

DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

CONCERNING

*Divine
Healing*

ANSWERED

Here are the answers to questions most often asked in our campaigns and conventions in many cities throughout the nation.

BY GORDON LINDSAY

Answers to the Difficult Questions Concerning Divine Healing

It was my responsibility in many of the great deliverance revivals to conduct instruction services. This brought me in direct contact with thousands of people, who sought special assistance for their problems. Realizing that it was physically impossible for me to deal personally with each inquirer, I initiated a special question period at the close of each service. These proved to be immensely profitable and satisfying to all concerned. The question period has been continued regularly in many services I have conducted since. This book incorporates the questions which have been most frequently asked. Some of the questions which are answered in the following pages are:

- ◆ Was Paul's "thorn in the flesh" blindness?
- ◆ Does God heal children of unsaved parents?
- ◆ Is it possible for one to be healed and the affliction come back on him again?
- ◆ Should a diabetic who has been prayed for quit taking insulin?
- ◆ What about this new doctrine of "Immortality of the flesh"?
- ◆ Does the devil ever heal people?
- ◆ Does God send sickness upon people?
- ◆ Can deaf mutes talk immediately after healing?
- ◆ Why should God permit a child to have polio?

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Answers to the Difficult Questions Concerning Divine Healing

1. Is some faith always needed?

Does a seeker for healing always have to have some faith to be healed if prayed for by one who has the "Gifts of Healing?"

ANSWER: Some faith is always necessary to receive from God. Jesus could do *no mighty work* in Nazareth because of their unbelief. (Mark 6:5) Paul who undoubtedly had the Gifts of Healing, told the lame man to stand on his feet *only after he perceived that he had faith to be healed*. (Acts 14:8-10) Much of course depends upon the individual that does the praying, but if the person who is being prayed for waivers or permits unbelief in his heart, the Scripture says, **"Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."** (See James 1:6-8) Someone has said, "God has given all His promises to faith; He has reserved nothing for unbelief."

It does not require a great faith to receive healing when the Gifts of Healing are in question. When one sees the blind, the deaf and the dumb, seeing, hearing, and speaking, he must be downright wicked to still disbelieve. It is easier to pray for a small child than an older person who doubts. A baby cannot exercise any active faith, but again, it cannot doubt.

In the case of a person so ill that he cannot exercise faith for himself, or a small child, or an insane person, there should be someone who will exercise faith for them, besides the one who is called to pray. In that way there is an agreement of faith. (Mat. 18:19) Thus those who brought the palsied man to Christ, contributed their faith for his healing. (Mark 2:5)

One should not boast of his faith, but it is a serious thing for one, to say he has no faith and then come for healing. One might

as well say, "Lord, I have no confidence that You will heal me, but I'll try it out anyway." Better to do like the one of old who had come with an "if," but repented in tears and said, "**Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.**" (Mark 9:24)

2. Was Paul sick?

I am told that Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was serious eye trouble, that he was nearly blind, and was often sick. That because of near blindness, he could not write his own epistles (Rom. 16:22). That when he did write, it was in large letters (Gal. 6:11).

ANSWER: The subject of Paul's thorn in the flesh has been answered in detail elsewhere and we cannot repeat it here. The Bible does say that Paul went blind on the Damascus Road and had to be led into the city. (Acts 9:8) But the same chapter states that Ananias laid his hands on Paul and God healed his blindness. (Acts 9:17-18) We believe it is only fair to conclude that anyone who rejects this plain statement can no longer be included among those who believe in the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures. *When God's word says that Paul received his sight, we believe that he did.*

As to Paul's thorn in the flesh being some other chronic sickness, this too is in utter variance with facts. Paul testified that he had labored more abundantly than all the other apostles in carrying the gospel to heathen lands and in enduring the hardships. Chapter Eleven of II Corinthians is not a testimony of a sick man. In fact the evidence is that Paul enjoyed divine health. At one place he was stoned and left dead. (Acts 14:19-20) Yet to the amazement of the disciples he picked himself up and went on his way, apparently unharmed. This would indicate divine health instead of chronic sickness. A deadly viper curled around his arm, yet he was unhurt. (Acts 28:3-6)

Nevertheless, we do not wish to give the impression that Paul was anything but human. He suffered from the infirmities of the flesh. Many times he was tired, weary, and felt keenly the excessive hardships that he endured. Moreover, the aging

process that goes on continuously in the bodies of all members of the human race, was, we are sure, the case of Paul also. In Philemon 9 he speaks of himself as “Paul the aged”. The promises of divine healing do not ordinarily arrest the aging processes. As people get older their vitality declines. Bones become brittle. Skin becomes flabby and wrinkles appear in the face. Teeth decay, and have to be refilled or removed. Hearing, even in normal individuals, loses a measure of its keenness. Hair turns grey or falls out altogether. Elisha who had more miracles than any man in the Old Testament save Moses, was bald-headed. (II Kings 2:23)

And like the other cells in the body, those of the eye, age in time also. The crystalline lens of the eye operates like a telescope, automatically focusing so that objects near or far may be seen clearly. At about the age of forty or a little later, the crystalline lens loses its elasticity and will not focus sharply for close reading. The eye is not sick, it just gradually loses its elasticity for close focus. If Paul was normal, he would, as he aged, find reading difficult. There were no reading glasses available in those days, and it would be natural for him to employ a secretary to do his writing. Certainly his eyes were not diseased, nor in any sense of the word could he be said to be blind.

