

# *Simple Healing*

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## SIMPLE HEALING

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## Overview

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### Healing by Faith

When I began to pray for divine healing over thirty years ago, I understood almost nothing about it. I had stumbled across some exciting passages in my Bible, but I strongly suspected that God didn't intend healing for all Christians, and especially not for the members of my denomination.

Nevertheless, around the time when my husband was in seminary I began to look closely at the Old Testament and New Testament healing texts, and my ideas about the subject began to change. A lump in my own body focused my attention, and I began praying in earnest.

At first I expected what is commonly thought of as a *miracle*. I would pray a little, lie down on my living-room couch, and wait for the hand of God to come out of the sky. I would have been grateful for a lightning-bolt from heaven, or the appearance of an angel in my bedroom, saying, "Child, I bring you healing from the Throne of Grace."

But no such thing happened. Gradually it became clear to me that Christians can't live on miracles—at least not as they're usually understood.

One day when I was praying in my dining room, I had an unexpected revelation of what I now know as *healing by faith*. My Bible was open; I was meditating on the healing Scriptures in Isaiah and Matthew. Suddenly a quick vision flashed through my mind. I saw Jesus Christ hanging on the Cross, with the lump in my breast transferred to His own body.

I remember thinking, "That's it! It's *already* been done for me. I'm *already* healed and made whole, and I don't have to have that thing in my body any longer."

So I began to *confess* the healing Scriptures over my condition. I repeated the core message of Isaiah 53:4-5: “Surely He has borne away my sicknesses and carried away my pains. The punishment necessary to my complete well-being was upon Him, and by His stripes I am healed.”

In a short time the tumor disappeared.

What made the difference? That’s the subject of this book. In the following pages I’m going to argue that it’s as simple for Christians to receive healing as to have their sins forgiven. Just two conditions have to be fulfilled. First, we must *believe* God’s provision for healing in His Word. Second, we must faithfully *confess* that Word over whatever needs to be healed.

Unfortunately, most of us haven’t had much practice. When modern Christians believe in divine healing at all, it’s usually by way of “mental assent” (“I know God heals from time to time, but I can’t really expect Him to heal *me*”). So we put our faith in doctors, psychologists, counselors, and nutritionists, and sometimes we remember to ask the Lord to bless their work.

Now, I’m certainly grateful, as I trust you are, for the healing professions. All true healing is from God, and He has provided medical science for our benefit. But my point is that the Lord should be our primary physician, not someone we turn to in last-minute desperation.

The truth of the matter, as I’m going to argue, is that through Jesus’ death and resurrection we have been set free from disease and every other work of the devil. God is strong for us. He has the power and the will to deliver us from sickness, mental torment, bad relationships, failed finances, and everything else that’s inconsistent with the Kingdom of Heaven. We must know, however, how to tap into that power. It isn’t enough merely to agree that God has it.

At the beginning of her classic work, *The Healing Light*, Agnes Sanford compares the power of God to the force of electricity. If we have an iron or a toaster, we plug it in. If it doesn’t work, we check the wiring. We don’t stand pleading with the electricity to come into the appliance.

God's power works the same way. We "plug in" by persistently confessing His Word against any weakness or distress that we face. Every Christian on the face of this earth can draw on God's limitless power to fight the evil one: power to pray, power to witness, power to believe, power to be healed in body, mind, and spirit.

Let's establish some first principles, then, to prepare ourselves to draw on God's power. I'm going to make some bold claims in the rest of this introductory chapter. Despite what you may have been taught in the past:

- If we are following Jesus Christ, sickness is never God's will—whether we're speaking of sick bodies or minds, sick relationships, or even sick finances.
- Healing is always God's will—whether we're speaking of healed bodies or minds, healed relationships, or even healed finances.
- Healing already belongs to every Christian, by faith. We don't have to wait passively for a "miracle."

So, please bear with me. A part of you may be locked up in sickness or some other distress. Let the Holy Spirit convince you that the prison door is open, and it's not necessary to stay inside.

### **Sickness is Never God's Will**

A common notion among Christians, reinforced by religious tradition, is that illness and other torments are "blessings" from God, given to mold us into the image of His Son. But in the very first book of the Bible it's clear that God regards our physical, mental, spiritual, and relational difficulties as curses, not blessings.

So why do we get sick—or mentally disordered, or penniless, or miserable? Because all these torments are in the world as a result of the Fall, the rebellion of the original humans against

their Creator. Adam and Eve rolled out the red carpet and the devil walked in.

The simple truth is that evil spiritual causes have evil material effects. The Curse was never part of God's will for the human race, as you can see in the *last* book of the Bible, which says that death and all the things that lead to death will be gone forever when God's work is complete.

