

The Word of God in Healing

Bob Brasset

Hebrews 4:12

For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, and penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (NIV)

The Bible calls both scripture and Jesus “the Word of God”. The healing ministry honours the Word of God and seeks to bring honour and glory to God. When the Holy Spirit releases the healing anointing the divine inspiration of scripture and the Lordship of Jesus are affirmed. God’s Word is powerful, not just as a revelation, but in destroying all that hinders healing.

One of the greatest battles we as Christians must wage is the battle of passivity – the inclination to lay back and allow the enemy to walk all over us. We need to fight the good fight of faith. A ‘good fight’ is one that we win. Whenever we face sickness in ourselves or others, we should resist the invasion and intrusion against our well-being with all our spiritual and natural resources.

Hebrews 4 :12 can be paraphrased as follows.

The Word of God is alive and active. It is inspired by God and conveys His power. The Spirit in us is determined to honour the God who speaks to us. He is sharp enough and fully competent and able to minister to any areas of the soul and spirit, to achieve his goal, whether in the body, soul or spirit, and is even able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Now, let’s add verse 13. “Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.” God’s Word uncovers everything in us that is not holy. Let us join with him in replacing everything in us that is of the devil. As scripture says, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). Sickness is a work of the devil to which we should apply the Word of God who heals all our diseases (Ps 103:3).



Healing

Notes for use in Healing Ministry

Preface

The notes in this booklet are from healing conferences I attended in 1990 to 2010 which were led by such people as John Wimber (Vineyard Christian Fellowship), Randy Clark (Global Awakening), Bob Brasset (Healing Evangelist), and Cal Pierce (International Association of Healing Rooms). The effectiveness of prayer for healing is increased by preceding prayer with biblical teaching and testimonies of healing. It is as though the Holy Spirit likes to confirm what has been spoken by healing the sick. The sections in this booklet are suggestions for such teaching. Select one that is appropriate for the situation.

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Faith gives us insight into the unseen realm, perceiving it's tangible nature. This was Paul's perspective in **2 Corinthians 4:18** when he said, "... while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal in the heavens." (NKJV)

Paul was not saying we deny those things which we see. He was saying the things which are seen are not all there is to see. God, in His eternal realm, is the ultimate reality.

Marc Brisbois, in writing on Overcoming Deferred Hope, said,

"The greatest joy of having a promise is not the receiving of the thing promised. The greatest joy and reward of faith is its ability to take us above the plain of the natural. It enables us to transcend the fickle passions of human 'wants', to live in the timeless presence of the Everlasting Father. The Words of Promise are not just IOU's we one day hope to collect on. Rather they are windows into eternity. They give us the means to bask in the reality of the Lord's timeless dominion. With this resource in hand, maintaining one's confession of confidence is a simple task, no matter how long the wait."

Eternal Spiritual Reality

The principle is: spirit controls matter. The spiritual realm is eternal, immortal, invisible, and incorruptible and is infinitely more powerful than the natural realm. This does not negate the natural realm. The natural-material realm is real too, but it is subservient to the spiritual. It is temporal. It is subject to delay, death and corruption. However, it is still real and the day is coming when the mortal will put on immortality. We will one day enjoy a new heaven and a new earth.

We should not deny or ignore sickness. Acknowledging sickness or impairment is not a lack of faith. Instead of denying natural circumstances, we need to look to God's Word. They can then apply what God has spoken over them. What God speaks is eternal, incorruptible, and substantial. There is no limit to God's power. The way into this abundant, eternal, supernatural realm is FAITH. Faith grows in us, starting as a tiny seed. What we do after the seed is planted will determine whether or not it bears fruit in us.



Matthew 26:39

Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” (NIV)

If God the Father did not grant every prayer request of Paul and Jesus, we have no reason to expect God to give us everything we ask. But Jesus tells us to pray for miracles of healing. There is no ulterior motive in prayer for healing. We may need to persevere in prayer over a particular concern or join with others in prayer. Follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.



Dealing with Delay

Bob Brasset

Paul, in Romans 4:19 used Abraham as an example of faith. “Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old — and that Sarah's womb was also dead.” (NIV)

Abraham fully considered two realities. Firstly, he considered his own and Sarah’s bodies. He knew that they were well past child-bearing years. He didn’t deny reality. He didn’t grow strong in faith because he refused to acknowledge his natural circumstances. He simply saw another reality. In fact, he saw both dimensions. He saw the natural and the spiritual. He had received a revelation from God and that was a firm spiritual reality for him.

