

Praying for Healing

When God Seems To Have Forgotten

**When you're sick and tired
of being sick and tired.**

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Instructions and Guidance in Seeking Healing

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Preface

It is clear in Scripture that God has a purpose in sickness. At times He allows it for a greater good or purpose that his power might be manifest in healing. Sickness can be a blessing because it causes us to turn to the Lord for help. God uses sickness as a wake-up call. Joni Eareckson Tada rightly said, *“Sometimes God allows what he hates to accomplish what he loves.”*

There is a danger in seeing sickness as the normal will of God. It is a kind of pessimistic and fatalistic, “que sera, sera” whatever will be will be, attitude. There are ample scriptural promises and procedures for dealing with sickness on a spiritual level and not treating it solely as an inevitable human annoyance. There is an abundance of scriptural examples, promises, and procedures to follow when we are afflicted with resistant illnesses.

There is another danger in assuming all sickness is the work of the devil. The cause of sickness is clear in the Scriptures. It came through Adam’s sin and thus the curse that came on the earth. The aggravation of sickness, afflictions, and torments is the work of Satan, but only through God’s permissive will. He cannot afflict or torment what God prohibits. However, it is also clear that Satan can attack saints for prolonged periods of time. Job is certainly the case.

There is also a danger of ignoring sin as a factor. There is a relationship between sickness and sin. Sometimes, sickness may remain in us because of our own negligence or disobedience. Consider the Apostle Paul’s instruction concerning the Lord’s Table and unrepentant sins, “for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”

God is our Healer, His son, Jesus, is our Healer, and the Holy Spirit is our Healer. If He is the same yesterday, today and forever, then there is healing available for the children of God. Jesus called it THE CHILDREN’S BREAD. It is the provision of God for all his children.

It is with these truths in mind that we approach James 5 and a myriad of other Scriptures to encourage our faith to step out and believe God for supernatural healing.

Introduction

This book is the result of a series on James I preached many years ago. (That series is available online at www.PrayerToday.org) The book of James is like Proverbs in that James hits many topics in a rapid fire sequence. Overriding all is his emphasis on faith in the Word of God and prayer. In this context, James addresses an important issue for every generation and every living person. That issue is prayer and healing. The two are inseparable. James wanted us to know that the Lordship of Christ means that the Word of God becomes the living Lord of our lives, and that prayer is not just asking or begging God for things, but believing God and expecting Him to answer our prayers.

Jesus said to his disciples in John 15:7,

*“If you abide in me and my words abide in you,
you shall ask whatever you will and it will be done unto you.”*

I am surprised at how we have let these seeds of truths fall to the ground without bringing forth fruit. We have become doubters and pouters more than believers and receivers. Too often, we gloss over Jesus’ words as though we had the right to accept them or to ignore them. Many believers today do not think everything in the Bible is true, or at best, is not to be taken at face value. But James, the brother of the Lord Jesus, and John in his Gospel, both echo the same message. *“If we love him, we will keep his commandments.”*

This is not legalism. This is not salvation by works. The reality of the New Testament church is that if we love Jesus Christ, we will build our lives on the Word of God. We are to anchor our souls to His promises and his commands. If we love him, we will abide in him and we can only abide in him as His word abides in our hearts. Loving Jesus is about loving His word. Believing Jesus is about believing His words. Living for Jesus is about living out His word in our daily lives.

Derek Prince sums it up precisely in his brief study of Hebrews chapter five in his daily radio broadcast, “The Study Hour.”

*“Your attitude toward God’s Word is your attitude toward God himself.
You do not love God more than you love His Word.”*

*You do not obey God more than you obey His Word.
You do not honor God more than you honor His Word.
You do not have more room for God in your life
than you have room for His Word in your life.”*

This is a book about healing. But more than that, it is about believing and trusting God’s word. In this study, we will examine the last chapter of the Book of James. James, the brother of Jesus, addressed the power of prayer in chapters four and five. Chapter five is his great summation about prayer and healing. He gives us very practical instructions on how to pray effectively in order to experience healing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Though the central passage of our examination will be James 5 we are going to be looking at this issue from several angles. We want to address healing not only from James but also how it is addressed throughout the Bible. We hope to do this thoroughly to omit no important biblical teaching on healing. I have tried to keep this book pastoral and practical while also being theological. We want to answer as many questions as might be bothering you regarding healing—and be assured there are many questions that need answers.

It's good to explore these truths and understand what God has given to us. Jesus said a scribe, one who made copies of the Scriptures, was like a man who entered his treasure closet and opened the treasure chest and he brought out old things and new things so people could appreciate them. Ezra stood at a pulpit and read the Scriptures to the people of God, then made them plain. He explained it. That's what we're going to be doing, bringing out old things and new things, and some fresh practical things about applying these healing principles.

Obviously, I cannot cover everything in this book. Others have perhaps said it better. I want to encourage you to read other books on healing. I am stepping out on a limb to put these messages in writing. I say that because I know many of you will disagree with me. It is okay to disagree with me. I have had people through the years come up to me and say, "Pastor, you preach with such authority, but I don't agree with you." My answer to that is that it is okay to disagree with me. Disagree, but argue the Scriptures. Don't disagree because of a pet doctrine or private opinion. Get into the Scriptures and look at them carefully. Feel free to disagree,

but please be loving in your disagreement. Like the Apostle Paul, I am passing along to you the things the Lord has taught me during my 50 years of ministry.

Above all things, don't give up on the Lord and His healing power in your life. My desire in these chapters is not to confuse you, but to infuse into you faith in God's word. My desire is that you may discover that God is able to do, wants to do, and will do *"immeasurably more than you ask or even imagine."* (Ephesians 3:20)

I believe God wants to stretch us. I believe He is still the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of crossing the Red Sea, the God who provided manna for forty years, gushing water from a rock, and quail from heaven to feed a million people. He is still the God who heals lepers, the lame, the deaf, and raises the dead. I believe He is still God today. He has not changed. His word has not changed. His promises have not failed. His power isn't diminished.

He is not the absentee Heavenly Father. He still wants to show Himself merciful, gracious, loving, and all-powerful. He wants His people to be people of His presence. He wants to show up in our churches. He wants to bring us into a better place in this life so that we, like Paul, *will know Him in the power of His resurrection,* (Philippians 3:10) and that others will know that the *Gospel is not in word only but in demonstration of the power of God,* (1 Corinthians 2:3-5) so that *our faith would not stand on the words of men but on the power of God.* (Romans 1:16)

So please, join me as we study these things together. Think through these Scriptures, discuss them with each other, pray about them, and apply them to your own situation. Be like the Bereans in Acts 17:11 *"they searched the Scriptures to make sure those things are so."*

