

## Healing Through Faith

Over these many years of my believing in the Lord Jesus and trusting in His watchcare over me, health and health related issues have been some of the more perplexing of the matters within my relationship with Him.

I know that I am eternally saved from my sins and that when I breathe my last in this life, I will immediately be with the Lord Jesus in paradise. And with that confidence, matters of my soul have been settled. But I must confess to you that the matters that I, that we, you and I, have to deal with each day regarding our physical bodies, have been an ongoing puzzlement to me.

I know from the scriptures that when God first created mankind, we were perfect in every way, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically. But then, after our fall into sin, everything changed. And perhaps that is the simplest of answers for the constant daily dilemma that each person of today exists within.

Simply put, with our fall into sin, our once perfect mind, spirit, soul and body, became corrupt. We were no longer perfect in every way. Every part of our being began a “downward spiral”, a decline that would never be perfect again within our lifetime.

And the effects are obvious within our own selves and within the people around us. Our thoughts and plans and behaviors are corrupt. We have sickness and disease of every kind, physical illnesses that are further complicated by emotional and psychological problems.

And now here, in our scripture passage for today, we see that God, our Lord Jesus, has come to offer at least some remedies to our dilemma of suffering. Let's pause and read about a circumstance in Jesus' ministry where He was dealing with some of those physical sufferings of the people.

And note here, that as Jesus was confronted with two separate cries for His help, He did not become flustered, He simply and patiently went about helping each one of them.

These words are given to us in Luke chapter 8, beginning in verse 40. Listen!

<sup>40</sup> Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. <sup>41</sup> And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, <sup>42</sup> for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. As Jesus went, the people pressed around him.

<sup>43</sup> Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, <sup>44</sup> came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

<sup>45</sup> And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'"

<sup>46</sup> But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." <sup>47</sup> Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

<sup>48</sup> And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." (Luke 8:40-48)

In the Book of Isaiah, chapter 35, some seven hundred years before the Lord Jesus came to the earth, God told us about Jesus and about some of the special ministry that He would bring to the people, especially about His ministry of healing. There we read in Isaiah 35,

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

<sup>6</sup> Then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
And the tongue of the dumb sing. (Isaiah 35:5-6)

And here in today's passage, we see the Lord Jesus going about that special ministry and calling, pouring out His great and mighty power upon anyone who came to Him for help and blessing!

And as we read accounts like these of the healing of this poor woman, we are reminded that Jesus' power has no limits. His power easily and comfortably reaches into every realm of life and nature and causes things to take place that you and I can only imagine about.

Recall that just a few verses earlier Jesus exercised His power over the realms of nature by simply speaking to the winds and the waves of the sea and they obeyed His voice.

And then, a few verses after that, He showed how His power reached on into the supernatural realm to prevent demons from their insidious curses. And there again, He needed only to speak and the power of His voice drove those demons out of that man.

And now, here with this dear woman, we see how Jesus also had absolute power over the physical health and wellbeing of a person.

All these things should give us reason for great comfort and faith, knowing as we do, and as this dear woman had come to know, that even physicians, with their extensive training, most often have limits in their ability to help us.

But that is not so with Jesus! He can always help. And unlike the doctors who often only provide temporary relief, Jesus can actually completely fix the things that are hurt and broken within us, whether those things come from the natural realm or from the supernatural realm.

Thankfully, Jesus' power has no boundaries or limits. His power easily spans across the natural realm and the supernatural realm interacting with both of them.

Here, with this dear woman who had suffered for many years with her infirmity, while no mention is made of demonic presence, the question must always be raised, "Does this health crises come solely from natural causes or does it also have a supernatural influence involved?"

On another occasion, as Jesus dealt with an illness described as epilepsy, He clearly revealed that on certain occasions the two, the natural and the supernatural realms can be closely linked together. Listen to these words in Matthew chapter 17.

<sup>14</sup> . . . a man came to Jesus, kneeling down to Him and saying, <sup>15</sup>"Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. <sup>16</sup>So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."