Revelation superimposes God’s reality and God’s purposes on the circumstances of our lives. It is the plan of God that shows you where you are going. When Scripture says “Abraham did not consider his own body”, it doesn’t mean Abraham denied his own body. It means that he did not consider the inability of his own body, and his wife’s body, as the final answer. He saw God’s vision as sure and not the devil’s lie.

Abraham did this, and continued strong in the faith for 25 years, by remaining focused. His life of faith was far more significant than what was promised. He walked in and lived in the realm of God’s supernatural presence. Once we learn the secret of abiding in that realm, no delay will ever cause us to lose hope and nothing will be impossible. Abraham considered God’s direct promise to him as superior to natural reality.

Biblical Basis for the Healing Ministry

Randy Clark

Luke 6:17-19 says that power came from Jesus to heal people of their diseases. The power does not come from us, nor did it come from Peter or Paul when they healed the sick. Healing power comes from God.

In **Exodus 15:26** God says “I am the LORD who heals you.” God reveals his nature in healing the sick.

In **John 10:37-38** Jesus said to believe in him because the miracles (of healing) revealed that the Father was in him. Jesus’ miracles were motivated by love and he is still doing today through his Spirit the things he did when he was on earth.

In **John 14:12-14** Jesus added,

Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it. (NRSV)

So, Jesus expects his followers to continue doing his work on earth.

1 Thessalonians 1:4-5a. The gospel message of Paul, Silas and Timothy to the Thessalonians came not only with words, but also with power.

Matthew 11:20-24 says that seeing miracles made Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum more responsible for their lack of faith in Jesus. Healing and evangelism often go together.

Luke 7:20-23. When John the Baptist wanted to know if Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus did not reprimand him or give him a theological lecture, but encouraged him by pointing to the miracles of healing that fulfilled the prophecy about the coming Messiah in Isaiah 61.

“Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” (NIV)

It wasn’t only Jesus who was healing the sick. In **Matthew 10:8** Jesus gave

the disciples their marching orders. (Also see **Mark 6:7, 12-13**)

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. (NIV)

These instructions apply to Jesus' disciples today, too.

The Great Commission, Matthew 28:19-20

"... Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (NIV)

This means healing is not peripheral or just for the apostles. They were to make disciples, to baptise them, and teach everything he taught them, including Mk 6 and Mt 10. This commission applies to the church. The Holy Spirit helps Christians to not only live righteous lives *but also* heal the sick. Our experience is of a lack of healing in the church. We should proclaim the Word of God with power to heal. God is not deaf to our prayers. He is not powerless to heal. If we are not preaching healing we are not preaching the gospel fully. Reality is bigger than our experience of it.

Jesus did not heal just to prove that he is God. It was because he was God that he healed. He is merciful and powerful. The gospel is not just good advice ... it is good news. Jesus has the power to transform us into a new creation. It is more than forgiveness. The healing ministry of Jesus is an integral part of the gospel. Andrew Murray wrote, "Jesus came to deliver men from sin and sickness that He might make known the love of the Father."

The **Scope of Healing** includes everything from headache to terminal illness. Just as Jesus forgives all our sins, not some, he heals all our diseases (Ps 103:3). We don't stop proclaiming the gospel because all are not saved.

Three Reasons for Healing

1. The Covenant

Exodus 34:10 — "Then the Lord said: 'I am making a covenant with you. Before all your people I will do wonders never before done in all the world. The people you live among will see how awesome is the work that I, the Lord, will do for you'." This was under the Old Covenant where God declared: "I will be their God, and they will be my people." (Jer 31:33b).

Can You Lose Your Healing?

Cal Pierce

Sometimes when a person has been healed by God the enemy comes to steal it away. A few days after being healed you might have a recurrence of the symptoms you were healed from. These are counterfeits of your previous condition that an evil spirit is using to make you think you weren't really healed by God. If you accept this lie, the enemy can bring back upon you the very thing that you were healed from.

The devil brought sickness into this world and tries to use it to make people lose faith in God. Acts 10:38b says, "...how [Jesus] went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him." (NRSV) The devil doesn't like it when God's Word brings healing and destroys his work.

In **Matthew 13:20-21** Jesus explained the Parable of the Sower, "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path." Just as the enemy tries to steal the Word before it can become firmly rooted in us, so it is with our healing. Jesus continued, "As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away." (NRSV)

When we receive biblical teaching and prayer for healing and a healing takes place, we receive it with joy, but let it become firmly rooted in you because the devil will try to bring it back. Jesus said that because of the Word the enemy will seek to make us fall away.