3. Does God heal children of unsaved parents?

Does God heal children of parents who are in sin?

ANSWER: We can never limit God to what He might do. We know that in many cases God has healed children of unsaved parents, especially where the parents have had little light of the gospel. However, God has not put Himself under obligation to do so, and in some instances He may definitely refuse to heal the child of unsaved parents. This was true in the case of Jeroboam. The king sent his wife to the prophet Ahijah to inquire whether their son who was ill, would recover. But King Jeroboam had been notorious in his evil deeds, even erecting two golden calves at Bethel for the people to worship instead of Jehovah.

Obviously, a child growing up under these influences would be corrupted by the evil around him. Because God foresaw some good in the child, he permitted him to die. So far as we know all children who die are saved. (Matt. 18:10)

Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die, And all Israel shall mourn him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord of God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam. (I Kings 14:12-13)

Divine healing is the “children’s bread.” (Matt. 15:26) Christian parents have the right to claim the promises of God concerning healing. Although the Lord may on occasions elect to heal the children of sinners, He is under no obligation to do so. And if the parents have the light of salvation and still resist surrendering their lives to God, it is unlikely that their prayers will be answered. Our first prayer to God is not for Him to heal us, or our children, but rather, **“God be merciful to me a sinner.”**

4. Can an affliction come back on a person really healed?

If one is really healed by the Lord, is it possible that the affliction can ever come back on him again?

In answering this question we may truly say that it is not the will of God for an affliction to ever return to a child of God. God’s Will is fully expressed in III John 2, **“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”** But we must not forget that always it is by faith we stand. It is perhaps one of the more common errors of Christians to suppose that if a blessing is received, and is truly genuine, then it is permanent, irrespective of the person’s faith. The truth is that God has intended that our Christian experience be secured in perpetuity through a daily walk of faith with Him. Man wants to get a thing from God and go his way. God wants him to receive and continue receiving, to

keep ever in vital contact with the Giver.

Most every Christian remembers that after his conversion, Satan came and tempted him and even tried to get him to doubt the fact of his conversion. We should not be surprised that Satan should tempt along this line, for we note that he even thus tempted Christ, when he said, **“If thou be the Son of God....”** It is well to note that Christ always defeated him by quoting the Word, saying, **“It is written, it is written.”**

It would be strange then if Satan did not tempt us after we receive healing in our physical body, which indeed, more than any other department of our being, is peculiarly subject to temptation. Certainly it would be the poorest kind of instruction to leave people unwarned against this wile of Satan if it exists. That it does exist is shown by the fact that Jesus did not neglect to give this warning to those who were healed in His ministry. To the man who had been healed of a 38-year infirmity, He said, **“Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.”** (John 5:14)

What is this **“worse thing”** that Christ alluded to? Evidently, it could be another and even more evil disease, or it could be the same disease in a more malignant form. This is quite evident from the teachings of Jesus in Luke 11:14-28. Here He cast out the devil from the dumb man and delivered him. Did Jesus then leave the impression that the affliction could never come back on the man again, regardless of his part in the matter? He certainly did not. He said that **“when the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places....”** meaning that the evil spirit found rest only when he was in a body. The truth is, then, that a spirit when cast out, eventually returns and attempts to again enter the body. But, he will find such opportunity only if the **“house”** is **“swept and garnished.”** (Note that though this passage of Scripture is usually interpreted only in a spiritual sense, it actually, primarily refers to what could happen after an afflicted man—the affliction in this case was dumbness—was healed.)

IN OTHER WORDS, IT IS VERY NECESSARY THAT

THE INDIVIDUAL WHEN HEALED SHALL FILL HIS LIFE WITH SPIRITUAL THINGS. Man is not complete in himself. There is, as it were, a spiritual vacuum in his nature which God intended should be filled with the things of the Spirit. And if man does not avail himself, the spirit of darkness will come in without invitation and take possession—terrible alternative. Notice especially that it was not necessary for the man to do anything especially evil, but only to fail to open his life to God.

Moreover, it is important to notice that the same degree of affliction did not return. This time the devil, in order to make his position more secure, took, to himself seven other devils, **“and the last state of that man is worse than the first.”** This is the teaching of Christ. Thus we see that prayer for the sick, unless it is accompanied by wholesome instruction, could eventually leave the individual in a worse condition than he was at first. This is the reason that ordinarily we urge that people attend instruction services before they are prayed for.

We would add, however, that all instruction should be of a positive nature. A good pastor does not tell his converts that they may backslide. Rather he gives them instruction so that they will not backslide. A good teacher will not tell those for whom he prays that they may lose their healing. Rather he gives them instruction so that they will keep it. Indeed, such was the instruction which God gave when He first gave the Covenant of healing. **“AND YE SHALL SERVE THE LORD YOUR GOD, and He shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.”** (Exod. 23:25)

If Satan should return with the symptoms of an affliction, do not accept them. Resist him with the Word of God. The symptoms ultimately must conform to God’s Word.

