.

Appreciation for His suffering, realisation that “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:” (1 Peter 1:18-19) This, too, must be a part of our worthiness. This realisation and appreciation means that we can no longer direct our own lives through self-will. We belong to Him! We are aware of it. Being free forever from sin, we are bound to Him forever by the cords of love, a love so strong that it can not be broken. Unless this is true, we are unworthy to partake of His body and His blood. “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Corinthians 6:20)

Partaking of the symbols of Christ’s body and blood, the bread and wine of the Lord’s Supper, is, if taken worthily, an open confession that the price has been paid, and accepted, the sale has been completed, and we are no longer our own but His! Every deed, thought and word, then, should be kept under subjection to His will. He knows that we are but dust, and will forgive our failures, when we confess them to Him, should we fall short of perfection through ignorance or weakness. (1 John 2:1; Psalms 103:14). He who professes to be a partaker of Christ, yet stubbornly claims the right to rule his own life, by disregarding the will, the commands, and the desires of Christ, and by refusing to submit to the principles of the law of love as set forth in the New Testament, “eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.” (1 Corinthians 11:29)

(2) Not Discerning the Lord’s Body - Overlooking a Privilege (1 Corinthians 11:29)

The blood of Christ was shed for the remission of sins, but it was His body that bore the stripes whereby we are healed.

“Who his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: **BY WHOSE STRIPES YE WERE HEALED.**” (1 Peter 2:24)

Many, in partaking of the Communion, drink the wine with happy realisation and praise to God for the glorious deliverance from sins through the shedding of the blood. Yet eat the bread without any realisation that this also typifies a definite price paid at a definite time for a definite blessing, which is ours if we will but accept it. This blessing

is HEALING.

Only as we believe and accept the blood of Christ for salvation do we find salvation. Drinking the wine of the Communion, alone will not wash away our sins. A young man who had been brought up in a home where God's Word was not read and God was not honoured, attended a church service for the first time on Communion Sunday. For the first time in his life, at the age of sixteen, he saw people taking Communion. Very little explanation was made, and when the elements of Communion were passed and his friend took a portion, he joined in just as he would join in the treats at a party. He had no realisation of the meaning of the wine or the bread. There was no change in his life as a result of taking the wine. There must first be an inward understanding of the cleansing of the blood, before the outward form can have any meaning.

Many fine Christian people receive no more benefit from partaking of the bread than this young man did in taking the wine, and for the same reason. They have never learned that when "Christ our Passover ... (was) sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7), the blood was sufficient to deliver from spiritual death, and the Body provided healing and physical strength. (Read the account of the first Passover, Exodus 12.)

When the death angel passed over the houses of Israel, he was not concerned with what was on the table, or on the pantry shelf. God said, "when I see the BLOOD, I will pass over you," (Exodus 12:13) Thus the curse of death was set aside by the blood.

But the command of God was not completed with the applying of the blood to the door posts, for God had also commanded that they should eat the flesh on that night, and thereby receive strength for the journey which lay ahead.

Even so, the blood of Christ shed upon Calvary is fully sufficient to make atonement for our sins. This being true, His sufferings at the whipping post and in Pilate's judgment hall were all in vain unless we accept healing.

But they were not in vain. **BY HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED!**

As we discern by faith the power of the blood of Christ, we are set free from the guilt and bondage of sin.

As we discern the Lord's body, we are set free from the bondage of sickness.

We are living under a better covenant than that of Moses, established upon better promises. (Hebrews 8:6)

Moses' covenant was strong enough that when his people partook of the blood and the body of their Passover lamb, it was sufficient to deliver them from both death and sickness.

"He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes." (Psalm 105:37)

Our new covenant is strong enough, too, to bring health and healing to every child of

God, if they would but believe His Word and obey His commands.

Many churches today, if they were consistent, would use only the wine for Communion, since they believe in the blood for salvation, but reject the broken body for our healing. No wonder so many are sick, for they have rejected the only remedy that is guaranteed to heal every disease, if used according to the directions!

The reason the minds of so many have been unable to grasp this glorious truth may be found in the third phase of unworthiness, which goes beyond and includes both the others:

(3) Failure to Discern the Lord's Body Alive in the World Today - His Church

To discern is to recognise, or to understand, as well as to see or perceive. Many Christians have been unwilling or unable to recognise His body as it is alive and working and moving in the world today. Their last glimpse of His body was as it was taken, dead and mutilated, from the cross and carried to Joseph's tomb. They visualise His body hanging, bleeding, upon the cross, but they live and move and work in a world where His LIVING body is all around them. They see Him day after day, and fail to recognise Him. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32), they fail to perceive that it is really He!

True enough, Christ Himself has ascended into the heavens (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9-11), but He left in the world a representative, which He has called "His body"! That body is alive in the world today, still doing the same things which He did while He was here.

"Now YE are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (1 Corinthians 12:27)

Because of failure to recognise this fact, many have been guilty of causing division in the body, of injuring other members of the body, of setting at naught the work of others in the body.

This is sin!

"God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members, rejoice with it." (1 Corinthians 12: 24-26)

Sin kills faith. You can not possibly claim the blessing which was purchased for you through the sufferings of Christ's body on the cross, while you continue to break and tear and destroy His body by criticising, belittling, slandering, backbiting, and otherwise hurting the members of His body all around you!

If you have been guilty of causing division in the body of Christ, either by tale-bearing, which separates others from one another, or by pride and self-righteousness, which separates YOU from the body, confess this as sin and turn from it so that your faith may grow. (See Proverbs 6:16-19; Matthew 24:48-51 and James 3)

Take your proper place in the body, whether it be small or great, and help others to do the same. (See 1 Corinthians 12:12-31)

Accept the blood of Christ for the cleansing of your sins. Then by faith accept the body of Christ for the healing of your body. This is yours, all of it. Jesus bought it for you. Do not be satisfied to receive only a part of what He purchased at such a great cost. Satan will short-change you if he can. He will cause you to accept a partial shipment, and think that God just did not send, or provide all that was purchased. Even if you have not yet received visible manifestation of all that Jesus purchased for you, determine now to do your part. The part that God in His Word asked you to do, not that which you or some other person may feel your part should be, for God Himself has set the conditions. Then praise Him by faith for all these benefits!

“Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.” (Psalms 103:1-3)

Forget not ALL His benefits! Who healeth ALL thy diseases! Your part is to believe ALL his promises, to heed ALL His commands, to keep ALL His statutes, and to praise Him and honour Him with ALL your soul and ALL your living.

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” (Colossians 3:17)

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

So now, discern the Lord’s body.

- (1) Recognise by faith the importance of His sacrifice in bearing the stripes as a substitute for your sufferings. Remember that your bearing of that suffering NOW will not diminish the suffering he has already borne. He is not PAYING the price; He has already PAID it! Honour it. Believe it. Accept it. It is YOURS!
- (2) Recognise and honour the other members of Christ’s body, the Church. Treat every member - regardless of church affiliation or the lack of it - with respect and honour that is due Christ Himself, for they are members of His own body. Seek and find your own place in the body. Seek it humbly, not thinking of yourself more highly than you ought to think. (Romans 12:3) Yet do not assume a false humility which prevents effective service. “Think soberly.” (Romans 12:3) Think of yourself as a son, and heir of God; a child of the King. Think of yourself as one, who by His Spirit and by the power of His might, can do anything He asks you to do. “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:13) Do not think of yourself above the other members of the body, for they share the same Lord, the same Father, the same promises, and the same power.

Do not be afraid to step out on the promises of God. You are His child (if you have believed). His promises are yours.

In striving for honour or recognition, never step on the other members of the body.

That is the WORLD'S way of rising. God's way up is DOWN! Serve your fellowmen in humility, and God Himself will exalt you in due time! (1 Peter 5:6)

HEALED, BUT SICK AGAIN

There are many sick today who once experienced marvellous healings. Some of these even complain of the same sickness from which they had once been so gloriously delivered. The enemy has used this as an occasion to speak reproachfully, and to destroy the faith of some. A prominent magazine carried a headline, "DO THESE HEALINGS LAST?" The stories listed under that headline were all accounts of healings lost! Our own experience over the years is that these healings DO last!

A man who is our neighbour now, living at Warren, Arizona, twenty miles from Miracle Valley, was healed when two vertebrae in his back had disintegrated and doctors had said that the slightest jar would bring death. Immediately, he turned a handspring as the Spirit of God rested heavily upon him. Then he bent over and lifted a heavy tool box before the people while leaving the ramp after prayer. Six months later, he attended another campaign in Dallas, Texas. He drove his own car. He helped take down the tent, then drove a car and house trailer to Philadelphia, Penna., where the next campaign was held, and before returning to his home, helped set up the tent there. He even drove tent stakes, using a sixteen pound sledge. His picture and testimony have been carried in Miracle Magazine at two different times. First, at the time he was healed, and later as he drove stakes for the setting up of the tent. That man is well, holding a job, and feeling fine today. He frequently attends services at Miracle Valley.

I could fill pages with case histories equally decisive, of those who have been instantly healed of visible and organic diseases and afflictions many years ago, and whose healings have lasted through the years.

Yet it is true, and Christ Himself said it would be so, that not all who receive healing remain healed. This does not mean that it is not God's will that these people should be well, or that they can not be permanently healed. To one whom Christ healed, He gave this warning, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." (John 5:14)

God does not heal anyone to give him more strength to continue in sin. Sickness returns to many because of their own carelessness and disobedience to God.

A later lesson will deal more fully with the subject of keeping your healing.
HEALED OF INFIRM SPIRIT.

"And behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself." (Luke 13:11)

According to the Bible, much sickness is due to afflicting spirits. This is not demon possession. It does not have its roots in the soul, but in the flesh. The individual so afflicted or tormented may be a fine Christian, with a sweet, beautiful soul. Yet year after year, the affliction remains. Even medical science fails to give any permanent relief. These cases frequently respond very readily to the ministration of laying on of hands and the healing command of a man or woman of faith. The difficulty is caused by

the presence of a demon, and when the demon goes, the difficulty goes.

Some have felt very much offended when the thought is suggested that they or their loved one might be afflicted because of a demon. They fail to recognise the distinction between possession that affects the soul and demon oppression or vexation, which may touch only the body. Note this description of the work of Christ:

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.” (Acts 10:38)

HEALING all that were OPPRESSED OF THE DEVIL: this, then, is a definite act of healing, and a definite spiritual cause of physical sickness.

This does not infer that all who are sick are oppressed of the devil. We are told that Jesus healed lepers, yet we do not infer that all who were healed were lepers. Neither do we infer that all who were healed were oppressed of the devil. In Mark 16:17 and 18, Jesus speaks separately of casting out devils and of laying hands on the sick for healing.

Nevertheless, it is very apparent that at least a part of the mental and physical troubles that people suffer today originate in demon oppression. Jesus recognised the presence of afflicting spirits in certain cases, and drove out those spirits with His command.

“Behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake:” (Matthew 9:32-33)

“Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.” (Matthew 12:22)

(Search out other cases throughout the gospels in which these and other afflictions are attributed to the presence of demons.)

In dealing with these cases of demon activity, Christ used a very direct approach. Many fail along these lines today because they are afraid to command the demon to depart, or because they do not have faith to believe that he will go at their command. Some have been heard to humbly plead, “Please, Mr. Devil, won’t you go away?” Of course he won’t. He is not that polite. The only thing that will drive him out is the word of AUTHORITY! That authority comes only from a life wholly surrendered to God, a knowledge of the Word of God regarding these matters, a firm faith, and firmly believing that God meant what He said: they shall “cast out devils.” (Mark 16:17) It requires that Satan be allowed no bridgeheads in the life of the individual who steps forward to use such power.

Jesus said, “Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him.” Mark 9:25.

He also said, “The prince of this world cometh (ie: Satan), and hath nothing in me.” (John 14:30) That was the secret of His power over the devil.

Seven sons of one Sceva attempted to cast out a devil, saying, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." (Acts 19:13) (Read the story, Acts 19:11-20.) They did not have power in their own lives. They had neglected to make a personal connection with the power of God. The demon possessed man answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" (Acts 19:15) He turned upon them, and overcame all seven, tearing off their clothing, so that they fled naked and ashamed.

As Spirit filled Christians, we need have no fear. God has given us power over all devils. They are subject to our command, but they will bluff their way and ignore that command and that power, unless we approach them with absolute confidence and faith in God's Word, and with assurance that God's power is in operation in our lives.

There are different kinds of infirm spirits, each having power to afflict the body in a different manner. Many are deaf, mute, or both, because of the presence of deaf or dumb spirits. There are demons that cause blindness. Cataracts, especially, which are caused by a living organism growing over the eye and shutting out the light, may be definitely classified as receiving their life from an inhabiting spirit, or demon. Other growths such as cancer, tumour, or goitres are living organisms invading the body and having life within themselves, receive their life from demons which inhabit the growth itself. When the demon is cast out, the growth dies and in the normal process of healing begins to diminish. In the case of a miracle, these growths may disappear instantly, but there is no cause for discouragement if the healing process is slower. Occasionally, the physical process of the body's throwing off the dead body of the demonic growth is very painful for a short period of time, but when it is gone, healing is very soon complete.

Nervous disorders and mental diseases seem to be very closely related to the operation of tormenting demons. (See Mark 5) Here a legion of demons had taken possession of one man. Physically he was so strong that chains could not hold him, but mentally he was a very sick man. In bringing deliverance, Christ cast out the unclean spirits (Mark 5:13). There were so many that upon leaving him they entered into about two thousand swine, causing them to run violently into the sea and drown. As soon as the demons were gone, the man was normal. The people who came from the city observed that he was clothed and in his right mind (Mark 5:15).

MEDICAL CARE IS NECESSARY FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT TRUST GOD

We have no quarrel with the medical profession. Rather, we thank God for trained men who are relieving the suffering of many whom do not have faith to trust God. Yet they can not help in every case, and do not claim to. Although many people in the world today have received help from physicians, many others are like the woman in Luke 8:43-44:

"And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd."

Surgery, no matter how skilfully done, can not remove a demon spirit. Surgery often

does bring relief, and sometimes by removing the invaded area from the body, makes way for nature to cure the parts that remain. But this is no guarantee that the demon so disposed from his living habitation will not return to invade some other area of the same body.

A woman in a recent campaign told me that she had undergone three operations, and that now her doctor informed her she must undergo a similar operation annually as long as she lives. It was impossible for surgery to bring a permanent cure.

THERE ARE PHYSICAL CAUSES OF SICKNESS - ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD

God created and planned the human body, as well as its environment.

God has given certain natural laws that are necessary for the welfare of the body. Ignoring these laws will bring discomfort, disease, and eventually death to the body. The laws of nature are GOD'S LAWS for physical health, and can not be broken without punishment in the form of sickness and infirmity. Divine healing was never intended to take the place of proper care of the body. This care includes rest, exercise, right eating, sanitation, and avoidance of weakening habits.

LACK OF REST MAY CAUSE SICKNESS

God commanded His people to rest one day out of each seven.

“Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.” (Exodus 20:9-10)

While we are no longer under legal bondage to keep the Sabbath, which the New Testament tells us was a shadow of a better rest to come (see Hebrews 4:9), Jesus Himself stated that “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:” (Mark 2:27) In other words, man needs one day of rest in seven. Even in countries where God and His law are not regarded, scientists have proven that man needs to rest, to change his routine, to relax one day in seven as a necessity for maintaining physical and mental alertness. Those who can not find time to rest, who keep themselves too busy with the cares of life to attend worship in the house of God make themselves liable for the inroads of disease. Even some who have given themselves without reserve to the work of God, and have failed to take the time to rest and to keep up their spiritual relationship with God, have found that eventually God, through nature, gives them time to rest! Many of these have been stricken down with sickness for a time, and unable to carry on any work, because they could not break away from their “necessary” work long enough to rest as God commanded. Many times, better management would make it possible to achieve even a larger volume of work, while still having the proper rest.

Nervous disorders and mental and physical breakdowns are on the increase. Much of this is attributed to overwork. This seems strange in a land where a shorter and shorter

work week has become common. Look around you. Those who work forty hours per week many times are continuing to carry out other programs of their own choosing during the remaining hours, and even on Sunday. Many of them work far into the night, “having fun”! There is no rest for body or soul. Sickness comes, and there is no faith to reach out and receive healing, for “FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD.” (Romans 10:17) The person who is too busy driving his body either in work or play to keep in touch with God lays himself open for the inroads of sickness.

THERE ARE DEFICIENCY DISEASES

Many diseases are called, by the medical profession, “deficiency diseases,” meaning that they are caused by a lack of essential elements in the diet. It is well for the Christian, in choosing his diet, to consider the value of various foods, which God has placed in the world, and choose from among them the foods that will keep his body strong and well, if it is at all possible for him to do so. This is not a matter of the soul’s salvation, but is vitally concerned with the body’s welfare.

In the beginning, God gave man the herbs and fruits for food. (See Genesis 1:29).

After the flood, God gave Noah and the entire race through him, an addition to their diet: the flesh of living moving things. He made one restriction: the blood of animals was not to be eaten with the flesh. (See Genesis 9:3-4) This one restriction is carried forward into the New Testament. (See Acts 15:28-29)

“For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” (1 Timothy 4:4-5)

Selection should be made intelligently, providing for all the needs of the body: protein, vitamins, minerals, fruits and vegetables, and a reasonable amount of meats and dairy products. Taste and appetite often perverted by misuse and habit, are not the best basis for selection.

SOME SICKNESS IS CAUSED BY OVER-EATING

More people in America are sick as a result of over-eating, or of eating foods that are too heavy and too rich than as a result of malnutrition. Over-eating is the direct cause of some sicknesses, and a contributing factor in many others. The work of all the organs of the body is so increased by over-eating and over-weight that it becomes impossible for these organs to carry on their normal duties, and sicknesses ranging from gout to stomach and heart troubles result. Even the deficiency diseases are frequently prevalent among those who over-eat, because they choose their foods on the basis of taste appeal, rather than the body’s needs. Too many rich, sweet, or starchy foods, fat meats, and the like, make the body fat, overburden the heart and digestive organs, at the same time failing to provide the food elements needed to rebuild the body cells and maintain health.

Many who seek prayer for their bodies would not need prayer if they would take a little care and choose the proper foods, limit their eating to the necessary amounts, and

give their bodies the proper rest.

Many of these would be benefited very little by an instant miracle of healing, for they would immediately begin again the process of tearing down their own bodies through the same disobedience to the laws of God and of nature that originally caused their sickness.

Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone." (Matthew 4:4) The eternal values of the kingdom are far greater than the present enjoyment of pleasant food and drink. "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." (1 Corinthians 9:25)

LACK OF EXERCISE MAY CAUSE SICKNESS

"For bodily exercise profiteth ..." (1 Timothy 4:8)

True enough, the King James version renders this, "Bodily exercise profiteth little;" however, the literal rendering from the original text, is rather, "For a little time." Godliness profits more.

Nevertheless, in any consideration of the Christian's way of life regarding health, it should be remembered that physical exercise is necessary to maintain muscle tone and to keep the body strong.

As Christians, let us not become worshippers of the "body beautiful," or more concerned with exercise, meats and drinks than with godliness. Yet we can serve God best when we serve Him with a clean soul in a strong body.

WEAKENING HABITS CAUSE SICKNESS

There are many that weaken their bodies through injurious habits. It is a well known fact, substantiated by the best medical authorities, as well as athletes, coaches, and others interested in building strong bodies, that the use of liquor, tobacco and narcotics is injurious to the body. Many diseases of the heart and liver, as well as cancer of the lungs and other diseases, have been attributed to one or more of these habits.

A man is brought for prayer, trembling in agony upon a stretcher, coughing and spitting blood and tissue from his lungs, too weak to lift a hand, but an attendant stands by, ready to light and hold his cigarette for him'. Of course he wants healing! No one likes to suffer like that, but he clings to the cause of his sickness more than he clings to life itself!

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1 Corinthians 3:17)

Knowing this, it seems unthinkable that any person would call himself a Christian and continue in these debasing habits, defiling his body with these recognised poisons! If you are among those who are still in bondage of any of these habits, make this the time when your body shall be set free from such bondage. No doubt, when you attempt to

set them aside, you will soon realise as never before, how great is this bondage! Any wholesome food can easily be replaced by another of the same food value, but what can take the place of tobacco, liquor, or dope, to the one who has lived under their sway?

God has said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8:36) Jesus can set you free!

EXPOSURE TO WEATHER OR TO DISEASE MAY CAUSE SICKNESS

Carelessly exposing the body to extremes of temperature, or to the germs of contagious diseases, comes under the heading of tempting God. (See Matthew 4:7) If any of these are necessary in our service for God, we may claim God's protection, and need not be in bondage to fear, as long as we walk by faith.

God has chosen to take up His abode in human bodies, as is shown by many Scriptures, "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" (1 Corinthians 6:19) All of us who are His are made caretakers of His temples. This is a sacred trust and responsibility. God is not glorified by our abuse of our bodies.

THE PSYCHOSOMATIC DISEASES ARE TO BE DEALT WITH

Those who preach and practice healing through prayer and faith are frequently accused of treating only these psychosomatic diseases or pains, caused by abnormal contraction of nerves and muscles due to emotional disturbances: fears, tensions and worries. While we who are familiar with case histories, know that this is not true (for we have seen broken bones healed and organs replaced which had been removed by surgery), still it is very true that many of those suffering from psychosomatic ailments do receive healing.

We shall pause here for only a moment to mention these emotional disturbances as one of the causes of sickness.

Even the best of doctors are not above attempting to relieve these very real pains. Their attempts are mainly a matter of the use of soda pills, or other "psychological medicines," giving a short period of psychological relief. Meanwhile they attempt to find the reason for the emotional disturbance and adjust the environment of the patient in such a way as to finally get at the real cause. Frequently such pains may be treated with sedatives, tranquillisers, or even narcotics. They are not just in the patient's mind. They are not just something that he can think his way out of. If relieving these sufferings were that easy, the doctors certainly would not permit them to continue to suffer. Medical science recognises these ills as real, and worthy of real treatment.

Then, should we not praise God and glorify His name, when faith brings healing?

Being rooted in the emotions, it is obvious that deliverance from fear, worry, unbelief, hatred, anger, malice, and many other habits of thought which the Scripture treats as undesirable, would and does bring immediate deliverance from the sufferings of psychosomatic ailments.

When God has promised His children, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27), there is no reason for Christians to continue to suffer from these psychosomatic pains, or from nervous and emotional diseases. Claim that peace for your own life. It will strike at the very cause of many ills.

SUMMARY

So then, we have learned that sickness is caused by:

- (1) **Sin.** The sin of the race, or a specific sin on the part of the individual. (Warning: do not, like “Job’s comforters,” add to the sorrows of the sick and afflicted by probing for the cause. Like them, you may find yourself seeking that person’s assistance to relieve your own suffering! (See Job 4:5-8 and 42:7-10.)
- (2) **Ignorance.** Failure to appropriate the blessings which Jesus has purchased for us, because of failure to realise that they belong to us. Based upon failure to read and understand the promises given in God’s Word.
- (3) **Unbelief.** Having read and heard God’s promises, persisting in the kind of thinking which does not take those promises into account, remember this: it is not so much WHAT you believe as WHO you believe! Believe for healing, not because it is a thing that is pleasant to believe, but because God has promised it, and God can not lie! Believe HIM!
- (4) **Division.** Failure to discern the Lord’s body, your own place in the body, and the intimate relationship between yourself and other members of the body. A willingness to hurt other members of the body, not realising that as members of the same body, they are a part of yourself. Having hurt others, you must surely suffer with them!
- (5) **Spiritual oppression.** The work of demons, or of infirm spirits, while possible even among Christians, and probable among those who are not Christians, does not necessarily possess the soul, but rather afflicts the body. May be a means of entry into the soul, in which case actual possession would occur.
- (6) **Physical causes:**
 - (a) Deficiency of certain food elements necessary to the body’s health.
 - (b) Over-eating. Gluttony. This can become sin.
 - (c) Inactivity. Lack of proper exercise.
 - (d) Lack of proper rest and recreation.
 - (e) Careless and negligent exposure to weather and disease.
 - (f) Wrong, mental and emotional habits, or should we say wrong spiritual habits.

Fears, worries, hatred, failure to find rest and peace and trust in Christ.

Examine yourself carefully for any of these causes. Once you have found the cause of your own sickness, and have faced it squarely, it is not too hard to remove the cause. When the cause is gone, the affliction often goes, or if the physical loss has already been too great, God is still a **MIRACLE WORKING GOD!** He **CAN** and **WILL** restore that which Satan has stolen away! Be sure that everything is right in your own heart, and then look to God in perfect confidence. He **WILL** meet your need!

LESSON THREE

MISCONCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO HEALING

Are you sick for the glory of God?

Do you think your sickness is a “thorn in the flesh”?

Do you feel your sickness may be a penalty for some unknown sin?

Do you feel you may be among those whom God *is* chastening? Have you been taught that God heals some but it is His will for others to remain sick?

Have you heard it said that God answers all prayers - some He answers “Yes,” some He answers “No,” and some He answers “Wait”?

Then your failure to receive healing through prayer may be like the failure of many other sincere Christians, the result of **WAVERING FAITH**. Like them, you may try again and again to believe God for your healing but just when healing seems to be within your grasp, suddenly you find yourself wondering whether God will really do it.

Many born-again Christians, who are living sincerely and wholeheartedly for God, are sick and even remain sick after having been prayed for, for healing. This may be due to some misconception in regard to the teachings of God’s Word. They have not been able to understand that God promises healing to **ALL** that ask in faith. They do not realise the extent of God’s great guarantee of healing. Because of this misconception, they have **WAVERINGLY** asked.

God says, “Let him ask in faith, **NOTHING WAVERING**. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” (James 1:6-7)

Often these people come for prayer with their minds made up that they **DO** believe, and that they will **NOT** waver in faith, but when they face the situation, they find their faith wavers. They say, “I really thought I was going to be healed this time, but I just can’t seem to have enough faith.

These people really have faith, but their faith is made to waver by the entrance into their minds of misconceptions regarding the Word of God, which have commonly been taught for doctrines, but which really can not be proven by the Word of God. These are traditions of men that make “the Word of God of none effect,” (Mark 7:13) to the person who heeds them.

Jesus said of those who taught in this way, “In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.” (Mark 7:7; Matthew 15:9) God has promised healing to His people, but those who profess to be His ministers have told the people that He didn’t mean what He said!

It is important both to your faith as an individual Christian and to the success of your

ministry, should you be called to minister, that you believe God's Word as it is written. Also to teach the truth of God's Word pure and unadulterated by the idea of those who before you have made excuses for their unbelief by wresting and twisting the Word of God. "Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:15-16)

These misconceptions in regard to healing have been built up over many years by those who form their ideas from the ideas of others rather than by going to God's Word for their doctrines.

A young woman sets out to make a patchwork quilt using an accurately drawn pattern. After cutting the first block, she lays aside the pattern and uses the cut pieces for a pattern. When all the blocks are finished, they won't fit together because the last blocks are so different from the first. Even so, doctrines built by comparison with other doctrines soon fall far short of the original pattern, the Word of God.

Take God's Word and read it carefully for yourself as though you had never heard a sermon. Read especially the four Gospels with your mind open and attuned to the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Mark particularly the passages describing Christ's healings and miracles. You will be surprised at what you find in the original pattern. Go from the Gospels into the Epistles in the same manner. Such a reading of God's Word will revolutionise your life and your faith.

The misconceptions in regard to healing mentioned at the beginning of this lesson are not harmless variations in doctrine. Instead they are tricks devised by Satan himself to deprive God's people of blessings purchased at Calvary and at the whipping post, and to deprive God of the glory that he would receive from the fulfilment of His promises. They are slander against the character of God, for God having promised, is true to His Word.

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19)

MANY HAVE THE IDEA THAT SOME ARE SICK FOR THE GLORY OF GOD!

This is the most prominent misconception regarding healing. Many are taught that they are sick for the glory of God. This teaching is based upon two misinterpreted incidents in the ministry of Christ.

(1) Consider the Death of Lazarus.

The sickness of Lazarus has often been referred to as for the glory of God and is based upon the following Scripture: When Jesus was told that Lazarus was sick, He replied: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might

be glorified thereby.” (John 11:4)

When Jesus finally came to Bethany, and was met by the sisters of Lazarus, He certainly was not met with praise, nor were they glorifying God nor His Son. The Son of God was glorified WHEN LAZARUS CAME FORTH FROM THE TOMB. (Verse 44)

Lazarus was raised for the glory of God! - not sick for the glory of God!

(2) Look at the Man Born Blind.

In this case, some of Jesus’ disciples questioned Him concerning a man born blind, whether the man had sinned or his parents. (Note: This is an example of the attitude of that time regarding the relationship between sin and sickness.) Jesus answered, “Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” (John 9:3)

This does not infer that neither this man nor his parents had ever committed a sin, for we are told “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) Rather, this blindness, which was unusual, was not a direct punishment of unusual sin.

If this man was blind for God’s glory, then Jesus was working against the glory of God, for He gave sight that day to the man who was born blind. This man’s blindness was not in itself a glory to God. Rather his blindness was an occasion for the works of God to be made manifest in him. God was glorified when those who had known him to have been born blind, saw that suddenly he was able to see.

IF YOU ARE SICK FOR GOD’S GLORY, THEN LET GOD BE GLORIFIED NOW BY ACCEPTING HEALING FROM HIM, and witnessing to all about you of the mighty power of God, who delivers all those who trust in Him!

CHASTENED BY SICKNESS

A young woman came in to one of our meetings in Idaho wearing a heavy body brace. For more than a year, she had been under the doctor’s orders to lift nothing and to move about very carefully. She had been in a serious automobile accident causing injury to her spine. The doctor had told her she might have to wear the brace the rest of her life.

This young woman was a minister of the Gospel. She had preached divine healing and prayed for many who had been healed, yet she was persuaded in her own mind that she could not be healed because she felt certain that the accident had occurred because she was moving out of the will of God. She based her belief upon the Scripture found in Hebrews 12:6 - “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

She attended an afternoon Faith Clinic Service where that same Scripture was used as the text. The minister began pointing out that while affliction or trouble may come upon Christians as punishment for disobedience or sin, a loving Father does not punish

His child more severely than is needed for that child's crime or misbehaviour. Even though such sickness may come as penalty for sin, heartfelt repentance removes the reason for punishment. Thus it is not necessary for any Christian to remain sick. God has provided repentance not only as a means to salvation but as a means to staying saved, and as a means to qualify for all God's blessings.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) This was not written to people who had never been born again but to those who, having begun a Christian life, still fall short occasionally of the life of sinless perfection which is God's ideal for His people.

What a joy it was to that young woman to re-establish her fellowship with God, humbly repenting of her disobedience. How happy she was in the service that night to report that she had not only removed the brace but had gone back to her room, moved a heavy typewriter, carried her suitcases to the car, and was ready to go back on the field to preach the Gospel. Her healing was a great blessing but her renewed fellowship with God was greater.

Yes, you may be punished and chastened, but God will never punish without letting you know what He is punishing you for, and He will not continue to punish when the need for punishment is over.

"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." (Psalms 103:8-10)

**"JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY,
AND TODAY, AND FOR EVER."** (Hebrews 13:8)

Not once in all His earthly ministry did Jesus ever command any person to be sick, although He commanded many to be well, and healed them with His Word. Not once did a sick person come to Him asking to be healed and receive the answer, "It is God's will for you to remain sick for His glory."

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." (Hebrews 13:8) Then it is inconceivable that while He was here on earth He glorified the Father by healing "all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people," (Matthew 4:23) but now having gone back to the Father, He is glorified by the people remaining patient in affliction, declaring to all whom they meet that this sickness is an evidence of the love of God toward them.