<sup>17</sup>Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." <sup>18</sup>And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. (Matthew 17:14-18)

Within these words, is a clear statement from God that the demonic world can get very involved in our common illnesses.

Also in the Old Testament, we can clearly see the interaction of demons bringing on physical and emotional suffering. In the Book of Job, the old saint suffered in every way imaginable, physically from the boils, emotionally from the loss of his family and wealth, and even causing his wife and his friends to turn against him. And the scriptures make it clear from the beginning that all of Job's miseries came directly from the hand of satan, the supernatural realm intervening into the natural realm.

So then, the question, "are we to always believe that illness and disease is naturally occurring within our bodies, brought there by genetic predispositions and by viruses and other random natural causes. Or are we to understand that we are under a constant onslaught from the demonic realm. Or are we to believe that perhaps both realms interact with each other more often and more freely than we would first imagine?" We will probably never know the complete answer to that question until we reach heaven.

But regardless of the source of our suffering, the fact is we do live and have our being within this natural physical realm and we need to have relief from the suffering that we endure. So, what are we to do?

Up to this point, this dear woman had chosen to follow the course that the natural world offers, that of seeking help from doctors and the healthcare systems of her day, but to no avail. She spent all of her savings seeking after a cure, but had found none.

And does that not also seem to be the path that we most often follow in our day, going from one doctor to another chasing after some illusive cure, but often finding none.

And as we advance in years, it only gets worse. Eventually, we become so tied to our doctors that we find ourselves in their offices once a month, perhaps sometimes, even once a week.

Please don't misunderstand my intentions with these words. I never want to use this pulpit as a forum to complain. I am simply stating the obvious. We are inextricably tied to our doctors, doing exactly as this dear woman did, spending our rent and grocery money on doctor bills chasing after relief that might never come.

Again granted, for most of our suffering, it seems the only course we can follow. How else do we find relief from our suffering from our high blood pressure, our diabetes, our high cholesterol? And in most all ways, our medical care is right and good and excellent.

But just observing and knowing all of these things and especially as I read these scriptures, I must confess that for several years now, I have pondered and questioned the effectiveness and the worth of it all. With my own health problems and observing the health problems of my wife, and the treatments administered by our doctors, yes, we have often found relief.

But I must confess that with some of the more long term health matters, it seems that, much like the woman in this scripture passage, we have also been "chasing after the wind", not finding the cures and healing we hope for. We simply take more and more medication. And while yes, we are "maintained", but we are not cured.

But again, what are we to do as we hurt and suffer and need relief.

Let me pause here for a moment and again give you some thoughts that I have gained over time concerning the "grace" that God showers upon us each day.

Our bible teachers divide up the definition of grace into two categories, "special grace", the kind that comes directly from God's own hand, the kind like that shown by Jesus in His miracles, and is most often received through faith.

Then there is "common grace", the kind that comes more "second hand" through other people's care and provision. "Common grace" is a kind of

provision that God makes available to all people alike, regardless of whether or not they believe and accept Him, or even acknowledge that He exists. I believe that our system of medical care with all of its doctors and hospitals is one of God's common graces. And it is a good provision and it blesses us greatly.

Other provisions besides healthcare also fit into the definition of God's "common grace", provisions such as our national and local governments, our protecting armies, our police departments, our financial systems and the list goes on and on, imperfect yes, made imperfect by man's greed and personal conduct, but still gracious provisions from God to bless us daily.

And please don't let the secular thinkers of this world convince you that these systems have just "evolved" over time through man's effort. That cannot happen. The human mind is much too self-centered and greedy to think of and provide such good things.

No, it was God Himself who set up all those wonderful provisions. They come out from His mind and they are a gracious part of His "common grace".

And again, His common grace is available to everyone regardless of whether or not a person believes in Him and accepts Him as their Savior and Lord. As the words in Matthew 5 tell us,

<sup>45</sup> . . . He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. (Matthew 5:45)

God's "common grace" is given without regard to the condition of a person's soul. Yes, He does deeply desire that all would come to know Him as Lord. But like you and me, as we still love and make provision for our own wayward children, so also does God make provision for His wayward children.