There is one thing more that we should add which we believe is of importance to those who pray for the sick. The Bible teaches the principle that the strong should help the weak. In praying for children and people too spiritually weak to fight their own battles, special dominion should be exercised for them over the enemy. On occasion devils should be bound to prevent

reentrance. In accordance with this principle, Christ, Who never used unnecessary words, commanded the epileptic spirit to not only leave the youth but **“TO ENTER NO MORE INTO HIM.”** (Mk. 9:25) Apparently Christ, knowing that the devil would attempt to re-enter, and that the lad might not be able to defend himself, forbade the evil spirit to ever return. We believe that those words of Christ are of significance in the praying for certain classes of afflicted people.

5. The taking of insulin

I was prayed for diabetes. Should I now continue to take insulin?

ANSWER: This question has been asked many times. We are reminded of the conversation of an evangelist with a woman who had asked him this question. He answered: “Well, madam, that depends on whether you have diabetes or not. Now I don’t take insulin.”

The lady, rather surprised, replied, “Oh, sir, I didn’t know you had diabetes.”

“Oh no,” the evangelist said, “I don’t have diabetes. That’s why I don’t take insulin!”

The fact is, if you have diabetes and do not have faith for healing, you had better take insulin. If you quit taking it just because you were told to, or because you hope you are healed, you might experience a dangerously severe reaction. Some people fail to trust either God or the doctors.

There are cases of people who have no real faith for healing. They attend a meeting where they see miracles of deliverance take place. They may then rush into the prayer line with little consideration of what healing involves. They do not understand that their faith must be built upon God’s word rather than upon an emotion or excitement of the moment. Nor do they understand that the enemy will resist them, may attempt to bring back the symptoms, and, with no knowledge of God’s word they may become a victim of his onslaught. This latter could result in

a reproach falling upon the ministry.

A person who has diabetes has a malfunctioning pancreas which is not burning up the sugar in the blood. As the sugar incidence rises, the individual may go into a coma. In extreme cases death can result. Insulin is an artificially prepared substance that removes the sugar from the blood, thus doing what the pancreas should, but fails to do. There is no known medical cure for diabetes. Hence if faith is not positive, failure to take the insulin could have serious results. It is not a sin for a diabetic to take insulin any more than for a crippled man to walk on crutches. However, if he has faith for healing he will throw the crutches away.

We have had many wonderful testimonies of people who have been healed of diabetes. Their faith was strong and the results definite. They threw away their insulin on the basis of the confidence that was born in their soul, confidence in the truth of God's promise, and not because someone told them to give up insulin. If you have to ask what to do about it, this is an indication that you do not have faith necessary for healing. No one but God should tell another person to throw away insulin. The real answer has to come from the person's own faith rather than from an outside source.

6. Concerning ministering to the sick via radio

A minister opposing divine healing has made a violent attack against a prominent evangelist who is on television (not a Voice of Healing evangelist). He points out that the evangelist in question tells the people to put their hand on the radio or television set for a point of contact as he prays for them to be healed. This critic declares the whole thing is absurd, since, the program is on tape and the evangelist is not even in the studio when he is supposed to be praying for the sick. That the people are merely listening to a tape, therefore the whole thing is a farce. What do you have to say concerning this charge?

ANSWER: The first thing to be said is that if this critic is correct, then the entire use of radio is a farce. Many programs,

religious, educational, or otherwise are taped.

The whole question is really elementary. Actually it is not the preacher who saves the sinner or who heals the sick, or casts out devils. Jesus said, **“But if I cast out devils by the spirit of God....”** (Matt. 12:28) It is the Spirit of the Lord by which the work is accomplished; the man is only an instrumentality.

From the beginning God has shown His use of means. The voice of Abraham and Moses and Daniel and the apostles still speak through the written word, the Bible. Although the Bible is a medium it has no power in itself. God’s anointing on the written word it carries has all power. **“For the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life.”** (II Cor. 3. 6) Down through the ages the Bible, though written centuries before, has exercised a great power changing the lives of men and altering the destiny of kingdoms. Magnetic tape not only carries the spoken word, but the exact inflections of the human voice. Moreover it was God who created the radio waves in the first place. Man only discovered them and learned to use them.

The critic of whom you speak is as those who criticized Jesus when they propounded catch questions concerning the resurrection. (Matt 22:5-23) He replied saying, **“Ye do err not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God....”** (verse 29) Certainly the God who created the universe is the God of time and space. God doesn’t come and He doesn’t go. When a minister preaches a sermon, he leaves the pulpit and goes his way, but the Spirit of God goes with the spoken word and it will not return void. (Isa. 55:11)

We find this truth illustrated in the ministry of the great Elisha. At the conclusion of his ministry he died and was buried in a tomb. Some time later a burial party was preparing to entomb another dead man. But in the midst of their operations an enemy patrol hove in sight. In their haste the dead man was cast into the tomb of Elisha. When he touched the bones of the dead Elisha, there was an astonishing result. The dead man came back to life!

And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha; and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet. (II Kings 13:21)

That the healing power of God may be active long after the man of faith is gone, is readily proven not only by this but other cases. Paul put cloths in contact with his body and sent them to distant places. When these touched sick persons, evil spirits were cast out and they were healed.

And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. (Acts 19:11-12)

7. Immortality of the flesh

There is a new teaching that has gone forth recently called the “doctrine of the immortality of the flesh,” which teaches that no one needs to die physically if they have sufficient faith. Is this Scriptural?