No wonder those who are not Christians, are not interested in sharing such love!

Nowhere in the Scripture are we told that God answers prayer by saying, "No." "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." (1 John 3:21-22)

This does not say that part of our prayers are answered "No." The wording is "What-

soever we ask we receive.” We do not ask for bread and receive a stone; we do not ask for an egg and receive a scorpion. (Luke 11:11-13) We do not ask for healing and receive sickness; for deliverance and receive bondage.

Search the Gospels! You will find no instance where Christ ever told one who came to Him for healing to wait - to come back later. If He, then, is just the same today, how can He tell people today to wait?

SICKNESS - A PENALTY FOR SIN

Nowhere in the Word of God is sickness declared to be an evidence of God’s favour. Rather, it is a penalty for sin.

“If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD: Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of bug continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.” (Deuteronomy 28:58-61)

The reward of obedience is health and healing. “And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will, put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.” (Exodus 15:26)

WILLINGNESS FOR GOD’S WILL

A glaring inconsistency in those who hold the view that sickness may be the will of God, is that, while they do not come to God for healing, they seem to feel no qualms of conscience in doing all that is humanly possible to ease pain and restore health. If sickness is truly God’s will for them, should they try to escape it?

Suppose I should say to you, “I am labouring in this city for the glory of God. It is God’s will for me to labour here, but I will stay only until I can somehow find a way to get away from here. I’m leaving just as soon as I can earn, beg or borrow the price of a bus ticket to take me away. I know it is God’s will for me to be here, but He can keep me here only by making it impossible for me to leave!” These good people would be horrified, and would doubtless accuse me of being rebellious against God. Nevertheless, they say they are sick for God’s glory, yet it is very apparent by their expenditures for doctors and medicines that they will remain that way only so long as it is impossible for them to make themselves well. Is not this inconsistent?

(Please note: It was not I nor God’s Word which declared that sickness is God’s will for His people.)

Sickness is NOT the will of God for His people. It is the work of the devil. It is the will

of God for His people to “prosper and be in health.” (3 John 2) Therefore, let us come to God without wavering, in full assurance that we are asking in His will.

“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.” (1 John 5:14-15)

A woman suffering with cancer called a well-known minister to pray for her. When he entered the room she declared, “It may be that God has given me this cancer for his glory. Perhaps, through this cancer my son may be won to Christ.” Her lack of faith was obvious. After consideration, the minister replied, “Then, if God has given you this cancer and is being glorified by it and a soul is to be saved through it, perhaps we should not ask God to remove it. Perhaps we should ask God to give you more cancers so that more souls can be saved.” Needless to say, the woman was angry at this suggestion. She had not thought the matter through to a conclusion.

Please bear in mind that Christ died for the sins of the entire world, once for all. His suffering on the cross - not your suffering with a cancer - is the means of the salvation of souls. Nowhere in Scripture do we find an example of God placing sickness upon one of his obedient servants. Sickness may, indeed, come as a curse upon the lawless and disobedient. (See Deuteronomy 28:22, 28 and 61)

This Scripture deals with the curses of the law, but remember, only those who have come under grace by accepting Christ and living by the Spirit have escaped from the curses of the law. (See Romans 8:2-8)

SCRIPTURES ARE MISQUOTED IN AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE SICKNESS IS THE WILL OF GOD

Those who insist that some are sick because it is the will of God strengthen their position by quoting as examples a few cases in Scripture that they feel are circumstantial evidence. Such evidence has to be accepted only “with reservations” in any court of law.

Then, under careful examination, these cases break down, even as circumstantial evidence.

THE CASE OF JOB AND HIS BOILS

Let us consider the matter of Job and his boils. According to the testimony of God Himself, Job was a perfect and upright man, in that he “feareth God, and escheweth evil.” (Job 1:8) No divinity or superhuman perfection is attributed to Job. Any Christian can and should be at least as perfect as was Job, for our opportunities, privileges and powers are far ahead of his. And Jesus Himself left us the commandment to be “perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” (Matthew 5:48)

No Christian is in the will of God, nor in a position to seek healing, who is satisfied with being anything less than perfect. Though we may need to say with Paul, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after.”

(Philippians 3:12a) Let us keep this goal constantly before us, and earnestly “press toward the mark” at all times as it says in verse 14a.

Never make excuses for imperfections. **PERFECTION IS THE GOAL.**

God accounted Job as perfect, because he sincerely feared God and eschewed (shunned, found no pleasure in doing) evil. However, a careful study of the book of Job will reveal to the thoughtful person that there were reasons enough in Job himself for his trouble being allowed to come upon him. God does not submit His faithful and beloved follower to be tortured by Satan for no better reason than merely to prove a point to the devil. True enough, Job’s faithfulness WAS proved, and Satan’s boast proved empty, but a far greater issue than that was involved in the trial of Job. This book indicates that even a perfect man can be made better.

First, let us note that while Job was commended for his fear of God (Job 1:8), this was not Job’s only fear. When he found that he was bereft of family and possessions, suffering in body, scorned by his wife, misunderstood and accused by his friends, he cried out, “The thing which I GREATLY FEARED is come upon me.” (Job 3:25)

FEAR IS NOT FAITH

Faith is our protection against sin and sickness, and when these enemies lay hold upon us, faith is our only means of deliverance. Satan saw it as a hedge round about Job, through which he could not penetrate, but fear, being opposed to faith, makes an opening in the hedge through which Satan may enter. Job is not to be condemned for his attitude, for he had not the Scriptures as we have today. His knowledge of God and his dealings came only from oral tradition and from an incomplete direct personal revelation of God. (Note: Job is generally recognised as the first-written book of the Bible.)

FAITH COMETH BY HEARING

Since faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, it is little wonder that Job should have failed to have faith sufficient to protect him from Satan’s attack. Having God’s glorious promises so easily accessible, let us grasp them by faith and step forth into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, rather than remain grubbing in Job’s ash heap for an excuse to remain in bondage to sickness and the oppression of Satan.

God did not afflict Job. Job. 2:7: - “Satan ... smote Job with sore boils. Even this he could not do without God’s permission.”

JOB’S REPENTANCE AND NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

In his desperation, Job examined his attitude toward God, and through the struggles of his soul, he found a new relationship with God. True, he had feared God and striven to do right and avoid evil. But now, when his wife urged him to curse God and die (Job 2:9) and his friends accused him of every kind of sin (even calling those sins by name), Job discovered that only one thing remained a firm anchor in his fast-changing world. In his anguish he cried, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:” (Job 13:15) God

could not disregard such faith as that. Immediately God began to work toward Job's deliverance. He revealed Himself to Job in such a glorious flash of splendour as has seldom been equalled in His dealings with any one man. In the light of this revelation, Job had a fine opportunity to compare his own righteousness with that of his Maker, and found himself to be sadly lacking. He approached God then, not in a spirit of self-righteousness, but in true humility and repentance (Job 42:6) mixed with faith. He was even willing to pray for the deliverance of his accusers, and "the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends:" (Job 42:10)

But the most beautiful part of the whole story is found in the concluding verses of the Book of Job. After Job had repented of his self-righteousness and lack of trust, and after he had proven his humility and forgiveness by praying for his friends, God set him free from the CAPTIVITY of Satan. Then we see Job restored to all his former glory and blessed with even more than he had at the beginning. He lived another one hundred and forty years, and there is no record that he ever had another boil to annoy him in all that time!

If you have been following Job's example, sitting in the ash heap bemoaning your fate and blaming it upon God, take another look at your example. Place your trust in God, as Job did, though it may seem to lead only to death. Start searching the Scriptures, reading prayerfully, and as though you had never heard those explanations men have added by their traditions. Look to God HIMSELF to find the cause of your sickness, and when you have found the cause, GET RID OF IT. Like Job, you will be set free from bondage; GOD IS JUST THE SAME TODAY!

CASES IN THE MINISTRY OF PAUL

The enemies of the Gospel of Healing have attempted to point out that if an example can be found of one who was a true child of God, whom God could not or would not heal, no guarantee can be given that God will heal all who meet the conditions. Seeing beforehand this attempt to discredit His work, the Lord has carefully shown us in His Word the REASONS why those sicknesses persisted for a while, even in the presence of the mighty miracle-working powers of Christ and also in the first disciples with whom Christ worked, "confirming the word with signs following." (Mark 16:20)

In this regard we will deal briefly with the cases often mentioned, having to do with the ministry of Paul by whose hands God wrought special miracles (Acts 19:11-12). Not only those whom he touched were healed, but even men and women who were hindered from contacting him personally were healed of diseases and delivered from evil spirits, when handkerchiefs or aprons were brought to them from Paul's body.

The Case of Epaphroditus

We are told that Paul's fellow soldier and companion in labour, Epaphroditus, became sick while in the company of Paul, and was nigh unto death. In fact, these are Paul's own words (Philippians 2:27). However, Paul does not stop here, but in the same verse declares that "God had mercy on him," so that he was able to make the long journey from Rome to Philippi, despite the difficulty of such a journey in those times, showing the Philippians by his presence the greatness of the power and love of God in his

behalf. Not only this, but in verse 30, Paul explains the reason for the sickness. “Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.”

The gifts of healing do not guarantee an unlimited supply of strength and energy to the human body. It is possible even in so worthy a work as carrying the Gospel and praying for the sick, to tax the body beyond what God has made it able to endure, bringing sickness as a result. Even in a case like this God shows Himself merciful, and, while a period of absolute rest or convalescence, may be required, there is no need to be permanently defeated because of a nervous breakdown or other illness caused by overwork.

The Case of Luke, the Physician, Travelling with Paul

We are told that even Paul had his private physician - Luke - who travelled with him to watch after his health. It is true that Luke had been trained as a physician (Colossians 4:14). However, there is as much reason to declare that Jesus took Matthew with Him as His private tax collector, as to assert that Luke was chosen to go with Paul because of his skill as a physician. There is no record in the Scripture that Luke ever treated either Paul or any sick person in any place that they visited, in the capacity of a physician. Only once is his being a physician mentioned. As author of the books of Luke and Acts, he records many miraculous healings. It is noteworthy that every one of them is recorded as one hundred percent miraculous. Never once is it recorded that either Luke or any other physician applied any medical aid to supplement to the miracle-working power of God. No doubt, Luke, being a physician, was especially impressed with the ease with which Christ and His Spirit-filled disciples relieved diseases that the physicians had spent much time and effort trying in vain to heal. In fact, it is Luke who records that “a woman baying an issue of blood twelve years, WHICH HAD SPENT ALL HER LIVING UPON PHYSICIANS, NEITHER COULD BE HEALED OF ANY; Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood-stauched.” (Luke 8:43-4)

No doubt it is true that faithful physicians have relieved much human suffering, but there are plenty of people in the world today who have never learned of the healing power of God, to keep all the physicians busy, and to fully justify their existence in the world. Let us know the Great Physician, wait at His feet, (instead of waiting in the overcrowded waiting room of the earthly physician,) to find relief. Relief that is full and free, without money and without price, and may we add, without medicine or surgery, that our bodies may be well and strong for His glory. Surely He is worthy of every testimonial to His skill and faithfulness that His loving followers can give.

IF YOU ARE SICK, START TODAY TO EXAMINE YOURSELF ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD. Find what He says to do and DO IT. These treatments are not in the experimental stage. They are tried and proven - unconditionally guaranteed to be one hundred percent effective when used according to instructions.

The Case of Paul’s Thorn in the Flesh

As a final proof that God denies nearing to some, they quote, “Lest I should be exalted

above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2 Corinthians 12:7- 9)

Whatever Paul’s thorn may have been, God’s grace was surely sufficient for him, for the list of his achievements and sufferings given in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 would certainly be a sufficient test of grace. Yet to say that Paul’s thorn was a physical defect would certainly require some backing beyond what is found in this passage of Scripture, for sickness is not mentioned. The strongest advocates of the idea that the thorn was a physical weakness dare not go further than to say, “It has been conjectured that Paul’s thorn in the flesh was chronic ophthalmia.” (Schofield Bible, Page 1239) (Severe inflammation of the eyes.)

Surely in the face of the glorious promises of healing given boldly in the Word of God, something stronger than a mere conjecture that Paul was sick should be required to cancel such strong promises.

The term “thorn in the flesh” has been so commonly connected in our thinking with sickness that it has come to have that meaning to many readers of Scripture, but let us examine its use in other Scriptures, to see if that was the thought of the writer.

In Numbers 33:55, the Israelites were warned, “If ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and THORNS IN YOUR SIDES.” This warning is repeated in Joshua 23:13 and in Judges 2:3. Thus the thorn refers, not to something within the body, but to annoyances from without, caused by people. Paul speaks of his particular thorn as being “the messenger of Satan to buffet me.”

The word “buffet” means to strike as with the hand; to contend with.

In the list of the infirmities in which Paul chooses to glory (2 Corinthians 11:23-33), there is no sickness, nor blindness mentioned, but rather persecutions. He does mention weariness and painfulness, but would not beatings, stonings, hunger, and cold be sufficient cause for weariness and painfulness?

After reviewing the list of Paul’s sufferings and accomplishments, would it not require more faith in the miraculous to believe that he was carried through all these things while suffering from physical illness, than to believe that he was kept in health by the power of God?

Careful consideration of the words used by Paul, by comparing those words with their accepted definition and the manner in which they are used in other Scriptures, would indicate that Paul’s thorn in the flesh was something from without, probably his treatment by other persons or another person. His reference to “buffeting” would refer more easily to the beatings, stonings, and the like which he received after he preached the Gospel from city to city, than to any possible sickness in his own body. Added to this is the fact that in Paul’s own writings are found many of the tremendous promises

of healing.

“To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:9)

“And God hath set some in the church, ... then gifts of healings.” (1 Corinthians 12:28)

“Have all the gifts of healing?” (1 Corinthians 12:30)

It was Paul himself who declared, “God is no respecter of persons:” (Acts 10:34) His promises are YOURS! Let no man beguile you.

Every one of these misconceptions has been used by Satan for generations to hinder or destroy the faith of God’s people. Faith, in its simplest definition, is just this: believing that God meant what he says! When the doubts created in your mind by these misconceptions, and those resulting from wilful disobedience to his commands, have been cleared away, then you will find, it easy to come to God in faith, nothing wavering.

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised).” (Hebrews 10:22-23)

BELIEVE THE WORD OF GOD, AND NOT THE TRADITIONS THAT HAVE BEEN BUILT UP ABOUT IT

As the flame of your faith is made to burn brightly, no longer wavering, you may ask God **WHATSOEVER HE HAS PROMISED!** It shall be done unto you!

SUMMARY

So then, we have learned that there are many misconceptions concerning healing which hinder our faith. We must ask in faith, nothing wavering, to obtain results. These misconceptions are:

- (1) Sick for the glory of God. This teaching is based on two incidents from the Bible - the raising of Lazarus and the account of the man born blind. Neither glorified God through the actual sickness, but the sickness was used for the glory of God - Lazarus when he was raised from the dead; the blind man when Jesus restored his sight.

If you are sick for God’s glory, then let God be glorified **NOW** by accepting healing from Him, and witnessing to all about you of the mighty power of God, who delivers all those who trust in Him!

- (2) Sickness can be a chastening or punishment from God, but we can still claim healing by repenting and restoring our fellowship with God. God will never punish without letting us know what it is for and will not continue to punish when we

have learned our lesson.

- (3) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. He always answers our prayers. He never says “No” nor “Wait” when we ask for healing, in faith, as it is always His will to heal. Be sure you’re asking in faith, and there is no question as to the answer!
- (4) Sickness is a penalty for sin but it is not God’s will for His people. It is not an evidence of God’s favour. It is a curse from the Lord. It is a glaring inconsistency that those who claim that sickness may be the will of God for some, do all they possibly can by human effort to ease pain and restore health. If sickness were the will of God for them, should they try to escape it?

Only those who are under grace have escaped from the curses of the Law.

- (5) To try to prove that sickness is the will of God, some have used the following cases:
 - (a) Job and his boils: Job was a perfect man; any Christian can be as perfect as Job was; our privileges far surpass his. God permitted Job to be afflicted by Satan. Job had feared, and the thing he had feared had come upon him. Fear is not faith. Job changed his attitude and found a new relationship with God. “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him:” Job 13:15, showed a kind of faith God could not disregard. Job found the cause of his sickness and God set him free. Then Job was better off than he was in the beginning.
 - (b) Cases in the ministry of Paul: Epaphroditus: He became sick but God had mercy on him.” (Philippians 2:27), and healed him. Rest or convalescence may sometimes be required. It is possible to overtax the body even in the work of the Lord. Luke, the Physician: He travelled with Paul but there is no statement in scripture that he was with Paul in the capacity of a physician.
 - (c) Case of Paul’s thorn in the flesh: Whatever his thorn in the flesh was, it is plain from a study of the Word that it was not sickness - perhaps his treatment by an individual or individuals acting in the capacity of Satan’s messenger. It was surely something from the outside, not a bodily illness that was his “thorn” although the Scriptures do not say definitely just what it was.
- (6) We should believe the Word of God and not the traditions that have been built up around it. Satan has used all these misconceptions for generations to keep God’s people from claiming what is rightfully theirs. We can ask God for **WHATSOEVER HE PROMISED** and it shall be done, for “He is faithful that promised.”

WHEN THE DOUBTS CAUSED BY THESE MISCONCEPTIONS HAVE BEEN CLEARED AWAY, IT IS EASY TO COME TO GOD IN FAITH, NOTHING WAVERING.

LESSON FOUR

CONSIDER THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF FAITH

“Thy faith hath made thee whole.” (Mark 5:34)

“According to YOUR FAITH be it unto you.” (Matthew 9:29)

“As THOU HAST BELIEVED, so be it done unto thee.” (Matthew 8:13)

“For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive ANYTHING of the Lord.” (James 1:6-7)

A certain woman (Mark 5:25-34) had an issue of blood twelve years. This woman had suffered many things of many physicians, had spent all she had, but instead of getting better, she rather grew worse. Finally, hearing of Jesus, she touched His garment and was made whole.

What made this woman whole?

Many will say, “Christ.”

In a sense, that is right, for without touching Him, she could never have been healed. But after she was healed, Christ Himself said, “Daughter, THY FAITH hath made thee whole.” (Verse 34) Then according to Jesus’ own words, it was HER FAITH that made her whole. She would never have overcome the difficulties in her path that seemingly made it impossible for her to touch Him, had she not had FAITH!

At another time (Matthew 9:27), two blind men came to Jesus for healing. He touched their eyes, and they were opened.

What was it that opened the blind eyes?

After Jesus touched them, He declared, “According to YOUR FAITH be it unto you.” (Verse 29)

Then, in reality, it was their faith, in cooperation with the power of God through Jesus Christ, which brought about their healing.

THERE IS HEALING IN THE ATONEMENT

Seven hundred years before Calvary, Isaiah looked forward to the cross. Upon that cross he saw a man dying for the sins of the world. Not only dying - shedding His blood - for the sins of the world, but dying with His back bruised and bleeding from the cruel stripes, the beating with whips which He bore that man might be set free from sickness, as well as from sin.

Isaiah cried out in prophetic utterance as he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost:

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and WITH HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED.” (Isaiah 53:3-5)

Sixty years after Calvary, the apostle Peter declared, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye WERE HEALED.” (1 Peter 2:24)

What difference does it make whether it is 60 years after Calvary or 1900 years after Calvary? Time can not change God’s eternal Word. The fact remains that at Calvary YE WERE HEALED!

The work was finished there. ALL GOD ASKS US TO DO IS TO BELIEVE IT.

There is Atonement for the Soul and Healing for the Body.

Only as a sinner believes in Calvary for the atonement for his soul can he receive salvation from sin. And only as we believe that He bore the stripes for our healing can we receive this tremendous blessing.

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and FORGET NOT ALL his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.” (Psalms 103:2-3)

Remember these inspired words of David when you consider the benefits of Calvary.

He shed His blood for our sins. “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things ... But with the precious BLOOD of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:” (1 Peter 1:18-19)

“In whom we have redemption through His BLOOD, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” (Ephesians 1:7)

At Calvary we find atonement for the soul but we can not stop there. That is only half the benefit of Calvary. The other half is healing for the physical body. Christ suffered in His body for our healing.

Many today have forgotten His benefits. Many remember only part of His benefits but have forgotten that part which provides deliverance for our physical bodies. So far as they are concerned, they make the sufferings of Christ to be in vain.

“Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” (Matthew 8:17)

Since Christ bore your sicknesses, you no longer have to be sick. You can be released from sin and sickness by remembering that Christ finished your redemption from both, ONCE FOR ALL, at Calvary.

GOD'S GUARANTEE TO HEAL THE SICK

God's Word should never be doubted because God can not lie. Whatever God has spoken, He is able to make good, and the Word declares that He SHALL make it good.

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Numbers 23:19)

This all-powerful, unchanging God has promised to heal ALL our diseases. This is not hope-so, or think-so, or maybe-so. It is a definite promise. It is the plain emphatic Word of God.

If God has promised to forgive sins, He has promised to heal, and GOD CAN NOT LIE. Can God break a covenant, or alter the thing that has gone out of His lips?

NO!

“My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.” (Psalms 89:34)

PROMISES ARE CONDITIONED UPON FAITH

There is no way to receive anything from God except by faith. James states this fact: “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” (James 1:6-7)

The outstanding ministers of church history, (like Moody, Finney, Spurgeon, Wesley, Luther, Saint Paul, and the apostles) brought deliverance to the people of the time in which they lived. These ministers differed from other men - not so much in their mental ability, education, personality, talents, or human advantages - as in their simple trust in God. They did not go about to found churches, to build for themselves a great name. They simply read God's Word, and believed that he meant what He said. They laid aside the elders' traditions, which so frequently set at naught the Word of God, and thought, taught, and acted upon the fact that God is true, and that every man who disagrees with God is a liar.

God guarantees in His Word to reward that kind of faith.

Jesus said to the centurion, “AS THOU HAST BELIEVED, so be it done unto thee.” (Matthew 8:13) In reading the New Testament accounts of healing in the ministry of Jesus and His early followers, we find many such statements.

FAITH IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO RECEIVE ANYTHING FROM GOD

There are four kinds of faith:

(1) Human Faith: This is “head-faith.”

It is the kind of faith you have that if you board a bus it will take you where you want to go. It is a common every day thing which is evidenced in all the activities of daily life. You write a letter, go to the Post Office, buy a tiny stamp for five cents, place it on the corner of the envelope, drop the letter into the slot - having complete confidence that the person to whom you addressed the letter will receive it within a few days.

In this sense, even the demons believe. (James 2:19)

Demons believe there is a God. They believe and tremble. (That’s more than some people do).

The next three types of faith are of the heart - are, in fact, divine.

(2) Saving Faith

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” (Ephesians 2:8)

This is putting “head faith” into action; it is committing ourselves to our belief in Christ. It is accepting Him as God’s Son, and as our Saviour. It is giving ourselves to Him as obedient and loving “bondslaves” bought with His own blood.

This saving faith is also a gift, we are told (Ephesians 2:8), but it is not the supernatural gift of the Spirit of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 12.

How do we know? We know that all can receive saving faith, but Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:9, “To another faith by the same Spirit;” Weymouth translates this “To a third man, by means of the same Spirit, special faith.”

So faith, the gift of the Spirit, is distributed according to the sovereign will of God.

(3) Faith, The Fruit

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance:” (Galatians 5:22-23)

The faith mentioned in this passage is one of the fruits of the Spirit and is for character. This is the faith without which no man can please God. “But without faith it is impossible to please him:” (Hebrews 11:6) It is actually the development and growth of saving faith.

(4) Faith, The Gift

This faith is for power. This is the gift of the Spirit by which one may work miracles, or receive them.

Daniel, facing the den of lions, must have experienced a supernatural faith that closed the mouths of the lions. “And of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.” (Hebrews 11:32-33)

Paul, on the Island of Melita, shook off the poisonous serpent and was unharmed, because he exercised the supernatural gift of faith.

It is difficult to distinguish between the gift of faith and the gift of miracles.

“And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (Mark 4:36-41)

When the disciples were out on the sea in a storm tossed boat, they could have, by faith, sailed through the storm as if it had not existed. That is what Jesus wanted them to do. That would have been a miracle of faith.

However, they became fearful and the only way Jesus could get them to trust Him in the storm was to remove their fear. Thus He did by performing the miracle of stilling the storm.

That is the difference between a miracle of faith and of a miracle of the gift of miracles. One is passive, the other active. One is spectacular and the other is not. Yet which would be the greater blessing?

The operations of the gift of faith are not always immediately obvious.

“By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.” (Hebrews 11:20)

These things were a long time coming to pass but Isaac had supernatural faith to pronounce these blessings upon his sons.

Abraham believed God to lead him into a promised land, and to give him his son, Isaac. This was a long-range faith over a long period of time, and it was supernatural. His offering of Isaac on Mount Moriah was surely a supernatural faith that produced a miracle.

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” (Hebrews 11:17-19) (Also see Genesis 22:8-13)

The gift of faith, like all the supernatural gifts is transient. That is, it is for a specific time and place. Bold faith characterised Elijah when he said to King Ahab that there would be no rain for years until he spoke the word and it would then rain! (1 Kings 17:1) This faith produced the miraculous fulfilment of that prophecy, but where was that faith when he was sitting under a juniper tree, fearful and discouraged and wanting to die? (1 Kings 19:4) That particular faith was lacking there because it was not needed. It is the transient gift of the Spirit for power, for the miraculous.

He had not lost his faith in God or God's Word. That faith was with him and that faith taught him to believe God and take courage when God told him He had 7,000 other faithful followers in Israel.

THE NEED TODAY IS THE GIFT OF FAITH!

This gift is needed today just as it was in Bible days. It is needed for the same reasons it was needed then.

Caleb and Joshua surely had this gift of faith operating when, in the face of all evidence to the contrary, they insisted that Israel was well able to march into and conquer the Promised Land. (Numbers 13:17-33)

Later, it was surely by this faith that Joshua was able to lead the people into Canaan and conquer it, because the odds were great, and it was only by the mercy of God that they succeeded.

Today anyone who does a great work for God must have this special endowment of faith in order to succeed against the terrific opposition that faces him.

When David faced Goliath and delivered his people from the threat of this giant and his armies, he had to have special faith - faith that could perform a miracle.

This special faith is needed to go through persecution. In the fourth chapter of Acts we read how, in the face of persecution, and even danger to their lives, the apostles prayed for more of what brought on the persecution!

This is real supernatural faith in God and in His love and His purposes. Notice that they did not pray for their lives or for protection. They prayed for courage!

It takes special supernatural faith to pray thus in the face of opposition, and not to pray selfishly.

We need this gift for supernatural victories.

The fall of Jericho (Joshua 6) was certainly a miracle of faith. It took supernatural faith to believe God for that victory and to command a multitude of people to march around that city each day for six days. And then to go around it seven times on the seventh day, and to shout and blow their trumpets in order that the city should surrender! Joshua had that faith and he exercised it as God intended him to.

Probably George Muller of Bristol, England, is the most striking latter day example of one who had this gift in operation in his life.

He cared for, in a span of 50 years, more than 10,000 orphans. He did it with no backing of any kind from any organised group. He did it through faith alone, making it a point never in all that time to let anyone but God know the needs. The story of his life, and this tremendous work is one of the most inspiring I have ever read.

In all those years he solemnly records that the orphans never missed a meal, although once breakfast was delayed for 30 minutes.

On that occasion he knew there was absolutely no food at all. Yet he allowed his charges to file into the large dining hall where the tables were set with cups, saucers, and plates. They bowed their heads and gave thanks for their breakfast (which was not there) and as they prayed a noise in the kitchen was heard.

Someone had come to the back door with boxes of loaves of bread and great jugs of milk from a merchant. The orphans had to wait 30 minutes while the food was prepared and set out on the table!

There is no thought of “trying to believe” in the exercise of this gift. It is a gift, a supernatural endowment of faith for a special purpose. You can not work it up or obtain it by mental effort. It is a “gift of the Holy Spirit.”

FAITH OPERATES ONLY IN THE WILL OF GOD

It is impossible to exercise the faith of God for anything that is not His will.

George Muller once made this statement: “If we wish to find the will of God, we must first come to the place where we have no will of our own.”

The Red Sea would never have opened for the children of Israel if they had not been in God’s will. On the other hand, Jonah, out of God’s will, was a prey to any danger that came along!

There is a difference between faith and presumption.

The Egyptians, trying to cross the divided waters, were drowned. We will be, too, if we venture out presumptuously where God has not led us, where He is not with us.

The gift of faith does not substitute for other faith. It is not as if the gift made it impossible for its possessor to doubt God any more. The gift of faith does not make a man fool-proof for heaven any more than does the gift of tongues. It is temporary. It is a blessing.

There is a Gift-Faith and Other-Faith

Gift-faith is no substitute for other faith, which enriches our character and helps us to develop one which is suitable for heaven. George Muller, that expert on the subject,

put it this way. He said that gift-faith is for that for which there is no specific promise, while other-faith is for taking hold of and believing the promises of God. He made the statement that he was sure “it pleased the Lord to give me in some cases something like the gift of faith so that unconditionally I could ask and look for an answer.” He went on to say that to fail to exercise gift-faith would not be a sin, but to fail to exercise other-faith would be.

That is because gift-faith is a gift which we can not seize upon at will, but which the Spirit Himself must give to us at His will. Keeping this in mind, we should do as Paul suggested, “Covet earnestly the best gifts:” (1 Corinthians 12:31)

NOTHING WILL TAKE THE PLACE OF YOUR OWN FAITH

Many have a mistaken idea today, that since many are exercising the gifts of healing and miracles, all that is needed is to get into one of these meetings where the gifts are being exercised, and that they will be healed, without the necessity of faith on their part. They think that the gift of healing will take the place of their own faith in God. This is unscriptural!

The gift of healing WILL NOT take the place of your own faith in God.

There is no doubt that Christ exercised ALL the gifts of the Spirit, including healing and miracles. Yet, when He went to Nazareth, “He could there do NO MIGHTY WORK, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.” Mark 6:5.

The gifts of healing possessed by the Lord Himself, did not bring healing independent of their faith. Neither will the gift of healing exercised by men of God today bring healing to you unless you have faith.

HAVE FAITH TO BE HEALED - “THY FAITH HATH MADE THEE WHOLE.” (Matthew 9:22)

Paul met a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet. With a loud voice Paul said to the man, “Stand upright on thy feet.” (Acts 14:10) The man was healed immediately, and leaped and walked! Notice that according to verse 9, before Paul commanded him to stand upon his feet, he PERCEIVED THAT HE HAD FAITH TO BE HEALED. Although Paul exercised the gifts of healing and miracles, he recognised that they were insufficient in themselves, without faith on the part of the person in need of healing, to bring about the desired result.

When Christ healed the woman of Mark 5:34, He did not say, “Daughter, my gift hath made thee whole,” but rather, “THY FAITH hath made thee whole;” To the blind, He did not say, “According to my gift,” but “According to YOUR FAITH be it unto you.” (Matthew 9:29) To the impotent man Paul didn’t say, “All right, fellow, get a card and get in line. I’ve got the gift of healing.” Rather, Paul looked the situation over first and discerned that the man had faith to be healed.

How marvellous a privilege today to be able to attend meetings where God’s anointed men are bringing deliverance in the name of Jesus! But this in itself is not enough. If

Christ Himself were conducting the meetings and laying His hands upon the sick today, He would no doubt say to them as in the days of old, “**THY FAITH HATH MADE THEE WHOLE.**” (Matthew 9:22)

Many confess that they do not have much faith and wonder if it isn't possible for them to be healed through some other person's faith. Many have said to me, “I do not have any faith, but can't I be healed through your faith?”