The devil will once again bring the symptoms of the sickness to try and convince us that we are not healed. If the devil can cause us to look at symptoms instead of God's promise, he can convince us to believe his lie. When we focus on the symptoms, pain or whatever it is, doubt and unbelief come to our mind and this gives entrance for fear to re-establish the sickness. Keep your heart and mind fixed upon God and His promise.

Isaiah 26:3 says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You." (NKJV) Don't believe the devil's lies. If symptoms return, set your faith in God. "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and He will flee from you." (James 4:7)

When to stop

- If healing is completed
- The Spirit is finished for now
- You've done everything you can
- The person being prayed for is getting tired or anxious

Step 5 – Post Prayer Directions (What happens next?)

If healed

- Rejoice with them at healing or partial healing that has occurred. Do not tell people to stop taking medication. They should go to see their doctor.
- Instruct on how to keep the healing (ask God for wisdom first). Explain that the enemy sometimes tries to re-establish the affliction a few days later by counterfeiting the symptoms.

Incomplete healing

- Encourage and exhort as appropriate
- Where applicable, direct them to continue with or follow through with any repentance that has begun in the ministry time.

If healing has not occurred

- affirm and encourage them to keep seeking God and to know that he loves them. Some healings take time. On-going prayer from a church or home fellowship group may be suggested.
- Do not give personal advice (leave counselling to the professionals).
- Never condemn a person for not receiving healing.



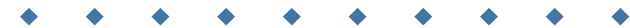
The author of Hebrews 8:6 said the New Covenant is superior to the Old Covenant because of the coming of the Holy Spirit (Jer 31:33). Just as there was healing under the Old Covenant, there is healing under the New.

2. The Atonement

Isaiah 53:5 prophesied that Jesus would take up our infirmities and carry our sorrows. The fulfilment of this prophecy is mentioned in Matthew 8:16 & 17. This was recalled by Peter who wrote of Jesus "by his wounds you have been healed." (1 Peter 2:24). Note the past tense. This world is fallen from glory and under Satan's rule, but Jesus has bound the strong man, so we can take back lost ground. "He that is in you is stronger than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Although not everyone we pray for is healed, we know that there is power in the name of Jesus. We pray for the sick, that the power of Jesus to heal will be released in their lives.

3. The Kingdom of God

Luke 17:21 says the kingdom of God is near, or within you. In the Lord's prayer we pray for God's kingdom to come and God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. That means for God's Kingdom to come and be manifest on earth. There is no disease in heaven. Give all the glory to Jesus. Peter was the first Teflon Christian – none of the praise or glory for healing stuck to him (Acts 3:1-16, read vs 12 & 13a).



Is it God's will to heal?

Randy Clark

Some ask if prayer for healing could be praying against the will of God ? Scripture leads us to believe it is God's will that all the sick be healed of all their diseases and afflictions. There are at least four reasons for this:

- (a) Jesus healed all who came to Him (Matthew 8:16, 12:15, Luke 4:40 6:19) and this ministry was passed on to the apostles (Acts 5:16).
- (b) Jesus healed every different kind of affliction brought to him (Luke 4:40, Matthew 4:24).
- (c) Jesus' Kingdom is a Kingdom that has good health. In Heaven there will be no sickness or crying or pain. When we pray 'Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven' we are, among other things, asking for a healed world.

When we pray "Your Kingdom come" we are talking about a realm of healing, restoration and authority over disease, demons and afflictions (Luke 10:1)

(d) God is a loving heavenly Father and we are His children. Earthly parents want their children to be fit and well. It is implanted in all people of all backgrounds. In this we mimic the heart of God, who is compassionate, kind and merciful. A readiness to heal was the disposition of Jesus towards sickness.

Matthew 14:14

When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd; he had compassion on them and healed their sick. (NIV)

It is always all right to pray for healing. You won't offend God by so doing. Jesus never refused anyone healing prayer. And Jesus instructed his disciples to teach everything he taught them, which included prayer for healing. We needn't be hesitant to pray for healing, or to ask for prayer for healing for ourselves. Healing brings honour to God

Most Christians believe God can heal today. If God is omnipotent, he can do whatever he likes. But all not being healed is not evidence that God does not always want to heal. Perhaps God will heal at another time, or through another person, at another place. We should not tack "if it be your will" on the end of our prayers.



What the Bible says about God's will to heal.