This dear woman who had come to Jesus with her suffering had been receiving God's common grace through her doctors for many years, but without relief.

And in her coming to Jesus, this presents a question that we must ask ourselves, and that is, "when should a person move from the provisions of 'common grace', the grace given through doctors, to the provisions that come through 'special grace' that grace that comes directly from God's own hand"?

This dear woman had reached a point of decision. She had been going to doctors for many years, exhausting her savings and still finding no relief.

She had reached her limit with common grace and needed another answer. And so she came to Jesus.

But is this the way that it should have taken place? Must we always reach first for common grace, spend all the money we have, and then, if that doesn't work, call out to Jesus?

I must tell you that the scriptures do not tell us to do that at all. Doctors are not intended to be God's first line of cure and they are not the first answer that we should turn to.

Let me remind you of the truth found in the Book of James, chapter 5 that we spoke at length about some months ago.

James 5, verse 13,

<sup>13</sup>Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. <sup>14</sup>Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup>And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up.

The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. (James 5:13-15)

This folks, is God's "first line" of response that we are to take when we find ourselves or our loved ones suffering.

Folks, God truly does have a plan, a plan that reaches into every part of our life, our work, our marriages, our childrearing, our health needs and on and on. If we choose to take the secular path first, before calling upon the Lord for His healing, then He will allow us to take that path, but once we start down that path, we may never get off it.

Thankfully, this woman did get off that path. She turned to Jesus and she was healed. And it was faith, faith in Jesus that brought her to the final cure.

Folks, after reading and hearing these words, a question should be asked, "Do you, do I place all our faith in the purveyors of common grace, our doctors and

hospitals?” “Is that the right thing to do?” “Does God only work through the hands and the minds of our doctors?” “Can God, will God, work separately from them?” “Do we dare to follow the explicit instructions of these scriptures that tell us to go first to our Elders and have them pray over us, and then fully expect our healing to come?”

Jesus said to the woman,

<sup>48</sup> . . . “Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.” (Luke 8:48)

Faith truly is the answer to most all of our questions in this life. Over and over again, Jesus said to the people who came to Him, “be it according to your faith”. I do fear that so often that has been exactly what has taken place with each of us, especially myself. I want to be healed of my many ailments, but I believe that my lack of faith might often be a hindrance from relief.

One last thought before we close for today. . . . God truly has been very gracious to me on many occasions and He has healed me in those. But there are other times that I have hurts and ailments that I pray regularly for Him to heal, but He does not. And perhaps the same is true for you. Why would that be so?

The only answer to that question that I can find is that there probably are two somewhat irreconcilable matters taking place both at the same time, similar in some ways to the dilemma that Jesus faced as He prayed on the last night of His life there in the Garden of Gethsemane. There He was facing the most awful of suffering. And not just the kind of suffering that you and I might endure, that of the physical pain of being crucified. He also knew that He would have to endure the sufferings of taking the sins of the whole world upon His shoulders and then paying the agonizing penalties of hell for all those sins.

And so, He cried out to God the Father to “let that cup pass from Him”. But then, He accepted the answer to His cries as being “No”, that it was the Will of His Father that He must suffer. And Jesus said, “Thy Will be done”.

Jesus had plenty of faith, but in this suffering it was not a matter of faith. It was a matter of the Will of God. And the Will of God must always be honored.



And folks, there will be times in our own lives when we will be faced with a similar dilemma, that of wanting to find relief for our sufferings, but that it is the Will of God the Father that we should suffer our sufferings without relief.

And in that dilemma, while we might have the faith required of us to be healed, we must do just as Jesus did and say back to God the Father, "Thy Will be done". "I will accept your Will oh God".

Just in recent days, we have had to do this. We wanted God to heal our son and restore him to good health. I prayed over him and anointed him with oil. And I may have had the faith for my son to be healed. But in God's great love and wisdom, it was the time for my dear son to go to be with Christ in Heaven. And all that I could say was, "Thy Will be done".

May I close with this thought. In Psalm 119, we are told that "God is good and that He does good". And we must be thankful for His goodness, even when we might want Him to do something differently.

May we pray.