ANSWER: The so-called doctrine of the immortality of the flesh is not a new teaching but has been going the rounds since the day that the devil said to Eve, **“Ye shall not surely die.”** Time and again false prophets have arisen who have promised that those who will follow them, will never die. Only time has been needed to refute their erroneous teachings for not only did their followers die, one by one, but the grim reaper finally overtook the deluded prophet who propagated this unscriptural doctrine.

Father Divine has been one of the more recent advocates of this teaching. When his wife, Penny, died in a charity hospital, he refused to recognize her death, nor would he assume the burial expense. This self-proclaimed and aging god, has little time left in this world, and it is a matter of speculation as to how his followers will take the shock when the newspapers announce his passing.

The word of God straightly declares that **“it is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment.”** (Heb. 9:27) Again Romans 5:12 states:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

Death is the one thing that all men have to face whether they are believers or unbelievers. The only two who have escaped death thus far are Enoch and Elijah. Many prophetic students regard them as the two witnesses who will die during the Great Tribulation. Whether this is true or not, certainly none other are excepted until the time of the rapture of the church. Concerning that time we are informed that the true believers who are then living shall not die but be translated.

Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (I Cor. 15:51-52)

Actually it is a blessing that these physical bodies die. We certainly would not want to carry around a flesh and blood body that would be subject to weariness, pain and infirmity, through eternity. Once it has served its purpose we shall be glad to receive in its place a glorified body, like unto the body of Christ. **“It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.”** (I John 3:2)

In a certain sense it is true that the believer in Christ never dies. Jesus said to Martha, **“And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”** (Jn. 11:26) But for two reasons it is evident that Christ was not referring to physical death. First Lazarus had believed in Christ, and he had died, and second in the verse previous, Jesus had also said to Martha:

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. (John 11:25)

Jesus evidently meant that though a man's body physically died he would continue to live in Paradise in the presence of Christ. Instead of going to Sheol, the abode of the Old Testament dead, he would go to Paradise which is now located in the third Heaven. (II Cor. 12:1-4) The departed saint today is very much alive with Christ in the glory world.

Nevertheless, because the end of the age is so very near at hand, it seems certain that there are multitudes now living, who will never die physically. At the coming of Christ their bodies will be translated, and they will go to be with Jesus. This, however, is something quite different from the unscriptural doctrine that people will live in their present physical bodies indefinitely, if they only have sufficient faith.

8. The use of anointing oil

Why is it that some, in praying for the sick, do not use anointing oil?

The command to anoint with oil was given by James in his instructions to the elders who were to pray for the sick. **“Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.”** (James 5:14, 15)

We find also that the twelve apostles, at the beginning of their ministry anointed with oil. **“And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.”** (Mark 6:13) It is generally agreed that the purpose of the oil is to symbolize the presence of the Spirit of God in the healing of the afflicted one. This, of course, must be true, for admittedly the oil alone has no power to heal.

Human beings living in a natural world, seem to grope for visible signs to stimulate their faith, when believing for the unseen power of the spiritual world. Gideon requested that the Lord let dew fall alternately on the fleece and the ground as evidence of victory over the Midianites. (Judges 6:36-40) A sign

of the shadow going back ten degrees on the sun-dial was given to Hezekiah as a sign of his recovery. (II Kings 20:8-11) The presence of the anointing oil signifies to the sick person that the prayer of faith has been made, that the Spirit of the Lord is indeed present to heal, and the promise of deliverance will be fulfilled.

However, where the ministry of healing is manifest in great power the anointing with oil is perhaps unnecessary. When people witness the deaf hearing, the blind seeing, the dumb speaking, the symbols are hardly necessary. People are already convinced that the power of the Lord is present to heal. Thus, in the actual ministry of Christ, we do not find Him anointing with oil. The manifest power of His ministry was sufficient and stronger than any symbolic evidence. Although Peter anointed with oil during the days of his early ministry, yet we find that after the day of Pentecost, he apparently dispensed with this. To the lame man he said, **“Look on us... In the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk.”** (Acts 3:4-6) Even those who lay in his shadow as he passed by were healed, although they were not prayed for, much less anointed with oil. (Acts 5:15)

Nevertheless some men who have had outstanding ministries of healing have continued to anoint with oil as they prayed for the sick. There is no reason why they should not continue this preference. Indeed, in many cases it is perhaps desirable.

9. Prayer cloths

Should handkerchiefs or cloths that are prayed over, which are to be laid upon the sick according to Acts 19:12, be anointed with oil?

There is no Scriptural evidence that handkerchiefs for the sick were anointed with oil. The sick person is not present at the time and does not get the benefit of the symbolic use of the oil. Paul took the handkerchiefs or cloths and placed them against the body, and the power of God was impregnated in them. In one sense we may truly speak of them as anointed handkerchiefs, although they be not anointed with oil. For they have become the

repository of the power of the Spirit, just as we may speak of a minister receiving an anointing of the Holy Spirit to preach. (I John 2:27; II Cor. 1:21)

10. Does the devil ever heal people?

Does the devil heal people?

ANSWER: This is a question of grave importance. The opposers of Christ claimed that Satan had power to heal. At first they had taken the position that no miracles took place. They rejected, or refused to believe, until they were forced to, the blind man's testimony that he had been blind. (Jn. 9:18) Compelled at length to admit that Christ was healing the sick, the enemies of Christ brought up many objections, such as, that because He healed on the Sabbath day, He was breaking the law. (Luke 13:14) These objections had little effect on the mass of the people, who glorified God for what they had seen.

