

Bible Study Guide of
Supernatural Healing

IF GOD WANTS ME WELL, WHY AM I SICK?

H L Ford

Endorsements

“Even though it’s bedtime, I will not retire until I compliment your writing! This book will be a huge encouragement to people who are seeking God for healing.

“Theologically? It’s sound.

“You are right to relate the numerous ways people were healed in scripture and compare your contemporary examples to them.

“Healing is always a bit of a mystery; however, you give sound scriptural backing for every traditional argument and then some.

“I must add your work is not fluffy, but scholarly, provoking serious thought. I think this book is for *real thinkers*, or even for the clergy, as it makes you want to seriously study and not just fly through it in an evening.”

— First Assembly of God Pastor Gene Burgess, world missionary-evangelist and inspirational author, Tennessee

“I was raised and taught the doctrine of selective grace (that God afflicts the proud to humble him, or the sinful believer to chastise him, and selects only persons He deems worthy to receive healing from illness). However, as I matured in my walk with the Lord, I could not find a *single* scripture to support this theory. In fact, quite the opposite. In John 10:10, Jesus makes the case Himself when He says, ‘The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’

“God is not a thief and does not steal, kill, or destroy. That’s such GOOD NEWS! Scripture says, ‘His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were *healed*’ (I Peter 2:24).

“This is even more GOOD NEWS! Healing was purchased by Jesus’ stripes! What a GOSPEL! What a GOD!”

—Melanie Hemry, journalist, Bible scholar, inspirational author/speaker, winner of the prestigious *Guidepost* Writing Contest, author of numerous books including *A Healing Touch: The Power of Prayer* and co-author of *Anointing for Healing*.

“Praise God, Harriett, the book is marvelous! This is a book that I will need to read over and over. Every time I read a chapter I’m blessed and encouraged. Even this morning, not being able to sleep because of pain in my arm, reading this chapter had me saying, ‘I am healed because God says I am, regardless of the symptoms.’ It’s amazing how I know this in my head, yet have to be reminded over and over. Thank you for helping to strengthen my faith!”

—Margie Lopez, executive secretary, assistant proofreader, and a faithful believer, miraculously healed by the Lord.

If God Wants Me Well, Why Am I Sick?

A Bible Study Guide of Supernatural Healing

H L FORD

With a Foreword by Missionary Brenda Lange, president of Orphans Unlimited, Mozambique, affiliated with Victory Christian Center, Tulsa, OK, inspirational speaker, author of the biographical book *African Adventures* and the astonishing resurrection testimony, *Crispo and the Black Mamba*, featured in *Guideposts* magazine.



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Also by Harriett Ford:

Shadow in the Rain

Frankly Madame, I Don't Give a Damn

Beware the Third Circle

All scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible with two exceptions from the NIV.

Because so many translations are used in Bible study groups, the author chose to paraphrase the scriptures in the discussion questions following each chapter for the purpose of syntax brevity and clarity. Quotation marks are not used for those references, scriptures in chapter headings, or the body of the work where they are paraphrased or condensed for syntax brevity by the author.

The name 'satan' and his related names are not capitalized.

Pronouns referring to the deity are capitalized.

All sources quoted are used by permission of the various publishers, from personal interviews, or written directly for the author as noted on the pages where they appear.

As an English teacher, author, and veteran newspaper reporter, the author is fully aware of numerous ways to document sources. She chose the RLN Writers Manual of Style, a casual and more readable approach used by recent publishers, rather than the formal research-style documentation used by scholars.

A Bibliography is included at the end for reference.

Special thanks goes to Margie Lopez and Cady Ramlow, for their assistance in proofreading.

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Foreword

“Thank you, Harriett, for making such a bold statement about believers taking authority in the Name of Jesus.

“Lazy and uneducated Christians suffer many things they don’t have to endure, simply because of a lack of knowledge of the authority they have.

“I get very frustrated with wimpy Christians who expect Jesus to do it all for them when He clearly instructed believers to take authority over evil.

“Over and over in the gospels, Jesus gave believers the authority to use His name.

“In our Bible School here in Mozambique, the first course I require my pastors to study is *AUTHORITY OF THE BELIEVER*.

“Unless they learn how to exercise their blood-bought dominion, they are at the mercy of the satanic forces trying to control Africa.”

—Brenda Lange, also known as Bush Bunny Brenda, missionary, president of Orphans Unlimited, Mozambique, inspirational author/speaker affiliated with Victory Christian Center, Tulsa, OK, author of *African Adventures*, and the *Guideposts* magazine feature, *Crispo and the Black Mamba*.

Preface

A Journey into the Supernatural

Seeking Wisdom and Understanding (Prv. 4:5)

“Three-year-old Lucky Yolla had just been diagnosed with a disease that would require a bone marrow transplant. Three weeks prior to this bad news, Lucky’s father, John, had been hit with a devastating personal crisis. The double blows left him reeling.

“On a crisp fall Arizona morning in 1997, I was led by the Holy Spirit to stop by John’s office in Havasu. We went outside, had a short conversation, and this street-tough man of men bowed his head and accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior.

“Last week, Lucky celebrated his seventeenth Birthday, *never* had a bone marrow transplant, and is one of our city’s walking miracles, a gift of the Father’s love.”

—Durmond Blatnik, minister, prison chaplain, voice of Kalamity Falls Children’s Ministries, Havasu, Arizona

Durmond’s story sends a thrill of hope to anyone who needs a miracle of healing from heaven.

I first met Durmond one summer as he sat on a park bench praying for the community of Saddlebrooke, Missouri. He speaks of God’s abundant grace. He prays for the sick. He believes. And the sick get well.

That simple?

It is for Durmond. As a prison chaplain and minister, he has seen countless people receive God’s miraculous healing touch over the years.

Since the days of the apostles, believers have experienced God’s gift of supernatural healing, yet healing is not always simple, no matter how strongly a person believes.

Puzzling inconsistencies raise many questions. Questions which seem to have no answers. Questions like the following:

What if ...

You believed that Jesus is the same Healer today as yesterday?

You believed beyond a shadow of doubt that healing of the physical body is God's will for you?

You believed Jesus bore all your sicknesses as well as your sins when He hung on the cross?

What if, while truly believing the above, you had an illness and prayed with all the faith in your heart, and yet disease symptoms remained?

Would you be confused? Would you keep on praying? Beg and plead with God to change His mind and heal you? Get angry with God? Give up? Decide it must not be God's will? That maybe He is testing your faith?

If you've ever struggled with such questions, you are not alone.

After years of skirting around the very questions listed above, I found I could no longer ignore them and began seeking the Lord for understanding, believing He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

I want readers to know, right at the beginning, this book is not about telling a sick person he has no faith, because everyone has a measure of faith according to Romans 12:3.

Rather, it is about a set of tools gleaned from victorious believers—tools (actually weapons of our warfare) for the sick to wield in their own good fight of faith for healing.

It is about encouragement and overcoming.

It is about victory.

Selective Grace, or Abundant Grace?

I soon discovered two major views prevail regarding supernatural healing.

Selective grace is the view that God sends sickness as judgment, or a trial to challenge a believer's faith, or perhaps to humble him for some prideful (or other) sin. A sick person may be selected to receive God's healing grace after he repents or is humbled. Faith is not emphasized. In fact, a good fight of faith is almost impossible with this view. People depend on God's sovereignty and leave it all up to Him, rather than take a faith-stand against the disease. If symptoms remain after prayer, the assumption is that God does not wish to heal. Emphasis is on the **person** to somehow become worthy enough to earn healing.

Abundant grace is the view that healing is provided in the atonement (Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross) as part of God's redemptive plan. In this view, God does not send sickness; Satan does. He is the oppressor who enters by deceit. Persistent faith is possible because it is the devil people are resisting—not God. They don't have to beg God to change His mind and heal them. They do have to stand in faith, resist the devil, and maintain confidence until healing is manifest. Healing can be sudden or gradual, and may even take a long period of time. Emphasis is on **Jesus**, and the blessing already earned by His obedience.

It is not my intent to open a heated debate on doctrinal issues. I am well aware that anyone can pull verses, string them together, and formulate a doctrine. My purpose is for people to pray the Spirit of Truth rightly divides the word, opens their understanding, and reveals which tools they need in order to set them free from anything that hinders body, soul, and spirit.

Because I was battling my own pain, I prayed the above prayer, and in November of 2009, the Holy Spirit began to deal with me regarding the selective or abundant-grace views of healing. I wavered between these views while the Lord brought people to my attention over the next several months: among them, a teenage boy who declared faith in God's word, got out of bed, and walked; a severely injured young pilot, the sole survivor of a plane crash, who determined to fly again although there was no hope of recovery; a woman who fought breast cancer for an entire year with only the word of God.

All received divine healing. Some waged an astonishing fight of faith for months, or even years. Others simply asked and received. Significantly, not one of them ever doubted God's will was to heal them.

I wanted to know how these people got healed. Where did they get such confidence? Weren't Christians supposed to suffer? How could they be so certain God wanted them well before healing came? Could I also believe He wanted me well in spite of my painful condition?

And, if God wanted me well, why was I suffering?

I decided to examine, record, and report these healing stories, comparing them with the gospel accounts.

During the entire year I worked on this book, I awoke each morning with a prompting from the Holy Spirit, an insight, or a scripture verse echoing in

my mind. I was seeking and finding answers.

I found literally hundreds of documented supernatural healings. Those which are not verifiable, I have not included. I had to omit one story of a modern-day resurrection from the dead, because I could not find the necessary documentation, even though I believe it to be absolutely true. I have chosen only those reports from trustworthy people with whom I have personal acquaintance and those from books released by respected publishing houses.

What I learned has been a journey into the supernatural.

As a journalist, I was investigating.

As a believer I was drawing near to God.

I have found many encouraging answers.

Not *all* the answers, however I am still learning.

Better yet, I am overcoming.

Best of all, I believe the reader will too.

Let us Agree to Disagree.

The Holy Book is like an onion in that it has layers of meanings. Many scriptures have both historical and multi-prophetic significance. Other verses contain double and even triple applications as they are written for the triune nature of man: body, soul and spirit. God's word is clear and direct in many passages, while open to interpretation in others. As soon as someone takes a stand on the meaning of a verse, there will be fifteen people who see it differently and experience it differently at different seasons in their lives. Because of that, let us agree to disagree, and reserve the right to be wrong until Jesus opens our individual understanding as He did for the two on the road to Emmaus.

I readily admit the book could provoke controversy. One person has already said, "I don't care what you say, I'm not believing that healing stuff."

It is not what I say, but what God says that matters. This book is for those who want to know what He says and how to apply it—for diligent seekers who ask and knock until the door is opened.

The questions and scriptures at the end of each chapter are questions I asked the Lord as I considered each person's testimony. As you discuss the references, please keep the yes-but-what-about thoughts on hold. Write them down. Most will be discussed in later chapters.

Open the Bible, the only infallible, unchanging source of truth, and let's begin by looking at people who tackled the first question: Is physical healing really provided by Jesus' suffering in the atonement?

CHAPTER 1

Is Healing in the Atonement?

Healing from heaven must conform to the word of God, which is our only standard for truth.

Various New Age gurus, spiritualists, psychics, mediums, and mind-over-matter healers often claim to achieve supernatural healings that do not measure up to the biblical standard. I have steered clear of these.

There are differences and commonalities in the healing testimonies included in this book. I grouped the first three stories into a category with the Centurion who came to Jesus on behalf of his servant saying, “Speak the word only and he shall be healed” (Matt. 8:8).

Let’s start with Canadian-born Albert Simpson. Ordained in 1865 in the Canada Presbyterian Church, Simpson eventually became widely known in New York and Kentucky churches for his healing ministry. He established the Christian And Missionary Alliance, an organized movement of global evangelism still active today. In 1915, he published a well-received book titled, *The Gospel of Healing*¹, describing countless, varied and remarkable healings, which happened during the course of his ministry.

Excerpts from his personal testimony follow.

Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843—1919)

“All that I know of divine healing, the Lord had to teach me Himself. I was not permitted to read anything but His own word, long after I learned to trust Him for my physical health.

“For over twenty years, I suffered many infirmities and disabilities. Beginning a life of hard intellectual labor at the age of fourteen, I broke hopelessly down from nervous prostration while preparing for college and was not permitted by my physician to even look at a book for months. I came very near death and finally gave my life to the Lord.

“After college, at age twenty one, I became the ambitious pastor of a large city church and again broke down, suffering heart trouble, and barely surviving with the aid of constant remedies and preventatives.

“Climbing a slight elevation or going up a stair left me in agony, suffocating for breath. It usually took me until Wednesday to get over the effects of the Sunday sermon, and then I began preparing for the next service. Finally, a prominent New York physician told me I had not strength enough to live more than a few months.

“Earlier, I had encountered a young man who experienced a startling and miraculous recovery from his death bed, and I had been impressed to take the Lord as my Healer also. For a time, God sustained me wonderfully, but having no foundation in the word and being advised by a Christian physician that this was ‘presumption,’ I abandoned my dependence on God alone for my health.

“I stumbled and floundered for years, because I never could feel that I had clear authority to trust my health to Him.

“Later, at the Old Orchard Beach campground meetings, I heard a great number of people testify they had been healed simply by trusting the word of Christ, just as they would for salvation. They gave all the glory to God, and I knew in my heart they told the truth. This drove me to my Bible, determined to settle the question of divine healing once and for all.

“First John 2:27 says you need not that any man teach you. I am so glad I did not go to man. At His feet alone, with Bible open, and no one to guide me but Jesus, I became fully convinced that physical healing is part of the atonement for a suffering and sinful world, and available to all who would believe and receive His word.”

* * *

Simpson said he determined to toss out all his medicine and trust God alone for his health. He went out into the pines where he could be alone with God and raised his hands to heaven, making a solemn vow to take the Lord Jesus as his physical life for all needs of his body until his life’s work was done and to use this blessing for the glory of God and the good of others.

As he walked back home, he felt no different. The weakness and symptoms of disease had not left his body; however, those symptoms did not stop him from believing. He was walking (acting) by faith in God’s word rather than allowing symptoms in his physical body to set his course.

Understandably, the still-suffering Simpson resisted preaching what he called “the healing gospel.”

He struggled with the Holy Spirit’s prompting, because he wanted to keep his sermons “conventional and respectable.”

Is the healing gospel not respectable? Apparently not in Simpson’s day, and many find it offensive today also. Where does such resistance come from? Large numbers of churchgoers understandably reject the teaching today, often because of charlatans and *fake* healers who claim to be faith healers, or because of misguided teachers who tell sick people they don’t have enough faith to get well.

What is enough faith? Jesus compared it to the size of a grain of mustard seed. That smallest of seeds is enough to move mountains (Luke 17:6). Any person made to feel guilty for a lack of faith, especially when a loved one dies, is placed under an impossible and unscriptural burden.

The remedy for healthy skepticism comes from understanding truth revealed in God’s word and from learning how victorious believers acted on it. Simpson grasped the truth from the word only, and believed it while symptoms remained in his body. Nobody laid hands on him or prayed for him.

Finally unable to resist the Holy Spirit’s prompting, he first preached his new understanding of healing at a Congregational church.

Significantly at that service, he could not say he had received his own healing, for he was yet experiencing serious heart symptoms. How difficult would it be to preach a healing gospel while he was struggling to catch his breath?

“I had to act like God’s word is true. God did not ask me to testify of my feelings or experiences, but of Jesus and His faithfulness. I had to testify *before* I experienced the full blessing, and I’m sure I would have lost my healing if I had waited until I felt it. God made me commit myself to His healing covenant before He would fully bless me with a new heart.

“I have since known hundreds to fail just at this point. They are afraid to testify, based on God’s word alone, that they have been healed before symptoms leave. They want to wait until symptoms disappear before they

believe. They do not understand that the word is true whether or not they have symptoms.

“For just as salvation does not depend on whether we feel saved, so is the healing word true whether we feel like it or not. Once a person gets the light on how to believe in the presence of illness, he will be able to confess God’s truth, take authority over his body, and defeat the oppressor.”

* * *

Simpson’s radical testimony would, of course, be put to the test.

It came almost immediately when a group of people from the Congregational church invited him to go mountain climbing. He drew back in horror, remembering the extreme lack of breath and suffocation he always experienced going up stairs, or even climbing the slightest inclines. *What have I done?* he asked himself, realizing the life-or-death impact of his covenant with God.

Immediately, he feared his diseased heart would fail on the strenuous climb. He also recognized that such fear at this time would be evidence of pure unbelief, since he had made a vow to trust the Lord as his healer. It was time. He knew he had to act on his faith. Faith is always followed by works (actions), or it is dead according to James 2:17.

“With every step, I felt all the old weakness threatening, the terrible suffocation, and the physical dread. I had no strength at all in my body. However, I became aware of a divine strength reaching out to me if I would take it, claim it, and persevere in it. With every step I felt death also, but the Blessed Shepherd did not let me turn away. I pressed closer and closer to His bosom, and when I reached that mountaintop, the world of weakness and fear was lying at my feet.

“Thank God, I have had a new heart in this breast ever since, both literally and spiritually, and Christ has been its glorious life.”

* * *

After God healed him, Simpson preached thousands of sermons, often more than twenty a week, without once feeling the extreme exhaustion that had plagued him throughout his life.

According to his publisher, divine healings began to overtake Simpson’s ministry so frequently that these confirmed miracles would fill countless

volumes.

How did Simpson instruct people who are seeking healing? He advised everyone to get rooted and grounded in scripture.

“Be fully persuaded of the word of God in this matter. This is the only sure foundation for scriptural faith. If faith is not grounded on rock-solid truth, it will not stand the opposition and the testings which are sure to come. You must be so convinced that healing is part of Christ’s redemption that all the reasonings of the best of men cannot shake you.”

The reader will note that Simpson had to believe, speak, and act on God’s word *before* his physical healing became a reality. His heart was still weak when he declared, “God is my healer.” He had to start walking, literally by faith, and resist his dreaded weakness of the flesh with every step. He came back down the mountain with a brand-new, healthy heart, and he remained healthy from that day to the end of his life.

That makes perfect sense to the spirit and perhaps no sense at all to the natural mind of man. After all, the natural man believes the evidence he perceives by the five senses. The spiritual man believes in evidence yet unseen, based on faith in God’s word only (Heb. 11:1).

Someone is thinking, “Well just because I go around saying I’m healed won’t make it happen.” No, it won’t.

How do we get our mouths to speak from a faith-filled heart? Simpson preached that faith comes by continually hearing the word of God, according to Romans 10:17. He taught people to get God’s word into their hearts and faith would come out of their mouths. Proverbs 16:23 says the heart of the wise teaches his mouth and adds learning to his lips (paraphrased). If we are repeating scripture, meditating on it, and muttering it, faith rises up from inside the heart and instructs the mouth.

Please Note: In any discussion on divine healing, it should be strongly emphasized that no one is ever advised to withhold medical treatment from oneself or one’s children as an act of faith, such as denying a diabetic child insulin, until a doctor confirms he no longer needs it. We have all heard tragic stories of misguided persons who presumed to do just that, and their children died as a result.

There is a great difference between presumption and faith.

Endnote

1. All quoted material in this chapter is from Albert Benjamin Simpson's book *The Gospel of Healing* (Christian Publications, Inc., 1915) pp. 153-170.

Questions:

1. Is there any scriptural basis for healing in the atonement? The curse of the law listed in Deut. 28:59-61 includes every _____ and _____. Christians do not live under Old Testament law. We have a better covenant. According to Gal. 3:13, Christ has redeemed us from the _____ of the law, being made a _____ for us: for it is written _____ is everyone that hangs on a tree. Can that really mean that Jesus paid the price for both our sins *and* our sicknesses as Simpson came to believe? Why, or why not?