The Scripture states that “The ... prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (James 5:16) But God's **GUARANTEE** is to those who themselves have faith. If a person received healing without himself having faith, it would certainly be the exception, and not the rule laid down in God's Word.

You might be healed through another's faith, but how would you keep that healing? Faith is necessary, not only to receive healing, but to retain it, for Satan is not easily defeated. Almost without exception when a person has been healed, he will immediately be attacked by Satan, in an attempt to snatch from him the gift which God has given. Thus it can readily be seen that if your healing depended upon another's faith, Satan would only have to wait until the other person was not present to find you utterly defenceless and take your healing from you. This is the reason many are suffering today from diseases from which they once had been healed.

HAVE THE FAITH THAT GOD GIVES!

We have learned that faith is an absolute requirement for healing. There are thousands of promises in God's Word. Every one is conditioned upon faith. Faith that you can have! Faith that God gives!

Christ on His way to Bethany one day, cursed a fig tree because it produced no fruit. (Mark 11:12-14) He declared that no man would eat fruit of that tree thereafter. A mighty miracle had been performed, although it was not immediately apparent. Faith had been exercised. The following morning, the disciples again saw the fig tree, but it was dried up at the roots. Peter spoke out his amazement at finding that the tree was withered away.

Jesus answered him, “**HAVE FAITH IN GOD.** For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; **AND SHALL NOT DOUBT IN HIS HEART,** but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.” (Mark 11:22-23)

It is plain to see that Christ meant that the same faith He exercised could be had by others. Really, He is telling them that they can have the **FAITH OF GOD** - literally the **FAITH THAT GOD GIVES!**

PAY THE PRICE TO HAVE FAITH.

God gives faith to every person who wants it badly enough to pay the price required. That price is obedience, godliness, holiness, following in the footsteps of Jesus, living free from condemnation, and walking in the full light of the Scriptures.

The Apostle John declares, “Beloved, IF our heart condemn us not, then (and then only) have we confidence toward God.” (1 John 3:21) Faith and confidence are the same thing.

Webster defines faith as “complete confidence in a person.” Surely, no one can merit our complete confidence more fully than God!

If we refuse or neglect to do our part in getting our petitions up to God, there is no reason to expect an answer from Him. But if we do our part, God ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEES to do His part. The healing is ours.

USE SCRIPTURAL METHODS OF OBTAINING FAITH

(1) Love God

Then faith having been planted in the heart through the Word must be watered and nourished through a genuine love for God. “Perfect love casteth out fear:” (1 John 4:18) Fear is the direct opposite of faith. It is the murderer of faith. There is no fear in love. You can not have faith if you do not love God. You can hope He will heal. You may say, “I know He is able.” But you can not have faith.

If you love God you will keep His commandments.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” (John 14:15, 21) Many fail to have faith because they do not really love God.

“Faith which worketh by love.” (Galatians 5:6) Love is manifested by obedience. Disobedience to the known will of God is poison to faith. Lack of desire to learn the will of God will bring the same results, for if you love Him, you will be concerned to know His will.

(2) Obey God

“Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and to those things that are pleasing in his sight.” (1 John 3:21-22)

Probably you have always thought of Abraham as the great example of faith. He was!

How did he demonstrate his faith? By obedience.

When God called him to leave all that was dear and familiar, and to go into a strange land, he obeyed.

At this time he was not the consecrated, mature man of God we think of when his name is mentioned. He was born and reared in the most worldly, heathen atmosphere of that day - the wicked city of Ur in Chaldea.

His father was a descendant of Seth, the godly son of Adam, and Abraham knew of the existence of God and had been taught to worship Him, but he had no holy Scriptures, no godly minister nor other associates to help him.

With the spark of faith which he did have he obeyed God, and as he continued to obey, he became the giant of faith and consecration we like to read about.

In contrast to Abraham's example of obedience, we have Saul's example of disobedience.

Saul was a godly and honourable man, who pleased God so much that He chose him to be the first King of Israel. Yet he allowed his life to change and to become a sordid example of the destroying power of sin, and sin in his life was demonstrated by his disobedience.

He disobeyed God first by usurping the office of priest.

Enemies were threatening his kingdom. He wanted to make a sacrifice, a burnt offering to God, and ask God for guidance. He sent for Samuel, who was both prophet and priest, to do this.

Samuel did not come when Saul expected him. So Saul, knowing full well that God had ordained that only a priest should offer the sacrifice on the altar, disobeyed God and did it himself. (1 Samuel 13:9-13)

Later, after another battle in which God gave Israel the victory, Saul again disobeyed God.

God told him to slay all the Amalekites - a very wicked nation - and their cattle. (1 Samuel 15:1-3)

Saul, however, spared the king of the Amalekites, King Agag, and the best of the cattle.

God spoke to Samuel, the priest, and priest, and said:

"It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and HATH NOT PERFORMED MY COMMANDMENTS." (1 Samuel 15:11)

Samuel asked Saul, "Wherefore ... didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord," (1 Samuel 15:19)

Saul then added other sins to his disobedience. He lied (verse 20) and he tried to place the blame on others (verse 21).

Samuel's reply should be a warning to us, "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight In burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry: Because thou hast

rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.” (1 Samuel 15:22-23)

(Have you been trying to offer a sacrifice of one kind or another to God as a substitute for obedience?)

Saul’s repentance was not real, as no doubt Samuel knew. His life from that time became more and more sinful.

He became consumed with jealousy of David (who was to be the new king), and this jealousy led Saul to become a murderer at heart. He tried for years to kill David. He sent out bands of soldiers to hunt for him with orders to kill him.

David had to hide in caves and woods many times, and except for the miraculous protection of God, he would have been killed.

Saul never turned back to God. His path of disobedience and rebellion led him farther and farther away from God and his life ended in suicide. (1 Samuel 31:4)

It is the belief of this writer that disobedience is the greatest hindrance to faith, and that obedience is one of the most effective methods of obtaining greater faith.

(3) Abide in Him

“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” (John 15:7)

One must ABIDE IN CHRIST before he is in a position to exercise real faith, before he can receive the faith that God gives. God does not give faith to people who do not abide in Him. If He did, anyone - even the drunkard, the harlot, the thief, the murderer, the enemies of the Kingdom of God could be able to have and exercise faith and receive from God ANYTHING they would ask. Since the blessings of God are for those who serve God and put Him first in their lives, one must abide in Christ before faith can actually be exercised.

Now let us look into God’s Word for the definition of abiding in Christ.

“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” (1 John 2:6) In this verse, it is quite plain that if we profess to abide in Christ, we should be walking as He walked. Then, friend, if you are not walking as Christ walked, you are not abiding in Him. No wonder you have no faith! Your sin and disobedience have destroyed your faith. You can never be on real faith ground until you begin to abide in Christ, and walk as Christ walked. This is not only possible, but it is God’s command.

“Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should FOLLOW HIS STEPS: Who did NO sin.” (1 Peter 2:21-22) He did not make excuses for sin. He resisted the devil and temptation, although He was (in all points) “tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15) He is our example, and He stands ready to help us to walk as He walked - to walk in His steps.

“Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not.” (1 John 3:6) This teaching is contrary to much religious teaching today. Multitudes claiming to believe in divine healing, and to be children of God, have been prayed for again and again, without being able to exercise faith for healing.

This matter is of sufficient importance to make it worthwhile to face facts, regardless of opinions. There is a reason why these people continue in their sicknesses, pains and diseases, and can not receive healing for their sick bodies, and it is not because God is a respecter of persons. Often it is because the person who needed healing has not paid the price of faith, which is OBEDIENCE AND HOLINESS.

Often those coming for healing will say, in answer to the question, “Do you believe God will heal you?” “Oh, I hope He will. I know He does heal today. I’ve been to Brother ____’s meetings and have seen hundreds healed. I’ve been prayed for, too, but not healed, but I know He can heal!”

This is not FAITH. It is hope, perhaps, and knowledge. But faith is believing what you have not seen, simply because God says it is so. (Hebrews 11:1)

HOPE is available to people without holiness, but FAITH IS NOT!

God has said, “Follow peace with all men, and HOLINESS, without which no man shall see the Lord:” (Hebrews 12:14)

If people without holiness could have faith, then those who will never see God could have anything they desired from God, for He guarantees to those who have faith, “whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, BELIEVING, ye SHALL RECEIVE.” (Matthew 21:22)

It is a general teaching today that everyone sins all the time; that it is impossible to live above sin; that as long as one is in this world he must partake of a certain number of sins of this life. Teachers of this doctrine quote numerous Scriptures that pertain only to the unregenerate man, who has never had an experience of salvation. But God says, “Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (1 Peter 1:16)

Paul says, “Awake to righteousness, and SIN NOT; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.” (1 Corinthians 15:34)

The people who are finding excuse for their habitual sin, according to this verse, do not have the knowledge of God. This is a SHAME! It is evident that such professed Christians do not read their Bibles.

After Jesus had healed a man, He found him in the temple, and said to him, “Behold, thou art made whole: SIN NO MORE, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” (John 5:14)

To the woman of Samaria, Christ Himself said, “Go, and SIN NO MORE.” (John 8:11)

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that YE SIN NOT.” (1 John 2:1)

Paul settled the sin question, when he said “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? GOD FORBID.” (Romans 6:1-2)

We hear the question “WHY WASN’T I HEALED?” The answer is simple: No faith, or insufficient faith.

There is more than one reason for lack of faith, but the main reason is lack of holiness.

Real living, vital faith is impossible to people who are living in disobedience to God’s commandments, and out of harmony with the personality and Spirit of God.

Many who profess to be Christians are living constantly under condemnation for sin and disobedience to the known will of God and to His Word. Such a person can never have real faith, the faith that God gives, until first he has repented of his sins and turned his back upon them. For then and then only will that condemnation leave. Then, only, can he have a clear conscience toward God, which brings perfect confidence, or faith.

The confidence of some may be destroyed because of living in the condemnation that light (the light of the Scriptures concerning the Baptism of the Holy Ghost) is come into the world, and they have not walked into that light. They know that they should have this glorious experience, but have not met the conditions to receive it.

Obedience to God will Bring You Into the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

“Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” Acts 19:2. Surely this can not be termed an unfair question to Christians. Paul asked this question of a group of twelve believers at Ephesus. It is an experience that every Christian should have, not only because God commanded it - although that should be reason enough - but because the Christian NEEDS it, that he may be ready to receive power to work and witness for his Lord.

In the New Testament Church every member was filled with the Holy Ghost. All Christian individuals and groups spoken of through the New Testament were baptised with the Holy Ghost, as a separate, different experience from conversion, and coming after conversion.

The disciples of Jesus were all saved, inasmuch as Christ had commissioned them to preach the Gospel and to heal the sick, and had given them power and authority over devils. (Luke 9:1-2) Their names were written in heaven, an evident sign that they were saved. (Luke 10:20) Yet Jesus “Commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” (Acts 1:4-5) “And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but TARRY YE in the city of Jerusalem, UNTIL YE BE ENDUED WITH POWER FROM ON HIGH.” (Luke 24:49)

This was not only a commandment to those few people in days gone by but for Christians everywhere today. For after Peter had been filled with the Holy Spirit, and while preaching his first Holy Ghost sermon, he said, “Repent, and be baptised every

one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” (Acts 2:38-39)

Many consider the baptism of the Holy Ghost a mere privilege, instead of a direct command. However, it is a command, for Paul said, “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” (Ephesians 5:18)

Since this is God’s command, one must be obedient. Those who have come into the light of God’s truth are expected to walk in that light; failure to do so brings condemnation, “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (John 3:19) Many people today are living more or less under condemnation because they have not made a consecration of full obedience, that they might receive this glorious experience - the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

It is plain that those who have been obedient HAVE RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST. “And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God HATH GIVEN TO THEM THAT OBEY HIM.” (Acts 5:32)

(4) Read and Study the Bible

No matter how trustworthy a person may be, we can not be sure that he merits our complete confidence until we become thoroughly acquainted with him. This is the reason many people fail to trust God. We become acquainted with God through walking with Him day by day and through reading His Word. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” (Romans 10:17) When we do become thoroughly acquainted with Him, we trust Him.

Read the Word as you would read a letter from a trusted friend. Consider it the FINAL AUTHORITY. Turn resolutely away from those books and conversations which question the truth of God’s Word.

Jesus accused a religious group in His day of “Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition,” (Mark 7:13) - and of “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” (Mark 7:7) Many preachers (not to say ministers of the Gospel) today set at naught the promises of God, basing their teachings upon the things that they have observed around them, rather than upon the Word of God. Faith can be built only upon the power and success of the Word of God, never upon our own, nor upon another’s weaknesses and failures.

Another outstanding reason for lack of faith is the common neglect of Bible study.

No wonder faith is so low in the hearts of so many. The price of faith has been established. It has been set by God Himself. Love God. Read His Word. Obey His commands. Believe His promises.

To some, this may seem to be an impossible price, but God has enabled man to pay it. The same Christ who saves from sin will keep those who desire to be kept by His

mighty power. “But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.” (2 Thessalonians 3:3)

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 24)

This writer has found that those who have a real desire to please God, those who read their Bibles and pray, are attaining holiness. It is these same people who are shouting the victory over sickness and disease and the power of the enemy. God has given them faith.

All Christians have a certain amount of faith. It is impossible even to be saved without faith. At the moment of salvation faith begins to grow as a fruit, for faith is a fruit of the Spirit as well as a spiritual gift. (Galatians 5:22) As some trees in an orchard produce very little fruit, or fruit of poor quality, so some Christians seem to produce very little of the fruit of the Spirit. Fruit must first bud, then grow and develop. For proper development, the fruit of faith must be properly nourished, even as fruit in the orchard. Since faith cometh by hearing the Word of God, the Christian should read the Word of God often. Memorise many of the promises of God that pertain to healing. Stand upon them. Quote them again and again. In this way, faith will grow.

LESSON FIVE

THERE ARE HINDRANCES TO FAITH

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

“But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.” (James 1:6-7)

“That your prayers be not hindered.” (1 Peter 3:7)

These Scriptures teach us that faith is an absolute necessity in order to receive anything from the Lord. In fact, without faith it is even impossible to please Him. Why?

Because faith, expressed in its simplest terms, is simply believing that God meant what He said.

There are many who cry, “I am trying to believe. Surely God should do for me the thing I have need of! Surely, if He answers prayer at all, He should answer mine! For no one ever tried harder than I to have faith.”

What are you trying to believe?

“I am trying to believe that my prayer will be answered.”

It is not so much WHAT you believe, as WHOM you believe.

Jesus said, “Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” (Mark 11:24)

Satan says, “Yea, hath God said it? Do you think for a minute He really will do such a thing? People have always had to do these things for themselves, or not have them done. You can’t bank too much on the truth of those things you see written in that old black book! After all, remember dear old Sister So-and-So. You know full well that if anyone ever was a Christian, she was, but God didn’t answer her prayers.”

Now, WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE? Without any disrespect to Sister So-and-So, for I am not her judge, may I say that at best I can only look upon the outward appearance, while God looks on the heart. GOD I KNOW! He can not lie. He is truth. He has proved His power and His love many times over. He said He would give me whatsoever I ask, and I know He will do it, for He is true to His word.

“It has been so long since you first asked Him! Are you not becoming weary with waiting? It is not written that hope deferred maketh the heart sick?”

“Satan, it is none of your business how long I have prayed, not how long I have waited. I don’t want your sympathy, and I don’t believe a word you say! I BELIEVE

GOD!”

Suppose you have promised your son a weekly allowance, but you have instructed him that once each week, he is to come into your office and remind you of that promise. Then suppose that for a week or two, he does not find this convenient. You did not promise to hunt him up to give it to him – only to give it when he came in to a certain place on a certain day and asked for it. Would you not feel greatly grieved to hear him say to a friend: “My father promised me a given sum of money. Now I need it. I would go and ask him for it, but it might not do me any good. He hasn’t given me any for the last two weeks. Of course, he said he would do it, and I am trying to believe, but I just don’t know whether he will do it or not!”

IT IS AN INSULT TO GOD TO SAY: “I AM TRYING TO BELIEVE!”

To think of inferring that God can not be believed! It isn’t WHAT you believe! IT IS WHOM YOU BELIEVE!

You can not possibly please God while you judge and choose WHAT to believe of His promises! You can only please Him when you believe Him – every promise, every command, every warning!

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO BELIEVE HIM?

Perhaps this is the reason you have trouble believing. Perhaps there are some things that you don’t want to believe. You would like to believe the promises, but do you want to believe His commands?

Are you trying to believe, “I am the Lord that healeth thee,” (Exodus 15:26) while trying not to believe, all the tithe is the Lord’s? (Malachi 3:10)

Are you trying to believe in heaven without believing in hell? Are you trying to believe in the love of God and the grace of God without believing in His holiness and His judgement?

Do you want to believe His “thou art made me whole,” without believing His “sin no more least a worse thing come unto thee?” (John 5:14)

You can’t do it! Either YOU BELIEVE GOD or YOU DON’T BELIEVE GOD!

There are many hindrances to our faith, which we will consider in this lesson. It is well to examine each one of them and look into our own heart and life. And then see whether any one or more of them might constitute the reason our faith has been ineffectual and we have not received from God the healing, or other petitions, we have so much desired.

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17)

SOME HINDRANCES TO FAITH ARE:

(1) Failure To Abide In Him

This may well be placed first on any list of hindrances to faith, for it nullifies God's guarantee.

Abiding in Christ is not church membership. It is not being kind to your neighbours. It is not even singing in the choir, teaching a Sunday School class, preaching or praying, but it is living in the Word of God, by the Word of God, and in joyful fellowship with God.

“There is no ... condemnation to them which are IN Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1)

When you became a Christian, you began a new life. In the words of Scripture, the old man DIED! A new life began. When you were baptised in water, fulfilling the command of Christ, you were buried with Him, and rose to walk in the newness of life. Then you were to have crucified the old man, with his affections and lusts. Your interests were married to those of your Lord. Your desires are now His desires. You are more concerned with the salvation of souls, sick bodies healed, deliverance of all who are bound or oppressed by the devil, and advancing the cause of the Kingdom of Christ in the world than you are with new hats, new cars, comfortable dwellings, fame, success in business, or any other concerns of this life.

God has never indicated in His Word that He would deny His people these comforts. But He declares, “seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33)

His promise to those who will do this, delighting themselves in the success of His kingdom, is “Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” (Psalms 37:4)

You are living day by day IN Christ - abiding in Him.

Then you are living in the place to claim the promise recorded in John 15:7: “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

This promise could never have been made to those who do not meet the conditions, because they might use this power indiscriminately, for their own lusts, and it could be very dangerous.

“Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts,” (James 4:3) describes the kind of asking that can never be done in faith. There may be a desire to be well, and even a hope that “it may work.” But there can not be faith, for there is no promise upon which faith can be based.

There are those who desire healing only to be able to better carry on their sinful pursuits. God does not give faith to such people. It is only given to those who abide in

Christ, and in whom His Word abides. Only those can be trusted to use such mighty power.

(2) Condemnation

Condemnation is certainly one of the greatest hindrances to faith. Those who abide in Christ are not condemned.

“If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” (1 John 3:21-22)

This is God’s formula for faith. Until you have met this condition, you can not have faith. You may be persuaded that God is able to heal you, but you can only hope that He will, for He has not promised to do it while you live in sin, under condemnation.

I may know a millionaire, who could easily give me a thousand dollars. I know he could do it. He may even have given one of my friends a thousand dollars. I may even have seen the check. I may need it very badly, and hope fervently that he will somehow decide to give me a thousand dollars, but I have no real reason to believe that he will do so unless he says that he will.

God’s power is sufficient to heal, as well as to save, EVERYBODY, but His promise is to heal those who keep His commandments and walk in the statutes, and those who believe Him, and believe that all His words are truth.

Anything that is of a disobedient, ungodly, or unholy nature is a hindrance to faith. Enumerated below are only a few of the things that will cause condemnation and therefore hinder faith. You can no doubt think of others, perhaps in your own life.

CAUSES OF CONDEMNATION

(1) Unscriptural Relationships in the Home.

Peter exhorts Husbands and wives: “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” (1 Peter 3:1, 7)

The faith of many is hindered because of unscriptural relationships in the home, but unscriptural attitudes toward our fellow men outside the home can also be great hindrance to faith.

This is indeed a sensitive (touchy) subject. It seems that each person, each couple, each family feels that their home life, their private life, is nobody’s business but their own, and, in a sense, this is true.

God, however, does not hesitate to place his finger upon misguided home life as one of

the principal hindrances to prayer and to faith as well.

Many wives have mistakenly assumed that they can become more spiritual by disregarding the wishes of their husbands, neglecting their natural care for their husbands to follow more lauded spiritual pursuits. They may indeed win the praise of some by doing so, but God's command is not thus.

"But," she may say, "my husband is unsaved. Surely I am not expected to remain in subjection to him." Please not the first verse! "that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives." (1 Peter 3:1)

(The word "conversation" at the time of the translation of the King James version meant general behaviour or deportment rather than talk as the word is generally used now.) Thus the passage does not mean that she is to attempt to talk him into the kingdom! Rather, he is to be won by observing her gentleness, meekness, kindness, longsuffering, love, joy, peace, and faith.

Surely, any wife whose husband is unsaved - doomed to spend eternity in hell unless he repents - will be praying for her husband's salvation! If her conduct toward him is not that which is set forth in Scriptures as proper for a wife, her prayers in his behalf are of little value. And her faith will not operate when she is not obeying the Word of God in her home life.

This is equally true of the husband. Cruel, harsh, overbearing, unkind treatment of his wife and children will certainly stand between him and the answer to his prayers and will cripple his faith to receive the thing for which he asks.

Faith that moves mountains springs from the depths of a soul that is at peace: at peace with God, with itself, with the members of its household, and with those that are without.

No matter how strong and how spiritual a man may be, it is a tremendous battle to try to pray in faith when he is constantly annoyed and irritated by the scolding and lamenting of a nagging wife. Solomon declared: "It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house." Prov. 25:24.

Courtesy in the home is a matter of great importance and not to be lightly regarded. God says, "be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be COURTEOUS:" (1 Peter 3:8)

True courtesy is only the concern for the welfare of others that we ought to feel in the home. It is putting others first. It is kindness. It includes respect for the person and privacy for every member. It allows for each person to have his own time alone with God. It does not embarrass other members of the family because of their failures, their aspirations, their consecrations, their dreams. Real love can not be discourteous, for "Love worketh no ill." (Romans 13:10)

Compassion and love are also necessary in a home if that home is to be in order as God wishes it to be. Compassion is defined as "sympathy, pity, mercy, tenderness, sorrow

for the distress of another.”

How easy it is for the husband and wife both to assume the attitude that the partner has everything easy, and has no cause to complain. The husband feels that in the shelter of the home, his wife is not buffeted by the world. She has every modern convenience and does all the work, and furnishes all the money. All she has to do is to spend it! Meanwhile the wife struggles all day long with the varied emergencies that small children can create. She longs for adult conversation and adult interests. She envies her husband who goes out into the big, bright, interesting world every morning!

Of course, neither the husband nor the wife has things all good or all bad, but each can make the lot of the other easier by being compassionate, by understanding the heartaches and annoyances of the other, and by going out of the way to ease the strain whenever possible.

Remember, Jesus Himself made the statement that where two of you agree as touching anything, it shall be done. Then, there is nothing beyond your grasp. As the two of you join hands together across the breakfast table, in full harmony and agreement—not hindered by the breakdown of any of these important home virtues – you can ask of God whatsoever you will, and your faith will be able to claim the answer. It will not be hindered.

(2) Unscriptural Attitudes Toward our Fellow Men.

“What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.” (Mark 11:24-25)

An unforgiving spirit hinders faith. It condemns the soul, and renders believing prayer impossible.

A Christian should be a good a good citizen.

In the time of Christ, pagan Rome ruled over the Jews. The Jews hated Rome and all it stood for. They hated the governors that Rome sent to rule over them, and the Roman soldiers who enforced the Roman rule. Most of all, they hated those of their own people who had hired themselves out to Rome as tax collectors.

As the popularity of Jesus grew, the religious leaders of the Jews became very concerned. They wanted to discredit Him, so they tried at various times to ask Him embarrassing questions in public.

One of these occasions, they asked Him a question designed to trap Him: “Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?” (Matthew 22:17)

They hoped He would denounce the Roman government, and involve Himself in such difficulties with the law that He would be out of their way. On the other hand, if He should answer “yes” to their question, this should make Him unpopular with the

people.

Since God was their real King, many of the Jews reasoned that they should not pay tribute (taxes) to a heather emperor - that it was treason to God. Jesus answered: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." (Matthew 22:21)

In effect, He said to them: "Circumstances have placed you in subjection to the Roman government. It protects your lives and your property. It builds your roads and furnishes other public services for you on a material plane. It is only fair, then, that you pay taxes to help support this service. You should be loyal to this government as long as it does not claim service that belongs to God.

"But that which belongs to God, worship, honour and tribute which He demands, render unto God."

PAUL'S TEACHING - ROMANS 13:1-10

(1) Our Duty

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher power" (RSV "The governing authorities") Verse 1.

The spirit of lawlessness is the spirit of the Antichrist, but a Christian will have no part of it. He voluntarily subjects himself to those who are lawfully over him.

Can you reconcile this teaching of obedience to the law with the attitude some Christians take that "It's all right if you get away with it"? There are Christians today who actually mock policemen, teaching their children contempt for the officer of the law. They laugh when they speed without being caught, and act as if the policemen were their enemies.

Such children grow up with the idea that the "governing authorities" are enemies, to be outwitted if possible. Christian parents should solemnly examine themselves if they have thus started their children on the road to juvenile delinquency. What is juvenile delinquency but contempt for constituted authority? And where do most of these juveniles learn this contempt?

(2) The Reason for Submitting to Rulers

"For there is no power but God: the powers that are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1)

God has instituted the governmental system and those who rule are doing it upon his authority. Does this mean that God approves of every ruler? Does it excuse us from obeying the duly appointed authorities just because they do not rule as we think they should?

No person is a law unto himself. If he were, we would live in a constant state of anarchy and revolution. This is the reason God instituted law and government, and

upholds it.

(3) Refusing to Obey

“Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” (Romans 13:2)

Does Paul mean by this that we must obey, from a ruling authority, a command that is morally wrong? No! In spiritual matters, things which pertain to our relationship to Christ and His Church, we are to “obey God rather than men.” (Acts 5:29-42)

But when the laws of the land do not violate the laws of God, the Christian who refused to obey them is, according to Paul’s words, actually resisting and disobeying God!

(4) Vindication of Rulers

“For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

“For he is the minister of God to the for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” (Romans 13:3-4)

Twice in these verses, the “ruler” is called a servant of God. this applies even though he may not be a Christian, (Paul was writing to the church at Rome, and their rulers were almost entirely pagan.) The ruler is a servant of God because God has ordained the powers that be the governing authorities.

Two things are taught here:

(a) Those who obey the civil laws need have no fear of rulers. (It is the man who exceeds the speed limit who fears to hear a police siren.)

(b) God intends that those who violate the laws should be punished, for the magistrate does not bear the sword in vain. (Romans 13:4)

(5) Citizenship and Conscience

“Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.” (Romans 13:5-6)

It is contrary to our conscience to break a law. Paul said, “herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.” (Acts 24:16)

To violate civil law can be a major hindrance to faith!

We are also instructed to show a Christ-like attitude to those who are not Christians. Of course it is much easier to love the good, kind, sincere Christian who is obviously a brother in Christ.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12, we are taught on this subject. Paul commended the Thessalonians for their fulfilling of the command to love the brethren, but he had some suggestions to offer toward their conduct as Christian citizens of their community, especially with regard to their relationship with “them that are without.” (Verse 12)

In Galatians 6:10, Paul exhorts us to “do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Thus, we see that those who are “within, that is, our brethren Christ, are accounted worthy of first concern to the Christian, but this does not relieve that Christian of his obligation to “them that are without” - the non-Christian among his neighbours, his family, and all citizens of the world.

It is disturbing to note that the habit some Christians have of treating with contempt anyone who is not (in their opinion) a Christian, or whose religious beliefs do not coincide with their own. Contrast this attitude with Christ’s love for all, His kind but uncompromising fellowship with sinners, His willingness to forgive even those who nailed Him to the cross, His assertion that He “came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Mark 2:17)

Our attitude and responsibility toward our fellow men may be summed up as follows: To “Provide things honest in the sight of all men.” (Romans 12:17) To deal fairly with others in all business transactions, whether with Christian or sinner. To do good. To be kind and gentle at all times. To be courteous. (1 Peter 3:8) The heart of true courtesy is kindness and thoughtfulness to others; to live and witness in such a manner as to win them to Christ.

Unscriptural attitudes toward our fellow men can constitute a great hindrance to faith. If you find in your life any of these attitudes, they may account for your failure to believe God and receive your healing or other requests.

CAUSES OF CONDEMNATION (CONTINUED)

(3) Failure to Tithe, and to Give to God.

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Malachi 3:8-12)

The wrong financial attitude can be a great hindrance to faith. Many professed Christians live under constant condemnation because they refuse to give God the tithe, which is His. "The tithe ... is the Lord's:" (Leviticus 27:30)

Yet there are those who feel that they can not spare more than a few pennies, or perhaps a dollar or two, for God when they are earning from fifty dollars and up every week! They declare that tithing was "under the law." It would be too costly for them to remember that Abraham paid tithe to Melchizedek, and that Jacob pledged to return a tenth of all that God gave to him, before the law began. The tithe IS the Lord's - before the law, under the law, and after the law!

Although the Pharisees were strict tithers (Matthew 23:23) Jesus declared that our righteousness must EXCEED theirs, if we are ever to enter heaven. (Matthew 5:20)

In Malachi 3:8, God calls those who withhold the tithe "thieves." Many of these so-called "saints" help to make up the healing lines. If you have been robbing God, do not expect Him to heal you until you have first asked forgiveness and become a tither.

Remember, God's promises are still true. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith." (Malachi 3:10)

In addition to the law of tithing, the Word of God has much to say about giving, and about God's promises to those who give generously. Even a selfish person who reads and truly believe those promises would not withhold from God!

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." (Luke 6:38)

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)

Do you consider an investment that would earn 10 percent interest, with no risk, a good investment? Those who have tried giving liberally to God have many times testified that God has returned, not 10 percent, but 100 percent, or even more, within a few days, from unexpected or seemingly impossible sources.

However, we dare not leave his lesson without pointing out that money can not buy the gifts of God. Simon, the sorcerer of Samaria, thought he could buy God's gift with money, but Peter told him, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God can be purchased with money ... thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore ..." (Acts 8:20-22)

This writer has been in a position to handle mail from all parts of the world, asking prayer for physical healing. Some years ago, a woman wrote asking prayer for the healing of a badly crippled foot. She enclosed a dime with the remark that when she had received healing for her foot, then she would remit the test, whatever was required.

My heart was moved within me as I read it, for I perceived that this poor woman was desperately in need, but that, not knowing the ways of God, she was in the gall of bitterness. I immediately returned her dime, explaining God's plan for her healing, and exhorting her to repent, as Peter did the sorcerer. A few weeks later, another letter arrived from the lady, thanking me for the faithful words of warning, and informing me that when she had repented and asked God to heal her, the work had been done!

Your money itself, even if it were millions, can never buy the favour of God, and a stingy, selfish, unbelieving heart can keep you from His favour. A generous, loving, outgoing, believing heart seems to be peculiarly in tune with the heart of God.

