

Chapter 6

Diagnose the Issues

There is a danger in treating all sickness as simply a physical problem. We are body, soul, spirit, and mind. The spirit, soul, and mind can influence the body just as bacteria and viruses do. Below, I am giving you my perspective of possible causes, triggers, aggravations, and hindrances to being healed. I have identified 10 common causes or reasons behind sicknesses. The difficulty is they all may look alike on the outside. Yet, the inside may be the real problem hindering healing.

Normal Sicknesses and Diseases

The first five are the most easily acknowledged and accepted. They are normal things all of us go through as children of God. The Lord sometimes has a purpose in allowing sickness so that we might draw closer to Him. It doesn't mean anything is wrong. God is not punishing us. We are not in trouble. We are being tested and tried, or the Lord is giving us an opportunity to see His mighty power. Remember, every miracle came because someone had an impossible situation. Every sickness Jesus healed gave God an opportunity to be glorified.

Abnormal Sicknesses and Diseases

The second set of five are areas most of us don't want to acknowledge. They are sensitive issues that require discernment of the Holy Spirit and careful consideration. Unfortunately, most of us don't want to admit there is a problem beyond the physical ailment. Sometimes we as a God's people, refuse to consider the possibility that there might be factors that prolong or aggravate an illness. Thus, many times (as Paul says), we never address the real problem. The purpose of listing these illnesses is not to judge other people, but to evaluate ourselves.

If you are an elder, it is not for you to diagnose someone's disease, but to understand there is often a cause and effect in stubborn sicknesses. By the way, I never tell the person what I perceive is the category of their illness. That is between God and me alone. God will reveal the problem(s) to them in the process of praying for healing. Trust Him. God knows how to whisper His message in their ears.

Normal Illnesses

1. Natural Causes – I Corinthians 6:13-17, I Timothy 5:23
2. Tests of our Faith – Job 1, 2, I Peter 1:6-7, James 1:2-4
3. God's Opportunity – John 9:2, John 11:4
4. Satanic Attacks – Luke 13:11-14, Ephesians 6:16, Isaiah 54:17
5. An Example of Patience – 2 Corinthians 12:7-9

Abnormal Illnesses

6. Chastisement – 1 Corinthians 11:30-32, Hebrews 12:13
7. Abuse of the Body – 1 Corinthians 6:19
8. Generational Sins – Exodus 20:5, Deuteronomy 5:9
9. Satanic Activity – Ephesians 4:27, 2 Corinthians 2:11, 2 Timothy 2:26
10. Psychosomatic Illnesses – Proverbs 23:7

1. Natural Causes

Most sicknesses and diseases aren't mysterious. They are natural. Stuff happens. People get sick. Accidents happen. Our bodies wear out. These things are normal works of nature and the frailty of human life. Every time we get sick or have trouble, we don't need to look for some spiritual mystery of why this is happening. A better question is why wouldn't it happen to you? You are part of the human race. This is not rocket science. You live on planet earth and everything on earth is dying and will die one day.

There's nothing strange about sickness. It's been around since the Fall. It is part of the curse on the earth and death working in us. The rain falls on the just and unjust alike, so accept the fact that the rain may fall on you. You're not being punished. It's life. Most of us don't spiritualize our bouts with sickness, we just take medicine or go to the doctor for help and go on with life.

Some people think all sicknesses are of the devil and need to be rebuked in Jesus' name, or they need to be anointed and prayed for every time they have a cold or flu. Personally, I don't enjoy being near a person with a severe cold and if you have the flu, please stay home. I'll pray for you at a distance.

“All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan. Our days may come to seventy years, or eighty, if our strength endures; yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.” – Psalm 90:9-10

“Man is born for trouble as the sparks fly upward.” – Job 5:7

“In the world you will have trouble, but take courage. I have conquered the world.” – John 16:33

“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.” – 1 Peter 4:12

God has allowed a curse on the ground, the snake, and mankind for Adam’s sin. But just as God did not kill Adam immediately and provided clothing for him, so He has provided natural remedies for many illnesses. The ground bears weeds but also good fruit, life-giving fruit. In heaven, the leaves of the trees will be for the healing of the nations. So too, today we have herbs and medicines that heal us.