2. Many tend to spiritualize Psa. 103:1-3 which says, Bless the Lord who _____ all your iniquities and _____ all your diseases. In First Pet. 2:24, we find Jesus bore our sins in His own body that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes we were _____. Do these verses really indicate Jesus bore our sicknesses at the atonement?

3. Matt. 8:16-17 says Jesus healed all that were _____ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying Himself took our infirmities and bore our _____. Does this verse indicate Jesus healed spiritual or physical illness (or both?) as a fulfillment of Isa. 53:5. The Isaiah prophecy states, with His stripes *we* are _____. Does "we" include you and me?

4. John 6:63 says the words Jesus speaks are _____ and they are _____. Prv. 4:20-22 says God's words are _____ unto those who find them and _____ to all their _____. Does this indicate there is a seeking and finding to be done? Does it also indicate God's word includes healing for both the flesh and spirit?

5. Both Col. 1:13 and Acts 26:18 speak of God delivering us from the kingdom of _____ to light and from the power of _____ unto God that we may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among those sanctified by faith. Does our inheritance include blessings only in the afterlife, or also on earth? First Jn. 3:8 says Jesus came to make

inoperative the _____ of the devil. In Jn. 10:10, the works of the devil are to _____, _____, and _____. Where do these works take place? Earth or heaven?

6. Albert Simpson said knowing the truth is what set him free from heart disease. John 8:31-32 says, if you continue in Jesus' word, you shall become His disciples indeed, and you shall _____ the truth and the truth shall make you free. Can knowing the truth include setting one free from disease as it happened for Simpson?

7. Selective grace theology teaches that healing is based on the person's worthiness. Rom. 3:20-28 says by deeds of the law shall no man be _____, but now the righteousness of God is by _____ in Jesus Christ. Can we become righteous by keeping the law? James 5:15 says the prayer of faith shall _____ the sick, and if he has committed sins they shall be _____. In that verse, which comes first, the healing or the forgiveness?

8. Faith comes by _____ the word according to Rom. 10:17. Prv. 16:23-24 says the heart of the _____ teaches his _____; and pleasant words are sweet to the soul and _____ the bones. Can we develop faith in God's word by putting it in our heart and hearing it spoken from our own lips? Can we really improve our health by pleasant words?

CHAPTER 2

When Do We Believe We Have What We Asked For?

When you pray, believe you receive and you shall have whatsoever you say
(Mark 11:24).

Look at the words *when you pray* in the above quote. Notice they are followed by the word *believe*. Does that mean we should believe we have the thing we asked for when we pray? Do we believe before we see the evidence of the thing we are asking for?

Isn't that the very definition of faith? Why would we need faith to believe what we already have?

Albert Simpson believed when he prayed. He declared his faith and then had to act as if his heart was healed *before* symptoms left his body.

In Matthew 16:19, Jesus gives us the keys of the kingdom of heaven to bind or loose on earth and in heaven. Mark 11:23-24 says we shall have whatsoever we say if we doubt not in our heart. Here is perhaps one of the most amazing truths. The Lord says the keys of the kingdom of heaven include speaking faith.

The reader only has to glance at Romans 10:8-10 to see how words establish what is in the heart. If you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, you shall be saved. Words establish the lordship of Jesus and deliver us from the kingdom of darkness into His marvelous light (I Pet. 2:9).

Albert Simpson taught that speaking God's words from a believing heart releases the power of the Holy Spirit to bear witness to the truth (Matt. 16-19). What truth? Whatever God's word says is truth.

I can already hear the cries: "That confession-is-possession stuff is wrong. Those name-it-and-claim-it teachers are heretics. They're wrong, wrong, wrong."

While it is true that some preachers got out of balance with their over-reaching claims, the late Kenneth E. Hagin's ministry does not fit those descriptions. Hagin, often referred to as the father of the word-of-faith

movement and founder of Rhema Bible Training Center in Tulsa, taught a biblical-faith message, which has been misunderstood by many as a form of positive thinking.

Hagin never advocated denying symptoms in the body. He simply taught that believers can—and should—deny sickness the *right* to be there, based on I Peter 2:24, Galatians 3:13, and several other scriptures.

Some people have actually claimed Hagin was teaching people to lie about their circumstances. A lie is speaking what is not true. Hagin taught believers to speak the truth of God’s word, giving scripture final authority over their bodies.

How can anyone be lying if he is speaking God’s truth over his body?

Kenneth E. Hagin (1917—2003)

Born in McKinney, Texas, Kenneth Hagin experienced a miraculous and well-documented healing as teenage boy. At age fifteen, he became totally bedfast. Five medical doctors agreed (including a specialist from Mayo Clinic) there was absolutely no hope for recovery. Medical history confirmed that no one in his condition, born with a deformed heart and an incurable blood disease, had ever lived past the age of sixteen.

Bedfast twenty-four hours a day, young Kenneth soon found he could do a lot of praying. He pleaded with God to heal him day after day, week after week, and month after month. Several times, he prayed all night long. Following are excerpts from his testimony, which has been published in numerous books, TV, and radio broadcasts over the years.

“I’d pray—and I’d be certain God had heard me, because I had a spiritual feeling of some kind. I’d just *feel* like this was it. Then I’d feel my pulse. My heart wouldn’t be beating right. My legs were still paralyzed lifeless bones with a little skin stretched over them. There was no meat and no muscles in the thighs or calves.

“I would start crying and say, ‘Lord I thought You were going to heal me. I felt like You did. I just knew it. But you didn’t!’”

Kenneth grew discouraged because it seemed as if God was not listening. How many of us have been there and done that? At times, he would not even look at the Bible. Still he wasn’t willing to give up. He actually wore

off all the varnish from the headboard of his bed as he held onto it with both hands, fighting death with every fiber of his being.

In sheer desperation, he would pick up his Bible again and start reading, convinced there was life in the word. At last, one hot Texas morning at 8:30 a.m. on an August Tuesday in 1934, something happened inside his spirit.

Out of disappointment and frustration, Kenneth quoted aloud the verse from Mark 11:24 to the Lord and then argued:

“Lord, You are wrong. Now, dear Lord Jesus, when You were here on earth, You said in Mark 11:24, ‘What things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.’ Dear Lord Jesus, I desire to be healed.

“You said, ‘*When you pray.*’ I have prayed.

“You said, ‘*Believe.*’ Dear Lord Jesus, if You stood here by my bedside in the flesh, like my mother does ... and if You were to say to me, ‘Son, the trouble with you is you’re not believing,’ I would have to reply to You, ‘Dear Lord Jesus, You are lying about it—I do believe.’ (And I said this in kindness and not with arrogance.)

“When I said this, He spoke to me. He spoke it to my spirit. On the inside of me, these words were spoken: ‘Yes, you believe all right—as far as you know. But the last clause of this verse of Scripture is ‘believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.’

“Then I saw it! It was just as if a light turned on inside of me. I saw it instantly!

“I exclaimed, ‘Dear Lord Jesus, I see it! I see it! I have to believe I receive healing while my heart is still not beating right. I have to believe I receive healing for my paralysis even though I am still paralyzed from the natural standpoint. *And if I believe I receive it, then I have it.*’”

Kenneth had never understood that part of the verse. He was like everyone else. He wanted to receive a normal heart and body first, and when all symptoms were gone, only then believe he was healed. However, faith is the evidence of things that are not seen. The Holy Spirit prompted him to believe based on God’s word alone (like Albert Simpson) and not on sense knowledge (II Cor. 5:7).

When he saw that part of the verse instructing him to believe when he prayed, Kenneth immediately lifted his hands and said out loud, “Heavenly Father, dear Lord Jesus, I thank You that I am healed.”

He kept praising and thanking God for healing his body for about ten minutes.

Satan challenged him almost instantly, accusing him of lying because the paralysis and abnormal heartbeat had not changed at all. Kenneth was in the habit of feeling his heart to check the rhythm and unconsciously reached up to touch his chest. He caught himself and immediately slapped his hand, saying:

“Don’t you do it! Now, Mr. Devil, I didn’t say I *felt* as if I were healed. If I said that, I would be lying. And I didn’t say I *look* like I’m healed. If I said that, I would be lying. I didn’t say anything about how I look or feel. I said I *believe* I am healed. I believe I am, and I receive the answer to my prayer. If you say I don’t believe it, then you’re lying. Besides that, you’re a liar anyhow—Jesus said you are. Jesus said it—and what He said is so! I believe it. If I believe it, then I’ll have it. I believe Him right now. If you want to argue and fuss about it, go argue with Jesus. I didn’t say it. He said it.’

“Then I went back to the business of thanking and praising God for my healing. After about ten minutes more, I heard words from within my spirit. ‘Yes, you believe that you are healed. But healed people—*well* people—haven’t any business in bed. They need to be up.’”

Kenneth agreed at once. He had to act on his faith, so he declared he would get up right then. He didn’t look any different. His heart was not yet beating correctly. He didn’t feel any better. Physically, he had no feeling at all from his waist down and was still paralyzed. He had only about two-thirds use of his upper body, so he shoved himself up and twisted his body around to push his feet off the bed. He was determined to act on his faith.

He got hold of the bedpost and pulled himself off the bed. His feet fell on the floor like chunks of wood. He knew they were down there, not because he could feel them, but because he could see they were there. His knees sagged. There he stood, hugging the bedpost, his knees almost touching the floor. The room started spinning.

Fearful thoughts bombarded his mind. He heard a sneering voice speak to his mind, telling him he could not walk and was not healed, accusing him of lying and telling him he was going to fall down on the floor and have to lie there.

Kenneth simply ignored those negative thoughts. He hung onto the bedpost, lifted one hand slightly, and continued speaking faith.

“Thank God, I’m healed. I want to declare in the presence of Almighty God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the angels in heaven, in the presence of the devil and the evil spirits, that the word of God is true, and I believe I am healed! I believe it.”

The room kept spinning. After all, Kenneth had been flat on his back for sixteen months. He shut his eyes, and in a few minutes he could tell things had quit spinning. He opened his eyes and said again, “Thank You God, according to the word, I’m healed.”

He had not yet taken a single step.

He was simply believing and acting like God’s word was true.

That’s not easy to do, especially when you’re in pain, but he did it. Like Albert Simpson, he was acting on faith and ignoring his physical senses, which were screaming that he was still paralyzed. Then he felt something like a warm glow dropping on his head from above.

“It seemed to flow down over me, as if a jar of warm honey had been poured over my head. It ran down my whole body.

“When it reached my waist, feeling began to return to the lower part of my body. For a few seconds I felt excruciating pain. My legs felt like ten million straight pins were pricking them. I would have cried if it hadn’t felt so good! When you haven’t had any feeling at all, it even feels good to hurt! Then I felt normal. The paralysis was gone.”

Kenneth decided to walk at that moment, and he did. He dressed, went downstairs, and joined his astonished parents at the table. He continued to walk in good health to the end of his life.

Later, the Lord called him to minister. He began preaching in 1949 as an itinerant evangelist and became a widely respected, though somewhat controversial preacher, because he taught that faith is spoken, believed (before symptoms leave), and then received.

In 1967, he began a regular radio broadcast, *Faith Seminar of the Air*, continued today by his son, Kenneth Wayne Hagin.

He founded Rhema Bible Training Center in 1974 and established training centers in fourteen countries. In 1979, he founded the Prayer and Healing Center located on the Rhema campus in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma to provide a place for the sick to have the opportunity to build their faith. The Healing School was held free of charge twice daily on the campus.

Thousands received healing during his lifetime and well over 30,000 students have graduated from Rhema centers. Many Rhema graduates are nationally and internationally known for powerful healing ministries today.

Please note: Kenneth Hagin *never* taught that merely speaking the right formula of words would bring healing. He never taught people to deny disease symptoms.

Many people try to repeat his prayer, or say a memorized prayer, and fail to see any results. Then they throw out the whole concept. I did that myself at one time. It's easy to become frustrated and turn back to prayers of begging and pleading with God to do it all for you rather than to take a faith stand and fight a good fight of faith.

First and foremost, Kenneth taught that the word of God must come alive in the heart of a believer (the same message preached by Albert Simpson). He did not arrive at victory overnight. He had been reading his Bible night and day for sixteen months, convinced there was life in the word. Praise God, there is!

God truly is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Kenneth learned how to activate the law of the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2). It set him free from the curse of the law.

Endnote

1. All quoted material in this chapter is from Chapter 3 of Kenneth E. Hagin's book *What Faith Is* (Tulsa, OK: Faith Library Productions, 1969, 1983) used with permission. www.rhema.org

Questions:

1. Over the years, Christianity has been called the Great Confession (meaning to speak what you believe). Rom. 10:8-10 says if you shall _____ with your _____ the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in

your _____, you shall be saved. What part do our words play in establishing the authority of Christ as our Lord and Savior?

2. Without first seeing any change in their physical bodies, both Simpson and Hagin began to claim their healing based on God's word alone. Heb. 11:1 says faith is the _____ of things hoped for, the _____ of things not _____. Do Hagin's and Simpson's testimonies line up with this definition, since they still had *not seen* symptoms leave their bodies?

3. I Cor. 2:14 says the natural man receives _____ the things of the _____ of God, for they are _____ to him; neither can he know them because they are _____ discerned. What does the natural, un-renewed mind perceive as foolishness? Would it be considered foolish to believe you are healed before symptoms disappear?

4. Rom. 8:2 says the _____ of the Spirit of _____ in Christ Jesus has set us free from the _____ of sin and death. A law implies legalities. Can it be said that these two men learned how to activate this law of the Spirit? Did God honor the law?

5. Simpson said he knew of hundreds to fail "just at this point—they are afraid to testify, based on God's word alone, that they have been _____ before disease symptoms leave." Do these hundreds represent most people? Does the truth of God's word depend on how a person feels, or is it settled forever in heaven?

6. II Pet. 3:9 says God is not _____ that any should perish, but that _____ should come to repentance. Does the fact that many do not come to repentance mean it is not God's will?

7. Syllogistic reasoning argues that if A and B are true, they must add up to C. However the syllogistic paradigm has been found faulty and has been replaced by deductive reasoning and other logics. Selective-grace teaching is a syllogism. The reasoning is that God answers prayer, so if God wants to heal you, He will. If you remain sick after praying, it is not His will to heal you. While this sounds logical, is it necessarily so? Why or why not?

8. Mark 11:24 says whatsoever things we desire, _____ we pray, believe that we receive them and we shall _____ them. When should we believe we receive? When the circumstances change,

or when we pray? Does it require any faith to believe you are well when no disease symptoms remain?

CHAPTER 3

Can Agreement Bring Healing?

Agree on earth ... and it shall be done (Matt.18:19).

A third remarkable healing is documented in the life of Canadian born John Graham Lake.

First a business and newspaperman, Lake was ordained as a Methodist minister at age twenty-one in Ontario. He became fully convinced of the healing power of God when his wife, Jennie, was dying of tuberculosis in 1898. At that time he found power in the promise of Acts 10:38, seeing in the scripture how Jesus went about healing all that were oppressed of the devil. He prayed for Jennie and God restored her to perfect health.

Greatly encouraged by this miracle, Lake did not doubt his authority over the oppressor and soon prayed for his brother and two sisters. All three recovered from fatal illnesses.

Eventually, Lake became a widely respected minister, and settled in Zion, Illinois from 1901 to 1904, working with famed healing evangelist John Alexander Dowie. He was called to missionary work in South Africa, where he founded the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa in 1908 and also documented numerous miracle healings. Excerpts from his book, *The John G. Lake Sermons*,¹ describe his personal experience with supernatural healing from a fatal disease. Parenthetical inserts are mine.

John Graham Lake (1870—1935)

“I was sitting one morning, suffering terribly from a disease with which I had been afflicted for nine years. That morning I reviewed all the failures of other remedies that had been used in my family and my father’s family.

“I could not recall a single instance where we had received the least benefit. We had buried four brothers and four sisters. Four other members of the family were dying, chronic invalids. It was a matter of life and death. Faith was beginning to dawn.

“Suddenly I made a decision that from then on I was going to put my trust entirely in the Lord. I did not then fully realize what I had done, but by that decision of my soul, I had cut myself off forever from the help of man.

I had separated myself unto God. I had no one else to look to, for I had refused the help of man.

“I was not aware of having prayed at all. I went about my affairs, and to my surprise I awoke to the fact I was perfectly well. I had not the least idea when it took place. It may have been so gradual that I was not aware of it. That is the value of committal.”

Lake did not even pray. He simply committed his health to God.

At first, I hesitated to include the following part of Lake’s testimony, because I know people who have lost loved ones. I have also lost loved ones. I don’t want anyone to feel his prayers were not answered because of some lack of faith or perseverance. How can anyone take a faith stand on what he does not know?

John Lake had both the knowledge of God’s healing power and the anointing.

The beginning of his ministry included raising his sister from the dead by persevering in prayer. Sadly, his parents had seen eight of their children die. This sister was going to be the ninth. He found her lying still, cold, and breathless with family members sobbing beside her bed and her baby sleeping in a crib nearby.

“Just a few weeks before, my wife had been healed (of tuberculosis) when almost dead. Prior to that, my brother had been healed after having been an invalid for twenty-two years. A short time before that, my older sister had been given up to die of breast cancer. She also was healed.

“I looked at my sister and said, ‘O God, this is NOT your will. I cannot accept it! It is the work of the devil and darkness. It is the devil who has the power of death. You came to bring life.’”

How boldly Lake challenged death. He was a man who had renewed his natural mind to supernatural thinking. I am reminded that Jesus said all things are possible to them that believe. Perhaps there are times also when we receive a supernatural gift of faith to believe for the impossible. What John Lake describes next is beyond most people’s experience today:

“I discovered there are times when one’s spirit lays hold on the spirit of another. I felt my spirit lay hold of my sister’s spirit and I prayed, ‘Dear Lord, she just cannot go.’ I walked up and down the room for some time.

My spirit was crying out for somebody with faith in God to help me. I sent a telegram to Dr. John Alexander Dowie, 600 miles away. He sent me an answer back, saying, ‘Hold on to God. I am praying. She will live.’

“I have said a thousand times what it would have meant to me if, instead of Dowie’s telegram of faith words, I had received one from a weakling preacher who might have answered: ‘I am afraid you are on the wrong track; the days of miracles are over.’ (Or, ‘It is not God’s will. He must need her in heaven.’)

“It was the strength of Dowie’s faith-filled words that came over the wire and the lightnings of my soul began to flash. The very lightnings of God began to flash in my spirit. I prayed, ‘This thing is of hell. It cannot be. It will not be. In the Name of Jesus Christ, I abolish this death and sickness and say she shall live.’

“As I finished praying, I saw her eyelids blink. Five days later she came to our father’s home, and the Lake family sat down to Christmas dinner for the very first time in their lives when they were all well.

“That was twenty five years ago, (from the year 1949) when a man who trusted God for healing was almost considered *insane* in the eyes of the church and the world.”

Lake refused to accept death. He did not give up. He sent that telegram to Dowie and persevered in prayer all day long until the powers of darkness were dispelled and life returned.

It may seem John Lake’s testimony places all responsibility squarely on the person praying. As previously stated, that is not the message of this book. Christians are not responsible for anything but to pray the prayer of faith, stand in faith, and leave the answer in God’s hands. The Holy Spirit will lead a person to press on, or to let go. And yes, there is a time for letting go, discussed in Chapter 16.

John Lake’s healing ministry blossomed soon after his sister’s astonishing restoration to life and health. God called him to missions overseas and miraculously provided for his needs and those of his entire family. It’s a fascinating story of God’s supernatural handiwork.

Eventually, he pastored a church in Spokane, Washington with a staff of ministers who believed in God’s healing power. According to the publisher,

“the record shows they prayed for up to 200 persons every day, and over 100,000 documented healings took place.”

Faith in Christ the Healer sent them on their way, well and rejoicing.

Endnote

1. All quoted material in this chapter is from *The John G. Lake Sermons*, (Voice of Healing Publishing Co., Dallas, 1949) pp. 24, 29-31.