Randy Clark

Hebrews 1:1 says, "Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets..." We can get some clues as to what God thinks about healing from the Old Testament.

Exodus 15:26

He [God] said, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you." (NIV)

God revealed his name as Jehovah Rapha, which means "the God

Step 3 – Prayer Selection (How should we pray?)

- What does God want to do for this person at this particular time?

Prayer directed to God

- Petition – ask for Holy Spirit's presence and healing power
- Intercession – bring the person's need before God
- Pray in the spirit
- With the laying on of hands, use anointing oil if available

Speech as a representative of God

- Command of faith in Jesus' name directed towards a condition
- A word of declaration about what God is doing
- A prayer of rebuke directed towards an evil spirit
- Prayer of agreement (with others about what is the Father's will)

Step 4 – Prayer Engagement (Are we making progress?)

Direct Prayer towards the problem

- Look for indications of the Spirit's presence
- Pray with your eyes open to cooperate with what the Spirit is doing
- Look for the Spirit's ministry gifts

Ask questions

(God won't leave because you interrupt prayer with questions)

- Has progress been made?
- Healing may occur without any visible signs
- You may not be able to discern what the Spirit is doing
- You may need to go back over Steps 1 to 3.
- Is the person not expecting to receive healing?
- Is the person resisting what the Spirit wants to do?
- You may need to adjust your approach.

How to Pray for Healing.

The Five-Step Integrated Healing Model

John Wimber

“Integrated” because the model is concerned with God’s healing of the whole person: body, soul and spirit. This model was devised by John Wimber in the 1980’s and since then has been refined by others.

Step 1 – The Interview (Where does it hurt?)

- Introduce yourself and ask their name.
- Ask, “What would you like Jesus to do for you?” Don’t assume you know. The question directs attention to Jesus as the healer.
- Ask the person what they think is wrong – Where does it hurt? When did it start? How did it occur? This will help with Step 2.
- Listen on a natural level (based on your experience, Bible knowledge, etc.) and on a supernatural level (to the Holy Spirit).
- This is not a medical interview; medical discussions may delay healing prayer.

Step 2 –Diagnosis (What is the cause?)

- Overlaps with Step 1 and helps determine the type of healing prayer (which is Step 3).
- Ask questions. Be open to help from the Holy Spirit.

Natural factors:

- Living in a fallen (sinful) world (e.g. viruses, diseases, accidents, etc.)
- Sin
- Emotional/social (e.g. unforgiveness, grief, bitterness)
- Family background (e.g. poor heart, diabetes)

Spiritual factors:

- Demonic affliction (demons can cause blindness, deafness, paralysis, etc.)
- Demonic oppression (compulsive behaviour, irrational fear, etc.)
- A curse, possibly through occult associations

who heals you”. Healing the sick is in the very nature of God.

In **Ps 103:3** David reminds God’s people, that it is God “who heals all your diseases.” God is the one who is ultimately behind all healing.

Hebrews 1:2 goes on to say, “in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son.” Jesus reveals God’s will to us. So let’s start with Jesus, not our experience, or even biblical characters who suffered (e.g. Job).

John 5:19 says, “Jesus said to them, *“Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.”* (NIV) So when Jesus was on earth he reflected the Father’s will.

In **John 14:8**, “Philip said to [Jesus], ‘Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.’ Jesus said to him, *‘Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?’*” (NIV)

So God should not be a mystery to us. By looking at what Jesus did, we will discover what God wants to do. Healing theology should begin with Jesus, and not with our experience. Let’s look at typical days in Jesus’ life to find out what we can learn about God’s attitude to healing.

Mt 14:14 says,

When [Jesus] went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. (NIV)

Jesus had compassion on sick people who came to him and he healed them. So, do you think we can say that God has compassion on all who are sick today? God hasn’t changed [Heb 13:8 “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”] Jesus didn’t turn away anyone.

Mt 4:23-24

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. (NIV)

Jesus is willing to heal any sickness. There is no disease that is too

difficult for God. Terminal cancer is not terminal for God. Even death is not terminal for God (see Mt 9:25). Jesus didn't make anyone wait, saying, "it is not God's timing, continue suffering for a few more months and then come back." He never said anything like that.

Matthew 8:1-3 says,

"When Jesus had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed him; and there was a leper who came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean." He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, **"I do choose. Be made clean!"** Immediately his leprosy was cleansed." (NIV)

Jesus was willing to heal a leper, a social outcast! Jesus didn't make an arbitrary decision to heal the leper, as though he might decide not to heal someone else who asked. God is free to do what ever he wants, but he tells us what he wants. He has compassion on the sick and wants to heal them. The leper wasn't sure that Jesus would want to heal him because leprosy made him unclean. This healing tells us something about God. God does not heal on the basis of who you are, or what you've done, but because of your need, and no matter how great a person's need, God is willing and able to meet it.

