
“I Am Seriously Ill! What Should I Do?”

Radio Message by Dwight Porter, D.D.

SICKNESS is a real problem to many people! So, friend, join a big crowd that is victimized by it.

To begin my advice, I would urge you not to take the usual course of action by rushing to the doctor and being filled with drugs. Rather than fill yourself with painkillers, I would do my utmost to seek the Lord and check your personal dissipation. Are you getting proper rest? Is your body being filled with junk food in the place of that which is nourishing and beneficial? Are you allowing stress and strain to dominate your mind and heart? Most men take better care of their car than their body. Most sickness we bring on ourselves. Why should I assume responsibility to pray for a person who breaks the law of mental and emotional health, and for a person who makes himself sick from worry, jealousy, rage, fear and by holding grudges, maintaining stress conditions and emotional upsets?

God's Action

The Bible teaches that sickness and physical disabilities can be supernaturally placed upon us. They can be given to us directly by God, under His will. Job is the prime Old Testament case of Satanically-imposed affliction, permitted by God to prove Job's faithfulness. Satan had bound a woman for eighteen years: "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" (Luke 13:16). "When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him" (Mark 9:25).

In Acts 13:8 God placed His hand of judgment of an unsaved man because of his opposition to the Truth. "But Elymas, the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation), withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith."

At times, God places sickness upon His own children. Note the sinful behavior of the saints at the communion table. Also note the judgment that followed: "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (I Corinthians 11:29, 30).

At times, God uses sickness as a chastening agent for His children: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:6,11). For the manifestation of His glory, God places some under physical maladjustments such as the man born blind:

"And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:2, 3).

All sickness is not from Satan or demons. The credit given to Satan is contrary to the Scriptures. It is very important to get alone before God, to enquire as to the cause and nature of the sickness to ascertain the proper action for healing. If it is the result of dissipation, change your schedule and habits. If it is sin and God's chastisement, confess your sin and make restitution to people you have offended (James 5:15, 16). Believe God to direct our course of action. If the Spirit of God does not convict you of wrongdoing or failures, move on to the possibility of other reasons for your sickness. Too much self-examination can easily be misunderstood. If you never find the reason, God does not want you to know at the present time. Do not allow it to be a problem.

God's Attitude

He will not do less for us today under the New Testament than His course of action in the Old. "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). "And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye measure, it shall be measured to you; and unto you that hear shall more be given" (Mark 4:24).

Biblical truth teaches us that Christ bore our sin in His own body and also took upon Himself our sicknesses, diseases and death: "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 has 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. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:3-6). In two of these verses the word "GRIEF" is used. In the Hebrew, the word is CHOLI, which means "SICKNESS." "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah, the prophet, saying, He himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17).

Of course, there are those who say that if healing is in Christ's redemptive work, we ought to claim and receive such as we do the forgiveness of sins in the name of Christ. Not all the benefits of the Atonement are willed to us by God in the same way or at the same time. For instance, the replacement of a spiritual body is delayed, yet it is a vital promise in the Atonement of Christ. Here is another thought: There is not the moral necessity for the healing of sickness that is found in the forgiveness of sin.

Christ's Ministry

Given to us is His Divine commission: "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the

blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18). Listen to His commission to the seventy: "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease" (Matthew 10:1).

We are given instruction that a healing ministry is entrusted to the elders of the church for the physical benefit of the entire Body of Christ. How some churches try to get around the scriptural plurality of elders is beyond my understanding. Remember the spiritual qualifications of these appointed leaders? (Titus 1:5-11) The practice of anointing of oil is to be continued to this day. To say this oil is medicinal is too ridiculous to take the time to respond. Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit as found in the Old Testament. "Is any among you afflicted: Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms. 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. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:13-16).

Of course, healing is included in these four verses: "And ALL THINGS, whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22). "Therefore, I say unto you, WHATEVER THINGS ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). "And WHATEVER ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask ANYTHING in my name, I will do it" (John 14:13,14). "Be anxious for nothing, but IN EVERYTHING, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6).

If It Be Thy Will

Bury that phrase, never to be repeated again. Unless you have heard from heaven with a loud and clear NO, keep believing. There is no "IF" in James 5. Of course, you have no business praying for healing if unforgiven sins are within your heart and life. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18). If your submission does not include the Lord's will, time and method, you have reservations about His will. When you use the word "IF" in a prayer for healing because of doubt that Christ heals today or a questionable faith in His ability, you forfeit confidence and assurance. If you do not know the will of God, then do not ask until your heart is right and the scriptures reveal His power and willingness to you.

Your physical healing in answer to prayer depends upon two basic factors. One is your faith that comes to be your portion through the Word of God: "So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). The other basic factor is your surrender to the will of God for your particular life and ministry. At times it is NOT God's will to heal. When it is God's will to heal, it is faith

on the part of the sick that opens the door for God to meet all physical needs.

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is an absolute prerequisite to receive physical healing for your body. Faith is unshakable trust and confidence that your Savior loves you and is able to heal you. Therefore, you seek His face in prayer. You can have special anointing per biblical instructions. You trust Him to heal you according to His will, plan, and purpose. No place in the Bible does it say that it is not God's will to heal you. However, we have a few instances where men of God were not healed or their healing was delayed. The Apostle Paul was told direct by God that His grace was sufficient to enable the bearing of his infirmity. Job's healing was delayed: "Erastus abode at Corinth; but Trophimus have I left at Miletus sick" (II Timothy 4:20). Timothy seemed to be sick quite often. "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thy frequent infirmities" (I Timothy 5:23).

Use of Doctors

The word "physician" is mentioned eight times in the Scriptures. God used methods with King Hezekiah in II Kings 20. (Look up this passage.) It is not always contrary to God's will to use natural means for our healing or to relieve our physical infirmities. The Christian should seek the Lord first of all. Physicians are not necessarily the automatic solution to your problem. The one verse that has personally revolutionized my own direction is James 5:16: "...Pray one for another that ye may be healed." Here God promises to answer such a prayer!

Final Advice

Friend, remember, you are to exercise the initiative. You are the one to pray and believe. You are the one to initiate contact with the church elders. Do not allow the difficulties of others to dim your confidence in God to meet your physical need. Since you are seriously ill, I hope you will reread this message a number of times. Lean upon the scriptures that you read. God is on the Throne to meet your every need. Not desiring to exploit great miracles, I refrain from telling you of tremendous healings that the Lord has given me the privilege of seeing. I know personal affliction and deliverance. It can happen to you, but not because of another person's experience. Your personal healing will be adjustment to God's natural laws and believe His provision as revealed in His Word. Now that I have taken the time to respond to your question, I hope you will respond to my answer. Be assured of my love and prayers.

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