Questions:

1. James 5:16 and Matt. 18:19 tell us that if two shall _____ on earth as touching anything they ask, it shall be _____ for them by the Father. John Lake said his fervent praying would not have been successful if he had not had Dowie’s agreement to encourage him. Does it follow that unbelief can rob a person of faith?

2. John Lake’s prayers were based on faith in the goodness of God. He boldly proclaimed that death was *not* God’s will and commanded, “I rebuke death and sickness and say she shall _____.” Is this different from the selective-grace view of healing, which emphasizes *if it be thy will*?

3. Lake refused to accept the obvious circumstances and continued praying for hours. Is this kind of perseverance something we often see today? How many people would look at a dead woman and continue to pray for her recovery?

4. Psa. 90:10 says a man has seventy to eighty years of natural life. Prv. 10:27 says the fear of the Lord _____ days. Did John Lake overreach the boundaries of his authority when he boldly rebuked death from his sister and shouted it was not God’s will?

5. First Cor. 15:26 says the last _____ to be destroyed is _____. Heb. 2:14 says Jesus, through His death, destroyed the power of him that had the _____ of death, that is the _____. Jas. 4:7-8 says when a believer submits to God and resists the devil, the devil has to _____. Could that be what happened when Lake resisted death as an enemy and called his sister back to life?

6. Matt 18:19 plainly states that if two shall agree on earth as touching anything, it shall be done for them. When it comes to illness,

everybody agrees they want the sick person to recover, and they hope God will restore health. Yet so many times it does not happen. I believe Jesus meant just what He said—“Ask (*demand* in the original Greek) and you shall receive.” What should believers be agreeing with? The doctor’s diagnosis, the hope for wellness, or the word of God?” Whose words are subject to change?

7. Life and death are in the _____ of the _____ (Prov. 18:21). What were Lake and Dowie agreeing on? Were they pleading with God to restore the sister’s life if it was His will, or were they in agreement, proclaiming the power of God’s word over death?

8. Can two believers agree on earth that God’s word has greater authority over the body than the doctor’s words? What then would be the result?

CHAPTER 4

Do Believers Have Authority Over Illness?

The tongue of the wise is health; the lip of truth shall be established forever
(Prov. 12:18-19).

Albert Simpson, Kenneth Hagin, and John Lake each received healing by believing the word only. Nobody laid hands on them and prayed the prayer of faith.

The following testimonies are examples of people who spoke with authority, declaring God's truth over their circumstances.

Careful students of the Bible find authority operates on three levels: God's authority is sovereign, satan's authority is limited on the earth, and the believer also has authority in Christ's name. The boundary lines for the believer's authority are under the Holy Spirit's direction.

There are those who say Jesus offers all the authority of His name to anyone who exercises faith, according to John 16:23, "Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it to you."

Some say believers have authority only over their own bodies and households.

Others teach that Christians must grow and mature in their exercise of authority; that a U.S. Army private should not expect to act as a general the day he gets out of basic training.

Kenneth Hagin taught that if we do not learn to exercise authority in Christ over the devil in our own lives, we will likely remain defeated, downtrodden, and robbed of abundant life.

Discernment from the Spirit is necessary. Every believer needs discernment to know what to accept as coming from the Father and what to resist as coming from the devil.

I have been pleased to meet believers who have exercised amazing authority by taking dominion over both disease and devilish circumstances, speaking faith-filled words on the authority of Mark 11:23-24.

Satan often targets those who are carrying the good news. When Paul arrived safely on the island of Malta after surviving the shipwreck, a poisonous snake fastened onto his arm. Paul simply shook the serpent off in the flames and suffered no ill effects (Acts 28:3-5). As a result, the astonished islanders experienced healing and salvation.

The following testimony is from the highly respected missionary-evangelist Gene Burgess of First Assembly of God, Memphis, Tennessee. Gene has traveled the world since the early 1960s to bring the gospel to third world countries.

Years ago, while in the South Pacific on the Solomon Islands, Pastor Gene received a communication from another pastor's wife back home in the states.

The Serpent Shook Me Until I Collapsed

By Missionary-Evangelist Gene Burgess

“Somehow, the Holy Spirit revealed to her that I had a serious kidney infection. She prayed and interceded for me in the Spirit, praying in tongues (I Cor. 14:14) until she felt peace and victory over the infection. Thanks to her obedient prayer, I was healed.

“Later, when I was ministering in Bangkok, my Aunt Nell Brewer saw, in the Spirit, a snake curled around my arm. She too prayed in tongues for my release.

“What had appeared as a snake in her vision was actually an electrical wire. It shook me until I collapsed. The current left a deep scar on my right palm. It took weeks to heal as it had burned my flesh to the bone, but I survived.

“On some days I look down and see the scar, and I'm reminded that we serve a God who still does miracles through praying believers who exercise their authority over the devil.”

* * *

The year was 1972 when Pastor Gene's younger brother, Ronald, also a missionary-evangelist, had the following encounter with the supernatural.

Too Late to Avoid the Collision!

By Missionary-Evangelist Ronald Burgess

“At the time, Bob Beard and I were taking Bibles and other materials into Yugoslavia and meeting with believers. We were traveling just after dark on very primitive back roads when we came upon a slow-moving vehicle. It may have been a truck. I couldn’t see around it. The night was so dark, and I was uncertain what lay ahead. Since we were traveling at a good rate of speed, I had to pull into the opposite lane to avoid crashing into the back of the truck.

“Instantly, I saw we were heading directly into a horse-drawn lumber wagon hauling huge logs. It had no lights of any kind, but the wagon and horses appeared, plainly visible in our headlights.

“There was nowhere to turn. It was too late to avoid certain collision! I threw up my hands in front of my face expecting to endure the crash.

“Nothing happened. When I pulled my hands down, we were driving along with nothing but open road ahead of us!

“The most incredible feeling rushed over me. Bob and I were both so astonished that we could hardly speak other than to confirm something incredible had just happened. We were never able to talk about it again, as each time we tried, we choked up so that we could not speak for the tears streaming down our faces.

“Approximately a week later, maybe a bit longer, I got a letter from a lady in my home church in Memphis, asking what had happened to me at a specific time. She gave the exact hour and date of the near-accident and said the Holy Spirit had awakened her at that time to pray in tongues for me. She wrote that she interceded until she felt a release.”

* * *

Why Does God Need Words Spoken on Earth?

“Whatsoever you shall bind on *earth* shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt 16:19). The praying intercessors did not know what dangers Gene and Ronald were facing. However, the Holy Spirit knew. He used those obedient women’s tongues to loose (or release) supernatural protection from Heaven and bind danger on earth.

Would things have happened differently if they had not prayed? Does our sovereign God *need* words spoken on earth to bind danger? Couldn’t he

simply have given His angels charge over them? God has always used intercessors since the time when believers were praying for Peter, and He sent an angel to open the doors of the prison (Acts 12:5-7).

Things happen when God's people exercise their authority in prayer. God is sovereign, however it appears He has chosen most often to operate through the authority of His people. That's an astonishing thought. (Sure makes me want to pray more.) Could it be there is a legality of dominion, which God respects?

I Will Fly Again.

Captain Dale Black's Decree

Captain Dale Black, author of the book, *Flight to Heaven*,¹ began a miraculous journey back to health after surviving a horrific plane crash.

On July 18, 1969, nineteen-year-old Dale, a young pilot, was aboard a twin-engine red-and-white Piper Navajo taking off from Hollywood-Burbank Airport (today known as Bob Hope Airport) in California. The Piper crashed into a tall cemetery monument killing the pilot, Charles Burns, 27, of Lakewood, and copilot, Eugene Bain, 38, of Fresno.

Doctors at St. Joseph Hospital in Burbank said Dale suffered multiple severe and crippling injuries. After three days in a coma, during which time he experienced a visit to heaven, Dale woke without knowing the extent of his injuries, which would leave him wheelchair bound, blind in one eye, and certainly unable to pass the pilot's physical exam.

Dale simply declared he would fly again. By faith, he decreed his recovery: "Don't worry, Dad, it will all come back. God will restore me and on the anniversary of the crash, I will fly over that monument as pilot in command."

He spoke his future, basing it on God's word, *whosoever asks receives*, and declined a procedure to fuse his shattered ankle bones, although the doctor warned him not to postpone it or the bones would die beyond repair.

Over the following months, Dale made some astonishing gains and also suffered discouraging setbacks, yet he did not stop believing God. Miraculously, he recovered sight in the blind eye.

Dale's Abraham moment arrived after Doctor Graham sadly reported that the surgery had been postponed too long. The shattered anklebones

were dead. There was no way they could ever mend. Dale would remain a cripple for the rest of his life.

The young pilot had seen so much physical progress already that giving up did not make sense. However, after such devastating news, he stopped insisting on healing and prayed a prayer of surrender:

“God, I give up my obsession to walk again. I will still pray for healing, because I believe that is Your will according to Your word, but this time I will put You first in my life and not my own dreams. If You can use me as a cripple in a wheelchair, then not my will but Yours be done.”

Dale meant what he said. At his next visit, Doctor Graham again shook his head and muttered, “I don’t understand it, but the ankle bones are healing.”

Miraculously healing! Dale was going to walk again.

“He who loses his life for My sake will find it,” (Matt. 10:39). Those words echoed in Dale’s spirit. He realized his healing was completed only after he learned to surrender his hope on an altar to God.

He had to learn to seek the Healer first, rather than the healing.

Incredibly and against all odds, on the anniversary of that terrible crash, Dale did indeed fly as pilot in command over the very monument where the crash had occurred—just as he said he would by faith in the word of the Lord.

Victorious, but humbled, he recovered completely and became a commercial pilot. He flew all over the world for more than forty years. Before retiring, Captain Dale also flew as a missionary pilot to over fifty countries.

* * *

Escaping Certain Death

Brenda Lange has appeared as a guest on Oasis Radio’s *On The Road Show* four times with host David Warren and also on a TBN broadcast out of Oklahoma City. *Guideposts* magazine featured her miraculous story in the February 2001 issue.

I had the honor of interviewing Brenda during her 2011 “friend-raising” tour in the U.S.

The Texas-born cowgirl grew up killing an occasional barn snake with a shovel. She knew how to handle horses and other animals. Later, she earned a B.S. degree in agriculture from Texas A and M and also trained to become a registered nurse. Without realizing it at the time, Brenda had learned skills that uniquely equipped her for life in the African wilderness (bush).

In 1987, the Lord called her to fulfill His vision for her life. She followed His direction, left her dream ranch in Gonzales, Texas, and became ordained by Victory Fellowship of Ministries in Tulsa.

The young woman set out on a remarkable journey of faith. At that time, thirty years of war had ended in Mozambique, leaving many starving children in need of the most basic necessities.

By 1991, Brenda was learning how to run an orphanage “the Lord’s way.” Soon she was establishing homes for orphans, eventually working in remote Balama, five hours of rugged wilderness travel west of Pemba.

Affectionately known as “Bush Bunny Brenda,” she currently provides for the needs of more than 1600 orphans in two counties in Mozambique. These children have been threatened by extreme poverty, starvation, and disease, and God has not forgotten them.

Brenda learned to trust God while facing certain death more than nineteen times during her years of ministry. Her riveting book, *African Adventures*, is filled with triumphant stories to the glory and power of God.

The remote orphanage where she first worked was located deep in the bush of Mozambique. She had no electricity and only the most primitive of bathing and cooking equipment.

One night during a lightning storm, a bush fire broke out putting the entire orphanage at risk.

I Wasn't Ready to Give Up.

By Brenda Lange

“I was helpless to fight the flames by any natural means, and I knew it. Whipped by heavy winds, the tree-top-high flames roared toward the grass-roofed compound. Irreplaceable food supplies had just been stocked to feed the children for the next season. Of even greater concern, lives were at stake if we could not outrun the fire.

“Where do you turn when you’re facing disaster? The Holy Spirit prompted me I have authority as a believer and should use it against the fire. Remembering how Jesus spoke to the wind and waves, I stood in front of my hut, pointed my finger toward the blistering wind, and commanded, ‘In the name of Jesus, you reverse, or be still!’

“Nothing changed. The wind and orange flames raged forward.

“Next, I commanded the flames, ‘STOP in the name of Jesus and do not cross the fire break!’

“In the natural, I knew our pitiful firebreak was overgrown with grass and would not stop any fire. A single spark carried by those strong gusts to a grass rooftop would ignite the whole place in moments. What chance did we have? None without Jesus, and because of Him, I wasn’t ready to give up.

“Astonishingly, when the roaring flames reached the edge of the useless firebreak, the fire acted as if it hit an invisible wall. Praise God! Not one blade of grass inside the firebreak was singed!

“The next day, I went out and photographed the evidence of this miracle. The fire had stopped in a straight line, plainly visible down the entire length of the firebreak—amazing to see, and almost unbelievable, yet the visible evidence was indisputable.”

Brenda did not ask God to put out the fire if it was His will.

Instead she boldly commanded it to stop in the name of Jesus. The Lord reminded her that *she* has dominion and power over the earth as His child, (Psa. 115:16 and Luke 10:19) and He would intervene *at her* command.

In yet another astonishing, life-or-death incident, Brenda again saw the power of Jesus’ name when she exercised her blood-bought authority over a man who was dying from a venomous snakebite.

You’ll be Dead in Fifteen Minutes!

By Brenda Lange

“Crispo, my interpreter and right-hand man, was the key figure in helping me to establish the first remote orphanage.

“An avid hunter and lover of wild pork meat, Crispo and two other men set out one afternoon to check their rope snares in the eight-foot elephant

grass along the Lugenda River.

“As they pushed through the grass on a narrow dirt trail, they spotted an empty rope snare. Grabbing for the rope, Crispo never saw the lightning-fast, seven-foot black mamba until it sunk both fangs into the back of his hand. The bite injected him with a deadly paralytic nerve poison that kills a grown man in thirty minutes. All three men ran for their lives, aware that a mad mamba will bite anything moving within it’s range of sight.

“When Crispo reached the dirt road about 150 yards away, he lost control of his legs and had to sit down on a log. Running had pumped the deadly venom throughout his entire body, and he was quickly losing the ability to move.

“A villager hopped on a bicycle, raced to my mud hut, and managed to gasp the chilling words, ‘Crispo! Snake bit!’

“I screamed, ‘HELP JESUS! Not Crispo!’

“As an RN, I knew that no person has ever lived from any snake bite in this part of Africa without immediate medical care. The only hospital was five hours away, and I had no anti-venom. I felt helpless, knowing my friend was doomed to die rapidly, so I did what I’d been taught in Victory Christian Bible School. I took authority, using the word of God and the Name of Jesus.

“Racing to the river in my pickup, I pulled up beside the log where Crispo sat.

“Two men lifted him into the passenger side of the truck, as his legs and arms were already paralyzed, and he could not speak. I said, ‘Crispo, my brother, start thanking Jesus in your head for healing you and I’ll pray, because without a miracle you’ll be dead in the next fifteen minutes.’

“I whipped the truck around on that dirt road and began to drive and speak to the problem. ‘In the name of Jesus, I rebuke the spirit of death, and command life to come back into him!’

“**I stood on Mark 16:18**, declaring that no poison can come against us. I asked the Lord Jesus to nullify the poison and cleanse Crispo’s blood with His own precious blood.

“Nothing happened.

“I recognized the death rattle in the dying man’s throat. Crispo gasped a last gurgling breath and was gone. Relaxed in death, his body slid down in the seat until his knees hit the dash.

“Suddenly, I got so mad at the devil for taking his life that I shouted, ‘I rebuke the spirit of death, and I command LIFE into him in Jesus’ Name!’

“At that moment, Crispo sat straight up in the seat, turned to me and said almost calmly, ‘I feel better.’

“I began shouting, ‘Thank you Jesus! Hallelujah!’ A moment before I had been madder than the mad mamba. Now I was bouncing up and down with hilarious joy on the seat of my pickup.

“Crispo, take a deep breath,” I urged, knowing how a mamba’s bite paralyzes the diaphragm and makes breathing impossible.

“That’s better,” Crispo exclaimed, inhaling easily.

“His arm was swollen to his shoulder, and he could not bend his elbow or his fingers. The fang marks were clearly visible for several days. When he climbed out of my truck, the villagers all fled in terror, thinking they were seeing a ghost! They had already begun preparing for a funeral.

“There is much more to this story, but this portion proves that death has to bow to the name of Jesus. Crispo fully recovered with all swelling gone by the next morning. He became Africa’s first known survivor of a mamba bite without medical intervention. *Guideposts* magazine published the story and soon our orphanage drew much attention.

“The name of Jesus is the most powerful tool the Lord has given to us.

“In John 14:13-14, Jesus states, ‘Whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do.’ In the original Greek language of the New Testament, the word *ask* actually means *demand*.

“Jesus gave us the right to demand whatsoever, but few believers realize it. Once you do, satan will tremble, for his greatest fear is that large numbers of believers will rise up in Christ’s authority and start commanding people to be healed and raised from the dead. That is exactly what the disciples did when they finally understood their blood-bought authority and their commission from Jesus.

“Grab it, because Jesus gives it to all believers as a free gift to use in saving yourself and others.”

* * *

Is This a Better Way to Pray?

Brenda’s boldness is astonishing. It is almost outrageous to think believers have the right to actually *demand* anything of God. Most Christians shy away from such boldness in a show of humility.

Even knowing that God’s will is His word, too many Christians are aware they have prayed prayers that seem to go unanswered. I know I have. Why is that? Am I praying amiss?

Is there any faith-demand released in a prayer asking for God to intervene *if it is His will*? Are these conditional words actually based on doubt, with a built-in excuse, should the request go unanswered?

How did Jesus pray?

As I pondered this, I asked the Lord, “Jesus, did you ever pray a prayer that went unanswered?”

He took me to the Lord’s Prayer, specifically to, “Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done.”

I realized at once His words are yet to be fulfilled in the earth. Jesus has a kingdom not of this world; however, God’s kingdom will be established on earth when satan’s time is up.

Not only that, the Holy Spirit whispers that Jesus was not asking or beseeching the Father to fulfill a request. He was not begging: “Please Father, let your kingdom come. Please let your will be done. Please make it happen.” Instead, He was issuing a faith-demand to establish God’s kingdom on earth.

“Thy kingdom come.

“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Not **IF**, but **BE**.

Jesus Decreed The Kingdom

“He hath made a decree which shall not pass”(Psa. 148:6).

I was startled at that. Jesus was decreeing God’s kingdom into existence—establishing it by His words spoken on earth. Teaching His followers to

decree it with Him. Just as God spoke, “Let there be light,” and light came into existence.

Speaking of light, astronomers have discovered the birth of new stars is a continuing process. When God commanded light to be, His word went forth. It has lost none of its creative power. Light is continuing to *be*.

God’s will is His word and not some far out, unknowable, mystical experience. God has spoken in times past by the prophets. In these last days, He has spoken by His Son (Heb. 1:1-2). We have the sure words of Jesus who framed all creation with the power of His words.

Nothing is more powerful.

How many faithful believers have agreed with Jesus in praying the Lord’s Prayer over the last 2,000 years?

By Christ’s decree, God’s kingdom will be established and restored to its rightful King. In the meantime, His body (the believers) on earth is no longer under satan’s dominion, but they don’t always act like it.

Abundant grace teaches people that giving God’s words authority over circumstances is a better way to pray, imitating Jesus. God’s words, spoken by His people, are the way He establishes His will and His blessings in the lives of His followers. Just as faith-filled decrees protected the Burgess missionaries, established health for Captain Dale Black, stopped the fire for Brenda Lange, and raised Crispo from the dead.

What if they had accepted their circumstances as the will of God?

What would have happened to the orphanage? To Crispo?

Endnote

1. Captain Dale Black’s story is used by permission from his book, *Flight to Heaven* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2010).

All other material in this chapter is written especially for the author.