Should We Use Doctors and Medicines?

I don’t believe it is wrong to go to doctors and use medicines God has provided for our health. Even in the Old Testament, there are ample stories of God using natural medicines to bring about cures. God showed Moses a stick he used to cure the bitter waters of Marah. Elisha used salt to cure the poisoned porridge. Isaiah put a poultice of figs on Hezekiah’s wound to heal him.

Even in the New Testament, we have evidence that God uses medicines. Luke was the beloved physician. Paul told Timothy to take a little wine for his frequent stomach ailments. Epaphroditus was sick, nigh unto death, but Paul did not say he would not have been sick if he had enough faith. No, there was no censure for his long-term illness. Then Paul left Trophimus sick in Miletus.

I Timothy 5:23 ESV

No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.

2 Timothy 4:20 NIV

Erastus stayed in Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick in Miletus.

Philippians 2:25-27 NIV

Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. Indeed, he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow.

2. God's Opportunity

Sometimes our sicknesses are for God's glory. It is God's opportunity to show his love and power through you. God has allowed your sickness because He wants to do a miracle. Wouldn't it be wonderful if all God's children would look at every sickness, disease and affliction as a God-sent opportunity?

If you read the Old Testament journey of Israel through the wilderness, you will note their many hardships came as tests and opportunities to trust God. Too often, the people of Israel got discouraged and angry at Moses and/or God for the trials they faced. They blamed God instead of having a positive attitude that as God had been with them in the past so He would be with them in this next trial. Human nature being what it is the people moaned, groaned and complained because of their troubles. It was only Joshua and Caleb that had a different spirit. They believed giants were for killing. Rivers were for crossing. Walls were for tearing down and enemies were opportunities for victories. Which spirit do you have? The spirit of fear, or the spirit of faith?

John 9:2-3

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

John 11:4

When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it."

3. A Test of Our Faith

Some trials come to strengthen us. That seems to be a cliché, but it is true. God sends or permits trials to test our faith, and the testing of our faith makes us stronger. Some of our afflictions, diseases and/or sufferings are for a reason. God is taking us on a journey of faith. The ups and downs are part of our journey. We will all have to go through valleys and climb mountains. This is not unusual.

Job stands as a great example of a prolonged trial that had nothing to do with his faults, failures, or faith. It was all a test of his faith. How long Job suffered we are not told. It was certainly no passing infirmity. It may have lasted years. It was a daily torment. It was a constant companion. It was a daily pain. It was agony, so much so that he sat scraping his sores with pottery shards and wishing to die. Yet, he never gave up on believing God. In faith he said, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust Him."* (Job 13:15)

Can you say that in your trial? Can you say that on your sick bed during your sleepless nights? Are you able to praise God during the storm?

Or are you more like the disciples on the stormy Sea of Galilee crying, *"Lord, don't you care we are perishing?"* Job refused to blame God or accuse Him of wrong doing.

Job 1:8-11

Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."

Job 2:4-6

“Skin for skin!” Satan replied. “A man will give all he has for his own life. But now stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face.” The Lord said to Satan, “Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life.”

In your sickness, Satan desires to discourage you from believing in a good God. He wants to sift you as wheat and blow you away as chaff. It is a test of your faith. Set your anchor. Hang on for dear life. Never give up. God will show up.

1 Peter 1:6-7

In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

James 1:2-4

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

4. Satanic Attacks

As a Christian, you have an enemy. Satan hates you. Satan attacks believers because of their faith. It's not because you did something wrong. It is because you are doing something right. Satan is against you. He is out to get you. You've got a big target on your back and Satan has fiery darts, not just darts, but fiery arrows, javelins and thunderbolts. He sends fiery darts at you to discourage you. Most of us don't have Roman soldiers chasing us or putting us into dungeons. But we have an enemy who is invisible to our eyes, and he throws us trials, tribulations, sicknesses and troubles, sometimes in heaps.