We need, then, to clean up our thinking about the source of disease and other weaknesses. The words of Jesus in John 10:10 make it plain that "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

Is it clear that the thief is *not* God? Do we understand that God does *not* steal from us, kill us, or destroy us—despite traditional interpretations of certain Bible texts? Can we agree that sickness is a form of destruction, and that health is an expression of abundant life?

Dear one, please understand that God's house is not divided against itself. Jesus is the life-giver, Satan is the destroyer, and that's that.

### **Healing is Always God's Will**

Let's dig a little deeper. Two important words in the Bible—one in the Old Testament, one in the New—will help us settle, once and for all, that it's God's will to deliver us from illness and the rest of our troubles.

The first is *shalom* (from *sh-l-m*, the Hebrew root), usually translated *peace*. It occurs first in Genesis 15:15 and appears well over a hundred times from Genesis to Malachi. A typical passage is Isaiah 53:5 (Amplified): "The chastisement [needful to obtain] peace and well-being for us was upon Him."

It's clear, here and everywhere else in the Old Testament, that peace is God's will for His people.

What does peace have to do with disease? When we “pass the peace” on a Sunday morning, we’re probably thinking of nothing deeper than peace of mind. But to the ancient Jews, the word “peace” meant *wholeness*, complete harmony in one’s body, mind, spirit, and relationships, with nothing missing or out of whack.

When Jesus used the word in Luke 8:48, speaking to the woman whose issue of blood had been healed, he was using it in its full Old Testament sense: “Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in *peace*”—that is, restored to complete life.

In the New Testament a similar idea is expressed by the word “salvation,” *soteria* in the original Greek. Most modern Christians have a limited notion of salvation. Of course it’s vitally important to be rescued from sin and its eternal consequences—to enjoy the salvation that people generally mean when they ask, “Are you saved?”

But again, the biblical term means a lot more than most of us think. “Wholeness” and “soundness” are good definitions of *soteria*. “Healing,” “preservation,” and “deliverance” are shades of meaning that appear throughout the Gospels and Epistles. In its fullest sense, then, “salvation” includes both healing of disease and deliverance from the evil that surrounds us.

So, when we read in 1 Timothy 2:4 that God “desires all men to be *saved* and to come to the knowledge of the truth,” we can know that as far as God is concerned, no human need is left out of our “salvation package.” It’s a complete rescue from everything that troubles us. Because *peace* and *salvation* are God’s will for us, He sent Jesus to free us from:

- sin and guilt (Isaiah 53:5)
- disease (Matthew 8:17)
- infirmities and weakness (Matthew 8:17)
- fear (2 Timothy 1:7)
- poverty (2 Corinthians 8:9)
- condemnation (Romans 8:1)

- grief and sorrow (Isaiah 53:4)
- and every other work of the devil (1 John 3:8b).

Sickness, mental torment, bad relationships, and destitution are the “gifts” of Satan, not God, and Jesus stands ready to deliver us from every one of them.

### Healing Already Belongs to Christians

Let’s leave our sad old traditions behind, then, and take the Word of God at face value. God wills all people to be saved. *Saved* means *healed*, *delivered*, and *protected*. *All people* means *everyone*. *Everyone* means *you*.

Now, at this point religious tradition is apt to rear its hoary head. What about Job? What about Paul’s thorn? What about the “chastening of the Lord” in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews? These questions deserve serious answers, and I’ll be discussing them soon.

For the moment, though, let’s concentrate on the central fact of “simple healing”: *According to the Bible, if you’ve been saved you’ve already been healed, as far as God is concerned*. The gift of healing is already yours. It comes to you by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8).

Consider the tense in 1 Peter 2:24 (Amplified): “He personally bore our sins in his [own] body on the tree . . . , that we might die . . . to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.”

You *have been* healed. Present perfect. And there’s no need to imagine that this Scripture is only talking about “spiritual” healing. First-century Jews made no such distinction. If you were delivered from spiritual evil, you were delivered from its consequences as well (see Luke 5:20-26).

Notice the past tense in Matthew 8:17 (Amplified): Jesus “took . . . our weaknesses and infirmities and bore away our diseases.” If Jesus *bore* away your sicknesses, if you *were* healed,

if you *have been* healed, there's no good reason for you to be sick. That also goes for your infirmities (*astheneia* in Greek)—anything that cripples you, anything that makes your life less than God wants it to be. And please don't let the enemy convince you that God's gift of healing was for "then" but not for "now." According to Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Jesus Christ is the same in all ages. He came two thousand years ago to get rid of sin and its consequences, and He's still getting rid of these things today. If Jesus still takes away our sins, then he still takes away our sicknesses and infirmities. We don't have to plead with Him to do it. As far as He's concerned, our deliverance has already been bought and paid for.