Questions:

1. Captain Dale Black had a choice to believe the doctor’s reports or the word of God. If Dale had accepted the doctor’s diagnosis, would he have recovered so completely?

2. Jesus said, “If you ask anything of the Father in my _____, I will do it,” (Jn. 14: 13-14). Does this indicate we have the power of attorney to use the Name above all names? Does the word ask, meaning *demand* in the original Greek, take on a whole different understanding of prayer?
3. Would the bush fire have died out if Brenda Lange had not commanded it to stop in the authority of Jesus’ name? Would Crispo have lived?
4. Acts 1:8 says believers shall receive _____ after the Holy Spirit is come upon them. The word *power* is used interchangeably with the word *authority* in many translations. Would Jesus give us power and not expect us to use it?
5. Some teach that our Sovereign God accomplishes His will apart from whatever people do. Jesus instructed His followers to preach, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and cast out devils (Matt.10-8). Can God accomplish this without His body of flesh (the believers) on the earth? If He could, would the church be necessary?
6. Mark 16:20 says the apostles preached everywhere and the Lord _____ with them with _____ following. Is there a balance between God’s works and man’s obedience to His leading?
7. In both Matt. 16:19 and 18:18, Jesus assures His followers that whatsoever we bind on _____ shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever we _____ on earth shall be loosed in heaven. God is sovereign. Why does God need the words of believers spoken *on the earth*?
8. The earth is the Lord’s, but Psa. 115:16 says God gave it to the _____ of men. Jesus called satan the prince of this world in Jn. 12: 31. Can it be that God actually needs faith words, prayers and decrees to intervene in Satan’s domain?
9. Job 22:28 says you shall _____ a thing and it shall be _____ unto you. Could this verse be the Old Testament counterpart of Mark 11:23-24—you shall have what you **say**? (I will add, **what you say in agreement with God’s word**. obviously God is not going to give you something against His word, such as your neighbor’s husband.)

CHAPTER 5

Does God Sovereignly Heal?

You have kept me alive that I should not go down to the pit (Psa. 30:3).

As a news reporter in Rockford, Illinois during the 1990s, I worked at the city police department, regularly scanning reports for the weekly *Rockford Labor News* Police Beat column. That's how I became acquainted with Officer Sherri Glover, an elegant and lovely African-American woman, the opposite of what one might expect a police officer to be. She is surprisingly small and slender, with delicate features.

Sherri's sudden thrust into a terrifying, supernatural encounter began on April 14, 1993, at 2:15 a.m. in the pre-dawn black of a cool spring morning.

She sat writing a report inside her squad car on Hinkley Avenue, an area known for violence and drive-by shootings, common among members of rival street gangs.

At the time, her husband, Detective Theo Glover, was assigned to a street-gang crime unit. Sherri was well aware of rumors that a gang member could move up in rank by shooting a law officer. As Theo's wife, she knew she could be a possible target; however, she did not worry.

The Fifth Bullet Struck My Head

By Sherri Glover (as told to Harriett Ford)

“On this dark morning, alone in a dangerous area, I felt an inner voice kept warning me to go back to the station. I ignored it, wanting to finish the report first. Finally, I reached up to shove the papers under the right visor, the place where most cops stash reports to keep them from falling into our faces if we get into a speed chase.

“This reaching up may have stopped a fatal bullet from hitting me. Without any warning, I heard four gunshots explode beside me. My senses suddenly went into slow motion. I felt a slight stinging sensation in my elbow.

“There was no blood visible on my navy blue sweater.

“Not yet.

“Then I heard the fifth shot and felt a blow to the left side of my head. My body was hurled across the seat.

“I began to fight the greatest fight of my entire life. Fighting *for* my very life. My body immediately shut down, but I heard these words shouting at me from somewhere inside: *Kick. Move. Breathe. Recover. Recover!*

“My body did not respond. Much later, I learned that if I had moved at that moment the gunman would surely have fired again through the squad car’s window glass, because he had stood there, calmly and deliberately reloading his .357 Magnum.

“A mighty rushing noise came from somewhere, like the sound of a great water fall. I didn’t know it then, but it was the sound of blood gushing from my nose, mouth, and ears. The bullet had passed through my sinus cavity. I could not breathe because I was starting to choke on my own blood.

“As I lay there dying, I actually felt my spirit leave my body. I saw a mirror image of myself. My body had slumped on the seat. My soul no longer had a safe place to be. The simple expression on my face seemed to say, ‘Oh well. I’m dead.’

“The next instant, I found myself in an awful place of total darkness and desolation. I had the sensation of floating, to my horror, downward. *Downward* instead of up! I became aware of thousands of other souls around me, all in great mourning and unbearable sorrow.

“I heard weeping. Wailing. Deep groaning.

“Sadly, I could not reach out to these people or offer them any comfort at all. For I, too, was in deep sorrow. The worst thing was that it was *not* a repentant sorrow.

“It was too late for me to repent!

“What an unspeakable and horrible realization.

“I felt absolute despair and total anguish that I had not learned to serve God while there was still time. The misery of such hopelessness is beyond words.

“Then suddenly, I was back inside my own body in the squad car again. A feeling of energy swept through my being.

“I heard a voice so powerful. So majestic. So all-encompassing. The Great Voice said, ‘Yes, there is someone out there who is evil and mighty, but I am mightier.’

“I started praying the Lord’s Prayer like never before in my life, even though I could not open my mouth. By the time my mind said, ‘hallowed be thy name,’ I felt a rush of air being forced into my lungs.

“Then I heard the sound of my own voice repeating the prayer.

“Where did that breath of life come from?

“A fellow officer, who was only half a block away, quickly arrived and was trying to assure me that I was going to be okay.

“I already knew that, because the presence of the Lord was so real.

“I tried to reassure him as I felt his fear, and it was great fear.

“He couldn’t hear me say anything distinctly, as I could only mumble. Dispatch alerted the fire department and an ambulance was on the way even before they knew my exact location. It was one heck of a ride to the hospital. So great was their concern that the rescuers did not take time to lock down the gurney and it slid from side to side.

“In the emergency room, my head started to swell from blood clots forming inside my skull. For the second time that night, I was fighting for my life.

“I grabbed hold of the doctor’s coat and tried to say, ‘I can’t breathe, I can’t breathe!’

“Then I lost consciousness. My heart stopped beating once again. However God was not going to let me die. He had already breathed a breath of life into me. This time the doctors revived me from clinical death.

“I later learned the bullets had struck me twice in the arm and once in the shoulder. The fifth one struck my head. It entered and exited without breaking or even bruising a bone.

“A miracle? I think so.

“The doctors did not expect me to wake up from surgery, but I gained consciousness that very day. They did not believe I would leave the hospital for many more days. I went home only five days later.

“I lost my elbow and had to deal with recurring dizziness for awhile from damage to my inner ear. I also suffered short-term memory loss for a time and had to carry a notebook to write down where I was going and what hour I expected to be there.

“Nightmares, flashbacks, and depression became my next enemies. I defeated the anger and depression with prayer. The flashbacks I learned to count as great sources of information to help me adjust to the trauma of the shooting.

“Rockford police arrested the shooter within hours of my ordeal. He was convicted and sentenced to a minimum of forty five years.”

“I returned to police work for awhile, but God had other plans for my life, including ministry.

“My experience in satan’s world taught me that I had been a lukewarm, middle-of-the-road Christian. Yes, I had believed in God since the age of fifteen, but I hadn’t served Him. I had been content to live and let live.

“Until the shooting, I had not even believed there was a satan.

“From time to time, I heard the Holy Spirit prompting me to read my Bible, go to church, pray, do something for someone else. But I didn’t listen.

“Today I listen.

“I do not doubt there is someone out there who is evil and mighty. However, God is mightier. Greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world. To God be the glory forever.”

Endnote

All material in this chapter is from an interview with Officer Sherri Glover.

Questions:

1. Sherri’s story brings up interesting questions. Was her recovery a sovereign act of God? Do you think her parents, or others, were praying for her protection?
2. Eph. 2:2 speaks of the prince of the power of the _____, the _____ that now works in the children of disobedience. Who is this prince?_____ Where is this power-of-the-air realm located?

3. Was Sherri a child of God, or a child of disobedience? _____ Can a person be both?

4. Sherri describes herself as a passive believer before the shooting. Rev. 3:16 says because you are _____ Jesus will spew you out of his mouth. What do you think this passage means?

5. First Jn. 4:4 says greater is He that is in you, than _____ that is in the world. Who is in the world? _____ Who is the Greater One?

6. James 4:7-8 says we should submit to _____, and He will draw near to us, and resist the _____ and he will flee from us. Can anyone resist the devil without first submitting to God?

7. In Deut. 30:19, God instructs us to choose life. In Rev. 22:17, Jesus says to let him who is thirsty come and _____ wishes, let him take the water of _____ freely. Is anyone excluded? _____ Jesus came to bring abundant life. Does abundant life include sickness?

8. In the book of Acts, numerous miraculous healings took place through the apostles' faith. Even Peter's shadow and his handkerchiefs transmitted healing. Is God ever limited to a particular methodology?

CHAPTER 6

Natural Versus Supernatural Thinking

“It is no secret what God can do, what He’s done for others, He will do for you.” These words from an old gospel song encourage, however they do not instruct.

Some readers will say: Those ministers, Albert Simpson, John Lake, and Kenneth Hagin had a gift of healing. Not everyone has that gift. I’m not a police officer working in a dangerous job. I’m not a preacher or a missionary. I’m just an ordinary housewife, or a family man, working nine to five. I don’t have that kind of calling.

For those people, I have included testimonies from ordinary men and women in all walks of life who have experienced extraordinary healings.

The following three accounts describe the way all Christians hope to receive healing. Simply by asking the Father.

Margie Lopez’s Italian ancestry shows in her dark eyes and hair. A retired executive secretary, wife, mother, and young grandmother, Margie is active in her Missouri community and known for her sweet spirit and love of the Lord.

Would I Wake Up The Next Morning?

By Margie Lopez

“I was always a very active little girl. This didn’t please my mother, because as a baby I’d had rheumatic fever. The doctor said I had permanent heart damage and would not live to see my teenage years.

“I remember Mom always telling me to sit down, take it easy, and not to run and jump because I had a damaged heart. One day I asked her what that meant. She told me about my condition, saying that if I didn’t take it easy, I was going to die of a heart attack as a young girl. Perhaps she told me this so I would slow down and not over-exert myself. I also remember having a ton of energy and not being able to relax for great lengths of time.

“The first time Mom told me I was going to die young, I had a hard time sleeping at night, wondering if I would even wake up the next morning. I thought about dying all the time and prayed that it wouldn’t hurt.

Thankfully, my parents were wonderful Christians. Mom comforted me, telling me about heaven, and assuring me that my life was in the Lord's hands.

“One Sunday evening when I was around ten years old, I went to a service with my older sister who had married and was attending a different church with her husband. It was the first time I had ever been in a healing service. I listened as the pastor read James 5:14-15, ‘Is anyone among you 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 will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.’

“I watched as people went forward and were anointed with oil. The pastor and elders prayed for them and then declared they were healed in the name of Jesus. I was amazed and wondered why my parents had never taken me forward to be prayed for in that way.

“Hey, if that's all it took to be healed, why do people walk around sick? As the prayer line shortened, I got out of my seat and went to the front. I told the pastor about my heart condition and said I didn't want to die young. He anointed my head with oil and the elders prayed for me.

“**A strange sensation** entered my body. I remember getting goose bumps and feeling a warm sensation wash over me.

“I *knew* I was healed. I believed it with all my heart. What was to doubt? It was in the Bible, God's holy word, and we know God doesn't lie. How could I doubt it?

“I didn't tell my mother about my experience right away. Not long after, I was running around our house and yard, playing very hard. She scolded me and warned, ‘Margie, you'd better sit down and rest. You're putting too much stress on your heart.’ I looked at her and answered, ‘It doesn't matter now, Mom, because I've been healed.’

“I told her how I had visited my sister's church and had gone forward for healing prayer. I explained how the minister anointed me with oil and prayed. She seemed happy and didn't want to cast doubt on my childlike faith, so she didn't say any more about it.

“I continued to be a very active little girl and never had any heart problems. I grew up past my teenage years, got married and had children, and never had my heart checked.

“When I was around twenty-five years old, I had an infection affecting the lining of my lungs and heart (pleuropericarditis). The cardiologist asked me if I’d ever experienced any heart trouble. I told him my story, and even though I explained God had healed me, he said I needed to have a cardio echogram. The results showed my heart was *completely* healthy. There was no evidence I ever had any kind of heart trouble.

“I know the Lord healed me when I was ten years old, and He has healed me many times since then. I praise God and give Him all the glory!”

* * *

Margie heard the word and believed the prayer of faith would heal her. She went forward expecting to receive. Then she acted on her faith, playing, climbing trees, and enjoying her childhood. She also established her healing by telling her mother how God had touched her.

* * *

My longtime friend and prayer partner, Victoria Haller, a petite and attractive, now-retired grandmother in Rockford, Illinois, began life as a premature baby, weighing only three and a half pounds. Her tiny body had to struggle to survive.

But for the Grace of God ...

By Victoria Haller

“The staff didn’t pay too much attention to me. They didn’t think I would live. My twin weighed only a pound, and she was stillborn. But for the grace of God, I would have followed her in death. However, our wonderful God had a plan for my life.

“When I was two years old, I had tonsillitis. My tonsils were so swollen they were closing my windpipe. I had a very high fever. There were no antibiotics available, such as the medical community relies on today. Somehow, I got through it. God had a plan.

“I was four when the polio epidemic hit Rockford, Illinois so my mother took me and my sister to Madison. Either I got polio in Madison, or I

brought it there. I was in the hospital in quarantine for a couple of weeks. Miraculously, I fully recovered and had no paralysis. God had a plan.

“Between my eighth and tenth birthdays, I developed rheumatic fever. I was slowly getting better and my sed rate kept coming down, but it had not hit normal.

“One Saturday, I went to have my blood tested again. When I got home, I was standing in my mother’s kitchen, and I went to the window. I looked up at the sky. It was a beautiful day. The sun was shining, the clouds were very white, and the sky was deeply blue. As a ten-year-old child, for the first time I called upon Jesus. I just said, ‘Jesus, please make me well.’

“Then I saw the Lord! The vision looked blue-gray in color.

“First I saw only His Face. Slowly the full length of His body appeared. He had shoulder length hair and a beard. He wore a full gown and a sash draped from His shoulder to His waist. A cloth the same color of the sash was wrapped around His waist. He held up His hand, but did not say a word.

I don’t know how long the vision lasted. Then He was gone.

“I knew that *I knew* it was the Lord.

“Jesus revealed Himself to me, a little girl, in a way that I would recognize Him (Jn. 14:21). I told my parents I saw the Lord, and they didn’t say anything to that.

“When the doctor’s office called back to give us the report, my blood work came back normal.

“No doctor has ever been able to tell I had rheumatic fever. I do not have the common heart murmur. It is just written on my chart that I once had the disease in childhood.

“Praise God. He had a plan for my life. ‘I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord’ (Psa. 118:17).

“I was thirty-two when my neighbor led me to the Lord on May 29th, 1965. That was the first time I asked God to forgive me of my sins and come into my heart to be my Lord and Savior. I said, ‘Jesus, take my life, change my life. Anything has to be better than this.’ I was born again that

night. The Lord had a plan for my life. I couldn't have survived some of the things I've been through without Him.

“What an awesome God we have.

“Every day with Jesus gets better and better. The best is yet to come.”

* * *

As we age, do we walk more by sight than by faith? Both Margie Lopez and Vickie Haller were young girls when they asked Jesus to make them well. They simply believed. They received. And it was so. As adults, both women have faced other health challenges. They eventually overcame, but not as instantly or as easily as when they were children. Why is that? As we mature, do we become more firmly entrenched in the medical view of illness? Do we lose some of our childlike faith and depend more on conventional medicine?

Our minds are programmed to expect aches and pains as we mature. TV personalities advise women to take drugs because their bones become thinner with age. Media sources urge people to take flu shots, pain relievers, and seasonal allergy meds. We learn that antibiotics can cure bacterial infections. Radiation and chemotherapy can shrink cancers. Insulin helps control blood sugar, etc.

Then we see an X-ray showing a crooked spine, a tumor, or a bulging disk, etc. An image of the physical pathology remains in the mind. It's real. It needs treatment. In short, we can easily slip into walking by sight (the natural realm) and not by faith (the supernatural realm).

I'm not saying a person should abandon preventive measures, or medical intervention. I'm simply observing how natural thinking can become a stronghold and make it more difficult to believe for supernatural healing.

Following is the story from a young mother who refused to give the X-rays greater authority over her body than God's word.

Her long blonde hair and fashionable clothes draw admiring glances to Marla Woodmansee, of Branson, Missouri. However, it is her inner passion shining through that truly sets her apart. Marla's desire to proclaim the message of Christ as Lord and Healer could have ended when she was diagnosed with a brain tumor.

In the summer of 1997, Marla, newly single and the mother of two young children, ages two and four, became alarmed by excessive hair growth over her body.

She made an appointment to see an endocrinologist in Springfield, Missouri, and received bad news. Two separate tests clearly showed a tumor located on her pituitary gland.

It was a chilling moment. How was she going to manage?

She began to pray fervently to the God with whom all things are possible, pouring out her heart and reminding Him of His word.

God, You Said All Things Are Possible

By Marla Woodmansee

“I kept praying without ceasing for God to remove the tumor, reminding Him that all things are possible, and how He does not change according to His word.

“This frightening diagnosis appeared during one of the most difficult times of my life. I especially needed God to heal me, because I had little ones who depended on me to take care of them.

“The doctor wanted me to have the tumor removed. I had little choice but to consult a neurosurgeon for medical advice. However, even as I was contemplating his opinion, I received a phone call from the endocrinologist’s office.

“The tumor had already showed up twice, plainly visible. Yet for some unknown reason, my doctor wanted me take the test a third time. I didn’t know why, but I was willing.

“On the third visit to the endocrinologist’s office, I asked my father and mother to come and wait with me for the test results. They seemed calm. I sat there, knowing my trust was in the God of miracles, whatever happened.

“The pleased physician entered the room to give us the news. He said, ‘This is a miracle! I had a gut feeling we should do this third test before I sent you to surgery. The tumor is completely gone!’

“My broad-shouldered father usually shows little emotion. This time with tears flowing down his face, he jumped up and gave my doctor a long, tight hug. My mother and I also were sobbing because of the miracle.

“That’s right. The doctor himself labeled it a miracle. Praise God, there is only one explanation: God healed me supernaturally.

“Somewhat ironically, God later led me to marry an emergency-room physician. We are now the joyful parents of four children. I have been called to preach the gospel around the world and have completed my theological degree from Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in Springfield, Missouri. I often use the details about my healing to encourage others to seek God for their own miracles as well. Jesus is greater than any disease.”

* * *

Marla prayed and believed, putting God in remembrance of His word (Is. 43:26). She says it is only when we stop believing that we come up against a wall.

For supernatural healing, do we need supernatural thinking?

The natural (un-renewed) mind balks at supernatural concepts and prefers a natural method for treatment. There’s nothing wrong with that. Jesus said the sick need a physician.

What about those times when the doctor says he cannot offer any hope? Does the law of the Spirit of life really change visible pathology as it did for Marla?

Questions:

1. Sickness is the beginning of death, and death is the wages of sin. Rom. 8:1-2 says Jesus has made us free from the _____ of sin and _____. This verse is most commonly understood to mean we are free from spiritual death. Could it also be that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ is why Marla’s tumor disappeared?
2. Did Marla pray for healing if it was God’s will, or did she put Him in remembrance of His word?
3. Did God put illnesses on Vickie and Margie when they were young girls and later decide to heal them? Why, or why not?
4. Margie and Vickie received their healings easily when they were young. After adulthood, they each experienced health challenges from time to time. As we age, does it get easier, or more difficult, to believe

in some areas of God's supernatural realm? How do we combat natural versus supernatural thinking?