Jesus said to Peter, *“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail.”* (Luke 22:31-32)

You are being sifted, ground down, sandblasted, and shaken up like you are in a cement mixer. Why? Because Satan knows you are the enemy. Why are Christians

attacked with sickness, cancers, accidents, and strange diseases? It is because you have an enemy. You are being attacked. You're being beat up. That is what the word "buffeted" means. Paul said there was *"a messenger of Satan to buffet me."*

Look at the list of Paul's trials in 2 Corinthians 4:7-12, 16-17, (*hard pressed, crushed, perplexed, persecuted, struck down, sick in body, wasting away*).

2 Corinthians 6:3-10 (*endurance, troubles, hardships, distresses, beatings, imprisonments, riots, hard work, sleepless nights, hunger and thirst*).

2 Corinthians 11:23-30 (*flogged severely, exposed to death, lashed, beaten with rods, shipwrecked, cast away, danger in rivers, bandits, countrymen, in the city, country, among false brothers*).

Why did Paul have so many troubles? Because he was on the front lines. If you are getting shot at by the enemy, rejoice, it's because you are on the right side.

Psalm 124:1-8 MSG

"If GOD hadn't been for us—all together now, Israel, sing out!— If GOD hadn't been for us when everyone went against us, we would have been swallowed alive by their violent anger, Swept away by the flood of rage, drowned in the torrent; We would have lost our lives in the wild, raging water. Oh, blessed be GOD! He didn't go off and leave us. He didn't abandon us defenseless, helpless as a rabbit in a pack of snarling dogs. We've flown free from their fangs, free of their traps, free as a bird. Their grip is broken; we're free as a bird in flight. GOD's strong name is our help, the same GOD who made heaven and earth.

Luke 13:11-13, 16

A woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your infirmity." Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.—Should not this woman whom Satan has bound these eighteen years be freed on the Sabbath Day?

Ephesians 6:16

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Martin Luther's Struggle

Martin Luther, that great man of faith and stamina, understood our battle is not with flesh and blood, but with the enemy of our souls. Luther defended himself against this constant hostility of the devil through prayer, happy songs, and at times by throwing his inkwell at the devil. Luther reported the devil often pestered him during his stay at the Wartburg while translating the New Testament between May 1521 and March 1522. While he lived incognito, he grew his hair long and had a beard. He suffered in exile and complained of various physical ailments. People usually attribute his statement of 'driving the devil away with ink' to his translation of the Bible, but there was an ink stain on the wall in Luther's room that testified to the real battle against the devil. His most beloved hymn reflects that battle with the enemy of our souls.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

*A mighty Fortress is our God,
A Bulwark never failing;
Our Helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.*

*2 Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing:
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth His Name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.*

*3 And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us:
The Prince of Darkness grim,
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.*

*Public domain: Martin Luther (1483-1546);
Translated by Frederick H. Hedge.(1805-1890)*

5. An Example of Patience

The Apostle Paul gives us a great example of this. He was certainly on the front lines of faith and as such, he was being constantly shot at by friends and foes.

In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul noted that there was a messenger from Satan to buffet him, to beat him up. Satan's fiery darts can be like stinging punches from a big bully boxer. Paul described it as a physical attack on his body, "*a thorn in his flesh.*" Three times he says he sought the Lord to take away that infirmity. That doesn't mean he prayed three times about it. It means that on three separate occasions, he probably went away to be alone with God to pray about it. On other occasions, he may have spent an extended time in fasting and prayer over it. Finally, he probably called for the elders, other apostles, to pray over him for deliverance and healing.

But all three times God responded, "*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in your weakness.*"

NOTE THIS, Paul did not say three times God did not answer him. No, he said, three times God answered with the same answer.

Too many Christians say they have a thorn in the flesh like Paul and it is their cross to bear. They tell me they have asked the Lord to heal them, but he said, "No." So now they are stuck with this miserable infirmity to carry around the rest of their lives.

The interesting thing is I do not see any of them REJOICING in their infirmity as Paul did. No, they are moaning about it. They are having a pity-party about it to whomever will listen to their lament. I have met many Christians that have taken this default position and look for pity from God's people. Yet none of these people rejoice in their infirmities. This is not what the Apostle Paul did. He rejoiced in his infirmity.