If you have condemnation in you heart about these things, do not expect to be able to have faith until you change your attitude about finances and bring your life into conformity with the Word of God.

(4) Failure to Right Wrongs

It is useless for us to expect to have real working faith and to be able to get anything from God until we have ourselves made everything right, as far as it lies within our power, with our fellow men.

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath outh against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go they way; first be reconciled to they brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” (Matthew 5:23-24)

These are the words of Jesus. When the Jews came to the temple, they brought a “sin offering” as a sign of their repentance and desire for forgiveness. T his is the “gift” Jesus referred to.

Notice that the Scripture quoted above says, if “thy brother hath ought against thee.” It does not say just to be reconciled to those you have something against. That comes under forgiveness, and is necessary, of course, but this is to make the wrongs right which you have committed against someone else.

Failure to do this brings condemnation to your heart, and may well be a real hindrance to your faith.

(5) Failure to Confess Faults

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” (James 5:16)

Many of us see faults only on others but never in ourselves. We should examine ourselves, and see wherein we have failed God, and if our sin has been a public one, it should be confessed publicly.

Few people claim to be perfect, yet when confronted with the idea that confessing of faults may be necessary for their healing, there is usually not one fault that they are willing to confess. While many receive immediate healing as they come in the healing

line, it is a well-known fact that there are folk over the land today, who have passed through many healing lines and yet are not healed.

These are the people who need to call in help - according to James 5:14, the elders of the church and with much heart searching and prayer trace out in their lives the reason the healing has been withheld. Then when the light of God has revealed to their honest, seeking hearts the reasons for their failures to be healed, they should confess those faults to those who are praying with them, asking their prayers that the faults may be overcome. Then, in answer to the united prayers of the sick persons and the elders, Satan can be driven from the field, and double victories won. The bondage of both sin and sickness will be broken.

Those who hear such confession MUST remember that in the cause of Christian brotherhood they are under obligation to speak to no one but God of the faults that have been so confessed.

Unwillingness to confess faults usually indicates an unwillingness to forsake them, or else a lack of confidence in the power of God to deliver them from them. This is one of the greatest hindrances to faith.

(6) Wrong Motives

“Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” (James 4:3)

There are those who desire healing in order to be better able to continue in a life which does not glorify God, or their chief motive is selfish in some other way. If you desire to be healed, but that desire is bigger than your desire to serve God, your motive is wrong and you can not ask in faith.

Are you asking for something God does not want you to have? Does He give drought instead of rain, poverty instead of provision, sickness instead of health, because it is “better” for you?

No! That is not the reason. The answer fails to come because your heart is NOT RIGHT. Because the good thing God wants to give is asked for the purpose of using it to depart farther and farther from God.

When we pray with selfish motives, it brings condemnation to us and thereby our faith is hindered.

LACK OF SEPARATION UNTO GOD

There are many that deny that there is any supernatural power in operation in the world today. They advise good resolutions, church membership, or baptism instead of conversion by means of a new birth, but those things can not change the heart.

Jesus said to one such religious man who had come to recognise the futility of his own doctrine and sincerely sought God’s way, “Ye must be born again.” (John 3:7) Some

who call themselves “Fundamentalists” accept this much of the miracle-working power of God, but no more. They agree with Mark 16:16, “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved;” but they deny the power of verses 17-18. “These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; **THEY SHALL LAY HANDS ON THE SICK, AND THEY SHALL RECOVER.**”

They gather together in churches and sing their hymns; preach their sermons, pray their beautiful prayers, some even baptise with water and take the Lord’s Supper. They have all the outward form of godliness. They are recognised by the world and by the government as “the church,” but they absolutely **DENY THE POWER JESUS PROMISES TO LEAVE WITH THE GODLY.**

In the same verse with the warning quoted at the beginning of this thought, God has told us clearly what to do if we are associated with such a group of people. “**FROM SUCH TURN AWAY.**” (2 Timothy 3:5)

Many fail to receive healing because they have not heeded this warning. The spark of faith has begun to glow in their hearts, but instead of assembling themselves together with others of like precious faith, who will encourage and guide them into an even greater faith, they insist upon remaining in the company of those, who not only do not believe in the miracle-working power of God, but openly deny that there is any such power.

Your personal faith has as good a chance of surviving in such circumstances as a coal of fire has in a tub of ice water. God has not called you to remain in such an environment. It is very well to tell them of what you have found in God’s word. If they also believe, you have won a friend in Christ, but if they will not believe, the Word of God is plain. Turn away from them, for they have turned away their ears from the truth, and will turn you away from the truth also, if you continue in their company.

Search the Scriptures! Build your faith upon the word of God, and then get into a church that has done the same. Many, many people are hindered from receiving faith because they have failed to heed this important warning of God’s Word.

The only way that Satan can prevent you from receive healing God has promised you is to keep you from asking in faith. This he accomplishes through tricking you into allowing some one or more of these hindrances to remain in your heart and life today.

NO WORKS

“Faith without works is dead?” (James 2:20)

A life of faith is demonstrated to the world by Christian works. You will do for the Lord and for others, as well as believe. A lack of works is a definite hindrance to faith.

I like to paraphrase the statement: “Faith without works is dead” and say “Faith that doesn’t work is dead.” Many Christians are so like the recluse in New York who had

lived, for many years, alone with her sister. The time came when neither of the maiden ladies had been seen for several days. Neighbours forced their way into the home, fearful that some accident might have occurred. One of the sisters had died. The other, fearful that her sister would be taken from her, had barricaded herself in the house with the body. Are you afraid that you and your neighbours will learn that your faith is dead; that it doesn't work, and that it will be taken from you?

DISOBEDIENCE

When ten lepers came to Jesus for healing, He told them to go to the priest (this was correct procedure under the Mosaic law), and show themselves to him. they turned from Him just as leprous as they came, but the Bible says, "It came to pass, that , as they went they were cleansed." (Luke 17:14)

Another time He told a blind man who came to Him for Healing to "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." (John 9:7) (He had placed clay on the eyes of the man and he was to wash this off.)

There he went groping and perhaps stumbling in his blindness as he went away from Jesus through the streets of the city to the pool of Siloam. Only when he had washed the clay from his eyes were they healed. This obedience, in faith, brought about the healing in these cases. If they had not obeyed, they would have been able to believe and they would not have been healed, in all probability.

If you have fulfilled all other conditions for your healing, and you pray in faith, then "believe that ye receive it." ACT LIKE IT! This may be the final act of faith that God requires of you.

Remember, disobedience to any command of God hinders faith, and you can not expect to receive from God under those circumstances.

ERRONEOUS TEACHINGS - THE TRADITIONS OF MEN

Among the greatest hindrances to faith are the erroneous teachings many folk have received throughout their lives.

If you will take the Word of God and read it as though you had never heard it taught nor preached, you may discover that some of the teaching you have listened to is not in line with the thought and intent of the Scripture. If you will let the Holy Ghost guide your in understanding it, you may find that you faith has been hindered because you have received teaching that was not simply a variation of doctrine. It was actually a trick of the devil to deprive you of God's blessings by hindering your faith.

We have built our faith on what we believe is taught in the Word of God; if we believe wrong, we can not have the faith that will produce the results.

Among the most faith-hindering of incorrect teachings are the following:

That one may be sick for God's glory: This teaching is based on two misinterpreted incidents in the ministry of Christ - the death of Lazarus and the account of the man born blind. God receives no glory for continued sickness; the only glory He received from sickness is when He heals it. (See Lesson #3)

That sickness is chastening from God and therefore God will not heal: It is true that sickness may be a chastening from God for disobedience or sin, but a loving Father does not punish His child more severely than is needed to correct that child. Even though you may be sick as punishment or penalty for sin, heartfelt repentance removes the reason for punishment, but if your sickness is a punishment for sin, God will let you know what it is for, and when you repent, you can expect healing. (See Lesson #3)

That it May Not Be God's Will to Heal: Five little words, "If It be Thy Will" have hindered the faith of more people and rendered their prayers ineffectual than any other words in the English language. (See Lesson #3)

When you pray for something and then say, "If it be thy will," it may appear at first thought to indicate submissiveness to the will of God. Instead, it is just like disconnecting the clutch on your automobile, and stepping on the brake. All the might and power of God are waiting and ready to be used on your behalf, but your "if" has disconnected you!

I know this is going straight against the way that many have been taught to pray. You have not had the answers you wanted, if you have been praying that way, because your faith is hindered by the fact that you do not have the certainty in your soul that it is God's will. So about all you can do is pray and HOPE instead of pray and BELIEVE.

The "If It Be Thy Will" method of prayer has not been followed by any of the heroes of faith either in the Bible or in the church age!

When George Muller began to feel that it was in the will of God that he should build an orphanage, he did not just begin crying out to God, "Lord, if it be thy will, send me the money to build orphanages." He knew the first thing was to find out God's will in the matter. He began first to pray for guidance. He KNEW God wanted to guide him, for God desires to guide every one of His children. As he prayed day after day for guidance, he began keeping a record of his impressions, and of God's dealings with him, until he had prayed for twenty-one days. By that time, he was positive of God's leading in the matter. Then he began praying, "Lord, send me the money!" He didn't have to say, "If it be thy will," for he felt certain of God's will. He could ask with confidence. He could ask without wavering.

You know the result. He built three great orphanages costing more than \$350,000.00. With the houses filled with orphans, he paid all the expense of housing, feeding, clothing, educating, and sending them out when they were grown, with money for a little start in life, for more than half a century, and all that time he never asked any man for a penny!

As far as healing is concerned, we know it is the will of God! This we have studied in previous lessons. It is suggested that you review Lesson #3 of this course, as all of the misconceptions regarding healing are likewise hindrances to faith.

WHEN THE HINDRANCES TO FAITH IN YOUR OWN LIFE HAVE BEEN MET AND CONQUERED, YOU WILL REALISE A REVITALISED PRAYER LIFE AND RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

YOU CAN RECEIVE YOUR HEALING AND WHATEVER ELSE YOU DESIRE FROM GOD ACCORDING TO HIS WORD!

LESSON SIX

WHY MANY DO NOT RECEIVE HEALING

If God still heals the sick today, why are so many good Christian people sick?

Thousands of sick and suffering people in the world today would love to believe in the teaching of divine healing. It would mean deliverance for them from much suffering and sorrow but they dare not rest their case in the hands of God and trust Him for deliverance until this question is answered.

Thousands more, who already believe in the doctrine of divine healing, are asking almost the same question. "Others are healed. I know that God does heal today. Why do I not receive healing? Is God a respecter of persons?"

These questions can not be ignored. God has not ignored them, for we read the answer in the Bible.

"For there is no respect of persons with God." (Romans 2:11)

If God's promises of healing apply to ANYONE, they apply to EVERYONE.

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith SHALL SAVE THE SICK, and the Lord SHALL RAISE HIM UP; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James 5:14-15)

It has been explained earlier in these lessons that healing is not provided nor promised for the enemies of Christ, nor for those who persist in living in sin. It is our purpose here to deal with the reasons that CHRISTIAN PEOPLE fail to receive healing.

If you desire to be healed, and are not a Christian, you must first find healing for your soul. Repent of your sins and seek God with your whole heart. When you have repented of your sins, and believe in your heart the Lord Jesus (not just some things about Him, but believe HIM, trust Him, believe what He says in His word). Then you will be born again by the Spirit of God, born into the family of God, and eligible to ask in faith for any of his promised benefits.

The following discussion on the subject of being "born again" is offered because several have written asking how they can know they have really been "born again"--how they can be SURE. It will no doubt be of great value to Christian workers desiring more information about dealing with those who need to be healed and yet are not "born again."

"... YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN." (John 3:7)

Jesus Himself declared "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

Observing the manner of life of professing Christians, and trying to copy it, will never be enough. Even attempting to live according to the Ten Commandments, or to the moral code of the Bible will not do. The rich young ruler declared, "All these have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet?" (Matthew 19:20)

Rebirth changes the nature of the individual. It changes his interests, his standards, and his outlook. He loves things he once hated, and hates things he once loved.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Through this experience, and it alone, we are empowered to become the children of God, heirs to all that He possesses, in heaven and in earth! (See Romans 8:17; Galatians 3:29)

As His children, we love Him. We desire to please Him, to gain His favour, and above all, to imitate Him, to be transformed into His image rather than be conformed to the image of the world. (Romans 12:2)

Some may have told you that you can never KNOW that you are saved, and that you are ready for heaven. There are those in the world today who call themselves preachers of the gospel who would say to you, "Just live the best you know how. Pay your just debts. Be kind to your neighbours. Attend the church of your choice. It doesn't matter so much what you believe, just so you are sincere. And when you get to the other end of this life, then you will find out whether or not you have done well enough. Nobody can ever know until the final judgment whether or not he is going to make it in!"

How utterly foolish! How far from the teaching of scripture! What a devilish deception, to cause people to drift carelessly into hell!

"We KNOW that we have passed from death unto life." (1 John 3:14)

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that YE MAY KNOW that ye HAVE eternal." (1 John 5:13)

This does not say that you may hope that you will have eternal life, when you have come to the other end of life's journey! You have eternal life NOW, and know that you have it, or else you have no eternal life! Eternal life begins within you when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and are born again.

"For God so loved the world, that he have his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

"Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

The life of the unrepentant sinner - even the best of unrepentant sinners - is one life; while the life of the repentant, born again Christian is an entirely different life.

The Apostle Paul describes the life of a well-meaning, self-righteous, religious sinner,

in Romans 7:14-15, 18, 24.

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I ... For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not ... O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

But Paul had found the answer, and reveals it to us in the next verse. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 7:25)

"What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:3-4)

If you have not been set free by the Lord Jesus Christ, you are in prison. You are in bondage. You are bound by sin! You can not do what you want to do, what you know is right. Many a time you have been ashamed of the things that you have done. Many times you have wanted to stop. You have "turned over a new leaf." You have made "New Year's Resolutions." You have seen the new leaf smudged and the resolutions broken. Sin's chains are too strong. You may blame your "environment." You may feel that some day, when you are older, and when your circumstances have changed, you will turn from your wicked ways and do better.

Only Christ can set you free. He whom the Son of God sets free is free indeed. (John 8:36)

You can no more save yourself by your own efforts than you can lift yourself into heaven by your own bootstraps. A penalty has been placed upon sin by a just and holy God. That penalty is death! "The soul that sinneth, it shall DIE." (Ezekiel 18:4)

NOW, HERE IS YOUR PART:

- (1) You must realise that you are a sinner, and that your sins are worthy of death. (Death, in this sense, means eternal banishment from God, in hell.)
- (2) You must come to hate your sin, which is destroying you. You must repent of your sins and, in prayer, confess them to Jesus. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9. Your sins need not be confessed to anyone but Jesus unless they have wronged others; and that can be made right by confession to the wronged one or by restoring to that one the thing of which he has been defrauded. (Luke 19:1-8). If restitution is impossible, God will freely forgive upon your repentance alone.
- (3) You must, after having confessed your sins to Jesus, believe in your heart that He has been true to His Word, and has washed your sins away.
- (4) There is one thing more: after you have believed, you must acknowledge Jesus as

Saviour. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:8-10.

Now, at this moment, before Satan can snatch this opportunity from you, cry out to God to forgive your sins. Confess that you are unworthy, that your sins are only worthy of death and hell, but remind Him that the penalty has been paid, that Jesus has died in your place, FOR YOUR SINS! Then, believe that you are forgiven, and thank God earnestly, and aloud, that your sins are gone. Tell your family and friends IMMEDIATELY that a new life has begun for you

"If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The change is so complete that God in His Word has called it a REBIRTH! (John 3:3)

The Scriptures speak of the New Christian as a BABE IN CHRIST. Just as new born babes must receive proper care, proper nourishment, and training, in order to become adults, so the new born Christian must observe certain rules in order to grow up strong and healthy In his spiritual living.

Because I am concerned for every one who has begun this new life, I have written a short booklet to give such a believer a start. It is entitled, "HOW TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE." You may have it for ten cents. This will defray mailing costs. Please write for it if you need this extra help.

IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN AND STILL HAVE NOT RECEIVED HEALING, examine your life and attitudes in the light of God's Word. God has not shown respect of persons in your case, for that is contrary to His divine nature. If you are still sick, there is a reason. God's Word will reveal it to you, if you will diligently seek His face. When you find the trouble, correct it, and God's healing touch is yours. This is God's guarantee, and God can not lie.

SOME REASONS MANY DO NOT RECEIVE HEALING!

(1) Lack of Faith

You may say, "But I have faith. I know God is able to heal me. Then why does he not do it?"

Do you believe He will heal you NOW?

You say, "I hope He will. I know God does heal today. I've been to Bro. _____'s big meeting, and have seen hundreds healed, but when he laid his hands on me, I didn't get healed."

What you have is NOT FAITH. You have HOPE. You HOPE to be healed. You have

KNOWLEDGE. You know God is able to heal, and that He does heal. You believe what you have seen, but you do not have FAITH.

Faith is believing what you have not seen simply because God said it is so. (Hebrews 11:1) If you had faith, you would already have been healed.

A dear sister came to us with a deaf ear, which had been deaf for many years. She said, "I don't see why I don't get healed. I have as much faith as anyone. I have all the faith in the world."

We at once carefully explained to her that if she had real living faith to that extent, it would be impossible for her to remain deaf, for real faith works. "Faith without works (faith that doesn't work) is dead." (James 2:20) Real faith is guaranteed to bring results, for God is faithful that promised. When she recognised the fact that she was lacking in faith and humbly asked God to forgive her for doubting him and to help her unbelief, immediately her ear was unstopped.

This is a thoroughly scriptural approach to God in such a case. Jesus once said to a man whose faith was weak, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23) He replied, with tears, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9:24)

Immediately, Jesus first helped his unbelief. His faith sprang up. He received the faith that God gives and the thing he desired became, not only a possibility, but a reality. Satan's power was broken. This man's son was delivered.

An honest confession of doubt, coupled with a sincere desire to learn better how to believe, is far better than a loud profession of faith that does not work. It is hard to deceive yourself in this matter, and IMPOSSIBLE to deceive God.

Real faith is not hoping that God will heal you, nor knowing that He is able to heal you. It is joyful assurance that the work is as good because God WHO CAN NOT LIE has promised - yes, even GUARANTEED - to heal YOU!

(2) Erroneous Teaching

Many fail to receive healing because, due to erroneous teaching, they have been made to believe that sickness and physical suffering is God's way of bringing out the best in them, or of developing the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. They believe that they must be patient in affliction, and wait until it is God's time to heal them, that perhaps God is working out patience and long-suffering in them, or perhaps God is chastening them for some unknown sin.

It is true that sin opens the door for sickness to enter, but all God asks is that sin be confessed and forsaken. The Scripture in James 5:14-17 applies particularly to this case. God does not say, "Is any sick among? Let him patiently wait until God has finished chastening him." Rather, "Confess your faults one to another, (Now, TODAY) and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." (James 5:16) The promise is, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be FORGIVEN HIM." (James 5:15)

He is not glorified by the Christian continuing in the sickness nor in the sin that caused it, but rather by giving deliverance from both.

Patience and long-suffering are the “fruit of the SPIRIT” (Galatians 5:22-23), not “fruit of sickness and suffering.” They result directly from being yielded to the indwelling Spirit of God. If in some individuals they may seem to result from sickness, it is rather because the sickness has driven that individual to give more attention to his relationship with the Spirit of God than he did when he was well. Any person who has observed sick people will readily agree that in other circumstances the result of sickness is frequently less, rather than more patience.

If God (who never changes) used this method of teaching patience and long-suffering, surely at some time in the earthly ministry of Christ, He would have said to someone who cried out to Him for deliverance, “Go thy way. Remain sick until you have learned patience. Then you may seek me again, and perhaps I will heal you.” Never once did He give such an answer. Not once did He command any person who was well to become sick, nor any who was sick to remain so.

Both sin and sickness are the works of the devil. God certainly has not ordained that the fruit of the Spirit should be developed by the works of the devil. This is the work of the Spirit! Christ was manifested to destroy the works of the devil.

Some may say, “This may not be God’s time to heal me. I will be faithful in my sickness, and God in His own good time will heal me, should it be His will to do so.” It would be just as well for a sinner to say, “This may not be God’s time to save me. I will be faithful in my sin and disobedience, and if I am one whom God wills to save, surely He will save me in His own good time.”

We know that it is the will of God to save everybody, for He is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9) Nevertheless, none will escape except they repent, for Jesus Himself said, “Except ye repent, ye shall ALL likewise perish.” (Luke 13:3)

The moment the sinner repents, salvation is his. He need not wait and wonder whether God will save him, for God has said, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

This is recognised as sound doctrine among all that call themselves fundamental believers. Yet many of them fail to recognise the fact that the same Bible tells us: “I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” (3 John 2)

Health is God’s will for His people, conditioned upon the well-being of the soul.

All of God’s promises are conditional. Salvation is conditioned upon repentance. Healing is conditioned upon faith and spiritual health, but when God’s conditions are known and met, **GOD GUARANTEES THE ANSWER.**

“For ALL the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” (2 Corinthians 1:20)

“For he is faithful that promised.” (Hebrews 10:23)

(3) Indefinite Prayers

Many fail to receive healing because they do not ask definitely for the thing they desire from God. “... ye have not, because ye ask not.” (James 4:2)

Two blind men were sitting by the wayside, and hearing that Jesus passed by, began to cry out, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.” (Matthew 20:31) Truly they were addressing their plea to the right person, but when their prayer is analysed, they really hadn’t asked him for ANYTHING! Jesus asked them, “What will ye that I shall do unto you?” (Matthew 20:32)

“Lord, that our eyes may be opened.” (Matthew 20:33) Thus their prayer was made definite, and “immediately their eyes received sight.” (Matthew 20:34)

When you come to God for healing, state your need DEFINITELY. God’s promise is: “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” (John 14:13)

In one of our meetings, a man came in the healing line that was deaf in one ear, blind in one eye, and had rheumatism in his knees. As he came, he asked for deliverance for his ear, which had been totally deaf for a number of years. As prayer was offered and Satan’s power was broken, he immediately received his hearing. This so inspired his faith that he had courage to ask healing for his eye. When this prayer also was answered, his faith was strengthened yet further, so that he asked and received deliverance for his crippled knees. There was no real new need in the man or any new willingness to heal on God’s part, but as each need was presented definitely, God was true to His word, and DID EXACTLY WHAT WAS ASKED IN JESUS’ NAME.

Oftentimes the failure to make a definite request is due to lack of faith. The beggar who comes to your back door may say, “Lady, please give me something to eat.” He isn’t sure he will get anything. If he should get something, he doesn’t know what it might be. So he makes his request indefinite, but when you go into the store with money in your purse to buy something to eat, you don’t say, “Give me something to eat.” You give the grocer a very definite list of just the things you want, and the quantity of each. You have no doubt that you will receive the thing you ask for.

Just so, the person who comes to God believing that whatsoever he asks, he will receive, will normally ask definitely for the things he desires. Many times, if the person seeking healing will determine in his mind exactly what healing he truly needs and expects to get, and can be persuaded to ask definitely, the barrier to healing is immediately removed.

Many people believe that it is a sign of meekness or humility to say, after they have prayed, “If it be thy will.” This may be a trick of the enemy to keep you from having real faith to be healed. So long as you are not sure it is God’s will to heal you, you can not ask in faith, for never in the history of answered prayer has anyone persuaded God

to do anything contrary to His will. The central secret of answered prayer is praying **IN HIS WILL**.

Those who feel they should say, “If it be thy will” quote as an example the prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane, when He cried out in agony of soul, “If thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” (Luke 22:42)

Note that He was not praying for something that God had promised. He was not praying with a desire to change the circumstances, and although the prayer was prayed by the Son of God Himself, **IT DID NOT BRING ABOUT THE CHANGE** suggested in the prayer. This was never intended to be a prayer to change things. It was simply the agonising cry of a struggling soul.

He knew the will of the Father. He had known before He ever came to earth that He was to come for no other purpose than to drink of that cup. Even before Gethsemane, when the disciples had asked for places of honour, He had asked them if they were able to drink of the cup which He must drink. This was a prayer for strength and grace to drink the cup. The hour had come, and the cup was bitter.

Jesus had taken upon Himself the human frailty of the flesh when He became “flesh and dwelt among us.” (John 1:14) So in being made, in all points, like unto His brethren (Hebrews 2:17), His flesh, naturally, rebelled against the horrible knowledge that in a few hours it would be torn, bruised, bleeding, disgraced, forsaken, and suffering the greatest punishment known to man. He who had known no sin was to be made a public spectacle as a sinner, bearing our sins upon the cross. He knew that His Father, who had been so close by, even as He walked the dusty paths of Galilee, could not go with Him through this, His hour of greatest testing. In agony of soul, He looked about for another way, but His purpose was unshaken, and only for a moment would He even cry out. And God sent an angel to strengthen Him for that dark hour.

Yes, in your life, too, you may many times have good use for the words, “Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.” Save them for the time when your consecration is being tested. Save them for the day when the dark waters have almost swept you off your feet and the devil is tempting you to seek an easier way out! Then, cry out as Jesus did. “Father, if it is all right with you, I will take the easier way, but my mind is made up. My face is set. I am determined to do thy will at any cost.” “**NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE,**” (Luke 22:42) will be the correct prayer at this time.

In your praying, day by day, make it a practice to find out God’s will, and then pray with complete confidence for those things which are His will.

When we pray for healing, we are praying for that which God has already revealed to be His will. **IT IS GOD’S WILL TO HEAL YOU!** Then, why should you say, “If it be thy will”?

It is right that we should be concerned to know the will of God, and that when we pray, we should pray in accordance with His will. We read in James 4:13, 15: “Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a

year, and buy and sell, and get gain: ... For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

In this case, God has not promised, nor revealed His will in the matter.

God has promised and revealed His will in regard to the healing of His people. Therefore, we need not say, "If it be thy will;" rather, let us say, I thank you, Father, that you have revealed Your will concerning the matter in Your Word, and that I know I am asking in Your will."

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (1 John 5:14-15)

The "if" in many prayers not only denotes doubt but is used as a loophole through which many hope to escape any possible charge of unbelief or unconfessed sin. If healing fails to come, the person who prays thus can always excuse himself by saying, "It just wasn't God's will to heal me. He heals others, but although I am blameless, God has shown respect of persons, and chooses not to heal me."

In the light of God's own plain statement that He is not a respecter of persons (Romans 2:11), such a statement might well be classed as a slander against God, or "charging God foolishly."

(4) Lack of Understanding of God's Dealings in Regard to Healing

A lack of understanding of the way God deals in regard to healing is the cause of many remaining sick. The person who has set a pattern in his mind and feels it is the only way that God can or will work is in danger of losing confidence. When the answer doesn't come according to his mental pattern, he may also have the feeling that his prayer has not been heard or will not be answered

Since healing can come only by faith, it is easy to see the importance of understanding God's methods of dealing in order that faith may not be shaken.

Many have been heard to remark that if God does the healing, it will instantly be complete. This is merely man's theory, and is not God's constant pattern.

One outstanding example of non-instantaneous healing from the Old Testament is that of Naaman. (See 2 Kings 5)

Elisha was a prophet of God, and was greatly anointed by God to perform mighty works in His name.

Apparently the people looked to him to heal them (through the power of God) because an obscure captive Israelite maid passed the word to Naaman that he could be healed of his leprosy if he would find Elisha.

Naaman's king immediately sent him to Israel, the land of the prophet, Elisha, with

instructions to the king of Israel to see that he was healed. How frequently our hearts are stirred today, and made to wonder, when we see the “heathen” (those who do not profess to be Christians) quickly accept and believe when they are told of a Saviour who heals the body as well as the soul, while many Christians sit by in unbelief and refuse to acknowledge or enjoy the blessing.

The king of Israel was like these. He became all upset and wondered how he could do the command of the king of Syria. (Verse 7) He apparently knew so little about what God was doing that he didn't even know there was a prophet in his land who could heal the sick!

Elisha heard of the matter and sent word that Naaman should be sent to him. When Naaman came to Elisha he was quite disappointed to find that, instead of being treated as the high representative of a powerful government, he was not even approached personally by Elisha. Instead, Elisha sent his servant, Gehazi, to him with a message. Naaman was to go to the Jordan River and wash in it seven times, and he would be healed.

The Jordan was a muddy and unattractive river. Syria, Naaman's own country had two rivers that were much cleaner and more attractive. Naaman was angry at such treatment, but he allowed his servants to persuade him to do the thing Elisha had commanded, and he was healed!

Did the muddy waters of the Jordan have any healing effect on Naaman? Of course not, but it was necessary that Naaman perform an act of humility and obedience. To do so indicated that he had some degree of faith. This was not the end of the matter. He came back to Elisha to thank him. He told Elisha that he would no longer worship nor sacrifice to the heathen idols of his land. He would serve only the God of Israel from that day.

He offered gifts to Elisha, but he refused to accept them. The power of God can not be bought, and this heathen captain might have misunderstood if Elisha had taken the gifts.

That instantaneous healing is merely man's theory and not God's constant pattern is also borne out in the life of Jesus; healings were not always instantaneous. Often He did heal instantly but other patterns apparent today were also apparent in the ministry of Christ. Let us consider some of these, both in the time of Christ and in our day:

The Healing of the Nobleman's Son: A certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum, met Jesus and said to Him, “Sir, come down ere my child die.” (John 4:49) Jesus said unto him, “Go thy way; thy son liveth.” (John 4:50)

According to the words of Jesus, the boy was healed. The work was done. The case was closed. The nobleman's servants met him along the road before he reached home, bringing him the glad news: “Thy son liveth.” (John 4:51) When the father inquired of them the hour when he began to amend, the servant replied, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” (John 4:52)

Note that the boy “began to amend.” It would appear that although this boy was truly HEALED, it was not an instantaneous full restoration to his former health and vigour. Rather, the fever left, and he was on the road to recovery.

Even so today, in many cases, the cause of the disease is driven out, yet some time is required before normal processes of growth or convalescence bring about a state of full and normal well being.

The Healing of the Man Born Blind. (John 9) Jesus met a man who was blind from his birth. Jesus made clay and anointed his eyes with the clay and commanded him to “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.” (John 9:7) The blind man did exactly as he was told. He went his way, washed, and CAME SEEING.

His eyes were opened, WHEN? When he obeyed the command of Jesus and did what He told him to do. Thus, we learn that healing may be down the road of obedience. Jesus can heal you in the same way today. It is important to recognise that this is scriptural.

In our meetings the Lord has dealt with certain individuals concerning obedience, and when they obeyed God’s voice, they were miraculously healed. It is doubtful if any that stubbornly refuse to do God’s bidding can have faith to receive healing.

The Healing of the Ten Lepers (Luke 17): As Jesus entered into a certain village, ten men who were lepers stood afar off and “lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests.” (Luke 17:14)

Jesus did not there on the spot tell them that they were healed. But He did tell them to go shew themselves to the priests, which they knew they had no reason to do unless they were healed. They started to the priests in obedience by faith, doing the thing they could not do unless they were healed. When they started, there was no outward manifestation of their healing, but “it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.” (Luke 17:14)

This was not an immediate, visible healing, but was a genuine healing by the power of God. These men took God at His word, and His word did not fall. They acted their faith, while it was yet not seen. As a result, in a very short time they SAW what they had had faith to believe.

If you will do BY FAITH that which you could not do before, God will meet YOU. Jesus said frequently said to the bed-fast, “Take up thy bed, and walk.” (Mark 2:9) They were healed when they obeyed. Peter said to the impotent in his feet, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk,” (Acts 3:6) and obeying, he was healed. Many today are receiving deliverance in the same manner.