5. Eph. 4:23 says to be renewed in the _____ of your _____. Is this renewal necessary to discern spiritual (unseen) things as opposed to what we see in the natural realm?

6. I Cor. 2:14 says the natural man _____ not the things of the Spirit of God for they are _____ to him. Neither can he know them because they are _____ discerned. What things does the spirit discern?

7. Vickie Haller did not accept Christ as her Savior until age thirty-two, yet the Lord heard her prayer as a ten-year-old child. Does this indicate God honors faith wherever He finds it? Would you agree that we do not have to have perfect understanding of theology in order to receive healing?

CHAPTER 7

Can God Use Another's Faith to Heal?

Many theologians teach that a person must have faith to receive healing, yet I have found people who had no faith at all and still were blessed by the faith of another.

“Scripture simply does not support the idea that we have to meet a certain standard of righteousness, or even faith, before receiving a miracle,” says Assembly of God Pastor Gene Burgess. “Often, it seems the wrong person gets healed.”

He has seen people of apparent great faith who continued in lingering illness, while others, who had little understanding of spiritual things, received instant answers to prayers for healing—both for themselves and for others. (See the story of Mr. Smith and Mr. Peavey in Chapter 20.)

My friend Vickie Haller also has seen numerous miracles in the lives of people she has prayed for, including her husband Tom, who was healed of melanoma cancer and other life-threatening illnesses time and time again.

Please God, Give Him Fifteen Years More

By Victoria Haller

“The Lord healed my husband Tom by removing melanoma cancer, or by putting it in remission many times over the years. Tom’s first melanoma surgery was in January of 1985.

“At that time, Dr. Behr explained to Tom that he had about six months to live. Tom went for a second opinion, and Dr. Hudson agreed with Dr. Behr. Hudson told Tom to make the most of the time he had left.

“It will be twenty five years ago as of January 2011 since he heard those awful words. God does not lie. The verses in both Proverbs 9:11 and 10:27 indicate that respect for God shall increase the years of a man’s life.

“At the time of his first diagnosis, I was reading about King Hezekiah in Isaiah 38:9-22 and again in II Kings 20:1-11. God told the king to get his house in order because he was going to die. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and wept, reminding God of all he had done to serve Him. God heard his tearful plea and granted Hezekiah fifteen additional years to live.

“I prayed, ‘Lord if you can give King Hezekiah fifteen more years, I am asking you to give Tom fifteen more years. He needs to be saved. He needs to be delivered from alcoholism, and he needs to be healed physically.’

“I claimed God’s promises for healing over Tom. Three and a half years later, the doctor removed lymph glands from under Tom’s right shoulder. Six months after that the doctor removed lymph glands from under his left shoulder. Tom recovered and continued to work.

“Because he was drinking and smoking heavily at the time, Tom did have bouts with pancreatitis. In 1994, (sixteen years ago at the time of this writing) God saved Tom and delivered him from alcoholism. In the last three years, Tom has had four melanoma cancers removed from his back and one from his thigh. Each time he recovered remarkably.

“After Tom had been sober for a while, I told him how I had asked God to give him fifteen more years of life. Tom’s response was, ‘Why did you ask for just fifteen years?’

“I answered that fifteen was the number of years God gave to a King, and that seemed like a lot at the time.” However, I added, ‘We have an awesome God who can do the impossible. We can ask Him to add fifteen more years!’

“We did so, and God has mercifully extended my husband’s life.”

* * *

Tom Haller leaned on Vickie’s prayers over the years. Then came a season when he had to fight the faith battle for himself.

One Drink Is Never Enough

By Tom Haller

“I was a true alcoholic in every sense of the word, classified by rehab counselors as a ‘chronic maintainer.’ My biggest problem: I was in complete denial. It took me thirty years to admit to myself and to others that I might have an addiction. Even then, like most alcoholics, I still believed my problem was not as serious as other drinkers’ addictions.

“Eventually, the drinking started causing problems in my marriage, family life, work, and friendships. Actually, the problems had been there for many years, but being an alcoholic, I didn’t recognize it.

“I checked into rehab at a hospital in 1987, for the wrong reasons. I did it to appease others. I took one look at the addicts in the hospital and knew they had big problems. I sure was glad I wasn’t like them, or so I thought.

“I managed to stay sober for seventy-five days, thirty of those days only because I was in rehab as a patient. Then I started drinking again. I was positive I could control the drinking, but soon learned I could not. One drink is always too many for an alcoholic, because one drink is never enough.

“In 1991, I went to out-patient treatment because of a DUI conviction. During the four-month program, I managed to stay sober, mainly because of checks performed at unknown times. This time, I went 120 days without a drink. Once again, I thought I could learn how to drink.

“In 1992, about the middle of July, I started to have health problems, big time—bleeding ulcers, bad headaches, and pancreatitis. I was hospitalized for eleven days.

“The doctor really gave me something to think about. It was a Sunday afternoon when he made his rounds. He said, ‘Tom, there are people in here who can’t help their illnesses. Then there are people like you who make themselves sick. If I were you, I’d rather be doing something else on a summer Sunday afternoon than lying here in this hospital.’

“In September of 1992, I checked myself back into rehab as a patient. The difference this time was that I really wanted to quit drinking. It was then that I called on the Lord and asked Him to take away my need for alcohol.

“And thank God, my need for alcohol was removed!

“I began attending Alcoholics Anonymous three to five times a week. I had two sponsors and a lot of phone numbers in my pocket. This time, I went a year and a half without a drink.

“**One huge problem.** It was living hell. I was one big, dry drunk. Not a day went by that I didn’t crave alcohol.

“I had begun to study the Bible and do a morning and evening devotional with Vickie. I found Galatians 5:21, which states that no drunkard will inherit the kingdom of God. That did scare me! It was the first time I had

fear of any kind. Up until then, I guess I was too stupid to be afraid of anything.

“Even so, in May of 1994, while on a fishing trip, I started to drink again. Small amounts at first, but within a week, I was right back to where I’d been the year and a half before. Before long, the health problems also flared up again.”

“I knew I couldn’t keep on like this. On Labor Day of September 5th, 1994, I turned back to the Lord. I knew that only Jesus had the power to remove my need for alcohol. This time I asked Him to remove both the need *and* the desire as well.

“I turned in the Bible to John 8:36 and read, ‘If the Son shall set you free, ye shall be free indeed.’ Also in Isaiah 53:5, I found ‘Jesus was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.’

“Not might be, or shall be, but *are* healed!

“Praise God, I am no longer an alcoholic. I am delivered from addiction’s power.

“It has been more than seventeen years since I’ve desired a drink. All that was required on my part was believing His word, having a desire, a willingness, and admitting that I was powerless to help myself.”

* * *

Tom called on God and received complete deliverance.

Anyone reading Tom’s story might assume he opened the doors to pancreatitis or melanoma cancer by his addictions to alcohol and cigarettes. Whatever the reason, Tom found the Savior so willing to forgive, to restore, and to heal all his diseases.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a very successful organization, and I applaud their efforts. However, AA teaches people to say, “I am an alcoholic.” Addicts must admit this, and they have to repeat it at all meetings, presumably to reinforce in their minds that they absolutely cannot drink again.

Tom Haller has a different confession. He says: “I *was* an alcoholic. I am no longer an alcoholic. I’ve been redeemed from the curse of addiction. I’m

doing what Psalm 107:2 instructs: ‘Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.’ Jesus set me free from both the need and the desire. Whom the son sets free is free indeed.’”

Now Tom lives under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ. With his confession of faith, he is establishing freedom from addiction in his body.

Alcohol has no more dominion over him.

Questions:

1. John 8:36 says that if the Son shall make you free, you shall be _____ indeed. Is Tom wrong to say he is free, or is he speaking God’s truth? Would Tom be just as free from addiction’s power if he continued to confess he is an alcoholic? Why, or why not?
2. News commentator and former alcoholic Glenn Beck said he allowed himself to become something he was *not* created to be. Can an addict blame God, or anything else, for his condition?
3. In Rev. 12:11, we overcome by the _____ of the Lamb and the _____ of our testimony. Do the words we speak in agreement with God’s word make a difference in what we overcome?
4. Paul said we are more than _____ through Christ who loves us (Rom. 8:37). Can we conquer the works of the devil, including addiction, through Christ’s power within us?
5. When the leper asked for healing if it was the Lord’s will, Jesus answered, I _____; be thou clean (Mk. 1:41). Did Jesus require the leper to repent first?
6. Is this where most people are? They believe God is able, but they do not know if He is willing to use His power to heal them? Could doubt result from sin consciousness? Do most people feel unworthy?
7. If Jesus required a certain standard of righteousness before He healed anyone, how much righteousness is necessary to qualify?

CHAPTER 8

Is God Waiting For Us to Act?

Be ye doers of the word (Jas. 1:22).

Three-year-old Johnnell did not want to sleep in her big-girl bed. Nightly, I sat beside her, read her a story, prayed over her, and assured her that she had nothing to fear. “Daddy and I are just down the hall and we won’t ever let anything harm you.”

Night after night, she got up and came to our room.

Finally I asked her, “Sweetheart, don’t you believe me when I say I would never let anything harm you?” I was thinking how pleased I would be if she acted like she believed my words and went to sleep.

Almost as soon as I thought it, the Lord reminded me He is also pleased when we *act like we believe His words*. The natural mind has been programmed to believe only what can be seen, and we act accordingly. In God’s kingdom, it is just the opposite. Believing is seeing, followed by acting on unseen truth.

Yet most people get it backwards.

Jesus said *rise and be healed*—NOT be healed and rise.

He told the ten lepers to go, and *going* they were healed.

He said, *take up your bed* and walk.

Stretch forth your hand.

Go wash in the pool.

Those people could have sat there waiting for the manifestation to happen, but they acted first and then their healing came. Do you see the difference? They had to believe and act like God’s word is true before any changes happened, and then it became a reality. No faith is required to believe what you see and feel.

Albert Simpson acted on faith when he walked up the mountain with a diseased heart. Kenneth Hagin swung his paralyzed legs out of bed and stood on them before any feeling returned.

Naturally, people are disappointed if a rapid recovery does not occur, including myself. However, that does not mean it isn't happening. What it means, many times, is simply that a person does not know how to *act* on faith for what is yet unseen. That's the real fight of faith, waiting for the unseen to become the seen.

Consider the actions of the following people.

Nasir and Anita Siddiki

Some years ago, Anita Siddiki ¹, wife of Wisdom Ministries founder and businessman Dr. Nasir Siddiki of Tulsa, Oklahoma, was suffering from blindness and the crippling effects of multiple sclerosis.

A Rhema Bible Training Center graduate, Anita battled the disease by renewing her mind and speaking God's healing words over her body. She had just given birth to their first child and was only twenty-five when the disease struck. Imagine her sorrow at not being able to hold her baby, play the piano, or experience the joys of her ministry as wife and mother.

Although both Nasir and Anita had previously experienced divine healing, Nasir says this time they had to "walk out their faith" during those two years. He has repeated their story over television broadcasts and in his teaching seminars many times.

What action did they take? The couple did not allow anyone inside the home who doubted that healing was God's will for Anita. No one was permitted to acknowledge the dire reports from Anita's doctors.

Instead, Nasir and Anita continually spoke scriptures of life and health over her body. They had a deep-rooted faith in abundant grace.

After a two-year fight of faith, Anita recovered completely and has remained healthy. How many people would take that faith stand and "cast not away their confidence" in the face of such a devastating disease?

Since her remarkable healing, Anita is often the featured guest on broadcasts such as *TBN*, Canada's *Crossroads* TV Network, Syd Roth's *It's Supernatural*, and the OASIS Network's *Roadshow*. Her background as a teacher and performer in classical music shines through. Anita has also appeared before women's groups, national conferences, and many churches in the USA and abroad, ministering in the areas of marriage and family.

From Allah to Christ

Nasir, a successful Canadian businessman and former worshipper of Allah, converted to Christianity at age thirty-four after a life-threatening bout of shingles in 1987. He had been crying out to Allah for healing, but nothing happened. Finally in desperation, he cried to the Christian God, “If you are real, please help me and heal me.”

Jesus miraculously healed all signs of the horrible skin disease, and Nasir converted to Christianity.

In 1997, Nasir graduated from Rhema Bible Training Center, founded by Kenneth E. Hagin, and soon received an honorary doctorate from American Bible College and Seminary in Oklahoma City.

He also founded Wisdom Ministries in Tulsa, Oklahoma with the goal of teaching biblical principles of wisdom to people all over the world. ²

Dodie Osteen

When doctors told Dodie Osteen, wife of renowned missionary-evangelist John Osteen, that she had only a few weeks to live, she did not prepare to die of liver cancer. Instead, she got out of bed every day, dressed, and went about her daily activities, praising God and standing on His word.³

Her sick body shouted at her to stay in bed, however like Albert Simpson, Kenneth Hagin, and John Lake, Dodie acted as if God’s word is true instead of listening to her body and her doctors. (Remember how the Holy Spirit spoke to Kenneth, saying a healed person doesn’t stay in bed?)

Dodie repeated healing scriptures to the Lord three times a day, just like taking medicine. Within a few short weeks, instead of dying, she regained perfect health and has continued in health since then. Nothing is more powerful than God’s word.

Naomi Boggs

A few years ago, my own aunt, Naomi Boggs, now an octogenarian, was ill to the point of death. When she recovered sufficiently to leave the hospital, she could barely walk and was subject to falling. She would get up from a chair, and her mind would tell her to go one direction but her feet would take her in another.

“I had a little talk with God and asked Him to let me get well enough to work outside again,” Naomi said. She got out of her chair and managed to

walk outdoors. She picked up a rock or two and sat down on the tailgate of her pickup to rest. Then she got up and picked up another rock and rested again. A few times she fell, but she kept at it, doing what little she could.

It didn't happen overnight, but Naomi gradually regained strength and is enjoying yard work again. How many women her age would have gone to bed and never gotten up again?

Naomi acted on her faith.

Desmond Oomen

Jesus delivered Desmond Oomen of Holland from a serious form of autism when he was six years old. I first became familiar with Desmond's miracle story when it was featured on Sid Roth's *It's Supernatural*⁴ television program.

Taking advantage of his repetitive speech, a characteristic of autism, Desmond's mother, Annet Oomen, finally got her little boy to say, "I am healed."

At four years old, Desmond continually repeated the phrase over and over like a broken record. Words in agreement with God's word from the mouth of an autistic child—could this declaration possibly make any difference?

From 1996 to 1998, Annet refused to look at circumstances, choosing instead to believe Jesus had paid the price for her beautiful son's healing. She confessed the word and not his symptoms. She saw the facts but did not observe them.

She spoke faith that her son would be "a success, an achiever, and a joy" to anyone who asked about his condition. Observing the severely affected youngster, people often looked at her as if she had lost her mind. She did not care what others thought.

Nothing changed. Desmond still banged his head and screamed. He did not communicate.

He did not react to pain as a normal child would.

He did not smile or look his parents in the eyes.

Yet Annet refused to cast away her confidence. She set her eyes on God's word—*by Jesus' stripes we are healed*—and she thanked God for the truth

of those words to become reality in her son.

Then one day after two long, faith-stretching years, Desmond, at age six, came home from the school for autistic children and looked his mother in the eye for the very first time.

He called her *Mom*, and asked, “Why am I at a school with strange children? They don’t talk. They push one another down.

“They scream ...”

Desmond’s Parents were overjoyed. Their son had gone to school that morning with every symptom of autism and had come home completely normal. He immediately gave his heart to Jesus. By age ten, he was admitted to Holland’s highest academic program and has since gone on to achieve many outstanding goals.

At any time during those two long years, while Annet daily confessed the word and did not see any change or the slightest improvement in her son, she could have given up and said: “It’s not working. It’s just not God’s will. My son is hopelessly autistic. God must want us to endure this and perhaps be a blessing to other parents with stricken children. He must be teaching us patience.”

She did not give place to the devil and his oppression (Eph. 4:27).

Instead, Annet spoke life and healing over her son. She held fast and did not waver. She was convinced, committed, and confident.

Who Preaches Recovery of Sight?

Jesus preached recovery of sight to the blind. Who is preaching that same message today?

Pastor Tom Brown preaches it. From El Paso, Word of Life Church Pastor Tom Brown’s ministry of deliverance and healing has been featured in documentaries on MSNBC, ABC’s *20/20*, and the History Channel. In a recent email to his church, Pastor Brown, relates how eight-year-old Julian was born blind and received his sight during an Easter service in 2010.⁴

Marlene Klepees prays and blind eyes open.

The Heaven Scent flower-shop owner of Springfield, Missouri experienced her own astonishing miracle in 1981. She came out of a wheelchair after eighteen years of suffering from seizures and crippling

palsy. The Lord soon launched her into a healing ministry. Marlene travels the country to offer her testimony and minister to the sick. She has seen the Lord open blind eyes and heal every sickness and disease by a simple command in His name. On the day she visited my home Bible study group, one woman was healed of chronic back pain, and another of cancer.

Doctor Marian Stewart also ministers to the blind.

A private practice physician in Branson, Doctor Stewart is a healer in more ways than one. She performs general surgery and specializes in plastic and reconstructive surgery at her clinic in Hollister, Missouri. At another location, she works in a charitable dental clinic for addicts and also performs generous services in places where many physicians will not practice due to lack of financial reward.

In addition to treating her patients with medical skills, Doctor Stewart prays for them. With a twinkle of joy in her dark eyes and praises to God on her lips, she speaks of blind eyes and deaf ears she has seen opened by the prayer of faith.

Among Doctor Stewart's miracle stories is Louis Kelly (Lou) of Branson, now retired from forty years employment at Stanley Furniture. Lou underwent his first cancer surgery at the age of fifty. He had twenty-one inches of colon removed. Doctors gave him only two to six weeks to live. At that time he had an encounter with Jesus. "The Lord told me He wasn't through with my life," Lou explains.

He gives all the glory to God for his recovery. Lou continued to work and lived to enjoy grandchildren and great-grandchildren together with his wife Liz. However, the disease tried to come back on him.

"Six or seven years ago, I had a recurrence of the disease and lost 60 pounds. I had to crawl on my knees to the bathroom. When I couldn't walk, I stayed at Doctor Stewart's house in Hollister. I was taking a thousand-dollar-a-day pill that almost killed me. Blood flowed from every orifice in my body, including my eyes, fingernails and teeth.

"I took myself off that medication, but did continue other treatments, even though I was not expected to live beyond a week or two."

All hope was gone in the natural realm. Specialists at Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis sadly confirmed Lou's tumor was inoperable.

Paying no attention to the prognosis, Doctor Stewart prayed for Lou's complete recovery. Instead of dying, he began to recover, miraculously once again.

The weeks passed. Lou returned to St. Louis, where an amazed physician looked at a CAT scan and found the cancerous tumor had completely disappeared. The specialist turned to Lou and said, "You have someone other than your doctors to thank. This has to be the Lord."

Since then, Lou has continued to receive divine healing for attacks on his body from time to time. His experiences have increased his faith to pray for others.

"I just ask God to do for them what he has done for me," he says, and then he praises God for the results.

He proclaims to everyone, "God will make you well if you believe."

Doctor Stewart makes the same proclamation, believing that Jesus bore the penalty for both sin and sickness. Her list of patients—those who have received healing from the Great Physician—continues to grow.

Endnotes

1. Anita Siddiki's testimony can be read at **www.wisdomministries.com/anita**
2. Nasir Siddiki's testimony can be read at **drnsiddiki@wisdomministries.org**.
3. Dodie Osteen's testimony can be accessed at **I'mawitness.com/_Dodi-Osteens-Faith-Healing/video**.
4. Desmond's story aired on Sid Roth's, *It's Supernatural* TV broadcast **www.sidroth.org**. Further information is from Melanie Hemry, author of *A Healing Touch: The Power of Prayer* and co-author of *Anointing for Healing* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House.)
5. Pastor Tom Brown's message describing the recovery of sight is viewable (April of 2011 archives) at **www.youtube.com/TomBrownMinistries**.