The Apostle Paul's case is unique. There is no pity-party in Paul. In his weakness, he finds joy as Christ's strength becomes visible. He is VICTORIOUS through it and despite it. He says, "I DELIGHT IN IT, because when I am weak, then Christ is strong in me."

There are rare times that God has determined to allow an infirmity or weakness to remain, not as a punishment but as a demonstration of patience in and through you.

2 Corinthians 12:6-9

Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

<p>There are illnesses and diseases that are causalional, something caused the disease or is making it worse.</p>
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6. The Lord's Chastisement

Probably the most overlooked and ignored passage of Scripture regarding the healing of our bodies and the cause of sicknesses among us is unconfessed sin.

When Communion is celebrated, we are to examine ourselves to see if we are walking in the light as He is in the light.

John warned evenly godly believers in 1 John 1:6-10,

If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. ⁸ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

John scolds believers for pretending they have no faults, failures, or sins. They claim that they have done nothing wrong and have no reason to confess their sins. They are like the Laodiceans in the book of Revelation 3:17-18,

You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

Many churches rarely mention this self-examination that is necessary at the table of the Lord. Paul says emphatically, "For this cause are many weak and sickly among you and many have died." Do you hear that? MANY are weak and sickly. MANY have died because of unconfessed sins!

1 Corinthians 11:28-32

Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ, eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world.

Hebrews 12:5-13

And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us, and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. "Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

The Word of God teaches us that the Lord chastens (disciplines) His children because He loves them. The discipline of God is a demonstration of the love of God. If He didn't care how we would turn out, He wouldn't bother disciplining us. He'd just write us off. But He doesn't!

7. Generational Sins

Exodus 20:6, amid the Ten Commandments, God makes a clear denunciation of families that abandon the Lord. He says, *“I visit the sins of the parents on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.”* The sins of the parents pass on from generation to generation.

Most Christians today are unfamiliar with generational sins and curses that are passed down from one generation to another. Yet, these afflictions and diseases are a direct result of idolatry and sins committed by the parents and grandparents up to four generations. In our seminars on prayer, we deal with this issue and have found great interest in it because it has never been taught or emphasized, mainly because many pastors don't believe curses and generational sins can affect us.

God has made it clear in His Word that sin leaves its mark on all it touches. Sin not only kills, it also wounds and leaves scars for generations until the power of the blood breaks it. Only the blood of Jesus Christ can stop the tragedy of generational curses in its tracks. Our parents and ancestors pass down their sins to the next generations. Not only do the punishments for those sins remain for three and four generations, but the sins themselves, being infectious, pass along to subsequent generations.

“You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;” – Exodus 20:5

It is important as we deal with Satanic strongholds that we take a close look at our own family lines and discover the repetitive sins that have plagued our families for generations.

I have had to deal with too many generational sins to turn a blind eye to it. If you have generational curses such as depression, suicide, alcoholism, sexual immorality, incest, physical and emotional abuse, witchcraft and a host of other practices in your family lineage, you should know Satan wants to afflict you with these torments.

Confessing our sins and praying one for another for healing is a heritage of the child of God. God never rewards those who hide sins. We are called on to renounce the hidden things of darkness and expose them to the Light.

Therefore, we ought to identify those strongholds of the enemy that have afflicted our family line for years and exert authority over them in Jesus' name. We encourage you to do this together with at least one other believer, but never attempt it all alone.

Exodus 15:26

He said, "If you listen carefully to 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."

Exodus 20:4-6

You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

We have organized some of those generational sins into categories so we can better understand and identify them.

There are:

- 1) Perpetual Family Sins.
- 2) Propensities and Lifelong Addictions.
- 3) Destructive Attitudes in the Home.
- 4) Harmful Behaviors Acted Out.

Perhaps a personal illustration here will help you see it more clearly.