Thus, we can boldly claim that complete healing—of body, mind, spirit, relationships, finances—is the God-given right of every Christian. The two-thousand-year-old sacrifice that erases our sins also heals and delivers us: same time, same date, same place, same Jesus, same covenant.

Why, then, are so many Christians sick, sad, angry, and poor? I'll have a lot more to say about this in the chapters to come. The short answer is that most of us have never been made aware of what is ours, or of how to receive it. As children of God, we need to get our "receivers" up so He can bless us with all the riches that belong to the body of Christ.

## **How to Receive Your Healing**

When I speak of "healing" in these pages, I'll be referring most often to physical and mental problems. You can assume, though, that the simple principles discussed here apply to any difficulty you may face—interpersonal troubles, financial troubles, and anything else that drags you down.

Basically, *simple healing is a matter of our first believing what the Word of God says about a disease or infirmity, and*

*then standing against the problem until we are free.* The process can be broken down into three steps:

- Know your healing covenant with God, as presented in His Word.
- Build the covenant Scriptures into your mind and spirit until they become second nature for you—that is, until your faith for healing is solid.
- Speak these healing Scriptures to your problem, and to the enemy behind them, until your healing is complete.

As I've said, I call this process "healing by faith," as distinct from "miracle healing." To the world and to most Christians, divine healing always seems miraculous, but I prefer to think of healing by faith as "supernaturally natural."

For one thing, anyone can do it—young Christians, old Christians, well-to-do and poor Christians, sophisticated and simple Christians. For another, it doesn't cost an arm and a leg. You don't have to fly from crusade to crusade, looking for the perfect healing evangelist.

And although it's good to pray and confess the Word with like-minded believers, you don't have to run to your pastor or priest for healing prayer. You can certainly call on the elders of your church and be anointed with oil, but that's a biblical option, not a requirement.

All that's strictly necessary is that you know your rights as a Christian, saturate yourself with the Word of God until your faith is strong, and then take your stand on that Word. When you do this, God will literally rush to meet your need. I know, because I've done it for many years.

It's a refreshingly simple thing to do. A good friend of mine compares it to having your car fixed by a master mechanic. You don't worry whether the mechanic is too preoccupied with cosmic concerns to bother with your car, or whether it's the mechanic's sovereign will to fix it, or whether the mechanic might have some mysterious purpose in leaving you with a

cracked engine-block and squeaky brakes. You just take the car in and get it fixed.

God is not only the Maker of our bodies, minds, and spirits, He's also our Master Mechanic. When He created human beings they were perfect in every detail, and God pronounced them "good." Nowhere does the Bible suggest that His idea of "good" includes a toothache, depression, or broken legs. When we present ourselves to God for healing, then, we're simply inviting Him to bring our lives into line with His original intention.

Can we dare to believe that divine healing is no more complicated than this? Well, as my friend says, "the short answer is that it works." In the years since I began to teach healing by faith, I've accumulated a drawerful of testimonies from Christians glorifying God for release from cancer, heart disease, strokes, back problems, eye problems, infected dog-bites, flu, skin rashes, strep throat, sinus infections, depression, phobias, bipolar disease, empty bank-accounts, wrecked marriages—and on and on, through the whole catalog of human ailments. Brief samples of these testimonies appear at the beginning of each section of this book.

Before we turn to the details of our study, though, I want to make the most important point of all. In its deepest sense, health is not merely the absence of disease but a relationship with a Person. Medicine can give us relief, but only Jesus Christ can give us *wholeness*. As the Scripture says, "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

Wholeness is more than a cure. It has to do with the healing of the whole person, not just some aspect of the body or the mind. When you enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ, you become a member of a new human race. And when you learn how to live the *eternal life* that will transform you from the top of your head to the soles of your feet, all kinds of wonderful things will be possible for you that weren't possible before.

In dying on the Cross, Jesus did everything that's necessary for us to have this wholeness, this eternal life, on earth and in

heaven. But we have to *come* to Jesus in order to receive all that He has won for us. It's good, then, to end these introductory remarks with an old-fashioned "altar call."

If you don't know Jesus as Lord and Savior, you can receive Him right now. Simply lift your hands up and say, "Lord Jesus, in this life I may need healing, but first of all I need you. So I receive you, Jesus, as the Lord of my life. I receive you as my Savior, my Healer, and my Deliverer. I receive you as my Comforter and my best friend."

With this simple confession you will have entered a new dimension of existence. The Son of God will always be with you "like the warm sun on a summer day," as a young friend of mine says. And if the Son sets you free—from cancer, heart disease, depression, fear, addiction, or any other work of the devil—you will be free indeed.

My prayer, then, is that as you read this book on simple healing, the truth of what Jesus has done for you will flood your heart and mind, and spill over into any part of you that is in pain. Whatever you may be suffering from, the Good News is that God's Son has already set you free.