Questions:

1. First Jn 3:8 says Jesus came to _____ the _____ of the devil. The works of the devil are described in Jn 10:10 as to steal, to _____, and to _____. Since Jesus is the same today as yesterday, shouldn't we be seeing the devil's works being destroyed by believers in Jesus' Name today? Why, or why not?
2. We know that faith without works is dead. Jn. 6:29 says this is the _____ of God, that you _____ on Him whom He has sent. By what works did Annet and Anita show their belief?
3. Heb. 10:23 says let us hold fast our _____ of faith without _____. Would Desmond have overcome autism if his mother had wavered and stopped confessing God's word over him?
4. Annet and Anita spoke wellness and refused to acknowledge what they saw (symptoms) in the natural. Were they acting on 2 Cor. 5:7, walking by faith and not by _____? If healing does not manifest at once, how do we usually respond?
5. Heb. 11:6 says God is a rewarder of those who diligently _____ Him. Matt. 7:7 says to ask and it shall be given, _____ and you shall find. Prv. 4:22 says God's words are _____ unto those who _____ them and health to all their flesh. Could it be there is a *seeking* and *finding* that must take place, at times, before God's word becomes more real than natural facts?
6. There are different understandings of Isa 42:19-21, which says the Lord's servant sees many things but does not _____ them, and _____ many things but does not listen. The Lord is well _____ for His righteousness' sake (KJV). Certainly Annet blinded herself to the symptoms of autism and did not observe them. Did that please the Lord? How did her observers react? Heb. 10:35 says to _____ not away your _____. How easy would it have been for her to cast away her confidence?
7. God establishes His will in the earth by words. Rom. 4:17 says God calls those things that _____ as though they _____. Can we also establish wellness by speaking health which *is not yet* manifest as Annet Oomen did? (Not that we deny symptoms, but that we Give God's word more authority than the symptoms by saying, "According

to I Pet. 2:24, I am healed.”) Is this a confession-is-possession prayer, or is this imitating God?

A WORD OF CAUTION:

It is always necessary to ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom to know what action to take. Obviously, if a person is blind, it would not be wisdom to drive a car as an act of faith that God has healed his eyes. There are things the Lord will show people to do in order to act on faith in what is yet unseen.

CHAPTER 9

Can Fasting Bring Health?

When thou passest through the fire thou shalt not be burned (Isa. 43:2).

She could be a model for a cosmetic commercial with her flawless complexion and beautiful features. Robin Talley, MD, onsite medical director of Providence Aesthetics & Medical Spa in Branson, Missouri, is part of our neighborhood and has often attended our Bible study group.

The Holy Spirit led Robin to go on Daniel-fast (vegetables only) for an entire month, just before dramatic events slammed up against her rock solid faith. Looking back over those tumultuous months, Robin has no doubt that the fast was in preparation for multiple attacks from the enemy.

The drama begins with a love story between Robin's equally beautiful sister, Renee, and a young man who captured her heart.

Renee met Kevin Waters in 1994. They enjoyed singing together in choir at Southwest Missouri State University, soon fell in love, and exchanged wedding vows in June of 1997. The young couple then moved to Tennessee where she finished college. They were eager to start a family; however, the passing months brought only disappointment.

After four years of trying to conceive a baby and two surgeries, Renee and Kevin decided to try In Vitro Fertilization. The first IVF worked, and in August 2007, Renee was joyfully pregnant with twins.

Renee's doctor monitored her very closely with ultrasounds once a week, starting around week fifteen. At week twenty, she received startling news. Immediately, Robin and many others began to pray.

Doctors Had No Answers, But Jesus Did!

By Renee Waters

“There was that suddenly awkward moment when the tech got very quiet, focusing in on Baby Girl for quite some time.

“Growing somewhat concerned, I asked, ‘Is there anything wrong?’

“She answered, ‘I see a spot on the left side of her brain. It might just be a cyst, which can be common, but it looks like she's got Trisomy 18. You

know, kind of like Down's syndrome. Let me get your doctor.'

"I was stunned. Up to that point, even though we were considered high risk, everything had gone just fine. The babies were both growing very well, and equally. The doctor was concerned about the ultrasound and wanted a perinatologist to diagnose or rule out any problems. That was a tense, two-week wait for the appointment.

"I asked Robin and others, including the Saddlebrooke prayer groups for prayer. They prayed the baby's test would be normal, believing in God's abundant grace.

"When I arrived on the day of the appointment, the perinatologist said, 'I should be able to check everything with an ultrasound, and I'm going to be very detailed and check out both babies from head to toe.' After completely looking over Baby Boy he said, 'Everything looks perfect.'

"Then he moved on to Baby Girl. I waited anxiously while he moved the ultrasound instrument over my belly.

"I'll remember that moment forever.

"He said, 'look at this Mom! She's telling you everything's okay!'

"There on the ultrasound monitor, plain and clear, was a beautiful picture of our daughter giving me the thumbs-up signal—one of my favorite ultrasound pictures of all.

"As if that's not great enough, the thumbs-up gesture is impossible for babies with Down's syndrome. They *can't* do it. Not only that, when we saw the picture of her brain, the defect was gone! Praise God."

A Second Challenge Threatens.

"My babies and I continued to be monitored weekly, and we were all looking great. At week twenty-six, I decided to stop for my regular appointment after school. Everything had been going just fine. There was no need for Kevin to miss work to be there with me.

"My doctor asked, 'how long have you been having contractions?'

"I must have had a stunned look on my face, because he said again, 'You're having contractions right now; how long have you been having them?'

“I had no idea I was even having contractions, so I couldn’t answer him. He immediately sent me upstairs to be admitted to the hospital in Liberty, Missouri. I sat there by myself for what seemed like forever, waiting for Kevin to get there.

“They put me on complete hospital bed-rest for three weeks. Off and on, the contractions returned, but medications kept them under control. The nurses and doctors kept saying, ‘If we can just get to week thirty, that will make all the difference.’

“At week twenty-nine, my contractions could not be controlled. They sent me by ambulance to Overland Park Regional Medical Center. This center has a higher-level Neonatal Intensive Care Unit equipped to care for babies born so early.

“I spent a week on magnesium sulphate at the highest levels given. At the end of that week, Dr. Cowles took me off of all medications and decided it was time for the twins to be born. Calvin and Cassandra arrived on week thirty, to the day! Cal weighed four pounds, two ounces and Cassie weighed three pounds, three ounces. They were ten weeks early.

“Both started off great, but within the first hour of their tiny lives they were each put on ventilators. By that evening, they were having brain bleeds. The first few days were very critical, but things finally started settling down. Cassie was released from the hospital on March 23, and Cal on March 26. They spent only six weeks in the hospital. We had been told all along to expect them to be there until their due date or beyond. All things are possible with God.

“The Waters family of four soon moved to Branson, Missouri where Kevin was transferred, working as a Missouri state trooper. We were excited to live closer to family members, including my sister. I had no idea that yet another ordeal awaited us.”

The Angel of Death Tries to Destroy Kevin.

“Kevin and I had won free tickets to a concert in Kansas City and were planning on going even though we had just moved to Branson. Kevin had been complaining of a headache and a slight fever for a day or so. He knew I really wanted to go and needed a little get-away, so he decided he could make the trip.

“We left the morning of August first and got to the concert, but later that evening, Kevin started feeling really sick. He spent the rest of the night throwing up, suffering a terrific headache, and running a temperature that was reaching a dangerous 104 degrees. Early the next morning, he allowed me to take him to ER.

“Doctors immediately started him on IV meds, did a chest X-ray, and blood work. Those results came back with a high bilirubin level, so they admitted him to the hospital to monitor his liver function. At that point, both our families were praying for him to get better, and his name was added to prayer lists and prayer chains throughout our area.”

“Over the next three weeks, people around the world were praying for Kevin and mailing him cards and letters. In spite of all this intense intercession, Kevin’s condition deteriorated.

He Continued to Deteriorate.

“For three days, he continued to spike extremely high fevers, to vomit, and to suffer massive headaches. Doctors tested his liver, kidneys, and pancreas, and the lab work came back with worsening reports. His lungs also continued to sound worse and worse.

“When Kevin’s family arrived, he couldn’t stay awake. I attributed the sleepiness to exhaustion from all the testing and assumed his body was fighting off the illness.

“Eventually everyone left the room, and he woke up long enough to kiss me and say, ‘love you.’ I headed to sleep on the bench next to his bed.

“The next morning, a nurse came in around five a.m. to check Kevin’s vital signs. His blood pressure and pulse oxygen level were bottoming out, and he would not wake up. A roomful of nurses began working on him, taking vital signs for what seemed like forever. They decided to take him to be intubated.

“His status worsened as the day went along, even after the staff transferred him to ICU. Doctors called family meetings to go over the results of tests and look at the next step.

“The bad news. He was going into multi-organ system failure. Even worse, Kevin would need a liver transplant and would have to start dialysis very soon.

“I wanted answers, and so did the doctors. They transferred him to a university hospital where the medical staff asked me a battery of questions: where he’d been recently, what his job was, if he remodeled any old buildings. These specific questions really didn’t make sense to me. The staff was trying to rule out any ‘odd’ diseases he might have contracted in his line of work, such as coming into contact with the body fluids of a sick person who had been in his patrol car. They were checking to see if he’d overdosed on Tylenol while fighting his fever and headaches, looking for Lyme disease, Legionnaire’s disease, anything they could rule out.

“They ran every test possible. They just didn’t know how to fix him.

“The illness wasn’t anything they could pinpoint. All they could do was support Kevin’s body while it fought off what was going on.

“Right down to the very doorstep of death, Kevin was scheduled to start dialysis when his kidney function suddenly improved.

“The doctors repeatedly told me they didn’t know what was wrong, so they could not explain why he was suddenly getting better. They had no idea.

“I didn’t miss an opportunity to let the doctors and nurses know his recovery was because of the prayers of thousands of people. Our God is able.

“I look back at that time and see that in a matter of eight months, all four members of the Waters family spent time in the hospital, weeks of which were in the intensive care unit. We faced millions of dollars in medical bills, but praise God, we were charged very little. Strangers mailed us cards, some with prayers, some with Bible verses, and some with money included.

“A colleague once said to me, ‘You’ve had so many horrible things happen over the past year, how are you staying so positive?’ I answered that I choose to look at all the miracles that happened in the middle of those horrible things. God’s grace was there with us all the time.

“My verse for 2008 quickly became Isaiah 43:2: ‘When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.’”

* * *

Kevin Waters' story is a good example of thousands of prayers storming heaven on his behalf. He was completely surrounded by the words of faithful believers lifting him up to the throne room of God.

During the time of Kevin's hospitalization, his sister-in-law, Robin, also continued to *speak* faith. Whenever I met her in the neighborhood and inquired about Kevin's condition, she admitted it was extremely serious, yet she absolutely refused to doubt her brother-in-law would get well. We knew things were looking dire from the urgent e-mails she forwarded to us from Renee, but Robin said, "I believe with all my heart that Kevin is going to recover."

Keep in mind Robin is a physician. She knew the organ failures were extremely critical. Once he started dialysis, Kevin would have to continue the procedure for life ... if he survived.

Robin did not look at the medical facts. She did not talk about the gloomy prognosis. Instead, she kept her eyes on the Lord.

As mentioned at the beginning of this story, the Holy Spirit led Robin, to fast an entire month before her family came under attack. The twin was healed in the womb. Robin's father recovered from a serious condition, which appeared at the time to be a stroke. And Kevin's mysterious, near-fatal illness was completely reversed. Glory to God!

The power of fasting?

It is little understood, but a very powerful tool.

Final Thought

One summer, Robin Talley experienced an alarming symptom. Immediately, images of herself becoming ill and dying bombarded her mind. Fear rose up.

Who would take care of her children? She tossed and turned. Sleep was impossible, so she got up and asked God for comfort, opened her Bible, and read the words, "Be of good cheer daughter, your faith has made you whole."

Medical tests soon confirmed her symptoms were totally benign.

Robin had cast down imaginations and renewed her mind instead of dwelling on the fearful thoughts coming against her. Is there any reason we

can't do the same?

Endnote

Kevin Waters' story is written by his wife Renee. Additional information is from an interview with Dr. Robin Talley.

Questions:

1. Did Robin ever doubt it was God's will for Kevin to recover?
2. Isa. 58:6-9 says God has chosen a fast which ministers to the needy, and then shall thy _____ spring forth speedily, if you take away ... and _____ vanity.
3. Could speaking vanity be calling temporary negative circumstances as though they were permanent, establishing what is instead of what should be, according to God's word?
4. Did Robin's fast strengthen her faith to stand against the things that came against her family members? We know she held fast to her confession of faith. Did her faith-words play a part in the miraculous outcomes?
5. Second Cor. 10:5 says to cast down _____, which exalt themselves against the _____ of God, bringing into captivity every _____ to the obedience of Christ. How did Robin do this after her own alarming symptom caused her to fear?
6. Eph. 4:23 says to be _____ in the spirit of your mind. How did Anita, Annet, and Dodie renew their minds? Can it be said that renewing the mind is an effective weapon of warfare with which to fight a good fight of faith?
7. **A little exercise in faith:** Write down a scripture you want to see fulfilled and begin to declare it, giving the word authority over the circumstances in your life. Praise God that His word is true, regardless of circumstances. Cast down imaginations and thoughts, which try to convince you that the word is not true. Write down the answer below when it happens.

CHAPTER 10

Can Unforgiveness Block Healing?

Hearken to my voice ... and I will heal you (Ex 15:26)

I came across Patricia Parks' book, *Cheating an Appointment with Death*,¹ while working on the last chapters of this book. A frequent speaker for women's retreats and Christian organizations, Patricia writes with such insight and powerful anointing that I immediately called her publisher for permission to include her story. I also tried to contact her directly; however, the address listed in her book is no longer valid and her publisher has had no contact with her in recent years.

Patricia's testimony confirms every conclusion I was beginning to reach after researching this book. She used almost every tool (the weapons of our warfare mentioned in preceding chapters) to fight a good fight of faith for her miracle.

Briefly she endured a yearlong battle with breast cancer, which began with a dream in which she heard the words, "Hearken unto the desires of My heart ... and I will heal you" (Ex. 15:26).

Hearing these words clearly spoken in the dream, Patricia realized she must be ill and somehow not "hearkening" to God at the time. She was caring for her sick mother and had her hands full. She had been experiencing pain in her breasts but was simply too busy to pay any attention to her body.

Later she experienced another vivid dream in which she saw a skull and crossbones in the clouds. Then a flying-saucer-like object descended from the skies, landed in her yard, and a hideous creature loaded with weapons got out and barged inside the front door. She knew immediately this was no ordinary dream.

His Mission Was to Take My Life.

Patricia Parks' Story

"His mission was to take my life. I knew immediately, because Jesus is a Gentleman. He stands at the door and knocks. The devil is no gentleman. He simply barges in. The Lord reminded me that locks are on the inside of a

door, and I had left the door to my heart unlocked, allowing the devil's entrance.

“The creature immediately attacked me with a machete, thrust it into my left breast, and sliced all the way down into my stomach. Looking back, I wonder that I did not immediately die, because I could feel life leaving my body. I knew I was dying. It was like watching myself battle satan.”

Patricia wrestled with the entity in her dream. She fought him, wrenched at him, grabbed him by the collar, dragged him through the foyer and threw him out the front door where he lay defeated. Significantly, she was not aware of feeling any great relief or even any supernatural strength in the dream.

The next morning, she dismissed her nightmarish ordeal until she happened to glance up at the sky. The skull and crossbones appeared plainly visible to her in the clouds.

She said to her family, “I am going to have a battle with death.”

When she finally got to a doctor, she was diagnosed with cancer in both breasts and in her stomach.

She realized her greatest enemy was the flesh. She also realized she had some overcoming ahead of her:

“I knew I was in for a battle. Since I had left the door unlocked to my heart, what good would it have done to rebuke the devil? However, once you overcome the flesh, defeating satan and his troops will be like walking on grasshoppers.”

Two weeks later, the Lord gave Patricia another vision. She was walking in a beautiful valley surrounded by high mountains. She noticed the clouds changing shape, taking on the appearance of ferocious beasts—a lion, a big cat, a bull, or a bear.

She heard a majestic voice saying, “Look for the nail prints in the feet of Jesus.” In the distance, she could see Jesus.

When she finally reached the Lord, she knelt and parted the grass to find the scars on His feet and then asked, “Jesus, why was I told to look for the nail prints in your feet and not in your hands as well?”

He answered, “I wanted you to know that I died for your spiritual walk with Me.”

Patricia then heard the following words in her spirit and wrote them down:

My people have forgotten what I did for them on Calvary. I have a victorious people, but they do not live it. Nor do their countenances show it. It grieves my heart that they do not realize what I did for them. My people are a victorious people and they know it not. You are already victorious, and you do not even know it. I have already wrought the victory for you (I Cor. 15: 57).

In Patricia’s vision, the cloud beasts looked as if they were going to attack Jesus; however, she saw they were made only of mist.

She heard the Lord say, “The beasts were satanic illusions. If I had believed satan’s lies while I was on the cross, I would have been defeated, instead of victorious.”

Let the reader note: I do not give serious credence to any claim that a message is directly from the Lord, until I find scriptural support. The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets and must be judged by scripture. In the gospels, there are no threatening cloud beasts described surrounding the cross. However, I asked the Lord to show me the truth, because the vision rang true in my spirit.

A few days later, I read a prophetic description of Christ’s death on the cross, written by King David some 700 years before it came to pass. David described beasts, *strong bulls of Bashan besetting around and gaping upon the Lord as a ravening and roaring lion* (Psa. 22:13).

This passage confirms exactly what Patricia saw in her vision.

Perhaps we will never fully understand what horrors our Lord endured as He hung on that cross, however I see His struggle in an entirely new dimension. He suffered in body, soul, and spirit, in order redeem the complete triune nature of man.

Patricia recorded what she learned from Jesus:

“The lie—that cancer could kill me—was an illusion the devil wanted me to believe. Like the cloud beasts, the lie was made of mist.”

She said the lie had teeth only *if* she believed it. Certainly her symptoms and pain were shouting at her that the cancer had progressed. Her doctor and all medical tests confirmed it.

She realized this is where people are so often defeated. They are hurting. They know they may be dying. They want relief, and it doesn't come. They know they can't cast away their confidence if they are to be victorious. The devil will lie and tell them to give up the fight; that they are only playing mind games. If a person is not rooted and grounded in the truth, it's easy to give up.

Everything in the natural underscored the medical fact that the disease was killing her.

How could she see these physical facts and not observe them?

Dealing with a very real disease, Patricia said: "The Lord showed me that the death angel was tempting me to go be with Jesus before my time. That astonished me. I did not know the devil could do that, but God said to me, 'I have no pleasure in Him that dieth ... wherefore turn yourself and live'" (Ezek. 18:32).

The Tool of Speaking Faith

She made a choice. She had to believe a spiritual truth—that God's word had already defeated the cancer—rather than believe the medical facts.

She learned to confess the healing scriptures to God alone, instead of to other people. That way she did not have to struggle against their unbelief. She spoke her confession of faith to the Author of faith, personified.

(This is a mistake I once made. I had thought to enlist the power of agreement with other believers. Instead, I felt a wave of unbelief that threatened to swamp my faith like a tsunami.)

Patricia came to know without a doubt that the written word she stood on is also the Living Word Who is faithful to perform the impossible. She believed that Jesus, the word become flesh, and His Spirit which dwelled in her would make alive even her mortal flesh (Rom. 8:11).

"I never confessed I was healed of cancer during that fight. Instead, the Lord gave me the wisdom to confess, 'Jesus, Your *word* says I am healed.' Do you see the difference?"