My dad had a violent temper. His dad before him had a bad temper. His granddad had a terrible temper. My dad told us that when his granddad died, the priest doing the funeral publicly stated that "This man was the meanest man he had ever

known.” Of course, that made my dad furious, even though he knew it was true. My dad never came to grips with his temper. I have vivid memories of things my dad did in fits of anger that would make chills run up and down your spine.

Unfortunately, my dad’s temper passed on to me. Since early childhood, I can recall becoming so angry that I would lose control. My older brother also inherited this temper. As a baby, he would scream and hold his breath until he passed out. But of all my brothers, I was known for my temper. I had given my life to Christ at an early age. I was a good person. I obeyed my parents as much as I could. I did chores without complaining. I went to church and Sunday School. I was even a champion at memorizing Scripture. But none of those things changed my temper. At times I would get so mad I felt like I could kill someone. It was like something took over my emotions and personality.

One day when I was a teenager, I got into a fight with my younger brother, who was about my size. I was the runt. We fist fought, then ended up wrestling on the ground, where he got me in a head-lock that I couldn’t get out of. I was breathing in dust from the ball field and that made my temper even worse. While on the ground, I told my brother he better not let me up because if he did, I would kill him. I eventually escaped the head-lock and stood up. I know that if I had had a baseball bat, I would have beaten him with it. Instead, I used my fist. I swung at him with all my might and smashed him in the face. He immediately screamed and dropped to the ground, writhing in pain. It was bad. My other brothers picked him up and took him into the house. When my mother saw his condition, they rushed him to the hospital. But before my mother left, she turned to me and said, “Richard, you are not to leave your room. I will speak to you when I get home.” When they returned, Mike had a huge black eye, a swollen face and a bloody nose. I was kind of proud of that.

My mom marched me in to her bedroom and gave me a lecture I’ll never forget. She said, “Dickie, you have inherited your father’s temper. When you get mad, you lose all control. If you do not surrender that temper to God and ask Him to remove it from you, I fear you will someday kill someone.” That struck home. I remembered I had threatened to kill my brother, and I meant it in that heated moment. I also knew that when I lost my temper, I was uncontrollable. Mom sent me to my room to think about it and talk to God about it, saying also that I needed to “make a trip to the altar to surrender that to God.”

I cried out to the Lord. I told him how I felt and that I had no control over my temper and asked him to deliver me from it. That Sunday, I went to the altar and asked the elders to pray for me that God would remove that temper from me. They prayed and something happened. God took that bitter anger out of me. From that time forward, never again was I plagued with uncontrollable rage. God healed me of a generational sin that might have landed me in prison.

Identify Possible Family Generational Curses and Sins

- Infidelity & Adultery
- Frequent Divorces
- Marital Violence
- Anger & Temper
- Inferiority Complex
- Depression
- Suicide Attempts
- Mental Illness
- Perpetual Poverty
- Perpetual Sicknesses
- Sexual Abuse
- Criminal Behavior
- Witchcraft & Occult

There may be more than can be identified here in our short list. Read Scripture that identifies sins God hates.

8. Abuse of the Body

There are diseases that are consequences of lifestyle choices such as smoking, drinking, drug abuse, sexual sins, overeating, bulimia, anorexia, and so on. These are not punishments from God, but consequences we bring on ourselves from our bad choices. As believers, our bodies belong to the Lord. He said our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. As such, we are accountable for how we use and abuse our bodies.

A Case of Diabetes

Early in my ministry, I encountered a case where a man from my church was hospitalized in a very serious condition. When I called on my elders to accompany me to the hospital to anoint and pray over him, one of my elders blatantly refused. I was shocked. I told him that James 5 instructs us as elders to anoint and pray for the sick. He responded, "I cannot, and I will not, pray for Fernley's healing. Fernley had diabetes for many years and refuses to take care of himself. He is grossly overweight, yet every day he goes to the bakery and buys a dozen donuts for breakfast. He has abused his body and I will not pray for him." I thought that was

an awful attitude for an elder, but I told him to stay home and another elder and I would go.