The Healing of a Young Lady on Crutches: In one of our healing lines came a young lady on crutches. She had been crippled for four long years. As she came, the glow of faith was upon her face. Before the minister could say one word to her, she beamingly handed him her crutches. She was fully persuaded by faith that she would need them

no longer. Of course, she went away walking without the crutches. God never fails to reward real, living faith.

The Healing of a Lady in a Wheel Chair: Another had come in the same healing line in a wheel chair. After prayer, she was commanded to rise and walk. Without making a move, she replied, “You know I can’t do that,” and she couldn’t because she did not believe! However, two nights later, after being more fully instructed in the promises of God, she did arise from the chair, walked, ran, and climbed the steps to the platform. This type of healing seems to have been one of the most prominent in the healing ministry of Jesus, and it is still in effect today.

Like the Fig Tree, Diseases are Cursed and Wither Away! One day Jesus cursed a fig tree because it produced no fruit. (Mark 11:13) Apparently there was no change in the appearance of the tree then, but the next day, when He and His disciples passed again that way, Peter was amazed, and said to Jesus, “Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.” (Verse 21) In this short time, it had dried up at the roots, and was withered away.

Many diseases are healed in the same way. The “root” of the disease is cursed in the name of Jesus. Should it be cancer, tumour, goitre, or some other growth, it must either pass from the body or disintegrate into the blood stream, and be carried away. It is easy to understand that the person could be truly healed and yet continue to suffer some discomfort during the time the process is taking place. The suffering may be even more acute for a short period of time than it was before, as the dead, foreign tissue is being separated and carried away.

IN FAILING TO UNDERSTAND THIS TRUTH OF GRADUAL HEALING, TWO GRAVE DANGERS ARE APPARENT:

- (1) The person may lose confidence in the healing power of God, due to disappointment in failing to be made perfectly whole as expected. The loss of confidence opens the door for Satan to return and take possession again of that which had been taken from him. (See Matthew 12:43-45) In that case, even that which was gained is lost. This also accounts for many that testify at one time to having received a “partial healing” and then in a little while are as bad or worse than before. (This subject will be discussed at greater length in one of the future lessons).
- (2) The person may accept the partial deliverance as being all that God can or will do, and therefore fail to continue to stand against the devil by faith until the healing is complete. If Satan can not prevent your healing altogether, he will back up one step, and try to hinder you from receiving ALL that God intended for you to have.

GOD’S PLAN FOR HEALING IS COMPLETE HEALING, whether it be instantaneous or a convalescent type of deliverance.

If you do not receive instant healing, do not be discouraged, but keep reaching out to God by faith, and praise Him for that which has already been done in your behalf. Do not only praise Him for the improvements in your condition, which you may be able to feel, but especially for the stripes which He bore at the whipping post in Jerusalem to

pay the price for YOUR deliverance. Keep right on looking at Jesus until the manifestation of your deliverance is complete.

FAITH IN GOD IS MORE THAN FAITH IN HIS PROMISES--IT IS ALSO FAITH IN HIS COMMANDS. His commands need not be simple tests of faith, as in the preceding cases. They may be tests of obedience.

(5) Rejection of God's Statutes

While Elisha refused gifts from Naaman, Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, was covetous of those things. He followed Naaman and told him that Elisha had changed his mind and would accept the gifts. The Spirit of the Lord revealed this to Elisha while it was happening. When Gehazi returned, Elisha gave him a chance to confess and repent. Instead, Gehazi told more lies. Then Elisha said, "The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed forever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow." 2 Kings 5:27.

A heathen captain, with little or no understanding of God and His Word is healed. Take heed one who has much knowledge and understanding, as did Gehazi, and wilfully sins against God's commandments, is in grave danger of severe judgment. The judgment on Gehazi illustrates this.

There is little doubt that in every place where we hold healing campaigns, we have some Gehazi's who go through the healing line, desperately seeking from God what can never be.

Somewhere, they have knowingly and deliberately turned aside from following God's will for them. They have despised their inheritance and sold their birthright. Now they wander, as a leprous Gehazi, seeking for a blessing they no longer have a right to receive. They have rejected the Lord's statutes.

(6) Stubbornness and Rebellion:

"And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians. And Asa died in the one and fortieth year of his reign." (2 Chronicles 16:12-13)

Is it a sin to go to doctors? This is a question that has been debated back and forth by people who profess to believe in divine healing. I do not quarrel with the medical profession. I don't know what the world would do without them. I don't know what many Christians would do without them either!

Not all Christians die who go to doctors. Many get well, so we will have to look further for the meaning of this Scripture.

Asa was a man who made a very good start in serving God. He was a king of Judah, and his first act as king was to remove all idols from the land and forbid idolatry. We are told that his heart was perfect "all his days." (2 Chronicles 15:17) After the 35th

year of his reign, the king of Israel invaded Judah and robbed him of some of his territory. Asa thought that if any other king joined Israel they could quickly overthrow his kingdom, so he sent to the king of Syria - a heathen king of a heathen nation--and asked him to come to his aid. The king of Syria consented.

God was so displeased that He sent Hanani, the prophet, to say to Asa: "Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, ... Herein thou has done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars."(2 Chronicles 16:7,9)

Asa became so angry at Hanani that he put him in prison, and we are told that he oppressed the people of Judah.

Now, four years later, he became sick. God was giving him one more chance, a chance to repent, to turn again to Him in humility, trust, and obedience, but Asa, in his stubbornness and rebellion of heart, refused to seek God for his healing. Man could not help him this time, so he died.

There is a lesson here for those of us who know the power of God. To turn from Him, and look to man and man only for help, whether for healing or for any other need, is displeasing to Him.

(7) Disobedience

God's power to heal was well-known and recognised by His people in the days of the Old Testament. When He made His covenant with the children of Israel at Sinai, He told them if they would obey His statutes and keep His commandments, He would keep them in health. "I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: FOR I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE." (Exodus 15:26)

When they became critical and murmured against God and against Moses, God permitted "fiery serpents" to come into the camp, and many were bitten and died. (Numbers 21:4-9) The people knew the cause of this and came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, pray unto the Lord, and he will take away the serpents from us." (Numbers 21:7)

God told Moses to fashion a serpent of brass and place it upon a pole where anyone who was bitten could see it. He would only have to look at the brazen serpent and he would be healed.

This, of course, was a type of Christ, who was crucified for us that we might be healed, both soul and body.

Many years later, Hezekiah, the king, had to destroy this same brazen serpent. Once it had been a blessing but now had become a curse because the people of Israel "did burn incense to it." (2 Kings 18:4)

Some who elevate a person, who is used to heal the sick, are guilty of doing the same thing. They are exalting the instrument of healing rather than the Healer. God alone has

power to heal. Man is never more than an instrument in His hands.

(8) Speaking Against the Lord's Anointed (Numbers 12:1-13)

In the above Scripture we read that Miriam, the sister of Moses, criticised him. She didn't approve of the woman he married! She added the sin of spiritual pride because she said, "Moses isn't the only prophet around here. Hasn't God spoken by us (Aaron) also?"

So great was this sin in God's sight that He smote her with leprosy! It was only through the intercessory prayer of Moses that she was healed. God reminded Miriam how He had chosen and blessed Moses above all others, and God said to her, "were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" (Numbers 12:8)

Some are unable to receive healing because they are guilty of speaking against the Lord's anointed!

A CAREFUL STUDY OF THE FOREGOING REASONS along with any others that may occur to you, should help locate the reason you, or those for whom you are praying do not receive healing. By correcting the trouble and turning to God in repentance, you should be able to receive it.

Perhaps you have had prayer for your healing once, or even many times, but failed to believe God for it, You think that perhaps it would denote unbelief to come back for prayer again for the same disease. Please refer to Mark 8:23. Here Jesus took a blind man by the hand and led him out of town. When He had spit on his eyes and put His hands upon him, He asked if he saw anything. The man looked up and said, "I see men as trees walking." (Mark 8:24) It was only after Jesus had laid his hands upon him the second time that his sight was fully restored. Then he saw "every man clearly." (Mark 8:25)

If you have had prayer and have not received healing, do not be discouraged. Rather, start over, reading the New Testament as though it were a new book. Read and study as though you know nothing about divine healing. You have missed a point somewhere along the line. Just go back and start at the beginning, and be very careful to follow God's instructions in every point, and for you too, heaven GUARANTEES THE ANSWER.

The Bible teaches that we shall prosper and be in health, even as our souls prosper. (3 John 2) Yet we haven't any promise in the Word of God that divine healing will give unlimited physical life to any person in this present age. It is still true that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Hebrews 9:27)

Some earnest teachers, preachers, and Christian people, in their great zeal for upholding the doctrine of healing, have left the strong inference that if one should exercise sufficient faith he might never die physically.

The Word of God makes it plain that death remains an unconquered enemy. "The last enemy that SHALL BE destroyed is death." (1 Corinthians 15:26) A careful study of

this Scripture and its context will show that while death will eventually be destroyed, destruction awaits a future time. The sting of death is sin. (1 Corinthians 15:56) To the person who is saved from sin, death has lost its sting, but death itself is yet unconquered. Until Jesus returns and puts all things under Him, death remains the normal end of all mankind.

Some quote Romans 5:12-14 as proof that physical health can be ours indefinitely to the extent that there should be no physical death. However, Paul was not here referring to physical death, but rather to spiritual death - spiritual separation from God. One can be alive physically, but dead spiritually. "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." (1 Timothy 5:6) A careful study of Romans 5, especially verses 17, 18, and 19, will reveal that Paul was speaking of this spiritual death and not of physical death. For he says, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Romans 5:19) If the death spoken of in verses 12 and 14 is physical death, then verse 19 should read, "So by the obedience of one shall many be made immune from physical death."

It is true that physical health during our appointed life time has been provided in the atonement. But the Word does not teach that any person can have such outstanding faith as never to die physically. The exception is those whose normal life span will reach to the time when Jesus will come and those who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." (Psalm 90:10)

After having given this general rule in regard to the normal length of life, God gives us this pattern prayer: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." (Psalm 90:12) According to this verse, even the most consecrated Christian should expect to come at last to the end of his days. This will explain why some in advanced age fail to be raised from their beds. God's time may have come for them to go.

However, even if it should be the end of days for an individual, God's word still does not indicate that it is His plan for that person to die in agony and disease, but rather that His servant should depart in peace. (Luke 2:29) Disease is not necessary to bring about death. God's pattern for death is found in Psalm 104:29. "Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust."

Even when the time has come for one to die, there is a scriptural example for the belief that in the case of unusual faith, a limited amount of time may be added. Hezekiah was informed that God had commanded him to set his house in order, for he should die and not live. Yet in answer to his pleading, Hezekiah was granted an extension of life for fifteen years. (2 Kings 20:1-7) Nevertheless, although Hezekiah was healed and his life extended, when the fifteen years were over, he still had to die. Divine healing does not set aside the law of death. Real faith can be based only upon the word of One who is faithful. We can have faith for healing because God has promised healing, but God has not promised that this physical life shall continue indefinitely.

Build your faith upon the Word of God. Search the Word to find the reason you have not been healed. Get rid of the reason you have not been healed. Then accept your healing joyful in whatever way God may see fit to give it.

God may choose to heal you instantly. He may choose to let the healing be gradual. He may choose to give a sudden manifestation of your healing, but at a time a little later. Or, in the case of one whose time has come to go, he may deliver from pain and suffering, and yet take the person to his eternal rest.

Lay aside your own ideas of how God is going to heal you and accept the healing God's way. Believe God! Take Him at His word! He says healing is for you. God, who CAN NOT LIE, has said, "believe that ye receive ... and ye SHALL." (Mark 11:24)

LESSON SEVEN

HOW TO RECEIVE YOUR HEALING

GOD IS ABLE TO HEAL YOU!

There has never been a time when there were so many sick and afflicted. And there has never been a time when so many millions of dollars were solicited and spent in research in an effort to find a cure for devastating diseases. Multitudes are dying because they are depending upon that which can not help.

God knows how to heal the sick. He is all power in heaven and in earth. God can heal a cancer in two seconds. He can stop it in a split second. He can raise you and heal you.

If you are sick, I do not believe you are in the perfect will of God. He does not want your body to be sick any more than He wants your soul to be sinful. I do not believe Jesus is coming back for a church full of sickness any more than He is coming back for a church full of sin. Paul said in Ephesians 5:27: "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

In the following scripture, the Bible tells us that when God brought His people out of bondage and out of captivity, He said He would take away sickness from their midst. "The number of thy days I will fulfil." (Exodus 23:26b)

"And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.

"There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil." (Exodus 23:25-26)

If God's people are sick, there is something wrong either with them or with the Bible. Since we know there is nothing wrong with the Bible, we know it is with the people.

God's people are not believing God. They are not paying the price. They are not claiming the promises. God will do exactly what He promises - exactly what He says. He will take away all sickness from the midst of His people, and that means ALL sickness.

In our Miracle Revival Campaigns, about eight out of ten are sick, diseased and afflicted. Some are brought in on stretchers. Some are wearing hearing aids. Others are suffering from high blood pressure and from mental sickness. They are bound, sick, in pain and misery, in agony and woe. Very few of God's people are perfectly well.

DISEASES AND YOUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION ARE CLOSELY RELATED

Many who claim to be Christians are bound in spirit. David referred to this when he

said: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit." (Psalms 51:10-12) In other words, he asks God to let a free spirit get hold of him because he is bound.

If you are bound today, there is no need for you to be. He will set you free from sickness. He will set you free from disease. He will set you free from a binding in your spirit.

JESUS came to set men free. "If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8:36) "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

ARE YOU FREE TODAY? If not, you are BOUND. Isaiah 61:1 says it is like being in prison. Jesus came to open the prison to them that are BOUND, to set at liberty those that are captive. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;"

If you are bound, the devil will use that very thing to depress and discourage you.

If you are bound in your spirit and bound in your soul, you will soon be bound in your body. When you become bound in mind and spirit, even your digestive organs are affected. All the organs of your body are affected. They can not function normally when you are mentally oppressed and bound in spirit.

At least ten of the major diseases (perhaps more) are caused, not by germs, but by a mental condition. Doctors tell us that eight out of every ten who think they have heart disease, palpitation, etc., have nothing organically wrong with their heart (the organ) - the trouble is merely psychosomatic - something wrong with their minds, (mental conflict).

Doctors also tell us that stomach ulcers are due to worry and oppression and heaviness of spirit.

A man came to me with stomach ulcers and said, "I am on my way to Minneapolis for an operation and I believe God can heal me if you will pray for me. I gave him a special prayer card and marked a big capital N T on it.

He said, "What's that N T for?"

I replied, "Nervous tension."

"Nervous tension!?" he protested. "I didn't tell you I was bothered with nervous tension! I told you I had STOMACH ULCERS! What did you put Nervous Tension on that card for?!"

"Stomach ulcers, I explained, "are not a disease. They are a condition - a condition

your stomach is in because of worry and distress, because of anxiety and oppression, and because of nervous disorders. You have this trouble because of NERVOUS TENSION. You are under a weight. You are under pressure.”

“You are right,” he agreed. “I have never worried so much in all my life. I am under tension! I just worry day and night!”

“That’s why you have stomach ulcers,” I said. “You get out from under this tension, this worry and oppression, and you won’t have stomach ulcers.”

Ulcers are caused by a mental condition. You are so worried and distressed, anxious and fretful that you can’t digest your food. Every time you eat, there is something in your stomach burning like fire. You have to take Tums or something else, for the “stomach burns.”

If you will get peace in your soul and peace in your mind, and become settled down in your spirit, your digestive organs will work right and you will find you do not have so much trouble in your body.

God wants to set you free in your spirit and in your soul. The scripture says, “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine:” (Proverbs 17:22a) Get your heart and soul right. It is better medicine than any you can buy. I am speaking of the heart medicine that comes right out of heaven.

If you find yourself in need of deliverance, cry out to God. “God, help me to get my heart right. I want some heavenly medicine. You promised to give it to me when I get my heart right. Uplift me! Let me get my heart right because I want to get my body right physically. Help me, Lord!”

BE PERSISTENT - DO NOT BECOME DISCOURAGED.

“And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging:”

“And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.”

“And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.”

“And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.”

“And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,”

“Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.”

“And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.”

“And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.” (Luke 18:35-43)

Blind Bartimaeus had surely heard much about the great healings of Jesus and how the blind were made to see. It was no doubt his constant hope that some day he could be where Christ was and receive his sight. And as he sat by the wayside begging, he had time to ponder, to think, to hope - to hope that some day Jesus would come by. He felt certain that whenever He did, it would be his time to receive his sight. Now the devil, knowing this, had already laid a subtle plan to hinder Bartimaeus from receiving his healing. Already, Satan had picked out certain religious leaders to do all in their power, when the time came, to see that he did not receive this miracle.

Bartimaeus had met with no opposition day by day as he had sat by the road, with a cup in his hand. A person never meets with opposition as long as he suffers and is patient in his afflictions. But when he begins to cry out to Christ for help, and begins to press his way through to victory, all Satan's forces are turned upon him in opposition. However, “greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” (1 John 4:4b)

Jesus said, “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” (Luke 18:39)

They were trying their best to discourage Bartimaeus, so that he would not receive his healing. The moment he cried out to the Lord for help, many charged him that he should “hold his peace.” (Luke 18:39a)

Satan had used this group before - this group did not follow Jesus because they believed in what He preached and did, nor because they believed in what He taught, nor because they were receiving anything from Jesus. They made it their business to rebuke people for shouting, and even begged the Lord to rebuke them for rejoicing with a loud noise. They made it their business to discourage the multitude rather than encourage them. They made it their business to find fault, to criticise, murmur and complain, to stay between Jesus and others for the express purpose of keeping them from the Lord.

Even so today, when a person makes up his mind to reach the Lord, in order to receive a miracle from Jesus or through someone used of the Lord, he is sure to discover some kind of hindrance from Satan. Notice, those who went before tried to hinder him, they rebuked Bartimaeus “but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” (Luke 18:39b)

“THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE” in your case, may be a friend, members of your family, perhaps your minister, or Sunday School teacher - anyone who would hinder you from receiving your healing.

Many times those who seek healing or a miracle are not in need of deliverance from sin (open, gross sin) nor from cigarettes, narcotics, alcohol, drugs nor such things. Oftentimes they need only to be loosed from, or know how to disentangle themselves from, “THOSE WHO GO BEFORE.”

As Solomon said there is a time for all things under the sun (Ecclesiastes 3:1), there was a definite time for Bartimaeus to receive his sight. That time was when Christ passed by. That was the time for his eyes to be opened. That was the time for Bartimaeus to deal with and overcome the hindrances. The healing was on the way. **JESUS WAS PASSING BY!**

More than healing was on the way! **OPPOSITION WAS ON THE WAY**, and it stood between Bartimaeus and the miracle. The crowd approached. Its noise became louder. A multitude was following the Master!

As the crowd began to pass by, Bartimaeus knew that Jesus must be somewhere in the lead. He knew with positive faith that this was **HIS TIME TO RECEIVE** - this was **HIS OPPORTUNITY!**

“**JESUS,**” cried he, with aloud voice and deep emotion, “**THOU SON OF DAVID, HAVE MERCY ON MET!** (Mark 10:47b) This was a real cry of faith. It was his only hope! It was now or never! He **MUST** stop the Lord! He **MUST** receive a touch! Not later, **NOW!** This was **HIS HOUR!**

Notice in Verse 48, the faith of Bartimaeus. He would not be discouraged. He was determined to have his eyes opened. He knew that Jesus was the only one who could help. The more people tried to discourage him, the louder he cried, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” (Mark 10:48b)

When Jesus saw that Bartimaeus would not be discouraged, He stopped and commanded him to be called. When they brought him to Jesus, He said to him, “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” Bartimaeus replied, “Lord, that I might receive my sight.” (Mark 10:51) It was then that Jesus said unto him, “Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.” (Mark 10:52)

Had Bartimaeus listened to the people, he would have been turned away and never would have been healed.

God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (Hebrews 11:6b) One must not be discouraged. It is very important to have a real determination to persist until victory comes.

AS THE NEXT STEP, REMEMBER CALVARY!

David said, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:” (Psalm 103:2) That is, “**REMEMBER** all His benefits.” To be reminded of all God’s benefits, we must go back to Calvary. The benefits mentioned by David include forgiveness for **ALL** sins, and healing for **ALL** diseases; not part of our sins, nor part of our diseases, but **ALL**; every sin and every disease. This is the benefit of Calvary.

Seven hundred years before Calvary, Isaiah looked forward to the cross. Upon that cross he saw a man dying for the sins of the world. Not only dying - shedding His blood - for the sins of the world - but dying with His back bruised and bleeding from

the stripes which He bore that we might be set free from sickness, as well as from sin.

Speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, Isaiah cried out in prophetic utterance, “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes WE ARE HEALED!” (Isaiah 53:3-5)

So, then, at Calvary we were healed by His stripes.

Sixty years after Calvary, the Apostle Peter declares, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye WERE HEALED.” (1 Peter 2:24)

What difference does it make whether it be sixty years after Calvary, or nineteen hundred years after Calvary? Time can not change God’s eternal Word. The fact remains that at Calvary YOU WERE HEALED. The work was finished there. All God asks us to do is to believe it, then receive it. Only as you, dear sick suffering friend, believe in the stripes, can you receive healing for your body.

SALVATION for the Soul in the Atonement:

Only as a sinner believes in Calvary for the atonement for his soul can he receive salvation from sin. Jesus Christ shed His blood to atone for ALL sins. The suffering Christ went through in His body, however, was not for sin.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious BLOOD of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:” (1 Peter 1:18-19)

“In whom we have redemption through his BLOOD, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” (Ephesians 1:7)

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood (not the flesh) that maketh an atonement for the soul.” (Leviticus 17:11)

(The following is my personal testimony, telling of my conversion and what it means to be saved. It will be of help to those who may not be sure that they have been “born again.”)

I have not always been a preacher. I was not even always a Christian.

I was born in a drunkard’s home. I grew up in sin. I learned to drink hard liquor in my parents’ living room. I learned to dance as soon as I learned to walk. I lit my first

cigarette from one my mother was smoking. No one ever told me, until I was twenty-three years of age, that Jesus had died for my sins and that I could be free!

Many times my heart had cried out for a better life. Many a night, after a gay party, I have cried myself to sleep. Many a morning, with a splitting headache and uneasy stomach, I have declared, "If I ever get over this one, I'll never go on another one!"

Thank God, one night I heard the old story of Jesus. I heard that He had made a way, that He would pardon my sins, cleanse my sinful heart, and set me free. I was told that I could fall on my knees at an old - fashioned altar, cry out to God for pardon, and that He would hear me. It seemed too good to be true! That night, as I knelt before the Lord, Jesus took my sins away. The "old man" who had lived a life of sin for twenty-three years died there at that altar, and a new man came to live and walk and talk through that old body. I WAS BORN AGAIN.

The old "True Detective" magazines, "True Romances," "True Story," all the old reading material had lost its interest for me. I found a little old black bound book that has stories in it far more thrilling than any I had ever heard. Once, I would have cast it aside saying, "Who would read that?" Now I found that in it were the words of life. I read it morning, noon, and night.

The songs I had sung for years, the songs my friends had applauded, were no longer half so sweet as the new songs I had heard at the church - "There is Power in the Blood," "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder," and "The Old Rugged Cross."

It became my greatest joy to tell my old friends about my new joy. Ashamed of my Jesus? Ashamed for them to know I had "got religion?" No! I wanted them to know my Saviour, too!

Since that night, I have told thousands of people about Jesus, about His love and power. I have seen thousands come weeping down the aisles, repenting of their sins. I have seen them rise from their knees, smiling through their tears, to go out to live happy, useful Christian lives.

The beginning of the Christian life is indeed the beginning of a NEW life!

The Christian life begins with a knowledge that your sins are gone, that old things have passed away, and all things have become new.

Some may have told you that you can never KNOW that you are saved, and that you are ready for heaven. There are those in the world today who call themselves preachers of the gospel who would say to you, "Just live the best you know how. Pay your just debts. Be kind to your neighbours. Attend the church of your choice. It doesn't matter so much what you believe just so you are sincere, and when you get to the other end of this life, then you will find out whether you have done well enough. No one can ever know until the final judgment whether he is going to make it in!"

How utterly foolish. How far from the teaching of Scripture! What a devilish deception! It will cause people to drift carelessly into hell!

God's Word declares that we CAN KNOW!

"We KNOW that we have passed from death unto life." (1 John 3:14a)

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that YE MAY KNOW that ye HAVE eternal life." (1 John 5:13a)

This does not say that you may HOPE that you shall have eternal life, when you have come to the other end of life's journey! You have eternal life NOW, and KNOW that you have it, or else you have no eternal life! ETERNAL LIFE BEGINS WITHIN YOU WHEN YOU BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND ARE BORN AGAIN.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

The life of the unrepentant sinner - even the best of unrepentant sinners - is one life, while the life of the repentant, born again Christian, is an entirely different life.

The Apostle Paul describes the life of a well-meaning, self-righteous, religious sinner, in Romans 7:14-24.

"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I ... For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not ... O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:14-15, 18, 24)

But Paul had found the answer, and reveals it to us in the next verse. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 7:25a)

"What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." (Romans 8:3-4)

Friend, you who have not been set free by the Lord Jesus Christ, are in prison! You are in bondage! You are bound by sin! You can not do what you want to do, what you know is right! Many a time you have been ashamed of the thing that you have done. Many times you have wanted to stop. You have "turned over a new leaf." You have made New Year's resolutions. You have seen the new leaf smudged and the resolutions broken. Sin's chains are too strong. You may call it "habit." You may blame your "environment." You may feel that some day when you are older and when your circumstances have changed, then you will turn from your wicked ways. You will do better.

Only Christ can set you free! He whom the Son of God sets free is free indeed. (John 8:36)

“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The change is so complete that God in His word has called it a REBIRTH. (John 3:3)

HEALING for the Body - in the Atonement:

Christ did not suffer in His body for our sins. He shed His blood for that. The stripes were for our healing! David says so. Isaiah says so. Peter says so. Christ Himself says so. That should be sufficient!

Many remember part of His benefits, but have forgotten that part which provides deliverance for our physical bodies. So far as they are concerned, they make the sufferings of Christ to be in vain. Paul refers to this very thing when he tells us why Christians are sick. “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.” (die prematurely). (1 Corinthians 11:30) The cause is found in verse 29. Failure to discern the Lord’s body. That is, not understanding, or failing to remember for what His body was bruised and broken. In this Scripture Paul is referring to the sacrament. Going back to the teaching of Christ on this same subject, we find that Jesus took bread and blessed it, broke it, and gave it to the disciples. He said, “Take eat; this is my body.” (Matthew 26:26) In verse 27, He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it unto them saying, “Drink ye all of it, For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matthew 26:27b-28)

Here Christ shows a distinction between the body and the blood. This distinction is the reason that both the bread and the wine are included in the symbolism of the sacrament. The wine symbolises the blood shed for our sins; the bread symbolises the body broken for the healing of our sicknesses. Failing to discern the Lord’s body (1 Corinthians 11:29) means forgetting half of Calvary, failing to remember that it was by His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5) No wonder so many were weak and sickly in the church at Corinth, when they had neglected the provision God had made for their healing, and it is for this same reason so many Christian people are weak and sick today. They have forgotten the benefits of Calvary.

Jesus’ last words on the cross, before He gave up the ghost, were: “IT IS FINISHED:” (John 19:30) What did He mean? He meant just this: He had borne the sins of the world, and carried its sorrows. “Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses.” (Matthew 8:17b)

Since Christ bore your sicknesses, you no longer have to be sick. You can be released from sin and sickness by remembering that Christ finished your redemption for both, ONCE FOR ALL, at Calvary. Thanks be to God for Calvary!

THE NEXT STEP IS - BELIEVE!

Believe. JUST BELIEVE. Believing is faith. Faith is believing that God DOES. Believing it, simply because God said He would do it, and you know that God CAN NOT LIE.

Now you are ready for healing. You are ready to come, believing that according to His word, you will recover.

The victory at Calvary is applied in your case.

“Faith without works is dead.” (James 2:20b) In other words, faith that DOESN'T WORK is dead.

Since real faith is ALIVE, it is ACTIVE FAITH. It works! It acts!

You absolutely believe that by His stripes you were healed. Since you absolutely believe it, you begin to act on God's word. Joy comes into your heart, as the realisation of what God has done for you sweeps over your soul. Faith always brings rejoicing. Then as you rejoice in your victory, stand upon your feet! Rise up in Jesus' name and walk!

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1) Faith is reaching out into the unseen, getting hold of that which is NOT, and holding on until it becomes that which IS. Faith is believing that we possess that which we can not see; that which we can not feel. Though it is unseen and unfelt as yet, we believe it is already done.

This kind of faith BRINGS DELIVERANCE!

Believe even though you are in pain. Believe even though you have tried to walk and could not! Keep on believing, and keep on trying to act upon your faith. It is the believing that drives out the pain that brings you forth from your bed.

The unbeliever says, “Let me feel and I will believe.”

God says, “Believe, and I will let you feel.”

Real faith is believing without being able to feel. We are healed according to our faith, not according to our feeling. Feeling comes after faith has been exercised.

Do not look for feeling - LOOK FOR HEALING!

Faith for healing is believing absolutely that we are healed in spite of such things as weakness or pain. It is simply believing that we already have the thing for which we prayed BEFORE WE SEE IT OR FEEL IT. This is exactly what John meant when he said, “This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we HAVE THE PETITIONS THAT WE DESIRED OF HIM.” (1 John 5:14-15)

Then, without waiting to see or feel, we believe that we have the thing for which we prayed.

ACT YOUR FAITH - DO THE THINGS THAT YOU COULD NOT DO!

Step out on the promise of God. Leave your wheel chair. Throw away your crutches. Walk and run! Leap for joy! Speak! Hear! See out of obscurity and out of darkness! Do it in Jesus Name! Because you believe, you are healed! You CAN and WILL do the things you could not do!

Quit TALKING about your faith and begin to ACT your faith. If you have real faith, you won't have to tell people about it. They can SEE the results of your faith. Four men brought a palsied friend to Jesus to be healed. The result of their faith could be seen. "And when He SAW their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee." (Luke 5:20)

People who have real faith act instead of brag and talk. Do not declare that you have "all the faith in the world," when you are still sick and afflicted. If you have that much faith, YOU OUGHT TO BE BRINGING DELIVERANCE to the multitudes of sick and suffering!

Do not say, "If I can only believe." Leave the "if" out, Quit "trying to believe." Simply believe, and ACT on the Word of God. "But be ye DOERS of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (James 1:22)

TALK ABOUT YOUR HEALING. TALK ABOUT THE GOODNESS OF GOD. TALK ABOUT GOD'S PROMISES.

Quote every Scripture promise of healing that you know! Do not talk of failure! Do not speak of defeat! Quit talking about your doubts! Quit talking about your pains! Throw away your medicines!

Speak of your faith in God's promises!

Quit telling people what a wonderful job the devil has done of binding you with sickness. Quit glorifying the devil and testifying to his power.

Tell people what a wonderful work the Lord Jesus has done in making you whole and in driving away the power of Satan! Let your testimony glorify God! We overcome the devil by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony. (Revelation 12:11)

At this point, someone might say, "But I have pain." The pain declares that the sickness is not healed. We care not what your pain declares, nor what your feelings say. GOD'S WORD SAYS, "WITH HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED:" Which are you going to believe: God's word or your pain?