Luke 17:12-14 also talks about Jesus healing lepers.

"As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" When he saw them, he said to them, **"Go and show yourselves to the priests."** And as they went, they were made clean." (NRSV)

All ten of the lepers who came to Jesus for healing were healed, not just seven or eight of them, God wants to heal all the sick people who come to him.

Jesus never told anyone to bear their sickness because he didn't like them and it would make them a better person or, somehow, glorify God more. Jesus never told anyone to wait for their healing. We might think, "Yes but Jesus is God, of course he could heal, that doesn't mean God wants to heal everyone who is sick." Jesus only did his Father's will, and he healed everyone who came to him.

Jesus came to destroy the devil's works (1 John 3:8). When God

Timothy was not healed and Paul urged him to seek a natural remedy. He did not say it must be God's will and Timothy should not try to recover. 1 Tim 5:23 "No longer drink only water, but take a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments." (NRSV)

Those who are against the healing ministry take delight in criticising anyone in the healing ministry who gets sick, or even if they use a hearing aid or wear glasses. The criticism is unkind and doesn't make sense. We live in a fallen world where sickness and disease and sin abound. There wouldn't be any need for a healing ministry, if there wasn't sickness to contend with.

Some think that most Christians do not have the gift of healing. But the Holy Spirit, who lives in all Christians, has all the spiritual gifts and all the power. We shouldn't neglect to pray for healing because we think we haven't got the gift of healing. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and he has all the gifts., including healing.

Jesus said in **John 14:13**

I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son." (NRSV)

We can ask God for healing, expecting him to send it. If we don't receive it, as God said to John Wimber, "the problem is not up here, it is down there". In heaven, God's will is always done and there is no sickness or suffering. On earth, miraculous healing comes as a "violent invasion of God's holy love".

When someone we pray for is not healed, it does not mean that they are at fault for not believing enough in God. To say, "you don't have enough faith" is an abuse of the healing ministry. But abuse should not result in non-use. Nor should we say, "We believe we are healed" when we obviously are not yet healed. That is to deny reality.

There are many possible reasons that someone is not healed when we pray for them. In prayer we connect with God and leave the results to him. It is not what we know, but who we know. John Wimber used to say if someone asked him why God did not heal them, "I don't know. ... All I know is the more I pray the more people get healed. ... I know God loves you. ... we will try again another time."



examples in Acts 9:35 & 42). But God heals with no preconditions.

Ezekiel 22:30 says, “And I sought for anyone amongst them who would repair the wall and stand in the breach before me on behalf of the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one.” God is looking for someone who will change the destiny of things. God may decide to act in justice and bring judgement on a rebellious people.

However, if someone calls on him to act in mercy instead, he will change his plans because a beloved child of his requested it. An example in Scripture is when Abraham asked God to refrain from destroying Sodom and Gomorrah if there were ten righteous men to be found there (Genesis 18:32). In intercession we stand in the gap and call on God to be merciful. Prayer for healing can change the dynamics of the spiritual battlefield by calling on God’s intervention to heal someone.

Luke 5:17

One day, while he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting near by (they had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem); and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. (NRSV)

Let us not miss those opportunities when the power to heal is available. But in 2 Timothy 4:20, Trophimus remained sick where the greatest healings were being experienced. There is a “mystery of iniquity” at work in the earth today. Because of the hindrance of spiritual deception, and the warfare that is going on in the spiritual realm, and because of human sin, weakness and immaturity in the church, we are not always able to receive healing.

At such times, it is best for us not to focus on our sickness, but on Jesus who loves us. If we are not healed this time, we still might be healed on another occasion. But, we can rejoice with those who are healed.

Let’s deal briefly with a few objections people have to this teaching about the healing ministry. Paul’s thorn in the flesh was not healed. But it was not a sickness sent from God but “a messenger from Satan” sent to stir up opposition and persecution wherever he ministered. 2 Cor 12:7b “... a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated.” (NRSV)

first created everything, he said it was good (Genesis 1:31). Sickness is a work of the devil. God’s plan is to do away with all sickness and suffering (Revelations 21:4). If you pray for sickness to be healed, you cannot possibly be praying against God’s will. We don’t need to add on to the end of our prayers for healing, “If it be your will.”