Angered beyond all sense of prudence, and feeling that their own position of importance in the eyes of the people was being jeopardized (Jn. 11:48), they reached the climax of their opposition, by accusing Christ of healing by the power of Satan!

But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. (Luke 11:15)

The reply of Jesus is a solemn one indeed. First, He showed that if Satan cast out Satan, then his kingdom was divided and would not stand. (Verses 17 and 18) In other words *Jesus categorically stated that the devil does not heal*. Christ is the Healer and Satan is the defiler. Then He showed the awful danger of attributing the works of the Holy Spirit to Satan. That those who commit this sin, were blaspheming the Holy Ghost. (Matt. 12:31-32) For this there was no forgiveness in this world nor in the one to come! Hence we see the extreme danger of attributing divine healing to the power of Satan. When a person shows fanatical opposition to divine healing, it is strong evidence that the Spirit of God has left him.

One thing is clearly evident from the Scriptures. It is the

devil that puts sickness upon people. Job 2:7; Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38) Hence if Satan healed, his kingdom would be divided, as Jesus said. Although the devil does not heal, nevertheless, that does not prevent him from appearing to heal. Witch doctors, devil doctors in foreign lands, and leaders of false cults profess to heal. It is significant that the false cults do not attempt to demonstrate the power of healing publicly as Jesus did. The true ministry of healing will not be delegated to a dark room, but it will be manifested openly in the manner of apostolic ministry. As Jesus said.

If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him. (Jn. 10:37-38)

However, it must be admitted that there are cases in which ministers who have practiced divine healing and who had real healings have since fallen into serious error. The supreme example of this is Judas Iscariot. He ministered to and healed the sick the same as the other disciples. (Mk. 6:12-13) Nothing in the conduct of Judas until the time Jesus was taken, set him apart as different from the other apostles. None of them apparently had the slightest idea that Judas would be the betrayer of Jesus—even as late as the last evening they were together. (Matt. 26:22-23) Notwithstanding, Judas at that hour had fully made up his mind to betray Christ.

That today unworthy persons should fit into the same pattern as Judas did, can hardly be surprising. (Matt. 7:21- 22) It is a serious thing to appropriate the benefits of the gospel and fail to bring forth the fruits of the gospel. (verses 15-20)

11. Does God send sickness upon people?

Does God ever send sickness upon people, or does the devil always do it? The writer further inquires, that if the answer to the above is “No,” then what about II Samuel 12:15, and II Chronicles 21:18, Acts 12:23, etc., where the Lord speaks of bringing sickness upon certain people?

We believe the Bible clearly answers this question. Nothing in the world can occur unless God permits it. Concerning the death of Christ on the Cross, Romans 8:32 declares that God **“spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all.”** But other Scriptures show us what we all know to be true, that God did not actually put Christ to death, but the ones who were guilty of this crime, were ungodly men who took the Saviour and **“by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”** (Acts 2:23) These men were controlled by the power of darkness, another term for Satan and his evil angels. **“When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”** (Luke 22:53)

Let us notice two scriptures that speak of those guilty of the death of our Lord. Matthew 27:1, 2 indicates first the chief priests and the elders: **“When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.”**

The other Scripture speaks of Pilate’s being responsible for delivering Jesus to be crucified: **“Then (Pilate) released Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.”** (Matt. 27:26)

Now although these Scriptures speak of three different parties being responsible for the delivering up of Christ to death, everyone understands that Pilate and the chief priests were the ones who were guilty of the crucifixion of Christ.

God was not responsible for the death of His beloved Son. True, He delivered Him up, but only in the sense that He permitted Him to come under the power of evil hands that He might die on the Cross, to accomplish the Redemption of lost humanity. Every Christian fully understands that it was Satan or the power of darkness which controlled the hearts of wicked men that conceived the daring plot to put the Redeemer to death. Likewise, it was Satan that entered into the heart of Judas and caused him to betray his Master. (John 13:27) But as Jesus said,

they could have done nothing had not God permitted them free course of action. (John 19:11) *In this sense only, God delivered Jesus to die.*

Now the Scriptures show that the same thing is true in the matter of sickness and disease coming upon the individual. The devil said to God, concerning His servant Job, **“Put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.”** (Job 2:5) Satan knew that nothing could touch Job except God permitted it. In fact, as the devil knew only too well, the Lord had built a hedge about Job, and though he slyly skulked about the property of Job for a long time, he had never until now been able to get at the patriarch. Now God gave His permission for sickness to come upon Job. *But it wasn't God Who sent the sickness!* He just withdrew His protection. We are taken behind the scenes, as it were, and are given the opportunity to see just who it was that put the boils on Job. It was the devil, as the next verse plainly declares. **“So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.”** (Vs. 7)

God sends sickness only in the sense that, when certain circumstances arise, He permits the hedge of Divine Protection to be broken down, so that Satan can do his evil work. As the Proverbs tell us, **“The curse causeless shall not come.”**

12. Concerning raising the dead

A lady, a member of my church, lost her mother, who at the time of her death was in her late sixties. One week after the funeral she called me and asked if I would pray for her mother to be raised from the dead. She said that the Bible said to “raise the dead” as well as “heal the sick,” and she believed that if we would pray in faith, her mother would be brought back to life.