When we arrived at the hospital, we found Fernley was in dire straits. He was seriously ill and likely to die. When I approached him about praying for him, Fernley refused our prayers. He said, "Pastor, the Lord will not heal me. He told me so. I have disobeyed him over and over and the Lord says this is the last straw. I am going to die because of my disobedience." From there, he confessed his deliberate abuse of his body. We prayed anyway (because that's what you're supposed to do. Fernley died two days later.

God holds us accountable for the use of bodies. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Nothing defiling should ever enter the temple of God. God says nothing defiling will enter heaven.

Revelation 21:27

Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.

1 Corinthians 6:13-17

You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. By his power, God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us as well. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, "The two will become one flesh." But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

9. Satanic Activity

Not only does Satan attack us, sometimes we fall prey to his schemes and get caught up in his traps. We get stuck in the muck. We get snared. We trade our freedom for slavery. We slip into the prison house of the Evil One. We are trapped by our sin. We let Satan have an advantage over us. We are not talking about demon possession or demonization of a believer. But Satan can ensnare a believer when we deliberately enter Satan's domain to play.

Sometimes we are sick because we are trapped. We are stuck. We are enslaved to some sin, some pleasure, some mental, emotional, or fantasy addiction. The only way to escape is to come to our senses and realize that we are trapped and in need of liberation. We are not demonized. We are not demon possessed. We willingly chain ourselves to some favorite plaything of the devil, which leads to demonic affliction and torment.

Ephesians 4:26-27 We can give place to the devil

In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

2 Corinthians 2:10-11 – Satan can take advantage of us.

Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 – We can be taken captive by him at his will.

And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

An Upper Middle Class Christian

One case of demonic interference was in an upper middle class home in New Jersey. A neighboring pastor had called to ask me to come visit a new believer and convince him that his house was not haunted. He wanted me to convince the man that his son, who was constantly ill, was not sick because of the devil. I responded I would visit in his home but I would not try to convince him that his house was not haunted. The pastor was shocked and asked why I would not convince him that his

house was not haunted. I replied, "Because his house is haunted. The man has dabbled in the occult and because of that open door, Satan is attacking the health and mental state of the family." The pastor countered that was not possible.

I went to the home with the pastor and met with the family. I heard their story of the haunted house and the perpetually sick son. After listening to their story, I asked a few questions. The first was, "Have you or anyone in your family dabbled in the occult?" Of course, they did not know what I meant, so I began to list occult activities including, but not limited to, astrology, horoscopes, séances, Ouija boards, tarot cards, psychic readers, palm readers, etc. They got real quiet. The wife looked at the husband and I knew I had hit the nail on the head. The husband then told his story.

He came from a Roman Catholic background and was unfamiliar with the religious differences. As their son did not get any better, he responded to a newspaper ad by a so-called Catholic woman in California who said she could undo curses and pronounce blessings on your home. She sent him amulets, bracelets and religious-looking paraphernalia he was to hang in his home and some he was to bury in the backyard. She promised to say prayers to saints and pronounce blessings and break curses on his behalf.

When none of these things made his son any better, she said it was a serious curse. He would need to buy a Rolex watch, one that cost more than \$5,000, and send it to her. She would then turn back the hands of the watch and his son would get well. He did so without his wife's knowledge. But his son did not get better. He got worse. It was about then they started hearing noises at night, footsteps of someone walking in the house, and other psychic phenomena.

By this time, the wife was livid. She shouted, "YOU DID WHAT?" From there, I explained what witchcraft and spiritism are. I read from Scripture what God said about such things, and I made them read it out loud. I explained they had opened their home to Satan's influence. They had, in fact, invited him in. Now they needed to repent of those deeds, ask God's forgiveness. After that, I asked them to go through the house and collect everything that woman had sent them and put it into paper bags to burn in their fireplace. They filled several bags of paraphernalia. We burned it and then walked through every room in the house rebuking Satan and loosing his hold on them and claiming freedom in Christ.

After weeks, the pastor gave me an update that their son had been fully healed from his afflictions and their house was no longer haunted.