“If the word says I am healed, and I stood on that in agreement with the Spirit of truth, then my healing would manifest in the natural—and it did! The Holy Spirit always bears witness to the Truth. God’s word is eternal Truth, not sickness. Sickness is temporary.”

Patricia lists four things the Lord impressed her to do during her battle with cancer: 1. Good nutrition (no sugar, no coffee, lots of vegetables, and only a small amount of meat each week). 2. Fasting. 3. Worship. 4. And most importantly, repentance from unforgiveness over rejection she had experienced early in life.

The Tool of Forgiveness

“I had to ask Him to forgive. While on my knees, Jesus began to show me the faces of people who had wounded me in the past and the hidden grudges and unforgiveness I had buried in my heart. Then He showed me the sins I had committed against each person and led me to forgive them. He further led me to ask Him to forgive each of them.”

She felt as if she had been born all over again, after her sincere repentance and deep cleansing by the Lord’s precious blood. Now thoroughly healed of the spiritual cancer, she had no doubt the Lord could heal the physical cancer.

Disappointingly, medical tests confirmed that she still needed a double mastectomy. Her symptoms had grown alarmingly worse. Her doctor insisted it was time.

The Tool of Surrender

From the beginning, the Lord had impressed on Patricia—no surgery and no chemotherapy. She threw herself on God’s mercy, saying, “Lord, my life is Yours to do with as You wish. Unless You give me a miracle, I suppose I will submit to the surgery.”

God had done a great work already in her heart, for there had been a time when she could not say she was willing to lay down her hope of being healed.

Just as Captain Dale Black surrendered his desire to walk again, Patricia surrendered her hope of healing. She reached her Abraham moment, learning to seek the Healer more than the healing.

During one of her lowest times, Patricia also indulged in remorse over what she called her own “great imperfections” and began to judge and sentence herself with weeping, loathing her shortcomings, failures, and sins.

She heard the Lord ask, “What do you do when your injured foot causes pain?”

Puzzled, she thought about it and answered, “Well, I favor it. I massage and medicate it. I do what I can to make it comfortable when it hurts me.”

The Lord impressed on her: **“So it is with you, child. Many times you have pained and hurt me, but I have given you favor, not because you are great, but because of your weaknesses.”**

Weeping great tears, she admitted, “I see that I am part of your Body, Lord, and you will not cut me off.”

The time drew near for the surgery, and still Patricia felt no difference in her body. She arrived at the hospital, and for some unknown reason, the doctor repeated the mammogram and other tests. Later that day, he walked into her hospital room and tossed a thick chart on her bed.

“There is no more cancer,” he announced. “No tumors. Everything is gone.”

Patricia had not undergone any chemotherapy or radiation. God alone received all the glory. The doctor could find no other explanation than divine intervention.

She remembered the dream of throwing the demon out of her house without experiencing any feeling of relief or strength at the time. She realized she’d had no awareness of when the Lord healed her. There had been no supernatural sensation of warmth, no Holy Ghost bumps, no physical indication. Nothing at all except her doctor’s welcome report.

The Tool of Worship

The Holy Spirit whispered to her: **“I am your laser beam. When you worshipped, sang praises, and were thankful, it activated that spiritual laser beam that is in you until finally the spiritually sick cells were changed in structure, and that is when the physical cancer disappeared.”**

The Tool of Love

One of my favorite parts of Patricia Parks' story is her comment on love. Faith teaching is marvelous, however she wants to see a greater emphasis on faith that works by love.

I agree with her. People can confess faith words until the cows come home, but if they have not love, they are as sounding brass (I Cor.13:1). Faith pleases God, but Love is perhaps the most powerful tool of all, because love overcomes *all* things, and also faith works by love (Gal. 5:6).

Patricia says: "I found that when you spend time with Jesus, you just naturally love Him more and more, until you can believe anything He tells you. You can actually experience intimate, close fellowship with the Lord beyond any mental assent or process. This passes head knowledge and understanding. His love enables us to love others even past their ugliness and hurts. To love them with Calvary love that says, *Father forgive them for they know not what they do.*"

The Tool of Humility

In her book, Patricia cautions readers never to look at her as someone specially favored. Although from early childhood, she has experienced visitations from God and has heard His audible voice many times, she does not want to be thought of as some Great-Faith Champion:

"You do not have to be a spiritual giant to hear from God. Nor does hearing from Him make you special. What He has done for me, He will do for you. He is the author of life and a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

"I do not know why He chose to visit me, nor does that make me a special person. My part is to hear and obey and leave the results to Him. If the Lord has spoken audibly to someone, or shown her a vision, she is simply an ordinary someone who has had a supernatural experience with God. Spiritual maturity comes only through a day-to-day continuing fellowship with the Lord."

Final Thoughts

Some readers will take exception to the idea that an evil spirit caused Patricia's cancer. Yet we have it from Jesus' own lips that satan bound the stooped woman in Luke 13:16. Her condition today would likely be

diagnosed as a form of arthritis. Why wouldn't satan's oppression include other diseases as well?

Endnote

1. All quoted material (with emphasis added) in this chapter is from Patricia Parks' book, *Cheating an Appointment With Death*, (Tulsa, OK: Vincom Press, 1993) used by permission.

Questions:

1. Second Cor. 10:3-5 speaks of weapons of our warfare that are not _____, but mighty through God to the pulling down of _____, casting down _____ and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. What are carnal weapons? What strongholds need to be pulled down?

2. Eph. 6:12 says we wrestle not against _____ and blood, but against principalities, against _____, against the rulers of the _____ of this world, against spiritual _____ in high places. What kind of weapons do we need to fight these powers?

3. Patricia saw the tumors on her X-rays. Can a diagnosis of illness result in imaginings of physical decline, suffering and death? Do fear and doubt come from hearing man's words, just as faith comes from hearing God's words? How do we combat doubt?

4. Mark 6:5-6 says Jesus _____ do no mighty works there and marveled because of their _____. If unbelief can limit the power of our sovereign God, why not use it to defeat the devil? Why not make his lies of none effect by doubting them!

5. God said to put Him in remembrance of His word. Can we say, as Patricia did, *Jesus took my sicknesses and redeemed me from the curse of the law, and by His stripes I am healed*. Are these words actually the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17)? Are they true regardless of medical facts?

6. Was Patricia denying the temporary facts (the cancer), or was she acknowledging God's truth and giving His word the greater authority over her body?

7. Did Patricia say the disease came as a result of her pride in hearing God's audible voice, a discipline for some un-confessed sin, or from unforgiveness in her own heart? Did the cancer come from God?

8. Mark 11:26 says when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone you should _____ them so that your Father in heaven can _____ you. Can unforgiveness actually bind God from giving us His grace and blessings?

9. Eph. 6:14 follows a verse on taking the whole armor of God to withstand the evil day, and having done all, to _____ therefore, having your loins girt about with truth and having on the _____ of righteousness. Is it our righteousness or Christ's that serves as our breastplate?

10. Do you think "having done all" includes self-examination and repentance? Should it? What truth should we be girded with?

11. If we are to take the Bible literally, satan is the author of oppressive disease (Acts 10:38). I hesitate to say *all* disease, because many illnesses are the result of poor health habits, neglect, abuse, malnourishment, exposure to toxins and pollutants, etc.; however, since these conditions are the direct result of a fallen world, can satan also be blamed for them?

CHAPTER 11

Can Healing Be Gradual?

Let patience have her perfect work (Jas. 1:4).

People who are just beginning to trust God as their Healer can easily become discouraged when they do not see instant results. This is where I've missed it many times myself. I thought healing had to be instantaneous, or my prayer and my faith had not been effective. I cast away my confidence when symptoms remained, doubting my authority and my position in Christ.

It is much easier to leave everything up to God than to take a faith stand and fight a good fight of faith. The weapons of our warfare are mighty to the pulling down of strongholds, but they are *useless* if we do not learn to use them.

Some will say Jesus always healed the sick instantly. A careful look at scripture shows that is not always the case. The Lord prayed twice for the blind man after the fellow first saw "men as trees walking." Others began to mend from that hour (Matt. 9:22; Jn. 4:52).

Bible teacher and best-selling author Joyce Meyers says a miracle is sudden. A healing is gradual.

Joyce teaches, as did Kenneth Hagin, Albert Simpson, and John Lake:

When disease symptoms are persistent, a person must lay hold of God's word. To fight the good fight of faith, he must hold fast to his confession of faith, cast not away his confidence, and having done all (including self examination, forgiving others, and repentance), to stand therefore on the word.

Do we have examples in the scriptures? Jesus described the crippled and bent woman as being a daughter of Abraham, whom satan had kept bound for eighteen long years, (Luke 13:16).

(Please note: Jesus said it was satan who bound the woman, *not* God. How would a medical doctor likely diagnose this woman?)

As a Jew, the bent woman lived under the curse of the law. Did God permit satan to strike her with a crippling disease and wait until Jesus came

along to change His mind and heal her? We know God wanted her loosed from satan's oppression, because Jesus said so. He didn't go to the Father and ask, "Is it Your will to heal her?"

No. Jesus laid hands on her and said, "Woman you are loosed."

Now here's the mystery. God always had the power to set her free. Our sovereign God could have healed her anytime during those eighteen years that she was bent double.

Why did He wait so long?

We see the same thing with the woman who had the issue of blood for twelve years and spent all her money on doctors. Did God suddenly change His mind one day? Did He decide the woman had suffered enough for her sins under the law and then select her to receive healing grace?

No. It was always His will, or Jesus would have found Himself fighting against the Father. The heart of the matter is, how long would anyone have to suffer the consequences of sin for which *Jesus alone* can pay the penalty? Is that not the double message in this passage—a demonstration of Jesus' authority to forgive sins and also to restore health to those suffering under the curse of the law?

Some people suggest God receives even more glory when everyone knows the sufferers' condition was incurable. Others say, possibly He was waiting for the two women to learn a lesson.

Significantly, the Bible does not say either woman learned anything from their long illnesses, nor is sin ever mentioned in either account.

Marilyn Hickey Waited Ten Years

Bible teacher, best-selling author, and popular television minister Marilyn Hickey and her husband were praying for a child when they first began their ministry several years ago. She tells the story in the booklet, *God's Benefit: Healing*.¹

Marilyn had been to several doctors and fertility experts, all of whom said she would never be able to have a baby.

Several years ago, she was in a Dallas meeting where William Branham was preaching. He called her out and spoke to her, saying by a supernatural word of knowledge (I Cor. 12:8): "You have a female condition."

Marilyn said at that time she had the most unusual sensation. She saw something in her spirit—not with her physical eyes. She felt something going round and round, whirling and swishing. The whirling came into her feet and up into her body. The evangelist spoke to her: “Go home and receive your baby.”

Did she get her baby that year? She had experienced a supernatural healing. She had received a prophetic decree.

Surely the time had come. The answer to her prayers must be on the way. Yet she did not have her promised child until *ten* long years after that experience.

Significantly, it was Marilyn’s husband who never quit believing. He always said, “Marilyn, God is going to give us a child.”

When she reached her thirties, Marilyn gave up. She said, “Forget it, God. Don’t listen to my husband.”

She was discouraged. Like Abraham’s wife, 90-year-old Sarah, Marilyn grew tired of believing that she would ever have a child.

However, Marilyn finally conceived and bore a child—Sarah, her miracle baby.

When Symptoms Remain, Do You Give Up?

Marilyn instructs people not to give up when healing is a long time coming.

“When you don’t see your answer, do you quit believing?”

“When you don’t feel symptoms leave, do you give up?”

“No. You stand on God’s word. You stand and keep *speaking* faith.

“But ten long years?”

“Well, Abraham waited twenty years for Isaac. There are times when it seems a believer must wait and wait and keep fighting the good fight of faith.”

God’s word will not return to Him empty, but will accomplish what He sends it to do. Marilyn also admits that she did not continue standing in faith during those ten years. It was her husband who believed and kept saying they would have a child. He got what he said.

In a second long wait for healing, Marilyn developed agonizing back pain. Her doctor said she had the strangest spinal formation he had ever seen and advised her not to lift anything.

Marilyn's daughter, Sarah, was just a baby at the time and needed lifting. Marilyn refused to accept the doctor's report. Instead, she and her husband agreed in prayer and stood on Mark 11:24.

Expecting to be healed, she got worse.

She got worse almost every day. She had to get out of bed at night and sleep on the floor because of the pain. When she held Sarah, her back pain worsened.

Did she give up? No. Marilyn had tenacious faith.

Daily she proclaimed over her own body, "According to Mark 11:24, I believe I receive my healing."

She did not say there was no pain in her back, (and this is important) neither did she complain about the relentless pain. She just kept speaking the word of God over her body, establishing it in her body.

At the end of six long, suffering months, Marilyn got out of bed one morning completely well. Nothing dramatic had happened. No cloud or warm glow. She had simply stood on the word until God brought it to pass.

Her back pain and female condition were gradual healings. Other times, Marilyn has been healed instantly.

What was the difference?

I do not know the answer. I do know that Marilyn remained steadfast and did not cast away her confidence. She has continued her ministry in good health ever since.

Endnote

1. Marilyn Hickey, *God's Benefit: Healing*, 12th printing (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House)

Questions:

1. Rom. 4:17-19 says Abraham considered not his own body nor the _____ of Sarah's womb, but continued to call himself by a name which means the "father of many nations." How

long did Abraham call himself a father before the promise was fulfilled? Did his words help to establish the promise? Why, or why not?

2. In the selective-grace view, the emphasis is on the person to somehow earn God's favor for healing. In the abundant-grace view, the emphasis is on Jesus who has already earned the blessings of obedience on the cross. Which view allowed Marilyn Hickey to remain steadfast?

3. Healing can be sudden or a long time in coming. Marilyn Hickey, Patricia Parks, and Kevin Waters each got worse before they got better. So did Martha's brother Lazarus! A *worsening* illness can be discouraging, but does that make the healing word of none effect?

4. It is a medical fact that Marilyn's spine was twisted. Was Marilyn speaking truth when she quoted Mark 11:23-24, saying she believed she received healing for her back, even while her pain persisted? Did the Holy Spirit bear witness to the truth in the word?

5. Abundant-grace teachers emphasize that they do not believe in divine healing simply because someone got healed. Neither do they doubt it because another did *not* healed. They base their faith on the word of God, Who declares He is the God Who _____ all our diseases (Psa. 103:3). Do our experiences change the truth of God's word?

6. In Dan. 10:10-14, the angel messenger spoke to Daniel and said he had been sent from the first day Daniel set his heart to understand, but the prince of Persia withstood him for _____ days before he got through to Daniel. Who is the prince of Persia? What does this tell us about timely answers to prayer?

7. Should we get discouraged when we don't see the answer come at once? Would we be more likely to become discouraged if we doubted it was God's will?

CHAPTER 12

Can God's Word Be Made of None Effect?

Trying to earn favor by works voids the promise, making it of none effect
(Rom. 4:14).

Here's one sure way the victory over disease is lost.

Traditional wrong thinking can be a faith buster, binding the power of the Holy Spirit, because it makes the word of none effect (Mark 7:13; Rom. 4:14; I Cor. 1:17). These scriptures show that our sovereign God can be restricted, or *bound* from bestowing grace and blessings.

The traditions of men can make God's own powerful word of none effect—an amazing thought!

Consider this astonishing passage in Mark 6:5. Jesus *could* do no mighty works there because of the people's unbelief. This passage does not say He would do no mighty works. It says He could not. Our Lord Jesus was restricted by unbelief.

If unbelief can bind God from releasing His blessings, let's put it to work on the devil's lies. When he tells us we're going to fail, we're going to be sick, we're going to lose, etc., let's doubt it! We don't get what we doubt, praise God. (I know I said that before, but it's such a powerful thought it's worth repeating. Besides that, I really like it!)

Faith That Takes What is Promised Pleases God.

Critics have suggested that if we are very persistent in some types of prayer, we are wrongfully trying to manipulate God. Trying to twist God's arm behind His back in order to get what we want from Him.

This may actually be true in some instances. God is not our butler in the sky, there to fulfill our every whim. However, Jesus did say He came to serve, and He took on the role of servant when he washed the feet of the disciples. As always, the word must be rightly divided.

In the fight against oppression of the devil—faith that *takes* back what the thief tried to steal is always pleasing to God in the biblical examples.

Committed, tenacious faith is played out over and over again by persons who “cast not away their confidence.” They refused to take no for an answer, in spite of traditional arguments.

When John Lake refused to accept death and rebuked it from the lifeless body of his sister, he treasured Alexander Dowie’s faith-filled words of agreement that she would live and not die. Any traditional argument that God must need her more than her baby and her family needed her was unacceptable.

Would words of mourning and sorrow, acknowledging her death as God’s *will*, have bound God to leave her body lifeless? John Lake certainly thought so.

Determined Faith is Great Faith.

Paraphrased from a Sermon by Pastor Keith Moore, Faith Life Church,
Branson

Consider the woman of Canaan who entreated Jesus to heal her daughter (Matt. 15:22-28).

“Have mercy on me thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed by a devil.” But He answered her not a word.

Can you hear the people saying: “Jesus is not speaking to you. It’s not His will to answer your prayer. You should go home.”

Instead, the woman pressed on with her entreaties.

She was determined.

She was insistent.

She was also noisy about her request.

The disciples complained to Jesus, “Send her away, for she cries after us.”

That would have stopped most people in their tracks. Again, hear the traditional arguments: “Look, woman, that’s confirmation. Jesus’ own disciples want you to leave. He’s not going to answer you. Can’t you see it’s not God’s will for your daughter to be healed?”

Still, she did not give up. She was committed.

Then Jesus said it was not fitting to take the children's bread and give it to dogs.

Whoa! Talk about confirmation.

That would have completely discouraged most people. Jesus insulted her, called her a dog, and said it was not fitting for her to receive the children's bread.

Most churchgoers would have said: "See there. He doesn't want to bother with you. He called you a dog. It's definitely not God's will to heal your daughter. You might as well go home."

Instead she answered, "Even the dogs eat the crumbs from under their master's table." And she would not leave.

Was Jesus angry with her? No.

He was *pleased*.

"O woman, great is thy faith. Be it unto you even as thou wilt," and her daughter was made whole from that hour (Matt. 15:28).

Faith pleases the Lord. Committed faith that doesn't take *no* for an answer.

Jesus always berated people for being of little faith. He never said: "O ye of little prayer. Ye of little fasting. Ye of little patience." I believe He is saying, "Why do you take so little, when I have so much to give?"

It is the Father's pleasure to give good gifts to His children.

What About the Lame Man's Four Friends?

What about the four believers who brought a paralytic to the place where Jesus was ministering (Mark 2:1-12)? They couldn't get into the house. The parking lot was full. The ushers told them there were no seats available. These guys could have said, "Well, brother, we tried. I'm sorry. I guess it's just not God's will for you to be healed."

Instead those determined men climbed up on the roof and somehow managed to raise the sick man's stretcher up there. You can see their confidence by their works.

Can't you hear the observers saying: "What are you doing? You could drop that poor man and kill him. You can't tear up the roof that way. It's

certainly not God's will for you to damage other people's property."

Yet these four did not cast away their confidence. They not only tore a hole in the roof, they managed to lower the man down to Jesus.

I'm convinced Jesus was totally pleased and probably smiling.

Why?

Because that house was full of skeptical Pharisees seeking to discredit Him in some way. It was His opportunity to demonstrate the very reason He came to earth. The legalists had questioned His authority to forgive sins. He showed them His authority by healing the man.

The observers glorified God (Mark 2:12).

That's what healing does.

It glorifies Jesus and confirms His authority as Lord and Savior.¹

Who is blind, but my servant? Seeing many things but observing them not. The Lord is well pleased . . .

(Isa. 42:19-21).

(This passage is understood differently in some translations, however the application is sound.)