God's Word declares one thing ... your pain declares another. What do YOU declare? What is your testimony? Here is what it should be: "BY HIS STRIPES I AM HEALED."

Some might think this to be a lie, but it is not. God's Word can not lie.

Many a time, after a person has gone through the healing line, the devil has some friend or loved one standing close by, who unaware of the fact that they are helping the devil, will ask the person, "How do you FEEL? Do you really FEEL any better? Can you hear out of that ear now?"

Don't let the devil make you talk in terms of what you feel unless your feelings agree with what God says. Feelings are good if they agree with the Word of God. But God's Word is greater than your feelings. If your feelings have not yet been made to agree with the Word of God, ignore them. Refuse to quote them. Quote God's Word. Stand upon it by faith. Tell those who ask, "By His stripes I am healed."

REFUSE TO BELIEVE SYMPTOMS

You do not have to lie about your pains. That is wrong. It is wrong to lie. Do not say, "The pain is gone," when the pain is still there. Do not say, "I can hear everything clearly," when you can't. If you feel bad, it is a lie to say, "I feel well." IF YOU STILL HAVE PAIN, DON'T LIE ABOUT IT! Just refuse to discuss aches and pains.

Quote God's Word. His word is truth. Real faith must be based upon the word of God EXCLUSIVELY. You are not to believe you are healed because the pain is gone nor to refuse to believe you are healed because you still feel the pain. That pain has nothing to do with your faith. Feeling is not faith, and faith is not feeling. FAITH IS BELIEVING THAT YOU ARE HEALED BECAUSE GOD SAYS THAT YOU ARE HEALED.

LESSON EIGHT

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HEALING

WHO HAS POWER TO HEAL?

God has not only guaranteed to heal you but He has guaranteed to keep you healed. Like the rest of God's promises, it is conditional. God has told us in His Word not only how to receive our healing but also how to keep our healing. Some have failed to realise that there was anything more to do after they received their healing, and although God had really healed them, soon found that they were no better off than if they had never been healed.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HEALING

(1) Remember That All Sickness is of the Devil

First, let us remember that, while all sickness can not be attributed to demon possession or even to demon oppression, God is not the author of sickness. Satan is responsible in one way or another for all sickness. Satan is an active, crafty, intelligent enemy. He gives no ground except what is actively taken from him by faith, and having given up ground, he is constantly on the watch for an opportunity to take it back again.

(2) Be Filled With the Spirit

Jesus gave not only promises and commands but warnings as well. One of these is found in Matthew 12:43-45:

“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.”

When you have been released from the power of Satan, whether it be from sin, sickness, demon oppression, or demon possession, it is important that the house in which you live, your body, be not only clean, but occupied. When Satan moves out, if you are to keep him out, the Spirit of God must move in. Never let the demon find your house empty.

If you have not yet been filled with the Holy Ghost, set out immediately to be filled; then **STAY FILLED**. Let the Spirit of God dwell in you richly, keeping you, directing you, possessing you, and using you for the glory of God. Then Satan can not return.

“Neither give place to the devil.” (Ephesians 4:27)

The devil can not move in unless we give him a place. Those who abide in Christ are safe from Satan's power. Be so filled with righteousness that there is no room for sin. Be so filled with faith that there is no room for doubt. Be so filled with the Spirit of

God that there is no room for any other spirit to dwell there.

THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY GHOST:

The last sermon preached by Jesus before His ascension was on the Holy Ghost! He said, ... wait for the promise of the Father, ... ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” (Acts 1:4-5b)

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Luke records the last words of Christ as:

“... behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49)

This message must be very important, or Jesus would not have reserved it until just before He ascended.

John the Baptist promised, “... he shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” (Matthew 3:11b)

Eight hundred years before Calvary, the prophet Joel prophesied, “... I will pour out my spirit upon ALL flesh; ...” (Joel 2:28a)

This promise was fulfilled in the second chapter of Acts, for Peter, one of the hundred and twenty who was filled on that day said, “... this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel.” (Acts 2:16) Later, Peter, speaking to a multitude said: “...the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” (Acts 2:39)

This experience is promised to saved people of every age. In Peter’s preaching, the list included YOU, YOUR CHILDREN, THOSE AFAR OFF, and even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Every Christian needs this experience and should desire and earnestly seek it.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST IS A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE FROM CONVERSION

The fact that salvation and the baptism of the Holy Ghost are two separate and distinct experiences is made plain throughout the Scriptures. Peter said, “Repent, and be baptised (now) ... and ye shall (future) receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:38)

Jesus said to “wait for the promise of the Father.” (Acts 1:4) There are many other passages to substantiate this truth.

All who receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit speak in other tongues. “When Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and

prophesied.” (Acts 19:6)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THOSE SEEKING THE HOLY GHOST

Remember that faith (on your part) has a part in the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Concerning the Holy Ghost, Jesus said, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ASK Him?” (Luke 11:13)

In asking, you MUST, “ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For LET NOT THAT MAN THINK THAT HE SHALL RECEIVE ANYTHING OF THE LORD.” (James 1:6-7)

There is but one way to ask in faith. This is found in Mark 11:24: “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, BELIEVE THAT YE RECEIVE THEM, AND YE SHALL HAVE THEM.” The moment you believe, you receive. God will fill you.

If you find it hard to believe that God will FILL YOU NOW, it would be wise for you to search your heart for the reason. The Bible teaches that there are definite hindrances to real faith. Review the teaching of Lessons #4 and #5 concerning faith. Eliminate the hindrances to faith and the result will be FAITH THAT CAN NOT BE DEFEATED, DISCOURAGED OR FAIL! Sin, disobedience, and self will destroy or murder faith (confidence).

Please note the following Scriptures:

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.” (1 John 3:21)

“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it can not save; neither his ear heavy, that it can not hear:” (Isaiah 59:1)

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:” (Psalm 66:18)

“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” (1 Peter 3:7)

The Holy Spirit is given to them that obey him (Acts 5:32), and is not even promised to the children of disobedience (Ephesians 5:6). When you can present to God a pure heart and clean hands, then you can approach Him scripturally, lifting up holy hands (1 Timothy 2:8), and praising God with a joy born of faith, knowing that the promise is for YOU!

If your faith has not yet mounted to this point, seek God earnestly, and search your heart. Do not condemn yourself and become discouraged, but wait in His presence, where the light of God’s Word, applied by His Spirit, can reveal to you those things which yet need to be corrected before you can have real faith.

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise:” (Psalms 100:4) Praise Him for what HE IS, for what He has ALREADY DONE, and for His faithful promise to give to YOU the power which He has promised (Acts 1:8), just as soon as you are obedient (Acts 5:32), and ready. Wait patiently in His presence, in an attitude of worship with praise, and holy hands uplifted. You will not be waiting long. God will fill you or show you the hindrance. If He shows you some disobedience, or some broken vow, do not think that you can buy the baptism of the Holy Ghost with words of praise, without repentance, and perhaps even restitution if it be possible. Words of praise will not buy it any more than could Simon’s money. (Acts 8:20)

Ask God to fill you with the Spirit, so that you can have real power to serve Him. Purify your heart. Be obedient. Come boldly into His presence with praise. Then let Him fill you.

Don’t flee in fear from the moving of the Spirit when the power of God begins to take hold of your body.

When praying for the Holy Spirit, you will feel a mighty moving of the Spirit upon you. It may cause you to shake (Jeremiah 23:9) or to tremble. (Acts 9:6) Note that when Daniel prayed and sought God, he said, “... I fell upon my face:” “I was in a deep sleep.” (Daniel 8:17-18) Your lips may stammer. (Isaiah 28:11 with 1 Corinthians 14:21) The Holy Spirit’s coming may be accompanied by a vision. (See Acts 2:17) You may even stagger as one drunk. (Acts 2:13-15) DO NOT BE AFRAID OF THESE MANIFESTATIONS. Remember that they are scriptural and God-ordained. Others have had one or more of these manifestations when they came into the presence of God, and you may have them too.

Be obedient. Remember, the Holy Spirit is given to them that are obedient. “So is also the Holy Ghost, whom God HATH GIVEN to them that OBEY HIM.” (Acts 5:32) Yield so completely to the Spirit’s power that nothing else matters but doing what God says, whether great or small, and be willing to follow God all the way no matter where or how He may lead.

Pride will keep you from being obedient. Get rid of PRIDE. “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.” James 4:6. “... the proud he knoweth afar off.” (Psalm 138:6b)

Do not resist. Remember that Satan knows if you yield to the Spirit, you will be filled. It is Satan’s plan to tempt you to resist the Spirit. He will tell you, “This is not necessary,” or “You can receive the Holy Ghost without all this foolishness.” Be on your guard. Resist the devil (and he will flee from you), but DO NOT RESIST THE HOLY SPIRIT! People who resist the Holy Ghost are called “STIFF-NECKED.” “Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always RESIST THE HOLY GHOST: as your fathers did, so do ye.” (Acts 7:51)

Yield yourself! This is important. YOU have a part in the baptism of the Holy Ghost. John likened the baptism of the Holy Ghost to water baptism, for he said, “I indeed baptise you with water ... but ... he shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” (Matthew 3:11)

The word “baptise” means “to dip” or to “put under.” When being baptised in water, one must submit to the one doing the baptising. One must be yielded if he expects to be baptised with the Holy Ghost. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is Christ submerging every part of our being-soul, mind, spirit, hands, tongue, lips, voice, and ALL!

Then, yield fully and let Him possess ALL of your being.

Many yield to the Holy Ghost until they are partially under His control. Their lips and tongue quiver under the control of the Spirit. The Holy Ghost is moving upon them, and ready to come in and speak out, but they WILL NOT YIELD themselves in the baptism. They are praising God in their native tongue, but the Holy Ghost is trying to speak in another language. They stubbornly insist upon saying what THEY WANT TO SAY, in the way they want to say it! If they find they can not continue to praise God in their native language, they refuse to speak at all. It is the Spirit that gives the utterance, but you must furnish the SOUND, the LIPS, the TONGUE, and the effort to SPEAK OUT. The Spirit furnishes the language. The Holy Ghost possesses you, and He, from within, speaks back to God above, using your speaking apparatus as a transmitter, as you yield to Him. This is why some speak right out in “tongues” immediately, while others hold back from fully yielding, because of fear or doubts.

Do not be afraid of receiving something you have not asked for! “If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: HOW MUCH MORE SHALL your heavenly Father GIVE THE HOLY GHOST TO THEM THAT ASK HIM?” (Luke 11:11-13) God said He would give THE HOLY GHOST! Don’t be afraid of getting something else. Just believe God! He can not lie! Then, in Jesus’ name, RECEIVE YE THE HOLY GHOST!

Is it necessary, since the day of Pentecost, to “tarry” or “wait” for the Holy Ghost? Before Pentecost, the disciples tarried in the upper room at Jerusalem, waiting for the “Promise of the Father,” the Holy Ghost, which had not yet been given. (John 7:39) From the time that the Holy Ghost was given, on the day of Pentecost, we have no record of anyone tarring for the Holy Ghost. They RECEIVED!

The Samaritans did not tarry for the Holy Ghost. Peter and John prayed for them, laid hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:15-17). In the tenth chapter of Acts, the Holy Ghost fell on all who heard the Word, even as it was being preached.

At Ephesus, there was no long waiting, or tarrying, after they came to the knowledge of the truth. As soon as they had obeyed the Word, Paul laid his hands upon them, and they were filled IMMEDIATELY WITH THE HOLY GHOST.

It is not even necessary to wait for the laying on of hands before you receive the Holy Ghost. At the house of Cornelius, in Caesarea, all who heard the word received the Holy Ghost WHILE PETER WAS YET SPEAKING! It is entirely scriptural to receive the Holy Ghost during the preaching. Start worshipping God as soon as you come into a service. Come quickly into His presence, with a thankful heart and praise

on your lips, expecting God to meet your need. Yield to the Spirit when you feel Him coming upon you, and you can receive the Holy Ghost then and there, without waiting.

We may liken this experience to a man who is given a vessel, and told to go out and hold his vessel up toward heaven until he has it filled with rain water. If the rain has not started when the man goes out with his vessel, it is easy to see that he will have to “WAIT” until it starts raining before he can fill his vessel. However, if the rain is already pouring down, all he will have to do is to go out where the rain is falling, keep his vessel right side up, and **STAY THERE WHILE IT GETS FULL!**

In Zechariah and James, the outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the natural rain that falls from the sky.

“Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; ...” (Zechariah 10:1a)

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.” (James 5:7)

The rain began to fall on the day of Pentecost. It is falling today. All you need to do now is to get where the (spiritual) rain is falling, and get your vessel full! **WAITING IS NOT NECESSARY! WHY NOT BE FILLED NOW? THIS VERY MOMENT?**

I do not want you to think that I am discouraging prayer. I am not. Few today pray as much as they should. There is a “waiting” upon God that is profitable and I certainly encourage it. Isaiah said, “they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31) Daniel prayed or “waited” upon God for three whole weeks. (Daniel 10:2) Jesus Himself “... continued all night in prayer.” (Luke 6:12b)

Certainly God’s people everywhere today need to get back on their knees and wait upon God In **BELIEVING PRAYER!** Waiting upon God in prayer will condition one’s heart for the Holy Ghost. However, after one is ready to receive this experience, the promise must then be claimed. The waiting or tarrying we should do today should be only to condition our hearts in preparation **FOR** the Holy Spirit. In other words, let us “wait” or tarry only as long as is necessary to get our vessel or “temple” cleansed for the Spirit’s abiding place. Remember, He will come to dwell only in **CLEAN** temples.

Waiting or tarrying in itself alone will never fill one with the Holy Ghost. If that were enough, then why have some people “tarried” or “waited” for thirty-five years and are still waiting and have received nothing? Furthermore, they may never receive unless they do **MORE** than wait. If “tarrying” alone were enough to receive this experience, then **EVERYONE** who tarried **WOULD BE FILLED!** Thousands declare that they have been “tarrying” for many years and with all their tarrying, they have not received. This is evidence that one must **DO MORE** than tarry. One must consecrate, obey, yield, believe, and **RECEIVE!** Why not **NOW?**

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HEALING (CONTINUED)

(3) Live a Holy Life

Sin and careless living on the part of one who has been healed is an open invitation for the unclean spirit to move back into the house from which he was driven out. Jesus warned one whom He had healed instantly and miraculously, in these words: "... Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." (John 5:14b)

I am aware of the fact that this is not the general teaching in most pulpits today. The people are taught to expect to sin every day and repent every night. They are taught that Jesus was truly a wonderful man, but no one now living can live as He lived, nor walk as He walked.

But the Word of God declares that, "... Even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should FOLLOW HIS STEPS:" (1 Peter 2:21)

What are those steps:

"Who DID NO SIN, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:" (1 Peter 2:22-23)

Few people today believe in following "... peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:" (Hebrews 12:14) They have forgotten that God has said, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:16)

In an apologetic manner, they tell us the Bible is good and wonderful - but no one could really be expected to live up to its standards. They say religion is fine, but be sure you don't get an overdose!

The Word of God says, "BE YE HOLY:" (1 Peter 1:16)

Of course, at this point you may remember some Scriptures you have heard quoted. Some religious teacher has said, "There is none righteous, no, not one. All we like sheep have gone astray. All our righteousness are as filthy rags. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us." So you say, "Are these not quotations from the Scriptures? How can you believe that we should be holy in the face of all this?"

Yes, these are indeed Scripture quotations, but do you know that not one of these quotations applies to or has any reference to the man who has been born again, the man who has had a change of heart, the CHRISTIAN? They pertain to man in his natural state - the unregenerate. None of us can say we NEVER sinned. The great Apostle Paul declared of himself that (before his conversion) he had been the chief of sinners. Indeed, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) Had this not been so, we would not have needed a Saviour. There would have been no

need for the NEW BIRTH.

When I refer to HOLY living, and of abiding in Christ, of walking as Jesus walked, I am not talking to people who have never been born again. Of course, it is impossible for man in his unregenerate state to walk as Jesus walked. It is impossible to abide in Christ without first being born into Christ. No wonder some “religious” leaders grasp so readily at those Scriptures. Having never themselves been born again, they are still among the group to whom such Scriptures apply!

How eagerly they hide behind such a scripture as Romans 3:10: “... There is none righteous, no, not one.” I suggest that you read to the end of the portion of Scripture for the rest of their description. “There is none that UNDERSTANDETH, there is none that SEEKETH AFTER GOD. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (Romans 3:11-18)

Certainly this is not a description of a Christian!

Remember, it is God’s Word which declares that “HE THAT COMMITTETH SIN IS OF THE DEVIL.” (1 John 3:8a)

A life of habitual sin is not the life of a Christian. If we are of Christ, we do not sin every day and repent every night. Rather, we trust the power of God to keep us from sin. To the born-again Christian, sin is a tragedy, something to be carefully avoided, and its scars and ravages repaired as quickly as possible. It is unpleasant filth, and if a Christian becomes contaminated with it, he must be cleansed as quickly as possible.

It is for this reason we are told, “IF ANY MAN SIN, we have an advocate with the father.” (1 John 2:1) (Note the word is IF, not WHEN.) We are encouraged to keep on trying by the promise, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to CLEANSE us from ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.” (1 John 1:9) (Not merely the guilt or the punishment, but from the unrighteousness itself.)

Let me quote a few more scriptures:

“Awake to righteousness, and SIN NOT.” (1 Corinthians 15:34a)

“Sin NO MORE, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” (John 5:14b)

“Go and SIN NO MORE.” (John 8:11b)

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye SIN NOT.” (1 John 2:1a)

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore we are

buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life ... For he that is dead is FREED FROM SIN.” (Romans 6:1-4, 7)

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” (1 John 2:3-6)

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that he may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Can these be the words of the same God? Are such statements as these inconsistent with the Scriptures declaring that there are none righteous? Or could it be that it is indeed the same God speaking, but speaking of two entirely different groups of people?

Yes, that is exactly the case. One group of Scriptures refers to man in his natural, fallen, degenerate state. The other group refers to the persons who are standing firmly upon the promises of God, who have been born again and are no longer children of the wicked one, but have been born into the household of God. Their very nature is different. Their desires are different.

Certainly, it is impossible for the man or the woman who has never been born again to live a life of victory over sin. That person’s very nature cries out to do the things which are not of God. The only thing that can take these desires out of the heart is for that person to HAVE A NEW HEART!

Describing the old, carnal, natural, sinful heart of man, Jesus said, “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.” (Mark 7:21-23)

It takes more than water baptism to cleanse away these evil desires out of the heart. Church membership will never do it. Signing a card will never do it. You will never be able to overcome all these evil things by merely shaking a preacher’s hand. Reformation can never do it, for so long as these evil desires are in the heart, they will eventually break through again. There is only one way that these things can be overcome: that is to be born again - to receive from God a NEW HEART!

God has promised to do just that. He says, “A NEW HEART also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.” (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

This is the only way that we can ever do the things that are right in the sight of God. It is the only way that we can ever abide in Christ, and live above sin. It is impossible to abide in God and to live a life of joyful victory, until you have first been born again.

Too many people today join the church merely as a social organisation instead of coming to Christ to be truly born again, and to have a change of heart.

To that person who has never been born again, it is hard even to conceive of any experience that could make a man powerful enough to overcome the temptations of Satan, and to live a life of real victory over sin. It is hard for him to believe that such a life could possibly be lived without a constant struggle - too much of a struggle for him to even attempt! Such a person, instead of seeking to overcome temptation, may even seek to find, in the Scriptures, justification for continuing to live in sin, and at a low spiritual level.

Thank God for the way of escape which He has provided for any who really WANT TO ESCAPE from sin and for those who want to live a holy life, to continue to abide in the Lord, and to be ready when He comes!

To keep your healing, it is important to live HOLY. If you do not do so, the danger is not only that of being no better but even of being worse. (Matthew 12:43-45) Therefore, it is easy to see the importance of abiding in faith, feeding upon God's Word, keeping in communion with God through prayer, and of resisting the devil.

(4) Resist the Devil

“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7b)

The Christian need not be in subjection to sin. “Sin shall not have dominion over you.” (Romans 6:14a) By faith, the Christian has power to refuse the temptations of Satan, and his suggestions to sin. There is something more commendable than daily repentance from sin, and that is daily victory over sin.

It is also possible, by faith, to refuse sickness a place. There is something better than being healed “many times,” especially of the same affliction, that is to get healed and to stay healed.

If you ever receive healing for your body, it will be by faith. You will also stay healed by faith. Faith is joyful. The sick person who lacks faith is sorrowful because of his pain and sickness. The sick person who has faith is joyful because of the victory which he realises is already bought, paid for, promised, and on the way. He will be rejoicing and praising God from his heart, regardless of what he can see or feel.

This kind of faith can not fail to bring healing. Satan is aware of the fact that faith is his enemy, and constantly goes about to destroy faith. Whenever you feel any pain which remotely resembles the pain of your previous disease, Satan will immediately suggest to your mind that you either were never healed, or that you were not completely healed, or that your healing did not last.

(5) Keep Believing God and His Promises

But if the promises of God are bright and clear in your mind, and you still believe that God meant just what He said, you will answer Satan, as did our Lord when He was tempted. It is written. (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10) By whose stripes ye were healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

As you review by faith the mighty promises of God, your heart will rejoice, even as it did when you claimed His promise and received healing, and there will be praise in your heart to God for His mighty deliverance. Stand upon a promise in God's Word, and praise God in the devil's face. This is resisting the devil. He never has been able to stay in the presence of this kind of faith, and he never will be able to do so.

(6) Seek an Atmosphere of Faith

Seek an atmosphere of faith. After you are healed, it is a mistake to go back into a church where the pastor and teachers do not believe in the miracle-working power of God. God describes these people and gives a warning concerning them in 2 Timothy 3:5. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

There are a number of good churches where the full gospel is preached and God's power is recognised, not only to save but also to heal.

Identify yourself with one of these groups where you can find food for your faith and where you can freely give your testimony for the encouragement of others who may also need deliverance.

(7) Testify to Your Healing at Every Opportunity

Your testimony is important. Not only will it be a blessing and encouragement to others, but it will be a help to you in overcoming the devil. (Revelation 12:11) As you give testimony with your lips to the truth and reality of God's promises, your faith will increase, Satan will be driven farther back, and his chance of again overcoming you will be lessened.

As Christ entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers. They lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us ... when he saw them, he said, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." (Luke 17:13b-14)

Only one of the ten returned to give God thanks and glory for his deliverance. "And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks." (Luke 17:15-16a) Jesus asked the one who returned, "... Were there not ten cleansed? BUT WHERE ARE THE NINE?" (Luke 17:17b)

There should have been ten returning and giving God glory, inasmuch as there were ten who were miraculously healed. Only one out of ten came to give glory to Jesus for

his healing. What were the nine doing? The Scripture does not tell us, but it does tell us **WHAT THE NINE SHOULD HAVE DONE!** They should have returned and glorified Christ.

Many people attend services night after night until they can go through a healing line and receive healing for their bodies. Then they never return to testify to the miracle that Christ may be glorified. There may be times when it is impossible for some to return and testify, but they should write their testimonies and mail them to those under whose ministry they were healed, so that God can receive the glory.

Testify to your healing in every public meeting possible.

Remember that when Christ healed the man at Gadara, Jesus said to him, “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.” (Mark 5:19)

This testimony is important. It will not only strengthen your own faith and help you overcome Satan, but may also be the means of bringing deliverance to others who may be encouraged to trust God.

WHO HAS POWER TO HEAL?

During His earthly ministry, Jesus healed “all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.” (Matthew 4:23) The glorious ministry of deliverance begun by Jesus was to continue through His disciples, His followers and His believers.

Jesus called unto Him His twelve disciples and “gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and ... disease.” (Matthew 10:1) He then sent them forth, “to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.” (Luke 9:2)

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them ... into every city and place.” (Luke 10:1) He commanded these seventy to preach the gospel but that was not all He commanded them to do. He said, “And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.” (Luke 10:9)

At the close of this journey, the seventy returned to Jesus with joy saying, “even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.” (Luke 10:17)

Before Jesus went back to heaven, He left with His followers the mighty promise, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.” (John 14:12)

Many preachers who deny the miracle-working power of Jesus Christ in His church today admit that Christ healed the sick, but declare that the day of miracles is past. They claim that the sick can not be healed by the power of God today because Jesus is gone, but He plainly stated that His going DID NOT mean the end of miracles, but rather an increase in miracles.

Jesus' last commission to those whom He left behind to carry on His work (Mark 16:15-18) was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; ... they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Matthew adds: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, **EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD.**" (Matthew 28:20)

According to Mark, as soon as he had spoken these words, Jesus was "received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they (the disciples to whom He gave this commission) went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord **WORKING WITH THEM**, and confirming the word with signs following." (Mark 16:19b-20)

This was in fulfilment of His promise in Matthew 28:20. Although it is indeed true that He is in heaven, it is certainly scriptural to say that He is still **WITH THOSE WHO BELIEVE and PREACH HIS GOSPEL**, for He said He would be, even unto the end of the world! He is with them, confirming His word with the same signs following, that are listed in Mark 16:17-18.

After Christ ascended into heaven, the church was born on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2) That church, filled with the power of the Holy Ghost and endued with the gifts of the Spirit, continued the same ministry Christ had begun. We find in Acts 3:2a, "a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful."

When Peter and John came by, they said, "Look on us." (Acts 3:4b) Peter continued, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee; In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." (Acts 3:6) Peter took him by the hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. "And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." (Acts 3:8) Here we find the spirit-filled followers of Jesus continuing the same glorious ministry of deliverance, even after Jesus had returned to heaven.

The people were filled with wonder and amazement at this mighty miracle that they had witnessed. They had thought, even as do church members today, that since Christ Himself was gone from the earth, they would see no more miracles. Many of them began to ascribe divinity to those through whose hands the miracles had been wrought. Peter, with rare but commendable humility, stopped them immediately, answering them, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk ... his (Jesus) name, **THROUGH FAITH IN HIS NAME** hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." (Acts 3:12, 16)

No man has this power **IN HIMSELF**, but it is available to **EVERY BELIEVER**.

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened

not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” (1 Peter 2:21-24)

The gifts of the Spirit and the commandments of Christ to His followers cover ALL THE MIRACLES THAT CHRIST EVER PERFORMED. He used no power that He did not make available to His followers even unto the end of the world. (See 1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

Stephen was a deacon in the first church. He was, “full of faith and power, (and) did great wonders and miracles among the people.” (Acts 6:8) Philip, another of the first deacons, went down to Samaria and preached Christ there. “And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.” (Acts 8:6-7)

Twenty nine years after the ascension of Christ, Paul was still healing the sick. (Acts 28:8-9). Although Paul was not among those who heard the commission and promises of Jesus on the Mount of Olives before He ascended, “God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.” (Acts 19:11-12)

Here, perhaps it would be well to introduce a word of warning: the miracles of Paul became so outstanding that even some whose lives had not been purified by faith came to believe that miracles could surely be done in the name of Jesus. (Acts 19:13-18) These men had not been in contact with Jesus themselves but knew Him only as “Jesus whom Paul preacheth.” (Acts 19:13) When they attempted to cast out demons in that name, they were recognised by the demons as men having no authority. These people believed the miracles they had seen Paul perform, but they did not have faith in God. They did not believe that God would work miracles by their hands because of His direct word to them. They did not prove their faith in God by believing His commands as well as His promises, and by living lives of consecration and holiness.

Many sincere people today have met with disappointment and discouragement because they have tried to appropriate God’s promises without being careful to fulfil His commands. The name of Jesus is not a charm. It possesses no magic. But it does possess power when used by those to whom He has given His “power of attorney” – the right, to do business for Him in His name. This includes all those who truly believe and act upon ALL of God’s Word.

The early church was a powerful church because the members of that church believed God. They believed in holy living because God said, “Be ye holy.” (1 Peter 1:16) They feared sin because they had seen sin revealed through the gift of discernment, and had seen liars struck dead for their sin. (Acts 5) They believed that they could do miracles in the name of Jesus because He had said, “the works that I do shall he do also.” (John 14:12) And because they believed God, God worked with them, confirming the word with signs and wonders. God has not changed. Any church today can have the same

power if they will meet the same conditions.

Twenty-six years after the ascension of Christ, the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, saying, “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that MIRACLES, then gifts of healings.” (1 Corinthians 12:28a)

That same church is still at work in the world today and will be until the trumpet sounds and the first resurrection takes place. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) As long as the church, its pastors and members believe the Word of God, it will continue, in the mighty name of Jesus, to heal the sick and to perform miracles. Jesus declared: “these things shall follow them that believe: ... they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” (Mark 16:17a-18b) The gifts of the Spirit have not been confined to a few chosen people in the early church or to a few preachers today, but as long as there is a believer on the earth, miracles can be performed in the name of Jesus.

Nowhere in the Scripture is the ministry of healing limited to any particular time or to outstanding individuals. Even in the Old Testament, it was God’s plan that all that he had set as shepherds over His people should heal the sick. “Woe be to the shepherds of Israel ... The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken.” (Ezekiel 34:2, 4a)

If God was so displeased with the shepherds of Israel who did not heal the sick, what must be His attitude toward the shepherds of His New Testament Church? They, who having His commission to do the works that He did, not only refuse to heal the sick, but criticise and persecute those who do!

There was more power in Elisha’s dead bones (2 Kings 13:21) than there is in some preachers who are very much alive today. Although only one man was healed, by coming in contact with Elisha’s bones, still, that is more than can be said for the entire lifetime of many today who call themselves the shepherds of God’s flock. In ministering to the Church of Jesus Christ, there was more power in Peter’s shadow than in the bodies of many of those who claim to be his successors. (Acts 5) There was more power in handkerchiefs and aprons that had come in contact with the body of Paul than in many great “fundamental” religious bodies today. (Acts 19:11-12).

HAS GOD CHANGED? No! The church Jesus purchased with His blood is still performing miracles and healing the sick. Those who dare to believe God’s promises and stand on His word can still, **IN THE NAME OF JESUS**, heal the sick.

God has given those who believe, **AUTHORITY** over all devils and to cure diseases. (Luke 9:1) Many will declare that only God has that authority. In one sense, that is true, but it is also true that God chose to delegate that authority to His Son. Accepting that authority from the Father, Jesus, during His earthly ministry, **COMMANDED** demons, unclean spirits, and diseases to depart. They recognised His authority and were obedient to Him. Just before He returned to heaven Jesus delegated the same authority to those who believe in His name. This gives the true believer the right to use the name of Jesus in making requests to God and in giving commands to demons and to disease. (See John 14:10-14)

There are very few Scriptures which refer to praying for the sick. In most cases, a few words of command, spoken by the one having authority, was all that was needed. Jesus did not pray for the sick. He HEALED the sick, and COMMANDED THE DEMONS TO DEPART, Peter and John did not pray for the man at the beautiful gate of the temple. They commanded him, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, to rise up and walk. (Acts 3:6) Paul first prayed, then laid his hands upon Publius' father and HEALED him. (Acts 28:8)

Demons and diseases are still subject to the commands in Jesus' name of them that believe.

Since the day that we recognised this truth in God's Word, we have seen multitudes delivered from demons and set free from all manner of sickness and disease at our command. It is done in JESUS' NAME, by the authority that God has promised to them that believe.

Although, in the majority of cases, the word of command in Jesus' name is all that is necessary to bring deliverance, there are also Scriptures that prove the necessity of prayer in some cases. If, after you have gone through the healing line, hands having been laid upon you and your disease commanded to depart, you still do not receive deliverance, do not hesitate to take advantage of the provision in James 5:14-16. Your failure to be delivered may be the result of unconfessed sin. If such be the case, confess your faults, ask the trusted elders to pray for you that you may be delivered from both sickness and sin.