Girl with psychic letters

One Sunday evening, as I preached, I felt a great hindrance in the service. Something was standing against the word of God. Whenever I have had this happen, I know it is because of demonic activity. I remember the first time this happened was in my first church. I was preaching on a Sunday morning and stumbling, stuttering, and losing my train of thought, which doesn't normally happen. Later in the day, I was informed by an elderly grandmother that her grandson had paid her a visit that morning after being released from prison. He told her he was the one causing the pastor to stumble. I learned from that to stop the service and pray, binding the enemy.

Well, this Sunday evening I felt that same spirit opposing the word. So, I stopped preaching and told the congregation what I was sensing and that whenever that happened, it was because someone in the service had been dabbling in the occult and an evil spirit was hindering the word. I explained some things that are occult. Then I prayed over the service binding the enemy and went on preaching without the hindrance.

After the service was over, many stayed around visiting with friends. When almost everyone had left, a young lady came up to me and said, "It is me!" I had no idea what she was talking about. I had put the hindering spirit out of my mind. When I asked what she meant, she told me she was the one who dabbled in the occult. She explained her constant sicknesses and that her mother consulted with a psychic and gave her a spell to keep in her purse. She pulled that psychic prayer out of her purse and showed it to me. That night we had a prayer, repentance and deliverance time with the few remaining in the building. Unfortunately, that young lady continued to be influenced by her mother's witchcraft and ultimately died of her sicknesses.

It has shocked me to learn how often believers ignorantly turn to the occult for healing when their prayers are not answered.

10. Psychosomatic Illnesses

There are some illnesses that are brought on by emotional and mental disturbances. Psychosomatic doesn't mean you invent your illness. No, it is a diseased thought life. Dysfunctional thinking patterns cause you to become sick or to stay sick. The Cleveland Clinic describes psychosomatic illnesses.

“Psychosomatic disorder is a psychological condition that leads to physical symptoms, often without any medical explanation. It can affect almost any part of the body. People with the disorder tend to seek frequent medical attention, becoming frustrated with no diagnosis. People with a psychosomatic disorder usually don't report overt symptoms of psychiatric distress. Instead, they believe their problems are caused by medical conditions. They tend to visit healthcare providers frequently to get tests and treatments, often not receiving a diagnosis, which may lead to frustration and distress.”

(Cleveland Clinic – <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/21521-psychosomatic-disorder>)

Emotional illnesses are real, and they are common. Our minds play an important role in the body's healing. An unhealthy mind will create an unhealthy body. It's a fact of life. If you are angry, your anger can turn inward and affect your health.

If you are an excessive worrier, your worries can cause nervousness that engenders digestive and heart disorders. If you are a fearful person, your anxieties can cause major upsets in your body. If you are full of hatred, your desire to get even can trigger physical responses.

Dr. J.I. McMillan showed that clearly in his book, *None of These Diseases*. There are psychologically produced diseases. He lists negative emotions as the leading cause of all diseases: **envy, jealousy, resentment, anger, hate, worry, fear, oversensitivity, guilt feelings, anxiety, sorrow, self-centeredness, desire for approval, frustration** and much more.

Fear is probably the greatest cause of diseases. Fear, anxiety, worry, anger, bitterness, rage and hatred all cause diseases, or make them worse. The body responds to the mind. The mind controls the body. These dear people are often

victims of mental and emotional abuse. False guilt, insecurities, anxieties, and fears torment their minds. The Scriptures give us ample warning about these emotions.

Therefore Guard Your Mind

Proverbs 4:23

Above all else, guard your heart for out of it are the issues of life.

Proverbs 23:7

For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he.

Matthew 15:18-20

But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

Luke 6:45

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure.

Colossians 3:5-15

Set your minds on things above...put to death the old earthly nature: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry...rid yourselves of anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language...put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience...let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and be thankful.

Philippians 4:8-9

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and admirable—anything that is excellent and worthy of praise—think on these things...and the God of peace will be with you.

Think About It

Chapter 6:

Diagnose the Issues – What kind is it? Normal/Abnormal

Do you agree there are at least seven kinds of sickness?

Do you think your emotions create or aggravate sickness?

Answer Jesus saying, “What do you want me to do?”

How would you react to Jesus saying “Go and sin no more”?

Do you have any psychosomatic illnesses? What?