How would you answer this woman? She is an intelligent woman who holds a good job in the community.

ANSWER: The lady needs gentle treatment. She is deeply affected with grief over the loss of her mother, and this

circumstance often prevents coherent thought at the moment. However, the following facts need to be told her in a sympathetic manner.

1. God has given us the promise of the resurrection of the dead. But that is the prerogative of Christ and will take place at the last day. (Jn. 6:39-40)
2. The promise of the resurrection is something completely different than healing. People need healing now. After the resurrection they have a glorified body as Christ, immortal, incorruptible.
3. Nevertheless God has promised that on occasion, the dead will be restored to life as they were in Bible days. A few such miracles have occurred in the presence of the writer. We do not, however, have the definite promise that any dead person we pray for will be raised, or that it is the will of God for them to be brought back to life. John the Baptist, forerunner of Christ, was killed by Herod, and was not raised from the dead, although strangely enough, Herod believed he might be. (Luke 9:7) Jesus could have done this, of course, but He raised only three from the dead. Two of these were young, while Lazarus certainly was not old.
4. Those who have been raised from death, usually have been dead a very short period of time. It is not consistent with providence that one who has become a situated member of paradise be called back to earth again. Neither does God wish the mysteries of paradise to become an object of speculation. Paul who witnessed Paradise was not permitted to tell what he had seen.

In the case in question, there was no reason to expect that it was the will of God for the woman to be brought back to life. First, she had practically lived out her time—she was almost seventy. She had been dead for quite a number of days. No one had a witness that God intended her to be brought back to life. The desire was based on the emotion of grief. It was her time to go. The daughter will see her again, but not in this life.

13. What about psychoanalysis?

There seems to be an ever-increasing use of psychoanalysis to cure mental ills. Even some Christians are recommending its use. What do you think about this method for the treatment of mental problems?

ANSWER: Real mental disturbances usually involve demon oppression of some kind. Psychiatry may analyze a person's complexes from a natural stand-point and give some apparent help. People are sometimes relieved if they can talk out their troubles with a counselor. However psychiatry cannot cast out devils—hence its limitations.

H. E. Eysenck, Professor of Psychology, University of London, writes an interesting article entitled "What's The Truth About Psychoanalysis?" in the January 1960, issue of *Reader's Digest*. Himself a famous authority, after a careful investigation of the subject, has come to the conclusion that there is little evidence, if any that psychoanalysis is of any value at all! He says: "There is no proof here at all of any efficacy of the Freudian treatment; just as high a proportion of patients recover under psychoanalysis as would have got better without it." The words of this famous British psychologist indicate that people who go to these analysts are wasting their money. Better to pray through about your problem than to lean upon the arm of flesh.

This is not to be construed as objecting to professional counsel. **"In the multitude of counselors there is safety."** (Pro. 11:14) There is a need in society for specialized financial, home and marriage counselors—preferably with a Christian background. Many people, including not a few Christians, evidence the most deplorable lack of understanding of human nature, and therefore fall heir to many frustrations and troubles. A pastor should qualify himself as much as possible so that he will be able to give help along these lines. Specialized Christian counsel is urgently needed, but psychoanalysis based upon Freud's perverted sex theories, is something altogether different.

14. The healing of deaf mutes

When deaf mutes are healed will they be able to speak at once?

This is a most important question because there is a general lack of information of a deaf mute's condition before and after healing. Often the deaf person is normal in every way except he cannot hear. Because he cannot hear, sound has no significance to him, and therefore he does not speak. Such persons usually can be taught to lip read, and also to speak a few words. Because they cannot hear their own speaking, their words will be uttered in a squeaky and unintelligible manner. Some mutes are bound in their vocal organs also, and such persons cannot be taught to speak at all.

Jesus definitely attributed deafness and dumbness to an evil spirit: ***"He rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him."*** (Mark 9:25) Since we know of this affliction, it is proof that while Satan cannot touch the Christian's soul, he can afflict the body. (See Job 2:7)

When the deaf and dumb spirit is cast out, the subject can now both hear and speak as we have witnessed scores of times. But—and this is most important to remember—the individual never having heard sound is utterly unable to understand the meaning of the words that he hears. It is strange that more people do not recognize this fact. If an American were suddenly ushered into the center of conversation by Chinamen, he would be unable to understand or make himself understood. Foreigners live years in this country and some never learn our language and few learn to speak it fluently. Yet the person who has been deaf all his life is often expected to understand what is being spoken to him, and to speak in return. How unfair this is to the person who has been delivered. Truly at this moment the one who has been healed needs all the sympathy and help people can give him.

A certain young man who had been deaf wrote to us of his healing: "I was healed, and now can hear trains, airplanes and cars; my only trouble is that I cannot understand what people say

as I have never heard before. I will have to learn the meaning of words.” He then told of his father’s healing. “He could hear very easily several feet away and could hear the piano, but could not understand people talking.”

A child that has been delivered of deafness should not be sent back to the deaf school. The child may have learned to communicate by means of his fingers or by lip-reading. It is unnatural for him to try to communicate by means of sound which is unfamiliar to him. Moreover the child or person must be made to concentrate on the sound to understand it. Parents must be as patient in training the child to speak as they would be to one leaving infancy.