The true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is aware that God will not heal an unrepentant sinner or an enemy of the cross. He will not knowingly use his authority to do anything that Jesus Himself would not do if He were present in the body. Those who are still in bondage to sin do well to first seek help in prayer that they may be set free from sin. When they have done this, God's promise is definite. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James 5:15a)

Much sickness is a direct result of demon oppression. (Acts 10:38) Jesus did not say, "pray for the demon oppressed and demon possessed." He said, "Cast out devils." (Mark 16:17) Prayer alone will not drive out demons. Fasting and prayer, seeking the face of God, and repentance from all known sin is in some cases necessary to prepare the hearts of both those who need deliverance and those who come in the name of the Lord. So that they may be ready to enter the battle with Satan and claim victory over him. Until those demons hear the word of command, given by faith, in Jesus' name, and by one who has authority to use that name, THEY WILL NOT MOVE. They do not have to, and they know it.

The disciples had been given authority over demons so long as they had faith. But when faith was allowed to become dormant because of a lack of communion with God, they became powerless. When they inquired of Jesus why they had failed, He replied, "Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ... nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." (Matthew 17:20-21) Faith must be fed by frequent

times of being shut away with God, with all the demands of the flesh set aside - times of fasting and prayer - in order that it may be strong to overcome the power of Satan and deliver those who are oppressed of the devil.

Satan was defeated at Calvary. But he refuses to acknowledge defeat unless he must. The ground must be taken step by step. To be able to do this, the Spirit-filled minister today must have real faith in Calvary's victory over Satan, must live a life out of touch with sin, must not be concerned with any personal gain, but stand only for God's right against Satan. There must be no uncrucified flesh in his life. Then and then only will Satan admit his defeat.

It is surprising that some good people desire to be able to exercise this power, yet they reject the source of that power, THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST. Jesus Himself did not do any miracles or cast out any demons until first God had anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power. (Acts 10:38; John 2:11) His promise to the disciples was, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: ..." (Acts 1:8)

The early church was a powerful church because it was a Spirit-filled, God-centred, God-fearing church. Only when God can find a group of people who answer this description today will revival come. God has not withdrawn the delegation of His authority over demons and disease from those who believe Him. He expects His people to obey his commands, claim His promises, act upon their faith, heal the sick, and cast out devils in JESUS NAME.

LESSON NINE

THE SUPERNATURAL ENDUEMENT

The baptism of the Holy Ghost, promised by Jesus to His believing disciples, was to endue them with **POWER FOR SERVICE**. There are many works of the Holy Ghost, too numerous to mention here. He draws the believer to God in the first place. He reveals the Father. He develops holiness in the life of the believer. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is to endue the believer with **POWER TO WITNESS**:

“And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24:48-49)

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me.” (Acts 1:8a)

This power for service takes many forms, but the form we will consider here is that revealed in the “gifts of the Spirit” as taught by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12, and illustrated in many other passages.

“For by one Spirit we are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:13)

The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is the true and living God about whom Jesus said, “God is a Spirit.” He is the same God about whom Moses cried unto Israel, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.” And this same God has come and taken up His abode in the bosom of the believer, through the Holy Spirit. Henceforth there is an enduement of power as promised in the Scriptures quoted above.

THE MIRACLE OF PENTECOST!

What was the great miracle of Pentecost? Many would reply, “The tongues! They spoke in tongues and that was the great miracle of Pentecost!” However, this is not true. Tongues were only the evidence of the miracle. The **MIRACLE** was the transformed lives of the believers. They were clothed with supernatural **POWER!** They had been “saved” long before this. (John 13:10-11; 15:3) They were already God’s children, but they were helpless to witness for Christ effectively in carrying the gospel of salvation to others in a heathen, hostile world. The powers of Satan were arrayed against them. They faced opposition from their own religious world and the heathen world outside was an overwhelming obstacle.

The coming of the Holy Spirit changed everything. It met this need. They were changed by this enduement into strong, fearless, effective witnesses for Christ. It was the baptising work of Jesus, immersing them into and filling them with the Spirit Himself, that caused this transformation.

THE POWER DEMONSTRATED

The healing power of God and the power to witness was powerfully demonstrated in the early church. That they received great power to witness and unusual boldness was evidenced for instance, in the life of Peter. He had been so fearful that he allowed a little maid's question to cause him to deny the Lord, but after the great milling of Pentecost he was able to face the world and declare that they had crucified Jesus. It was this baptism that enabled him to say to the man at the gate Beautiful of the temple: "Look on us ... Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." (Acts 3:4b, 6) Surely, no one could doubt that something miraculous had happened to Peter, and that it had changed him completely. (Read Acts 3) It was the mighty experience of Pentecost!

The gifts of the Spirit were brought into evidence by the supernatural endowment and Paul states in his letters that there are various operations of these gifts. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:4)

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:" (1 Corinthians 12:8-10)

The supernatural was so in evidence in the early church, and the people were so blessed with these supernatural endowments, that confusion resulted in their operation, especially in local churches. It is this confusion which Paul is seeking to correct in 1 Corinthians 12:1b when he says "I would not have you ignorant" for he is speaking of their ignorance of the scriptural operation of the gifts. The "ignorance" Paul had to deal with was not their lack of knowledge of the things as a spiritual reality. He said they came behind in no gift as far as their experience was concerned. Their need was two-fold. They had to understand that the unity of the body of Christ demanded that they yield place to other ministers; and they needed to understand that love must fill the hearts of those who have "gifts" if they are to exercise them profitably. This knowledge and understanding are badly needed today.

There is no scriptural reason for the idea which many have, that those who had these supernatural gifts of the Spirit were perfect models of holiness and spiritual maturity. Many think that the mere fact that someone exercises a gift means that he is a perfect Christian in every respect. The New Testament makes it clear that these were weak human beings, although saved and baptised by the Holy Ghost, they were still full of human frailty, made many mistakes, and needed instruction in these things.

There is another kind of ignorance which we must cope with today. It is ignorance in the church as a whole concerning even the nature and existence of the supernatural gifts. In addition to this, many who profess to believe in them - even some who exercise them - are sometimes as faulty as were the Corinthians in their understanding of the operation of the gifts of the Spirit.

THE GIFTS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The great miracles, the “signs and wonders” recorded in the Old Testament were performed by the same Spirit through the same operations as the gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12. In the Old Testament, however, this power came upon only a few from time to time. In the New Testament, the promise is unto all that will believe for it. In the Old Testament, men EXPERIENCED divine power; in the new dispensation of grace, they RECEIVE power. We might say that in the old dispensation, the operation of the Spirit was loaned to them; in this dispensation, it is a gift. In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God operated certain ones by “remote control,” so to speak. Today, He comes into our lives and operates from within. Many who have been studying the lessons of this course have expressed a desire to enter into a greater anointing to work for God and to bring deliverance and healing to others. It is for their special benefit that this testimony is made a part of these studies.

TESTIMONY OF A. A. ALLEN

Before I was converted, I knew nothing about any part of the Bible. I could not even quote John 3:16, nor name the four gospels. However, immediately after my conversion, my heart being hungry to know all that I could know of my Lord, I began to search the Scriptures, asking God to lead me to those readings from which I would receive the greatest benefit. The Lord began to reveal to me the truths of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the signs following, the gifts of the Spirit, and the supernatural things of God.

It was not long until God led me into a Pentecostal church, where I began to see in a small measure the blessings of God, and a few of the manifestations of the Spirit. It was in these meetings that I became convinced that I needed the baptism of the Spirit, and there I began to pray and seek God for that experience. Thirty days after my conversion, I was gloriously filled with the Holy Ghosts speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. I had read that “ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:” Acts 1:8. I fully expected that the infilling of the Holy Ghost would immediately give me the power to heal the sick and to perform miracles. It did not take me long to realise that more was required than the baptism of the Holy Ghost, in order to consistently see these results.

The baptism of the Spirit provides access to this power, but the gifts of the Spirit provide the channels through which this power operates. I began immediately to pray and seek the gifts of the Spirit. I felt I must have power to heal the sick, for I knew that according to the Scriptures, God never called anyone to preach the Gospel without commissioning him also to heal the sick. Two years after my conversion, I began my ministry.

For more than a year, in every revival meeting, I always planned at least two nights in each week to be set aside to preach divine healing and to pray for the sick. During this time, we saw a large number of miraculous healings, for God honoured the preaching of His Word. But I knew it was far short of what I should be seeing. I knew that God’s plan included greater things for me, and I believed that there would be a time in the future when they would be a reality in my life. Many times, I would search the

Scriptures, becoming more convinced as I did so that God's promises concerning the signs following, the gifts of the Spirit, healings, and miracles were meant for me today.

It was plain to see that God had promised these things to me as His minister but it was also plain to see that I did not possess that power in the fullness that God had promised. I knew there must be a scriptural reason why I was so lacking in power. Since God can not lie, the fault had to be **WITHIN MY OWN LIFE!**

It was while pastoring my first church that I definitely made up my mind that I **MUST** from heaven, and know the reason that my ministry was not confirmed by signs and wonders. I felt sure that if I would fast and pray, God would in some way speak to me and reveal what stood between me and the miracle-working power of God in my ministry. I was so hungry for the power of God in my own life that I felt I could not stand in my pulpit, nor ever preach again, until I had heard from God. I made up my mind that I would fast and pray until I heard from God.

It was then that I had the greatest battle of my life. Satan was determined that I should **NOT** fast and pray until God answered. Many times he whipped me or tricked me out of the prayer closet. Satan knew that if I ever actually contacted God, there would be much damage to his kingdom, and he meant do all in his power to hinder me from making that contact. Day after day, I went into the prayer closet, determined to stay until God spoke to me. Again and again, I came out without the answer. It seemed there was always a reason why I could not stay in that closet until the answer came. I always justified myself by saying I would pray it through tomorrow. Things would be more favourable then. The Lord encouraged my heart by calling to my remembrance how Daniel held on in fasting and prayer, and wrested the answer from the hands of Satan, although it took three weeks to do so. (See Daniel 10:1-12)

The next day found me on my knees in the closet again. I had made up my mind I would never come out until I heard from God. I really thought I meant it. A few hours later, when I began to smell the door of food from the kitchen, I was soon out of the closet and in the kitchen. A few moments later, while I was at the table, God spoke to my heart. I had only taken one bite of food and I stopped. God had spoken to me. I knew that **UNTIL I WANTED TO HEAR FROM GOD MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD, GOD WOULD NEVER GIVE ME THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION THAT WAS IN MY HEART!**

I arose quickly from the table. I meant business with God this time! I went back into that closet. I was going to stay there until I heard from God. At last, I had definitely made up my mind to stay there until I heard from God, no matter what the cost. Hour after hour, I battled the devil and the flesh in the closet! Many were the times I almost gave up. It seemed to me that hours were slipping by and my progress was so slow. Many times I was tempted to give up, and try to be satisfied, but I had tried that, and found that it was not enough. No! I would stay right here on my knees until God answered, or I would die in the attempt.

Then the glory of God began to fill the closet. I thought the door had opened, as the interior of the closet began to grow light. The door had **NOT** opened, but Jesus had

opened the door of heaven and the closet was flooded with light - THE LIGHT OF THE GLORY OF GOD! I do not know how long I had spent in the closet before this happened, but it does not matter. I do not care to know. I only know I prayed UNTIL!

The presence of God was so real, so wonderful, and so powerful that I felt I would die right there on my knees. It seemed that if God came any closer I could not stand it. Yet I wanted it, and was determined to have it. Was this my answer? Was God going to speak to me? Would God, at last, after these many years, satisfy my longing heart? How long had I been here? I didn't know. I seemed to lose consciousness of everything but the mighty presence of God. I tried to see Him, and then was afraid that I would, for suddenly I realised that should I see Him, I would die. (Exodus 33:20) Just His glorious presence was enough. If only He would speak to me now! If he would just answer my one question, "Lord why can't I heal the sick? Why can not I work miracles in Your name? Why do the signs not follow my ministry as they did that of Peter, John, and Paul?"

Then, like a whirlwind, I heard His voice! It was God! He was speaking to me! This was the glorious answer for which I had waited so long! In His presence I felt like one of the small pebbles at the foot of the towering Rockies. I felt I was unworthy even to hear His voice, but He was not speaking to me because I was WORTHY. He was speaking to me because I was NEEDY. Centuries ago, He had promised to supply that need. This was the fulfilment of that promise. It seemed that faster than any human could possibly speak, faster than I could follow mentally, God was talking to me. My heart cried out, "Speak a little more slowly. I want to remember all of it." It seemed God was speaking to me so fast, and of so many things I could never remember all of it. Yet I knew I could never forget! God was giving me a mental list of the things that stood between me and the power of God. After each new requirement was added to the list in my mind, there followed a brief explanation, or sermonette, explaining that requirement and its importance. Some of the things God spoke to me sounded like Scripture. I knew some of them were, but those first three; could they be Bible?

If I had known there were so many things to remember, I would have brought a pencil and paper! I hadn't expected that God would speak in such a definite way and give me such a long list. I had never dreamed that I was falling so far short of the glory of God. I hadn't realised there were so many things in my life that generated doubt and hindered my faith. While God continued to speak to me, I began to feel for a pencil in my pockets. At last I located a short pencil, but the lead was broken. Quickly I sharpened it. I searched for a piece of paper. I couldn't find any. Suddenly I remembered the cardboard box filled with winter clothes that I was using for an altar. I would write on the box. Now I was ready!

I asked the Lord to please start all over again at the beginning, and let me write the things down one at a time, so I would not forget. I asked Him to speak slowly enough so that I could set it all on paper. This time God started again at the first, and spoke to me, one after another, the many things He had already mentioned. As God spoke to me, I wrote them down. When the last thing was written on the list, God spoke once again, and said, "This is the answer. When you have placed on the altar of consecration and obedience the last thing on your list, YE SHALL NOT ONLY HEAL THE SICK, BUT IN MY NAME YE SHALL CAST OUT DEVILS. YE SHALL SEE MIGHTY

MIRACLES AS IN MY NAME YE PREACH THE WORD. FOR BEHOLD I GIVE YOU POWER OVER ALL THE POWER OF THE ENEMY.” God revealed to me at the same time that the things that were hindrances to my ministry, and had prevented God working with me, confirming the Word with signs following, were the very same things which are hindering so many thousands of others.

Now it began to grow darker in the closet. I felt His mighty power begin to lift. For a few more moments His presence lingered and then I was alone. Alone, and yet not alone. I trembled under the mighty lingering presence of God. I fumbled at the bottom of the cardboard box on which I had been writing. In the dark I tore the part on which I had written from the box. In my hand I held the list. At last there was the price I must pay for the power of God in my life and ministry. The price tag for the MIRACLE-WORKING POWER OF GOD!

In my hand was the old brown piece of cardboard with the answer that had cost so many hours of fasting and prayer, and waiting and believing! I sat down at the table with the list before me, and wept as I went down the list. There were thirteen items on the list when I came out of the closet, but I erased the last two. No one will ever know what they were. These things MUST remain between God and me.

Since God spoke to me that day in the closet, many pages have been torn from the calendar. In fact, many calendars have been replaced by new ones. One by one, I began to mark the requirements from my list. The list grew smaller and smaller, as one by one I shouted the victory over Satan, and marked off another! Finally, I was down to the last two. Satan said to me, “You’ve marked off eleven of your items, but there are two you’ll never mark off! I’ve got you whipped!” By the grace of God, I told the devil he was a liar. If God asked me to mark them all off and said I could do so, He would help me to do it! Yet it seemed I would never be able to mark off the last two. Never will I forget the day I looked over my list and found, praise God, there was only one thing left! If I could mark that off, I could claim the promise that God had made to me. I had to claim that promise! Millions were sick and afflicted, beyond the help of medical science. Someone MUST bring deliverance to them. God had called me to take that deliverance to the people. GOD HAS CALLED EVERY MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL TO DO THE SAME. (Ezekiel 34:1-4)

Many had been the times when God had poured out His Spirit in my meetings in a measure, as I travelled across the states. However, I knew that when I had marked the last item from my list, I would see such miracles as I had never seen before. In the meantime, I would patiently strive toward victory, trusting God to help me until victory came. Trusting that when that victory was mine, God would be glorified, and others, too, would be encouraged to seek God for His power.

Then came the day when such MIRACLES were manifested - such as had never before been in my ministry! THE SICK WERE HEALED, DEVILS WERE CAST OUT, MIGHTY MIRACLES WERE SEEN IN THE NAME OF JESUS AS HIS WORD WAS PREACHED. I had crossed the last item off that list! Hallelujah!

Many people will never forget the campaign that was declared to be the greatest REVIVAL in the history of Oakland, California - a “BACK TO GOD REVIVAL.”

Hundreds declared they had never witnessed such a dynamic moving of the power of God. The meeting continued for many weeks, and from the growing interest and increasing attendance, could, no doubt, have continued indefinitely. Night after night, waves of DIVINE GLORY so swept over the congregation that many testified of being healed while sitting in their seats. Again and again we felt the mighty power of God settling over the services and people arose to testify of instant healings, some that were visibly miraculous, such as outward tumours disappearing. Goitres left at the touch of my hand in Jesus' name. Cataracts vanished.

In one instance, we prayed for a woman with throat trouble. After a few moments, she was seen hurrying to the ladies' rest room. When she returned to the auditorium, she testified that after prayer, something came loose in her throat and came up into her mouth. She had hurried to the rest room to dispose of it. It was some kind of foreign growth (doubtless cancer) whitish orange in colour.

Ruptures as large as a person's fist disappeared over night. Cancer, deafness, tumours, sugar diabetes, every known disease and many unknown, disappeared as in the name of Jesus we laid hands upon the sick. Genuine healings were proved, in many cases, by doctors' statements and X-rays. We stood in holy awe and marvelled at the miracle-working power of God as it moved night after night from the very beginning of that campaign. Hundreds were delivered from the power of the enemy - saved, or filled with the Spirit. Eternity alone will reveal the number.

It was impossible to have, what is generally termed, a "healing line". At least ninety percent of those upon whom we laid hands were prostrated under the mighty power of God. Some danced a few steps or staggered drunkenly under the Spirit before they fell. (See Jeremiah 23:9) Under such circumstances, it was impossible to have the people move on after prayer. About all we could do was to lead the person who was to receive healing to a place where there was no one lying on the floor, and then pray for him. Some might brand this fanaticism, but it is not. It is the mighty power of God. It is the same miraculous power that caused John to fall "at his feet as dead." (Revelation 1:17) The most outstanding feature of that campaign was that such a large percentage of the sick received miraculous deliverance. It would be a conservative estimate to say that at least ninety percent, or more, of those prayed for were marvellously healed. We set aside a night especially for those who wanted to be baptised in the Holy Ghost, and we announced that hands would be laid upon the seekers for the infilling of the Spirit according to Acts 8:17.

After the sermon, all that had not already been filled during the service came down the outside aisle in a line. With but few exceptions, everyone we touched in the name of Jesus fell prostrate. What an unusual sight to stand on the platform afterwards, and look upon the many "slain of the Lord" in every available altar space and even in the aisles! Sweeter yet, the sound of the heavenly music of voices raised in united praise to God, as the Spirit-filled obedient believers and seekers began to speak in new tongues and magnify God. (Mark 16:17; Acts 10:46)

God is moving today in the very same manner, and He is manifesting His presence, performing glorious miracles of deliverance in our Miracle Revivals throughout the nation, performing great signs and wonders in the mighty name of Jesus.

LESSON TEN

REVIEW LESSONS ONE THROUGH TO NINE

No doubt, thousands who are now in their graves would be enjoying perfect health and happiness today had they received and believed and acted upon the right instructions dealing with the subject of divine healing, God's promises concerning health, and His requirements of those who would receive the blessing of His promises.

Since your health, your healing, even your very life may depend upon the manner in which you grasp the instructions given in the lessons of this Course, this lesson is being devoted entirely to a review of previous teachings.

It is not God's will that any person should be sick, any more than it is His will that any soul should be lost. Yet not all people are well and prosperous, any more than all people are righteous. There is a reason. I trust that this course of study has helped you to find, know and understand that reason (or reasons) as they apply in your own life, and then to your family, your friends, and to the entire world.

"Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life!" (Proverbs 4:13)

God's Word declares, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." (3 John 2)

ALL THINGS BY FAITH

Whatsoever we receive from God is received by, through, or because of FAITH. "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." (James 1:6-7)

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (1 John 5:14-15)

So then, all that is necessary in order to receive healing - or any other petition - is to be assured that our prayer has been heard. To be sure our prayer has been heard is to be ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN that we have asked a thing which God wills to give us. We know it is His will to heal us because of the teachings of Scripture and also because Jesus did not refuse to heal anyone when He was on earth in the flesh.

The person who prays for healing and then adds the words, "If it be thy will," is openly confessing that he is not at all sure of receiving healing. The "if" indicates doubt, not faith.

PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL CAUSES OF SICKNESS

When we come to God for healing, we find that He deals not so much with symptoms as with causes. In seeking healing through faith, it is just as urgent to remove the spiritual causes of sickness as to remove the physical causes.

SIN AND SICKNESS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Sin and sickness are as closely associated in New Testament thought as in the Old, Jesus Himself, in healing one who was sick, said, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." (Mark 2:5b) To another, He said, "Sin no more" lest a worse thing come unto thee." (John 5:14b)

James admonished the sick, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." (James 5:16)

God has not changed. In the Old Testament, we read: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee." (Exodus 15:26)

"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments that I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth." (Deuteronomy 28:1)

Promises of health are given specifically with the giving of certain commandments. "Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." (Ephesians 6:2-3)

If it is not well with you (physically) your sickness could be the result of breaking this commandment. Or it could be the result of breaking other commandments, or in some way disregarding the plans and purposes of God.

GOD PINPOINTS A CAUSE OF SICKNESS IN OUR AGE

The entire eleventh chapter of I Corinthians deals with one of the most perpetual and important ordinances of the church, the Lord's Supper, or Communion. The subject of sickness among Christian people is dealt within this way: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." (ie. Die prematurely) (1 Corinthians 11:30)

"For this cause" is explained in 1 Corinthians 11. (Read entire chapter.) "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." (1 Corinthians 11:27-28)

Many professing Christians have refused to take the Communion because of this warning. However, worthiness does not imply that one is sure he has fully attained the goal of sinless perfection. Christ Himself served the first Communion to twelve men who were still subject to human weaknesses and short of perfection.

The word “worthiness” as used here has a threefold implication:

(1) Attitude

First and most simple is the attitude of the believer at the time of partaking of Communion. A worthy attitude would be a deep realisation of the individual’s great need of a redeemer. Humility at the foot of the cross, sorrow for that sinful nature which made it necessary that the spotless Christ should be required to die for our sins, the just for the unjust. (1 Peter 3:18)

Appreciation for his suffering would be a part of our worthiness. (1 Peter 1:18-19)

(2) Not Discerning the Lord’s Body - Overlooking a Privilege

The blood of Christ was shed for the remission of sins, but it was His body that bore the stripes whereby we are healed. “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: BY WHOSE STRIPES YE WERE HEALED.” (1 Peter 2:24)

In partaking of Communion, many drink the wine with happy realisation and praise to God for the glorious deliverance from sins through the shedding of the blood. Yet they eat the bread without any realisation that this also typifies a definite price paid at a definite time for a definite blessing, which is ours if we will but accept it. This blessing is HEALING!

Only as we believe and accept the blood of Christ for salvation do we find salvation; drinking the wine of Communion, alone, will not wash away our sins.

Many fine Christian people have never learned that when “Christ our Passover (was) sacrificed for us,” (1 Corinthians 5:7b) the blood was sufficient to deliver from spiritual death, and the BODY provided healing and physical strength. (Read the account of the first Passover in Exodus 12).

But the reason the minds of so many have been unable to grasp the truth may be found in the third phase of unworthiness, which goes beyond and includes the others.

(3) Failure to Discern the Lord’s Body Which is Alive in the World Today - His Church

To discern is to recognise, or to understand, as well as to see or perceive. Christ Himself has ascended into the heavens. (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9-11) But He left in the world a representative, which He has called “His Body!” That body is alive in the world today, still doing the same thing He did while He was here. “Now YE are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” (1 Corinthians 12:27)

Because of failure to recognise this fact, many have been guilty of causing division in the body, of injuring other members of the body, and of setting at naught the work of others in the body. THIS IS SIN! Sin kills faith.

Discern the Lord's body:

- (1) Recognise by faith the importance of His sacrifice in bearing the stripes as a substitute for your sufferings. Remember that your bearing of that suffering NOW will not diminish the suffering that He has already borne. He is not PAYING the price; He has already PAID it! Honour it! Believe it! Accept it! It is YOURS!
- (2) Recognise and honour the other members of Christ's body, the Church. Treat every member - regardless of church affiliation or the lack of it - with respect and honour that is due Christ Himself, for they are the members of His own body. Seek and find your own place in the body. Seek it humbly, not thinking of yourself more highly than you ought to think. (Romans 12:3) Yet do not assume a false humility which prevents effective service. "Think soberly." Think of yourself as a son, an heir of God, a child of the King. Think of yourself as one, who by His Spirit and the power of His might, can do anything He asks you to do. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Philippians 4:13) Do not think of yourself as being above the other members of the body, for they share the same Lord, the same Father, the same promises, and the same power.

Do not be afraid to step out on the promises of God. You are His child (if you have believed). His promises are yours.

Never, in striving for honour or recognition, step on other members of the body. That is the WORLD'S way of rising. God's way UP is DOWN! Serve your fellowmen in humility, and God Himself will exalt you in due time! (1 Peter 5:6)

THE INFIRM SPIRIT

"And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself." (Luke 13:11)

According to the Bible, much sickness is due to afflicting spirits. This is demon oppression - not demon possession, since it has its roots in the flesh and not in the soul. It is apparent that at least a part of the mental and physical troubles people suffer today originate in demon oppression.

Jesus recognised the presence of afflicting spirits in certain cases and drove out those spirits with His command.

"Behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake:" (Matthew 9:32-33a)

"Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw." (Matthew 12:22)

In dealing with these cases of demon activity, Christ used a very direct approach. Many fail along these lines today because they are afraid to command the demon to depart, or because they do not have faith to believe that he will go at their command. As Spirit-filled Christians, we need have no fear. God has given us power over all devils. They are subject to our command, but they will bluff their way and ignore that command and that power unless we approach them with absolute confidence and faith in God's word and with assurance that God's power is in operation in our lives.

There are different kinds of infirm spirits, each having power to afflict the body in a different manner. Nervous disorders and mental diseases seem to be very closely related to the operation of tormenting demons. (See Mark 5)

PHYSICAL CAUSES OF SICKNESS, ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD

The laws of nature are GOD'S LAWS for physical health, and can not be broken without punishment in the form of sickness and infirmity. Divine healing was never intended to take the place of proper care of the body. This care includes rest, exercise, right eating, sanitation, and avoidance of weakening habits.

MISCONCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO HEALING

Many born again Christians, who are living sincerely and wholeheartedly for God, are sick and even remain sick after prayer having been offered for their healing. This may be due to some misconception in regard to the teachings of God's Word. God says, "Let him ask in faith, NOTHING WAVERING. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." (James 1:6-7)

Such misconceptions are tricks devised by Satan himself. They are slander against the character of God, for God having promised, is true to His Word.

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19)

Some of these misconceptions are:

(1) The Idea that Some are Sick for the Glory of God!

This is the most prominent of misconceptions regarding healing. Many are taught that they are sick for the glory of God. If you are sick for God's glory, then let God be glorified NOW by accepting healing from Him and witnessing to all about you of the mighty power of God, who delivers all who trust in Him!

(2) The Idea that Sickness is Chastening, or Punishment, from God

Are you being chastened? While affliction or trouble may come upon Christians as punishment for disobedience or sin, a loving Father does not punish His child more severely than is needed for that child's correction. Even though such sickness may

come as a penalty for sin, heartfelt repentance removes the reason for punishment. Thus it is not necessary for any Christian to remain sick.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

Yes, you may be punished and chastened, but God will never punish without letting you know what for, and He will not continue to punish when the need for it is over.

“The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.” (Psalm 103:8-10)

(3) The Idea that God Sometimes Refuses to Heal - Answers Prayers “NO” or “WAIT”

Not once in all His earthly ministry did Jesus ever command any person to be sick, although He commanded many to be well, and healed them with His Word. Not once did a sick person come to Him asking to be healed and receive the answer, “No” or “Wait.” Not once was anyone told “It is God’s will for you to remain sick for God’s glory.”

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8) It is inconceivable that while He was here on earth He glorified the Father by healing “all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.” (Matthew 4:23b) Now having gone back to the Father, He is glorified by the people remaining patient in affliction, declaring to all they meet that this sickness is an evidence of the love of God toward them.

Nowhere in the Scripture are we told that God answers prayer by saying “No.” “If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” (1 John 3:20-22)

(4) The Idea that Sickness is a Penalty for Sin and therefore it is not God’s Will to Heal

It is true that sickness is a penalty for sin. The reward of obedience is health and healing. God said, “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.” (Exodus 15:26)

It is the will of God for his people to prosper and be in health. Therefore, let us come to God without wavering, in full assurance that we are asking in His will. If we will obey Him, He will remove that penalty for sin, and heal us.

(5) The Attempt to Prove that Sickness is the Will of God by Quoting Certain Cases in Scripture Which They Feel are Circumstantial Evidence

Job and His Boils: According to the testimony of God Himself, Job was a perfect and upright man, in that he “feareth God, and escheweth evil.” (Job 1:8b) No divinity or superhuman perfection is attributed to Job. Any Christian can and should be, at least, as perfect as was Job, for our opportunities and privileges and power are far ahead of his. Jesus Himself left us the commandment to be “perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.” (Matthew 5:48)

No Christian is in the will of God or in a position to seek healing, who is satisfied with being anything less than perfect. Though we may need to say with Paul, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after” (Philippians 3:12a) Let us keep this goal constantly before us and earnestly “press toward the mark” at all times.

First, let us note that while Job was commended for his fear of God (Job 1:8) this was not his only fear. “The thing which I GREATLY FEARED is come upon me.” (Job 2:7) “Satan ... smote Job with sore boils.” Even this he could not do without God’s permission.

Job repented and found a new relationship with God. After he had repented of self-righteousness and lack of trust, and had proven his humility and forgiveness by praying for his friends, and God had set him free, we see him restored to all his former glory, even more than at the beginning.

If you have been following Job’s example, sitting in the ash heap bemoaning your fate and blaming it upon God, you should take another look at your example (Jesus). God is the same today.

CASES IN THE MINISTRY OF PAUL

(1) Epaphroditus:

We are told that Paul’s fellow soldier and companion in labour, Epaphroditus, became sick while in the company of Paul, that he was nigh unto death. In fact, these are Paul’s own words. (Philippians 2:27) Paul explains the reason for the sickness. “Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.” (Philippians 2:30)

The gifts of healing do not guarantee an unlimited supply of strength and energy to the human body. It is possible to overtax the body, but even here, God shows Himself merciful, and while a period of absolute rest, or convalescence, may be required, there is no need to be permanently defeated because of a nervous breakdown or other illness caused by overwork.

Paul says “God had mercy on him” (Epaphroditus) (Philippians 2:27), so that now he is able to make the long journey with Paul.

(2) Luke the Physician:

(Travelling with Paul). We are told that Paul had his private physician, Luke, who travelled with him to watch after his health. It is true that Luke had been trained as a physician (Colossians 4:14) However, there is as much reason to declare that Jesus took Matthew with Him as His private tax collector as to assert that Luke was chosen to go with Paul because of his skill as a physician. There is no record in the Scripture that Luke ever treated either Paul or any other sick person in any place they visited, in the capacity of a physician. Only one time is his being a physician mentioned.