Jesus said the miracles authenticated who he is. **John 10:37-38** says,

“If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” (NRSV)

Miracles of healing today, still point to Jesus as the Son of God. He is the healer. We pray for healing in his name.

The miracles bring glory to Jesus. For example, at the raising of Lazarus from death described in **John 11:4**,

But when Jesus heard it, he said, “This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” (NRSV).

If we don’t pray for healing we rob Jesus of his glory. We make excuses when we fail to pray for someone because, we weren’t in church, we were at work or in a shopping centre (we thought that there would be no anointing to heal there), or we were afraid of what people would think, or what if they weren’t healed (wouldn’t that reflect badly on God)?

From what the Bible tells us about Jesus, we learn that God wants to heal the sick. If we say that it is not God’s will to heal, we either deny that God reveals it in the Bible, or we are saying that God doesn’t have to be consistent. Either way it is an insult to God’s character.



Does God Want To Heal Me?

Bob Brasset

When we pray for healing and it doesn’t happen, should we then conclude that it wasn’t God’s will? We believe God can heal, but he didn’t want to heal me. This would be to believe in fate, where everything that happens is God’s will.

God's sovereignty does not mean that God's thoughts are so much higher than our thoughts and his ways beyond our ways that for reasons known only to him, he wants to heal some, and save some, but not others. We have learned from Scripture that God wants to heal everyone who is sick, and Peter reminded us, God does not want any to perish (2 Peter 3:9).

In the Old Testament, God's plan of salvation was kept hidden.

Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (NIV)

This passage means that God will pardon the repentant for reasons that were in the past a mystery. But Paul in Col 1:26 calls the gospel, "the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints." All Christians are saints. It is not God's ways that are a mystery, it is evil that is a mystery. Paul calls it "the mystery of lawlessness" (2 Thes 2:7) or "the mystery of iniquity" (KJV). God may be way above us in every way, but he does not hide from us the fact that he loves us and wants to heal us.

Scripture teaches, and it is our experience, that we do not yet see all things in submission to Jesus' authority. God is ultimately sovereign, but he does not override or bypass human initiative and he patiently puts up with this evil world while he saves people.

If it were true that God's perfect sovereign will is being done on earth, why did Jesus teach us to pray for God's Kingdom to come, why cast out demons, why seek medical attention for sickness? If we take "God is in control", to mean that, everything is going the way God wants, then why should we try to change anything at all?

Some people say, "don't you know that God has the devil on a leash? God is sovereign!" Peter says in 1 Peter 5:8, "Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour." Note that the devil prowls around looking for people to devour, not threaten to devour, or pretend to devour. There are real casualties in this spiritual war.

Jesus overcame evil. He showed us God's perfect will. He healed the sick, delivered the demonised, fed the hungry, clothed the poor, and instructed the church to go and do likewise. Jesus did not say God sovereignly wants some people to be sick and some to die prematurely. Such teaching is deficient because it leaves us without the ministry of Jesus. Why fight evil in Jesus' name, if the devil can only do what God allows? Evil is by definition, rebellion against God.



The World is Rebel Territory

Bob Brasset

When Jesus was on earth, he submitted to the limitations of being human and, even though he had no sin, he was living in this rebellious world. When Jesus was in his hometown of Nazareth, he wasn't able to heal many people because of their lack of faith. Mt 13:58 says, "And he did not do many deeds of power there, because of their unbelief." Jesus' compassion on the sick did not result in miracles in a place where there was little faith. (Also Mk 6:6a: "And he was amazed at their unbelief.")

In Mt 9:29 we read about two blind men who Jesus healed because they believed in him. Peter sank when he was walking on the water towards Jesus, not because the timing was wrong, or because of some mysterious purpose that God had in his sinking, or because it wasn't God's will for him to walk on water, but because he doubted (Mt 14:31).

At the Pool of Bethesda, Jesus healed only one paralysed man out of a large crowd of sick people, and he got into enough trouble for doing that. **John 5:5 & 6** says,

One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "**Do you want to be made well?**" (NRSV)

So, wanting to be healed is a prerequisite for healing. God doesn't heal people against their will, and unfortunately many are not interested in coming to God for healing. The enemy tells them, "there must be a catch. They are just trying to get you to join their church." But remember the ten lepers that Jesus healed. Only one came back to say thank you. There is no catch. Jesus loves all people. It is true that healing often opens the door to evangelism when people experience the love of God (see