It is also very essential that the parents of a child who is delivered should consecrate their lives to the Lord. Unbelief or carelessness will permit the deaf spirit to return. (John 5:14) Jesus plainly showed that even the spirits that He cast out sought to return to the individual from whence they came. If that person’s life is not filled with God, the evil spirit might well take his abode again, and the last state be worse than the first. (Luke 11:24-28)

15. Why should God permit a child to have polio?

If God is a loving God, why does He permit an innocent child to have polio?

ANSWER: It is well that the word “permitted” is used, lest the implication in this question be that God is somehow to blame for a child having polio. The Bible plainly teaches that Satan is the author of sickness, not God. (Job 2:7) To ascribe the work of Satan to God, is a very serious matter.

It is, of course, true that nothing happens in this world without divine permission, but that is a long way from God’s being responsible for everything that happens. Evil in this world is the work of Satan or wicked men, not God. God permitted His Son to die on the Cross, but it was the hands of wicked men who committed the act.

Now it is obvious that a child that has fallen a victim of polio, or any other disease, is not personally to blame for his condition. Jesus pointed out that adults are not always to blame for their afflictions, (John 9:3) although many times they are. In other words there are many cases of sickness in which the afflicted person is not responsible, *but neither is God responsible. Sickness* is in fact, the opposite of the Will of God for the believer.

God's first words in the Bible concerning man were, **"Let us make man in our own image."** The image of God is the design for the human being. God himself is free from sin, sickness, and death, and that is what He desires for man. Polio and other diseases are the results of other causes than God. Sin came into the world, and disease and death followed as God said they would. (Gen. 2:17)

This raises the old question which has been a center of controversy since the beginning of time, "Why do the righteous suffer?" There is not space here to deal at length with so complex a question, but we make the following remarks which throw some light on this problem:

1. God could have created a world inhabited by beings incapable of sinning and consequently immune from sickness, the result of sin. But such beings would have been automatons or robots. They would not have been free moral agents. Being made in the image of God men must be given the power of choice, and are therefore capable of sinning. Most of us are thankful that God created us intelligent creatures, rather than automatons.
2. Free moral agents by the nature of the case have the power of choice. As it has always proved out, some will choose to serve God, others, alas, will choose to rebel against Him. Jesus said, **"Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh."** (Matt. 18:7) The angels in Heaven had to be tested. God's people during this age are tested. Those who live

during the Millennium will be tested. (Rev. 20:7-9) In each case some will be faithful to God, while others will prove unfaithful.

It was man's sin, not God's, that brought sickness and death into the world. The latter is now a universal condition. Whether a child falls victim to polio or not, in time he will have to die. Thus we are dealing with a problem greater than polio—the problem of death which has passed upon every human being. **“It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment.”** (Heb. 9:27) Fortunately, God in His love has provided a remedy for death—salvation through Christ, with the promise of the resurrection and eternal life. (John 5:28-29) God was not responsible for bringing death into the world. On the other hand, He was responsible for bringing to light, immortality through Christ! The big problem in the universe is not polio, but death. God has solved that completely in Christ.

3. Just as God gave man a remedy for sin and death, He has also given him a remedy for sickness. (Read carefully Exodus 15:25-26) Many homes are afflicted with disease because the family does not rise up and claim God's promise of healing. Failure to receive deliverance is our fault, not God's. If the sinner dies in his sins, God is not responsible. Likewise, if the Christian fails to appropriate divine healing, God is not responsible. The big question is not why there should be sickness and disease. The real problem is why more people do not claim the promise of healing. A still bigger conundrum is why some oppose healing which God has so mercifully provided. We have had to labor year after year to get these truths across to people who have been confused by teaching against Divine healing. Recently, we are seeing a greater acceptance of this message than ever before, and for this we thank God. But some will accept Divine healing only after they have suffered affliction themselves. Which reminds us of the

old saying, that some do not care what happens in the world, so long as it doesn't happen to them.

4. We have to accept the every-day fact that a child may suffer through the wrong doing (Exod. 20:5) or unbelief (Mark 9:22-23) of his parents. See how the drunkard's child suffers shame, heartache, and sorrow as the result of the misconduct of a father and mother. It is unfortunately true that some parents abuse the privilege of being a parent. But we cannot blame God for ordaining the family relationship, though it makes it possible for a wicked person's child to suffer innocently, **"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."** (Rom. 14:7)
5. Finally God may use sickness and even the death of a child as a means to lead the careless parent to Himself. David became a backslider, having committed a great sin. When his child became grievously ill, he sought God for its healing with prayer and fasting. (II Sam. 12:16-18) Notwithstanding, the child died. Through this great sorrow, David was led to deep repentance and a renewal of his consecration to God. This circumstance in David's life no doubt has been repeated many times, and is an explanation of why some children of careless parents have been stricken. This certainly, however, is not God's best plan for dealing with His people. We should not have to have God lay the whip on our back, before we will serve Him. We should not have to wait until calamity or tragedy strikes, before we will obey Him.

In the case of the wicked Jeroboam, his son died because God saw some good thing in the child, and He did not want him to grow up in an ungodly home. (I Kings 14:13) In such cases we know that God takes care of His little ones. (Matt. 18:10) Our viewpoint is from the standpoint of time. God reckons in the light of eternity. Time compared to eternity is a very short moment indeed. That God reckons in the light of eternity instead

of time, proves that He is God. There is plenty of time in eternity for God to compensate the innocent who suffer.