(3) Paul's Thorn in the Flesh:

As a final proof that God denies healing to some, the Scripture is quoted: "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. More gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 Corinthians 12:7-9)

Whatever Paul's thorn may have been, God's grace was surely sufficient for him, for the list of his achievements and sufferings given in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 would certainly be a sufficient test of grace. But to say that Paul's thorn was a physical defect would require some backing beyond what is found in this passage of scripture, for sickness is not mentioned.

Careful consideration of the words used by Paul, comparing those words with their accepted definitions and the manner in which they are used in other scriptures, would indicate that Paul's thorn in the flesh was something from without, probably his treatment by other persons or another person. His reference to "buffeting" would apply more easily to the beatings, stonings, and the like which he received after he preached from city to city, than to any possible sickness in his own body. Added to this is the fact that in Paul's own writings are found many of the tremendous promises of healing.

Every one of these misconceptions has been used by Satan for generations to hinder or destroy the faith of God's people. Faith, in its simplest definition, is just this: Believing that God means what he says! Believe the Word of God, not the traditions that have been built up about it. As the flame of your faith is made to burn brightly, no longer wavering, you may ask God whatsoever He has promised! It shall be done unto you!

GOD'S GUARANTEE TO HEAL THE SICK

God has promised to heal the sick just as surely as He has promised to forgive sins. Whatever God has spoken, He is able to make good, and the Word declares that He SHALL make it good.

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19)

“My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.” (Psalm 89:34)

FAITH IS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY TO RECEIVE ANYTHING FROM GOD

There is no way to receive anything from God except by faith. In reading the New Testament accounts of healing in the ministry of Jesus, and in the ministry of His early followers, we find many statements such as

“Thy faith hath made thee whole.” (Mark 5:34)

“According to YOUR FAITH be it unto you.” (Matthew 9:29)

“AS THOU HAST BELIEVED, so be it done unto thee.” (Matthew 8:13)

God has promised to reward UNWAVERING FAITH! “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed ... let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.” (James 1:6-7)

THERE ARE FOUR KINDS OF FAITH

(1) Human Faith - This is “head-faith”

This is the kind of faith you have when you board a bus, that it will take you to your destination. It is the kind you have when you mail a letter, that it will arrive in the hands of the person to whom you addressed it. This is the kind of faith demons have (James 2:19) and it is the only kind they have. They believe the record God gave of His Son, but that is as far as that type of faith goes.

(2) Saving Faith

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” (Ephesians 2:8)

This is putting “head faith” into action; it is committing ourselves to our belief in Christ. It is accepting Him as God’s Son, and as our Saviour. It is giving ourselves to Him as obedient and loving “bondslaves” bought with His own blood.

This saving faith is also a gift, we are told in Ephesians 2:8, but it is not the supernatural gift of the Spirit of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 12.

(3) Faith, the Fruit

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, and longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, FAITH.” (Galatians 5:22)

The faith mentioned in this passage is one of the fruits of the Spirit and it is for

character. This is the faith without which no man can please God. “But without faith it is impossible to please him.” (Hebrews 11:6a) It is actually the development and growth of saving faith.

(4) Faith, the Gift

This faith is for power. This is the gift of the Spirit by which one may work miracles, or receive them.

Daniel, facing the den of lions, must have experienced a supernatural faith that closed the mouths of the lions. “And of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.” (Hebrews 11:32b-33)

Paul, on the island of Melita, shook off the poisonous serpent and was unharmed, because he exercised the supernatural gift of faith. (Acts 28)

When the disciples were out on the sea in a storm tossed boat, they could have, by faith, sailed through the storm as if it didn't exist. (Mark 4:35-40) That is what Jesus wanted them to do. That would have been a miracle of faith.

The operations of the gift of faith are not always immediately obvious.

“By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.” (Hebrews 11:20)

These things were a long time coming to pass, but Isaac had supernatural faith to pronounce these blessings upon his son.

Abraham believed God to lead him into a promised land, and to give him his son, Isaac. This was a long-range faith over a long period of time, and it was supernatural. (Hebrews 11:17-19; Genesis 22:8-13)

The Gift of Faith, like all the supernatural gifts, is transient. That is, it is for a specific time and place.

THE NEED TODAY - THE GIFT OF FAITH!

This gift is needed today just as it was in Bible days. It is needed for the same reasons it was needed then. Caleb and Joshua surely had this gift of faith operating when, in the face of all evidence to the contrary, they insisted that Israel was well able to march into and conquer the Promised Land. (Numbers 13:17-33)

Today, anyone who does a great work for God must have this special endowment of faith in order to succeed against the terrific opposition that faces him. This special faith is needed to go through persecution. In the fourth chapter of Acts, we read how, in the face of persecution and even of danger to their lives, the apostles prayed for more of that which brought on the persecution!

That is real, supernatural faith in God and in His love and His purposes. Notice that

they did not pray for their lives or for protection. They prayed for courage! It takes special, supernatural faith to pray thus in the face of opposition, and not to pray selfishly. We need this gift of supernatural victories.

Probably George Mueller of Bristol, England, is the most striking latter day example of one who had this gift in operation in his life. In a span of fifty years, he cared for more than 10,000 orphans through faith, without backing of any kind, and those orphans never missed a meal, although once breakfast was delayed for 30 minutes.

There is no thought of “trying to believe” in the exercise of this gift. It is a gift, a supernatural endowment of faith for a special purpose. You can not work it up nor obtain it by mental effort. It is a “gift of the Holy Spirit.”

FAITH OPERATES ONLY IN THE WILL OF GOD

It is impossible to exercise the faith of God for anything that is not His will. George Mueller once made this statement “If we wish to find the will of God, we must first come to the place where we have no will of our own.” The Red Sea would never have opened for the Children of Israel if they had not been in God’s will. On the other hand, Jonah, out of God’s will, was a prey to any danger that came along!

NOTHING WILL TAKE THE PLACE OF YOUR OWN FAITH

Many have a mistaken idea today, that since many are exercising the gifts of healing and miracles, that they will be healed without faith on their own part. They think that the gift of healing will take the place of their own faith in God. This is unscriptural. The gift of healing WILL NOT take the place of our own faith in God. The gifts of healing possessed by the Lord Himself, did not bring healing independent of their faith. Neither will the gift of healing exercised by men of God today bring healing to you unless you have faith.

HAVE THE FAITH THAT GOD GIVES

We have learned that faith is an absolute requirement for healing. There are thousands of promises in God’s Word. Every one is conditioned upon faith; faith that you can have; faith that God gives!

“Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, AND SHALL NOT DOUBT IN HIS HEART, ... he shall have whatsoever he saith.” (Mark 11:22b-23) It is plain to see that Jesus meant that others can have the same faith He exercised. Really, He is telling them that they can have the FAITH OF GOD - literally THE FAITH THAT GOD GIVES!

THE PRICE OF FAITH

God gives faith to every person who wants it enough to pay the price required. That price is obedience, godliness, holiness, following in the footsteps of Jesus, living free from condemnation, and walking in the full light of the Scriptures.

The Apostle John declares, "If our heart condemn us not, then (and then only) have we confidence toward God." (1 John 3:21) Webster defines faith as "complete confidence in a person." Surely, no one can merit our complete confidence more fully than God!

SCRIPTURAL METHODS OF OBTAINING FAITH

(1) Love God

"Perfect love casteth out fear:" (1 John 4:18) Fear is the direct opposite of faith. There is no fear in love. You can not have faith if you do not love God. If you love Him, you will keep His commandments. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15) "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (John 14:21) Many fail to have faith because they can not really love God.

(2) Obey God

"Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." (1 John 3:21-22)

Probably you have always thought of Abraham as a great example of faith, and he was! He demonstrated his faith by obedience. In contrast, we have Saul's example of disobedience. (1 Samuel 13) It is the belief of this writer that disobedience is the greatest hindrance to faith, and that obedience is one of the most effective methods of obtaining great faith.

(3) Abide in Him

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7)

One must abide in Christ before he is in a position to exercise real faith, or before he can receive the faith that God gives. God's Word defines "abiding in Christ" in 1 John 2:6: "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." This makes it plain that if we profess to abide in Christ, we should be walking as He walked. Until you do so, you can never be on real faith ground. It is God's command.

"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should FOLLOW HIS STEPS: Who did NO sin." (1 Peter 2:21b-22a) Christ did not live in sin. He did not make excuses for sin. He resisted the devil and temptation. He is our example. He will help us to walk as He walked.

(4) Read and Study the Bible

An outstanding reason for lack of faith is lack of Bible study. No wonder faith is so low in the hearts of many. The price of faith has not been established. It is: Love God,

read His Word, obey His commands, and believe His promises.

Those who have a real desire to please God, those who read their Bibles and pray, are attaining holiness. These are the people who are shouting the victory over sickness and disease and Satan's power. God has given them faith.

(5) Stand Upon the Word

Faith must be built upon the Word of God, and ONLY upon the Word of God. Experiences and testimonies of others merely bring hope, not faith. Faith can not be built merely upon the experiences of others, nor upon your feelings, nor upon what you have seen. Those things will cause you to hope, but hope is not faith. It helps faith, but can not take its place. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10:17)

Base your faith upon the Bible, exclusively. Do not talk in terms of what you feel. Real faith is simply TAKING GOD AT HIS WORD. God has said He will heal you. BELIEVE IT!

HINDRANCES TO FAITH

There are many hindrances to our faith, which every person desiring faith should understand. It is well to look into your own heart and life to see whether one or more of them might constitute the reason your faith has been ineffectual and you have not received from God the healing nor other petitions you have desired of Him.

Some of the most outstanding hindrances to faith are:

(1) Failure to Abide in Him

This may well be placed first on any list of hindrances to faith, for it nullifies God's guarantee. Abiding in Christ is living in the Word of God, by the Word of God, and in joyful fellowship with God.

(2) Condemnation

This is certainly one of the greatest hindrances to faith. Those who abide in Christ are not condemned. "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which, are pleasing in his sight." (1 John 3:21-22) This is God's formula for faith.

CAUSES OF CONDEMNATION

(1) Unscriptural Relationships in the Home

Peter exhorts husbands and wives: "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs

together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” (1 Peter 3:1, 7)

The faith of many is hindered because of unscriptural relationships in the home. But unscriptural attitudes toward our fellow men outside the home can also be a great hindrance to faith.

Many wives have mistakenly assumed that they can become more spiritual by disregarding the wishes of their husbands, neglecting their natural care of their home and care for their husbands to follow more lauded pursuits. They may, indeed, win the praise of some by doing so, but God’s command is not thus.

This is equally true of the husband. Cruel, harsh, overbearing, unkind treatment of his wife and children will certainly stand between him and the answer to his prayers and cripple his faith to receive the thing for which he asks.

Faith that moves mountains springs from the depths of a soul that is at peace: at peace with God, with itself, with the members of the household, and with those that are without.

Compassion and love are also necessary in a home if that home is to be in order as God wishes it to be. Compassion is defined as “sympathy, pity, mercy, tenderness, sorrow for the distress of another.”

(2) Unscriptural Attitudes Toward our Fellow Men

It is our duty to provide things honest in the sight of all men, to deal fairly with others in all business transactions, whether with Christian or sinner; to do good; to be kind, gentle and courteous. (1 Peter 3:8) The heart of true courtesy is kindness, thoughtfulness to others, and to live in such a manner as to win them to Christ.

If you find in yourself the opposite to these qualities, then your attitudes are unscriptural and constitute a hindrance to faith.

(3) Failure to Tithe, and to Give to God

The wrong financial attitude can be a great hindrance to faith and brings many under constant condemnation because they refuse to give God the tithe, which is His. “The tithe ... is the Lord’s:” (Leviticus 27:30)

Remember that God’s promises are still true. “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith.” (Malachi 3:10a)

In addition to the law of tithing, the Word of God has much to say about giving, and about God’s promises to those who do give generously. Even a selfish person who reads and truly believes those promises would not withhold from God!

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same

measure, that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” (Luke 6:38)

If you have condemnation in your heart about these things, do not expect to be able to have faith until you change your attitude about finances and bring your life into conformity with the Word of God.

(4) Failure to Right Wrongs

It is useless to expect to have real working faith and be able to get anything from God until we have made everything right with our fellow men, as far as lies within our power.

“Therefore if you bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” (Matthew 5:23-24)

Notice the above Scripture says “If ... thy brother hath ought against thee.” It does not say just to be reconciled to those you have something against. That comes under forgiveness, and is necessary, of course, but this is to make the wrongs right which you have committed against someone else. Failure to do this will bring condemnation to your heart, and may well be a real hindrance to your faith.

(5) Failure to Confess Faults

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, they ye may be healed. (James 5:16a)

One that hears such confessions must of course keep it in strict confidence.

Unwillingness to confess faults usually shows unwillingness to forsake them, or a lack of confidence in God’s power to deliver from them. This is a great hindrance to faith and a source of condemnation.

(6) Wrong Motives

“Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” (James 4:3)

There are those who desire healing to be better able to continue a life that does not glorify God, or they have some other selfish motive. This causes condemnation and hinders faith.

HINDRANCES TO FAITH (CONTINUED)

(3) Lack of Separation Unto God

There are many that deny that there is any supernatural power in operation in the world today. They advise good resolutions, church membership, or baptism instead of conversion by means of a new birth. Those things can not change the heart. They deny

the power that Jesus promised to leave with the godly - to heal the sick, cast out devils, to speak with new tongues, and possess the signs that follow the believer. The Lord warns us to turn away from such people. (2 Timothy 3:5)

Many have failed to receive healing because they have not heeded this warning.

(4) No Works

“Faith without works is dead.” (James 2:20b) I like to paraphrase the statement above by saying “Faith that doesn’t work is dead.” A life of faith is demonstrated to the world by Christian works. A lack of works is a definite hindrance to faith.

(5) Disobedience

When ten lepers came to Jesus for healing and Jesus instructed them to go and show themselves to the priest (correct procedure under the law) they were cleansed as they went. (Luke 17:13-14) If they had not obeyed, they would have not received their healing. Other instances of healing in the Word bear out the fact that disobedience keeps one from receiving from God.

(6) Erroneous Teachings - Traditions of Men

These teachings are the same as covered in this lesson under the title “Misconceptions in Regard to Healing.” Please refer back to that section and review them. These misconceptions are indeed great hindrances to faith.

WHEN THE HINDRANCES TO FAITH IN YOUR OWN LIFE HAVE BEEN MET AND CONQUERED, YOU WILL REALISE THAT YOU HAVE ENTERED INTO A REVITALISED PRAYER LIFE AND RELATIONSHIP TO GOD. YOU CAN RECEIVE YOUR HEALING AND WHATEVER ELSE YOU DESIRE FROM GOD ACCORDING TO HIS WORD!

WHY MANY DO NOT RECEIVE HEALING

Oftentimes questions are asked why so many Christian people are sick or why some are healed and others are not. These questions can not be ignored. God’s promises of healing apply to every Christian.

If you desire to be healed and are not a Christian, you must first find healing for your soul. Repent of your sins and seek God with your whole heart. When you have repented of your sins, and have believed in your heart the Lord Jesus (not just some things about Him, but believed HIM) and have confessed with your mouth, then you will be saved. (Romans 10:9-10)

Jesus declared “Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3b)

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

“We know that we have passed from death unto life.” (1 John 3:14a)

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that YE MAY KNOW that ye HAVE eternal life.” (1 John 5:13a)

This does not say that you may hope that you will have eternal life, when you have come to the other end of life’s journey! You have eternal life NOW, and know that you have it, or else you have no eternal life! Eternal life begins within you when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and are born again.

“Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3b)

The life of the unrepentant sinner is one life, while the life of the repentant, born again Christian is an entirely different life.

Only Christ can set you free. He whom the Son of God sets free is free indeed. (John 8:36) You can not save yourself by your own efforts. A penalty has been placed upon sin by a just and holy God. That penalty is death! “The soul that sinneth, it shall DIE.” (Ezekiel 18:4b)

NOW, HERE IS YOUR PART:

- (1) You must realise that you are a sinner, and that your sins are worthy of death. (Death, in this sense, means eternal banishment from God, in hell.)
- (2) You must come to hate your sin, which is destroying you. You must repent of your sins and, in prayer, confess them to Jesus.
- (3) Then you must believe in your heart that He has been true to His Word, and has washed your sins away.
- (4) There is one thing more: After you have believed, you must acknowledge Jesus as your Saviour.

“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” (2 Corinthians 5:17a) The change is so complete that God in His Word has called it a REBIRTH! (John 3:3)

IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN AND STILL HAVE NOT RECEIVED HEALING, examine your life and attitudes in the light of God’s Word. God has not shown respect of persons in your case, for that is contrary to His divine nature. If you are still sick, there is a reason. God’s Word will reveal it to you, if you will diligently seek His face. When you find the trouble, correct it, and God’s healing touch is yours. This is God’s guarantee, and God can not lie.

The reason may be one of the following:

(1) Lack of Faith

Faith is believing what you have not seen simply because God said it is so. (Hebrews 11:1) If you had faith, you would already have been healed. Jesus once said to a man

whose faith was weak, “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” (Mark 9:23) He replied, “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.” (Mark 9:24b)

(2) Erroneous Teaching

Many fail to receive healing because, due to erroneous teaching (misconception) they have been made to believe that sickness and physical suffering is God’s way of bringing out the best in them, or of developing the fruits of the Spirit in their lives. They believe they must be patient in affliction, and wait until it is God’s time to heal them, or perhaps they believe God is chastening them for some unknown sin. Or some of the other erroneous teachings and misconceptions mentioned earlier in this lesson are causing them not to receive healing.

Both sin and sickness are the works of the devil. God certainly has not ordained that the fruits of the Spirit should be developed by the works of the devil. Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. Health is God’s will for His people, conditioned upon the well-being of the soul.

All of God’s promises are conditional. Salvation is conditioned upon repentance. Healing is conditioned upon faith and spiritual health. But when God’s conditions are known and met, GOD GUARANTEES THE ANSWER.

“For ALL the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” (2 Corinthians 1:20)

“For he is faithful that promised.” (Hebrews 10:23b)

(3) Indefinite Prayers

Many fail to receive healing because they do not ask definitely for the thing they desire from God. “Ye have not, because ye ask not.” (James 4:2)

When you come to God for healing, state your need DEFINITELY. God’s promise is: “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” (John 14:13)

(4) Lack of Understanding of God’s Dealings in Regard to Healing

A lack of understanding of the way God deals in regard to healing is the cause of many remaining sick. The person who has set a pattern in his mind and feels it is the only way that God can or will work is in danger of losing confidence. When the answer doesn’t come according to his mental pattern, he may also have the feeling that his prayer has not been heard or will not be answered.

Since healing can come only by faith, it is important to understand that God heals both instantaneously and gradually. Oftentimes the root of the disease is cursed and then the disease withers away, in the same way as the fig tree Jesus cursed withered and died. (Mark 11) God’s plan for healing is COMPLETE whether it be instantaneous or

convalescent type deliverance.

(5) Rejection of God's Statutes

There are those who have deliberately turned aside from following God's will for them and have despised their inheritance. Now they are seeking a blessing from the Lord that they have no right to receive. They have completely rejected God's statutes, and God will not bless them.

(6) Stubbornness and Rebellion

"And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians. And Asa ... died in the one and fortieth year of his reign." (2 Chronicles 16:12-13)

God let Asa die because of stubbornness and rebellion in turning to man, for help instead of God. To turn from God and to look only to man for help is definitely displeasing to God.

(7) Disobedience

God's power to heal was well-known and recognised by His people in the days of the Old Testament. God made a covenant with His people at Sinai that if they would keep his statutes and commandments, He would keep them in health. "I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: FOR I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE." (Exodus 15:26b)

When they disobeyed God and murmured against God and against Moses, God permitted "fiery serpents" to come into the camp, and many were bitten and died. The people knew the cause of this and came to Moses crying, "We have sinned ... pray unto the Lord, that He take away the serpents from us." (Numbers 21:7)

(8) Speaking Against the Lord's Anointed (Numbers 12:1-13)

God smote Miriam with leprosy for speaking against Moses who was God's anointed. Through Moses' prayer she was healed, and God said "Were ye not afraid (o speak against my servant Moses?" (Numbers 12:8b) Some are unable to receive healing because they are guilty of speaking against the Lord's anointed!

A CAREFUL STUDY OF THE FOREGOING REASONS SHOULD HELP YOU TO FIND THE REASON YOU DON'T RECEIVE YOUR HEALING. Build your faith upon the Word of God. Search the Word to find the reason you have not been healed. Lay aside your own ideas as to how God will perform the work. God, who CAN NOT LIE, has said: "Believe that ye receive them and ye SHALL HAVE THEM." (Mark 11:24b)

DISEASES AND YOUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION ARE CLOSELY RELATED.

At least ten major diseases are caused, not by germs, but by a mental condition. Doctors claim that eight out of ten who think they have heart disease have only something wrong with their minds, not with their heart.

If you are bound in spirit and soul, you will soon be bound in body. Then even your digestive organs are affected. This is the cause of ulcers and many other diseases. If you will get peace in soul and mind, you will not have so much trouble with your body.

HOW TO RECEIVE YOUR HEALING

(1) Be Persistent - Do Not Become Discouraged

When a person makes up his mind to reach the Lord in order to receive a miracle, he is sure to discover some kind of hindrance from Satan. In Luke 18:35-43, we read of blind Bartimaeus who cried to Jesus for healing that he might receive his sight. "They which went before," (Luke 18:39a) tried to hinder him; they rebuked him "But he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." (Luke 18:39b)

In your case, "those who went before" may be a friend or member of your family, or someone of your church. They are those who would hinder your receiving your healing. If Bartimaeus had listened to the people, he would never have received his sight.

God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6) One must not be discouraged. It is very important to have a real determination to persist until victory comes.

(2) As the Next Step, Remember Calvary!

Seven hundred years before Calvary, Isaiah looked forward to the cross. Upon that cross he saw a man dying for the sins of the world. Not only dying - shedding His blood - for the sins of the world, but dying with His back bruised and bleeding from the stripes which He bore that we might be set free from sickness as well as from sin.

Speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, Isaiah cried out in prophetic utterance: "He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes WE ARE HEALED." (Isaiah 53:3-5)

The work was finished. All God asks us to do is to believe it, then receive it. Only as you, dear sick suffering friend, believe in the stripes that Jesus bore, can you receive your healing.

Salvation for the Soul - in the Atonement:

Only as a sinner believes in Calvary for the atonement of his soul can he receive

salvation from sin. Jesus Christ shed His blood to atone for ALL sins. The sufferings of His body were not for that.

David said “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.” (Psalm 103:2) That is, “REMEMBER all His benefits.” To be reminded of all God’s benefits, we must go back to Calvary. The benefits mentioned by David include forgiveness for ALL sins, and healing for ALL diseases: not part of our sins, or part of our diseases, but every sin and every disease. This is the benefit of Calvary.

Healing for the Body - in the Atonement:

Christ did not suffer in His body for our sins. He shed his blood for that. The stripes were for our healing! David says so. Isaiah says so. Peter says so. Christ Himself says so. That should be sufficient!

Jesus’ last words on the cross before He died, were “IT IS FINISHED:” (John 19:30) What did He mean? He meant just this: He had borne the sins of the world, and carried its sorrows. “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” (Matthew 8:17b)

Since Christ bore your sicknesses, you no longer have to be sick. You can be released from sin and sickness by remembering that Christ finished your redemption from both ONCE FOR ALL at Calvary. Thanks be to God for Calvary!

(3) The Next Step - Believe!

Believe! Just BELIEVE! Believing is faith. Faith is not KNOWING THAT GOD IS ABLE - IT IS BELIEVING THAT HE DOES! It is believing it simply because God said He would do it, and you know that God CAN NOT LIE!

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1) Faith is reaching out into the unseen, getting hold of that which is not, and holding on until it becomes that which is. Faith is believing we possess that which we can not see, that which we can not feel. Though it is unseen and unfelt as yet, we believe it is already done.

You absolutely BELIEVE that by His stripes you were healed. Since you absolutely believe it, you begin to ACT on God’s Word. Joy comes into your heart, as the realisation of what God has done for you sweeps over your soul. Faith always brings rejoicing. Then as you rejoice in your victory, stand upon your feet! Rise up in Jesus’ name and walk!

Do not look for feeling - LOOK FOR HEALING! Step out on the promise of God. Leave your wheel chair! Throw away your crutches! Walk and run and leap for joy! Speak! Hear! See out of obscurity and out of darkness! Do it in Jesus’ name! Because you believe, you are healed! You can and will do the things you could not do!

Tell people what a wonderful work the Lord Jesus has done in making you whole and in driving away the power of Satan. Let your testimony glorify God. Quote God’s Word. His Word is truth. Real faith must be based upon the Word of God exclusively.

You are not to believe you are healed because the pain is gone nor to refuse to believe you are healed because you still feel the pain. That pain has nothing to do with your faith. Feeling is not faith, and faith is not feeling. **FAITH IS BELIEVING THAT YOU ARE HEALED BECAUSE GOD SAYS THAT YOU ARE HEALED.**

Faith is never afraid to take a stand with the Word of God. "Let God be true, but every man a liar;" Romans 3:4. If my own feelings do not agree with what God says, then my feelings lie. A person who walks by faith ignores the testimony of his senses unless it agrees with the Word of God. Make this your testimony: "God says it is done! I believe it ... it is done! It is finished! **I AM HEALED BECAUSE GOD, WHO CAN NOT LIE, DECLARES THAT I AM HEALED.**"

THIS IS THE WAY TO RECEIVE HEALING. Not by Feeling, but by faith. If you do this, **GOD GUARANTEES TO HEAL YOU!**

Special Miracles by Handkerchiefs and Aprons:

"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." (Acts 19:11-12)

Countless thousands are being healed today by the ministry of blessed cloths. God has made this provision for the sake of those who can not get to us for help, that although we can not reach them personally, we can send them a cloth that our hands have touched. This is God's scriptural method of contacting them who are sick and bound and afflicted, who can not get into direct contact with those whose faith is strong and whom the Lord is using in this ministry.

A prayer cloth may be substituted for the laying on of hands of the evangelist if used according to instructions given for believing God for healing.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HEALING

(1) Remember that All Sickness is of the Devil

First, let us remember that, while not all sickness can be attributed to demon possession or even to demon oppression, God is not the author of sickness. Satan is responsible in one way or another for all sickness. Satan is an active, crafty, intelligent enemy. He gives no ground except what is actively taken from him by faith. And having given up ground, he is constantly on the watch for an opportunity to take it back.

(2) Be Filled with the Spirit

Jesus not only gave us promises and commands but warnings as well. One of these is found in Matthew 12:43-45.

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came

out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.”

When you have been released from the power of Satan, whether it be from sin, sickness, demon possession, or demon oppression, it is important that the house in which you live, your body, be not only clean, but occupied. When Satan moves out, if you are to keep him out, the Spirit of God must move in. Never let the demon find your house empty.

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost:

This is a separate experience from that of conversion. It was promised by Jesus to His people: “Behold, I send the promise of my father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49) This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2)

To receive the infilling of the Holy Ghost: Ask in faith. If it is hard to believe for this experience, search your heart for hindrances to faith. (Lessons #4 and #5). When you have eliminated the hindrances to your faith, it will be easy to receive the Holy Spirit. Just come boldly into Jesus’ presence with praise. Be obedient. Yield yourself and let Him possess you completely and speak out through your lips. Then He will live in your body and possess your “temple” and there will be no room for Satan.

(3) Live a Holy Life

Sin and careless living on the part of one who has been healed is an open invitation for the unclean spirit to move back into the house from which he was driven. Jesus warned one whom He had healed instantly and miraculously, in these words: “Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” (John 5:14b)

(4) Resist the Devil

“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7b) The Christian need not be in subjection to sin. “Sin shall not have dominion over you.” (Romans 6:14a) By faith, the Christian has power to refuse the temptations of Satan, and his suggestions to sin. There is something more commendable than daily repentance from sin, and that is daily victory over sin. It is also possible, by faith, to refuse sickness a place. There is something better than being healed “many times,” especially of the same afflictions: that is to get healed and stay healed.

(5) Keep Believing God and His Promises

If the promises of God are bright and clear in your mind and you still believe that God meant just what He said, you will answer Satan, as did our Lord when He was tempted. “It is written.” (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10) “By whose stripes ye were healed.” (1 Peter 2:24b)

As you review by faith the mighty promises of God, your heart will rejoice, even as it

did when you claimed His promise and received healing, and there will be praise in your heart to God for His mighty deliverance. Stand upon a promise in God's Word, and praise God in the devil's face. This is resisting the devil. He never has been able to stay in the presence of this kind of faith, and he will never be able to do so.

(6) Seek an Atmosphere of Faith

After your healing takes place, it is a mistake to go back into a church where the pastors and teachers do not believe in the miracle working power of God. Identify yourself with a group where you can find food for your faith and where you can freely give your testimony for the encouragement of others that may also need deliverance.

(7) Testify to Your Healing at Every Opportunity

Your testimony will increase as you declare the truth and reality of God's promises, and Satan will be driven farther back, and his chance of again overcoming you will be lessened.

WHO HAS POWER TO HEAL?

During His earthly ministry, Jesus healed "all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." (Matthew 4:23) The glorious ministry of deliverance begun by Jesus was to continue through His disciples, His followers, and His believers.

The early church was a powerful church because its members believed God. They believed in holy living because God said, "Be ye holy." (1 Peter 1:16) They feared sin because they had seen sin revealed through the gift of discernment, and had seen liars stricken dead for their sin. (Acts 5) They believed that they could do miracles in the name of Jesus because He had said, "The works that I do shall ye do also." (John 14:12) And because they believed God, God worked with them, confirming the word with signs and wonders. God has not changed. Any church today can have the same power if they will meet the same conditions.

Has God changed? No! The church Jesus purchased with His blood is still performing miracles and healing the sick. Those who dare to believe God's promises and stand on His Word can still, **IN THE NAME OF JESUS**, heal the sick.

God has given those who believe, **AUTHORITY** over all devils and to cure diseases. (Luke 9:1) They have the right to use the name of Jesus in making requests to God and in giving commands to demons and to disease. (See John 14:10-14)

THE ENDUEMENT OF POWER

"And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke 24:48, 49. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me." (Acts 1:8a)

Then we receive the **POWER TO WITNESS**. This power for service takes many

forms. This was a great miracle on the day of Pentecost.

The great miracle of Pentecost was not the tongues but the transformed lives of believers, although they did speak in tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. They were clothed with supernatural power. Gifts of the Spirit were given to them but those supernatural gifts did not indicate that the possessor necessarily had spiritual maturity of character or holiness of life to the extent that they had no faults.

Today the church is vastly ignorant of these gifts of the Spirit and the way the Lord works. They are for us today. The great wonders and miracles in the Old and New Testament were performed by the same Spirit through the same operations as the gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12. In the Old Testament they experienced divine power as the Spirit of God came upon them; in the new dispensation of grace they receive power; the Holy Ghost comes into the believer.

This miracle working power is given by the Lord to those who seek Him. God is performing His works today through those who will pay the price to receive this power. JESUS IS JUST THE SAME TODAY!

IF YOU WILL ACCEPT THE TEACHINGS AND INSTRUCTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD AND ACT UPON THEM, HEALTH, HEALING, AND HOLINESS WILL BE YOURS. AND REMEMBER GOD GUARANTEES TO HEAL YOU!