16. The taking up of serpents

Christ, in His Great Commission, said concerning believers: "They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them." (Mark 16:18) Some teach that this is to be taken literally. What do you say?

ANSWER: All things in the Bible are to be taken the way the Bible explains its own statements. Nobody would take a sentence out of a textbook and try to apply it without reading related instructions in the textbook.

In the Great Commission record in Mark 16:15-18, there are five signs which were to follow believers.

1. The first was, **"In my name they shall cast out devils."** Reference to other passages shows that Jesus meant the actual casting out of demon spirits. This is illustrated, for example, in Acts 16:18, where Paul cast the spirit of divination out of a girl who was a soothsayer.
2. The second sign is, **"They shall speak with new tongues."** There can be no doubt about the meaning of this. In Acts 2:4, the One Hundred and Twenty who tarried in the Upper Room, received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost with speaking in other tongues—languages understood by men of seventeen countries. The people of the house of Cornelius spoke in other tongues when they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 10:44-46) Likewise, it so happened at Ephesus. (Acts 19:6) The speaking in other tongues is one of the gifts of the Spirit given to the church. (I Cor. 12:10) The Bible fully explains what Jesus meant about believers speaking in new tongues.
3. Before we consider the 3rd and 4th signs we shall note the last one: **"They shall hands on the sick and they shall recover."** No difficulty about this. The apostles

laid hands on the sick and commanded them to be healed in the name of Jesus. One instance of many, was the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate. Peter took him by the hand, lifted him up and commanded him to be healed. (Acts 3:1-8)

4. Third sign is: “They shall take up serpents.” Does this mean that a Christian is to go out and pick up deadly serpents to prove he is a believer? Occasionally we hear of people who do just that. One man as a result had his arm swell up until it was double normal size. There have even been cases where a person has died as a result of indulging in a fanatical exhibitionism of serpent handling. These unfortunate people would not have made this error if they had carefully read their Bibles. When Paul (in Acts 28:3-5) picked up a serpent by mistake as he was kindling a fire, he did not wave it around to show that he was a believer, but shook it off into the fire. God protected him from its deadly bite and he **“felt no harm.”**

Since Satan is typified by a serpent, Jesus’ reference to them in the Great Commission, perhaps has a further symbolic meaning. This may be evidenced in the promise Jesus gave to the Seventy in Luke 10:18, 19.

And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

5. The fourth sign was, **“And if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them.”** The word “if” explains what is meant and bears out what we have just said. People are not to go out and drink deadly potions or to pick up serpents just to prove that they are believers. But *if* by mistake they should do it, or if they are forced to take a poisonous drink, they may then claim the promise of immunity.

Miracles are to confirm the Word of God. They are not

intended to be used as spectacular stunts, or to create a mere sensation. Jesus said, **“A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign.”** (Matt. 16:4) He refused to perform signs merely to amuse a curious audience.

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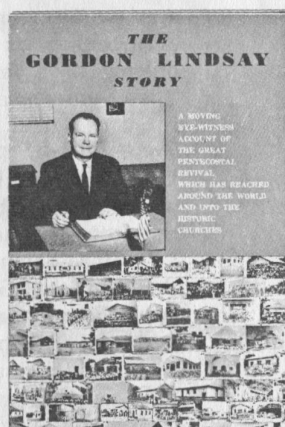
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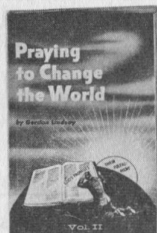
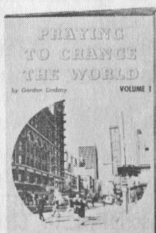
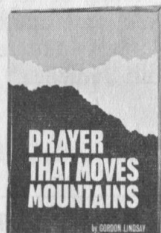
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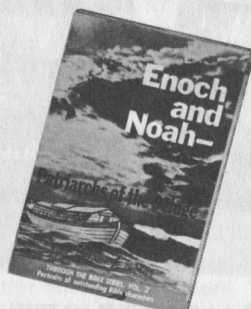
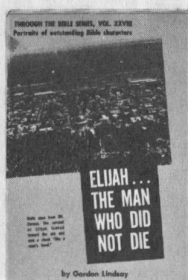
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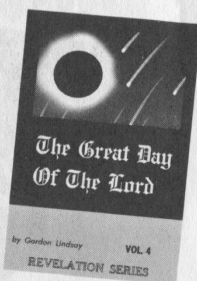
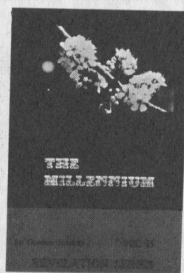
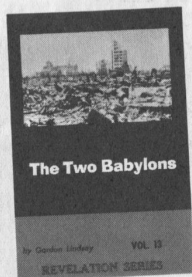
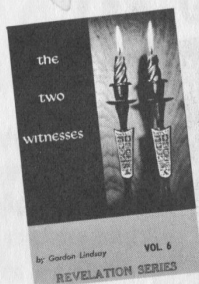
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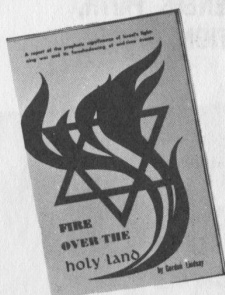
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