In II Kings 4:18-37, the Shunamite woman was convinced, confident, and committed. She refused to look at death staring her in the face from her child's cold, lifeless body.

She saw the facts, but she did not acknowledge them. She could have broken down and cried, "My boy is dead!"

Nobody would have encouraged her to go to Mount Carmel and get Elisha to come and pray. However, she held fast to her confession of faith, saying three times, *all is well*.

The woman was believing for wellness. She was also committed.

When she came before Elisha, she said, "As the Lord lives, and as my soul lives, I will not leave you." She was not about to take *no* for an answer.

She fell on her face, holding onto Elisha's feet. Gehazi tried to pull her away, and Elisha said, "Let her alone."

Faith never makes God angry. Contrary to some traditions, He actually wants to bless His children.

Illness and death are not blessings. If they are, shouldn't we be praying for more of them instead of less?

We know the Shunamite got her son back by faith. Hebrews 11:35 speaks of women who, by faith, received their dead raised to life again. This woman pleased God by her faith. And she was not even a daughter of Abraham, but a gentile "dog" unfit for the children's bread.

If she had heeded the traditional teaching—"It's just not God's will. It's too late. God must have needed your son in the heavenly choir,"—would she have held to Elisha's feet with such determination?

She saw death, but blinded herself to it, and observed it not, refusing to be snared by a defeated confession. Instead she issued a decree and established three times by her confession, *all is well*.

The mouth of the upright shall deliver them (Prv. 12:6 b).

The Shunamite woman and John Lake proclaimed wellness (life) over their loved ones, and received them back from death. Would God have been as pleased if these supplicants had bowed tearful heads in a show of piety, saying, *the Lord gives and the Lord takes away, bless the Lord; it was His will for them to die?*

Obviously, it was *not* His will. It took faith words spoken in the earth to accomplish His will.

God is the author of life, not death. I believe He was delighted to restore those people to live out their full life spans.

He loves to restore what the enemy tried to steal.

(Again, I don't wish to imply that those who have lost loved ones to untimely death are in any way responsible; we can only do what the Holy Spirit shows us to do.)

Endnote

1. The sections on the woman of Canaan and the paralyzed man are paraphrased from a sermon by Pastor Keith Moore, Faith Life Church, Branson, MO.

Questions:

1. In Matt. 15:22, does the woman plead for help because her daughter is afflicted by God, or grievously vexed by a _____? How would a present-day physician likely diagnose the condition?
2. In Matt. 15:26, Jesus said that it was not fitting to take the children's _____ and give it to dogs. Who are the children? Does Jesus teach that healing is the children's bread?
3. Luke 8:11 says the seed is the _____ of God. In Jn. 1:14, Jesus is the Word *become* _____, and sent to dwell among us. Can the word also become the renewal, restoration, and healing of our own flesh since we are members of His body on the earth today? Why, or why not? First Jn. 4:17 says *as He is*, so are _____ in this world. Does Jesus have arthritis? Cancer? Any disease? As members of His body, shouldn't we resist sickness?
4. In Luke 5:24 Jesus said, that you may know the Son of man has _____ (authority) on earth to forgive _____, I say (to the palsied man) _____, take up your bed and _____ to your house. How did He demonstrate His authority to forgive? By healing the paralytic man, was Jesus also demonstrating His mission was two-fold, to redeem people from the *power* of sin and also from the curse of the law in Deut. 28:59-61?
5. Rom. 4: 14 speaks of those who try to keep the law and their _____ is made void, and the promise is made of none _____. Matt. 15:6 also says you have made the commandment of God of none effect by your _____. Do these passages indicate God's promise can be made of none effect by both false tradition and by trying to earn God's promises of blessing by keeping the law?
6. Rom. 4:16 says it is by faith that the promise becomes reality to all the _____ of Abraham. In Rom. 4:17-22, God quickens (makes alive) the dead and calls those things which _____ as though they are. When the Shunamite declared *all is well*, was she calling something that was not so as though it were? Did she receive her son back from the dead by faith or by keeping the law?
7. Isa. 42:19-21 says who is blind as he that is perfect, seeing many things but observing them not? The Lord is well _____ for his righteousness' sake; He will magnify the _____ and make it

honorable. Is the Shunamite woman a good example of seeing things but observing not? What law does God magnify by a person's 'observing not' the things he sees?

CHAPTER 13

Can Wrong Believing Defeat Us?

Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right (Job 42:7).

Tulsa author Tim Thompson, who wrote *A Psychic Discovers Jesus'*, is a tragic example of how a person can be seriously damaged by wrong thinking about God's will.

When Tim was six years old, he was walking on a frozen lake with his older brother. Suddenly, the ice gave way. His brother managed to shove Tim out of the water but was unable to save himself and drowned.

Traumatized and heartbroken, little Tim attended the funeral and heard the priest say, "God needed this boy, so He took him."

The resulting confusion caused Tim to hate God. How could a loving God take his brother away? Before long, he attempted to contact his brother and thought he heard his brother's voice calling to him from the spirit world. Soon Tim began communicating with spirit playmates. Eventually, he began to actually see these spirits. They all had one thing in common: while they claimed to love Tim, they hated God and all Christians.

Tim explains: "I missed my brother so very much and wanted to be with him, but he was dead, so I pretended to be dead too. Then I began hearing a voice that mocked God. It made me feel really good to know I wasn't the only one who hated Him. I began to hear such mocking and hatred toward God that before long I thought, whoever this is really understands me."

Young Tim kept dealing with the spirit world and soon found a spirit playmate named Raw, who was feared in the demonic world because his name is War spelled backwards. By age fifteen, Tim had a spirit friend called Nightmare. He also became fascinated with the idea of murder and began to admire men like Ted Bundy and Adolf Hitler.

At seventeen, he dived heavily into occultism, cocaine, and meth, and continued to hate God.

By age twenty, Tim was a practicing satanist and had great power in the realm of psychic (demonic) phenomenon. He also could predict future events with some degree of accuracy.

Tim's life continued to be demonically "blessed" with counterfeit spiritual gifts. Eventually, he went through six drug rehabs, seven mental wards, and tried to commit suicide.

He couldn't even succeed at taking his own life.

Finally a hopeless drug addict, terribly alone, dying from liver failure, with no food and no money, he knelt down and asked God to either kill him or give him some relief.

Jesus Came Down Through The Ceiling.

"When I did that, Jesus came down through the ceiling and spoke to me. The Lord said, 'You are free from drug and alcohol addiction. You no longer need antidepressants. You are going to do mighty things for my kingdom.'"

Jesus delivered Tim from the bondage of drug addiction and the doctrines of demons, which he had grown up believing and practicing.

The former satanist has since authored a second book on dealing with the spirit of suicide. His story appears in *Charisma* magazine (Nov., 2010 issue) and his first book is under consideration for a movie. He was scheduled for an interview on TBN in February of 2011. Tim ministers to others who have fallen into the same web of deception—the web that began with the words, "God needed your brother, so He took him."

No doubt that priest meant well. People somehow are more willing to accept death from God than from satan who has the power of death. However, like the comforters of Job, Tim's priest spoke wrongly about God.

Wrong thinking. Wrong believing. Wrong actions.

That is the path to defeat and destruction.

Is Healing Always God's Will?

The will of God is a multi-faceted topic for debate, and I do not presume to know it apart from what He says in His word. If you've already closed your mind to the subject of healing as the ultimate will of God, just skip this chapter. As in the beginning of this book, it is not my intention to open a heated debate, but simply to point out the tools used by others who received supernatural healing.

Those who believe God sends disease and only heals by selective grace can find many verses that seem to support that view. For those who are still uncertain, let's look at a few.

Traditional Arguments

Understandably, many sincere, Bible-reading persons doubt that healing is always God's will because of Paul's thorn in the flesh and Job's suffering. They point out that affliction can lead a sinner to repentance as it did, eventually, in former occultist Tim Thompson's life.

Certainly there is a link between sin and disease, however many faithful believers have tearfully confessed their sins and yet remain sick. This contradicts James 5:15. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick and if he has committed sins they are forgiven." Why is that?

Does God Make Us Sick?

Once again, I do not presume to know the answer to this question.

Here is what I know. Hebrews 12:9 contrasts our earthly fathers—the fathers of our flesh—with The Father of spirits. Fleshly fathers chastise the flesh. The Father of spirits chastises the spirit of man. God does not destroy our flesh to teach us a lesson. The verse also says the result of God's correction is so that we may *live* and not die, unlike the curses for disobedience which lead to death in Deuteronomy 28:61. Jesus came that we might have life.

Let's take a closer look at Job's story.

Whose Words Pleas'd God?

Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar, the three comforters of Job, represent the traditional explanations for sickness and calamity.

They argued with syllogistic reasoning that a righteous God would not allow such terrible suffering to come on an innocent man. Therefore, God had to be punishing Job's sin, or teaching him something. This is the same reasoning people use today. God is too righteous to allow sickness on a righteous man. He is using illness to discipline or to punish sins.

This begs the question: If we could pay for sin with our own suffering, why would Jesus have had to die on the cross?

In Job's story we see God is angered by the words of Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar. Significantly, God was not angry with the fourth friend to arrive later in the book, the young man Elihu. In fact Elihu was His prophet.

Look at Elihu's words. He spoke prophetically of a Mediator (Jesus) to pay the ransom for a man's soul and spare him from going down into the pit ... and his flesh would be renewed as in the days of his youth. (Job 33:23-26 paraphrased).

Now watch this.

Elihu got What He Said.

Job's flesh was renewed, just as Elihu said in Job 33:23-26, and Job was spared from going down into the pit (the grave before his time).

Job also spoke faith when he said, "I shall see Him in my flesh with my own eyes,"(Job 19:26-27).

In his flesh and with his own eyes, Job did see the Lord.

He also received a type of resurrection. The Lord healed his near-dead body and restored twice over everything he had lost. How great is His goodness to the children of men.

God further scolded the three friends for their wrongful reasoning.

"I am angry with you because you have not spoken of me what is right as my servant Job has" (Job 42:7).

(What had Job said? All along he protested that he did not deserve the calamities he was suffering, yet he praised God, regardless.)

The fourth friend, Elihu, was spared God's anger. What did Elihu say of God?

"In His great righteousness, He does not oppress" (NIV Job 37:23).

This is consistent with Acts 10:38, which names satan as the oppressor—not God.

People who use Job's suffering as an argument to say it was God's will to afflict and oppress are as wrong as Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar were wrong. God does not oppress. He is the author of life.

But God Permitted Job's Affliction.

Yes, He did.

He *permitted* it. He did not commission it. If we claim God is ultimately responsible simply because He is sovereign, He gets the blame for every perverted, sadistic, evil, cruel, murderous act since Cain killed Abel. Not so. Jesus blamed the devil for evil acts (I Jn. 3:8).

Passages in the Old Testament do indicate God sends disease. However, Dr. Robert Young, author of *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, and an outstanding Hebrew Scholar, points out that the literal Hebrew translation should actually read: "I will **permit** (not send) to be put upon thee none of the diseases which I have **permitted** to be brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Ex.15:26). (That opens up a whole new understanding of God's dealings with man.)

The devil taunted, "Job only serves You for the blessings; take'em away and He will curse You to Your face," (my translation).

Hurrah for Job! He would not do so! Not even after satan caused him such loss, grief, and illness. Not even after Mrs. Job spoke satanically inspired words, urging Job to curse God and die.

Job's famous words, "Though He slay me yet will I trust Him," (Job 13:15) mark his Abraham moment. He was willing to trust God, whether or not he ever had God's blessings again.

I'm convinced that God was cheering, "That's my boy!"

In the book, we get a glimpse behind the scenes. We see God's confidence in Job. We see how God restricted satan as to how far he could go to torment Job. We see it was not God afflicting Job, but the devil. When Job said those oft-quoted words, "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away," he knew God was the Giver; however, it was not God who took away. It was the thief who came to steal, kill, and destroy.

Job Opened the Door to Oppression.

Here, perhaps, is one key to the whole mystery. Kenneth Hagin taught many times on his radio broadcast that the devil had a *legal* right to beat up on Job, because in Job's own words: "The thing I greatly feared is come upon me," (Job 3:25).

Proverbs 10:24 says, "What a wicked man fears shall come upon him."

Was Job wicked? No, but it can be said that he wickedly feared. Job didn't just worry. He "*greatly* feared."

When a person greatly fears something, he usually talks fear, doubt, and negative words instead of faith. Job describes an anxious state of life before his affliction.

“I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet, yet trouble came,” (Job 3:26).

Wow. He wasn't at rest.

He did not feel safe.

And he wasn't quiet about it either.

Perfect love casts out fear (I Jn. 4:18).

Now look at Hebrews 4:1. “Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His *rest*, any of you should seem to come short of it.”

The Bible tells us 365 times to live without fear except for this one thing—fear any failure to enter into God's rest.

We are also advised to labor to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief (Heb.4: 11).

Kenneth Hagin preached that Job, by his own words, was not at rest and acted in fear by continually offering burnt sacrifices for his sons, afraid they may have cursed God in their hearts. Fear is believing in the wrong things—faith in reverse. Like the spies who feared the giants in the land, gave an evil report, and lost the blessing.

Hagin always reminded Rhema students that the devil is a spirit, and he also operates by spiritual laws. He delights in *fearful words*. When Job spoke and acted on the things he greatly feared, he loosed the wrong spirit into his life.

What About Paul's Thorn?

At the risk of some disagreement—and believers should always allow each other room to disagree in non-essential areas of Biblical truth—I will add a few words about Paul's thorn, the messenger of *satan* sent to buffet him, “lest he be exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations” given to him (II Cor. 12:7).

Marilyn Hickey points out that the word *messenger* in the Bible consistently means an angel and *buffet* means to hit ¹. God's messengers are

described as angels, ministering spirits sent to assist the heirs of salvation, rather than coming from satan to buffet them (Heb. 1:14).

Can a messenger of satan bring illness? Absolutely, **if** the person opens the door and allows it. That's what happened to King Saul.

In the Old Testament, people under the curse of the law opened the door to suffering by failing to obey the Mosaic Law. God judged the Hebrews by permitting plagues and fiery serpents to torment them. Mercifully, He *also* sent the *remedy*. The Hebrews had only to look at the bronze serpent lifted up on the pole (representing Jesus' victory on the cross over satan) and they would live.

It happens today in the same way. Paul knew this. He preached it (Rom. 5:1; 8:1-2).

Paul Chose Affliction.

In Acts 20:22-25, the Holy Spirit witnessed to Paul that in every city, bonds and *afflictions* awaited him. Paul said none of those things would stop him. Rather he chose to proceed, to obey his calling and finish his course with joy.

He chose to suffer affliction, defined by Alexander Cruden's Concordance as "adversity, trouble, or distress." He was not forced. He had a choice.

The word *illness* regarding Paul's thorn is the same word translated *affliction* in many Bibles. It is the same word used in Hebrews 11:25 to describe how Moses "*chose to suffer affliction with the Hebrews, rather than to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.*"

Scripture says Moses chose an affliction of *persecution*, not illness.

Paul made the same choice in obedience to his calling as is evident in Acts: 20:22-25. The Holy Spirit witnessed in every city that bonds and afflictions waited him, but he did not count his life dear, and determined to finish his course with joy. He did not shun affliction.

In the Old Testament, Thorns Are People.

Understandably, many people believe Paul's thorn was illness, and some translations actually use the word *illness* rather than affliction, however three places in the Old Testament (Num. 33:55; Josh. 23:13; and Judges

2:3) describe thorns in the sides, eyes, and flesh as people. Unbelieving people who persecuted God's people and became ***thorns in their flesh and in their eyes***. That is consistent with Paul's description of the buffetings (whippings, stoning, beatings, and pricks) he suffered in every city.

God Healed Paul Many Times.

God healed Paul of blindness after his experience on the road to Damascus. The Lord also healed him many times thereafter from the effects of lashings, beatings, cold, hunger, the deadly viper bite when he reached the island of Malta, etc.

Not only that, Acts 19:11-12 speaks of God working special miracles through Paul so that from his body were brought cloths to the sick, and diseases departed from them and *evil spirits* went out of them, (Emphasis added).

The anointing of God was on Paul that strongly. How could an evil spirit stay on him to make him sick?

Paul's anointing could heal the sick and cast out demons; however, he could not stop people from persecuting him, nor would God.

Certainly, Paul's eyes were bruised and swollen (Galatians 4:13) after he suffered a stoning and was left for dead. He got up and walked from Lystra to Derbe the next day.

A man who has just been stoned to lifelessness doesn't get up and walk to the next town a day later without miraculous restoration. God didn't leave Paul in a broken body, yet no doubt he had bruises, black eyes, and facial swelling for a while.

That stoning is likely the time when Paul's spirit left his body and was caught up to Paradise (II Cor. 12:4).

What Made Paul Humble?

The purpose of Paul's thorn was to humble him. Can illness do that?

A look at Job's story plainly reveals that suffering did *not* humble him. In fact he was self-righteous until God appeared on the scene. "So these three men ceased to answer Job because he was righteous in his own eyes" (Job 32:1).

I have found illness doesn't make me humble. Rather it makes me useless. Like Peter's feverish mother-in-law, I cannot get out of bed to serve the needs of my family until I'm well.

It is true, knowledge puffs up (I Cor. 8:1) and Paul had knowledge. If I get puffed up by a new understanding of the word, which may not be a revelation to anyone but me, I can quickly be humbled by sharing with another who has a different understanding.

As I first began to glimpse the abundant-grace view, a few dear sisters sternly rebuked me. That was humbling. However, it sent me to the Lord to search out the matter and prompted me to write this book.

Paul's own countrymen persecuted him for leaving his Jewish faith. Once, he had been a highly respected Pharisee, commissioned by the high priest to persecute the Christians. Now he had become a Christian, a hated outcast, worthy only for the whipping post. That would have humbled any man.

Does illness have the same effect? Sometimes just the opposite. The patient finds himself the center of attention. He gets sympathy, flowers, candy, and his friends offer to help in any possible way. Some people enjoy this attention so much they don't even want to get well.

Albert Simpson, Kenneth Hagin, and John Lake each taught that God had to break the spirit of religious pride in Saul before He could use him to preach the gospel. The 'prick' of persecution (Acts 9:5 and 2 Cor. 17) is what the Lord used to keep Paul humble.

Aren't Christians Supposed to Suffer?

From El Paso, Word of Life Church Pastor Tom Brown's ministry of deliverance and healing has been featured in documentaries on MSNBC, ABC's *20/20*, and the History Channel.

Following are Pastor Brown's comments (parenthetical statements and emphasis are mine) regarding suffering and Paul's thorn.

"Through this (thorny) passage, people have developed a weak, passive gospel, (believing) they are supposed to suffer sickness for the glory of God.

"Many complain about the message (of abundant grace). They charge that faith ministers deny the role of suffering in the Christian life. I, for one,

believe a Christian *should* suffer, but only if it's God's will. The problem with much of the teaching on suffering is that it assumes all suffering is the same.

“The Bible mentions four kinds of suffering: general, sinful, Christian, and demonic.

“**Sinful suffering** involves the result of criminal or evil behavior.

“**General suffering** is discomfort that everyone goes through (as a result of the Adamic curse on the world, apart from the curse of the law). This should not be considered sinful or demonic. It's just normal. For example, it's normal to get gray hair when you grow old. You don't rebuke gray hair. You simply dye it. It's normal to slow up a bit when you get older. The devil is not slowing you up; age is. However, that does not mean you should be in a wheelchair.

“**Christian suffering** is adversity which comes to Christians who are living godly (lives)—usually in the form of persecutions, criticism, prejudice—and usually caused (or stirred up) by fallen angels.

“**Demonic suffering** is not normal. I find it tragic that Christians accept suffering from terminal and chronic illnesses (as coming from God). The Bible describes those illnesses as demonic (Acts 10:38; 19:12) and believers need to fight those.

“It is clear that suffering can be God's will if it is Christian suffering. Paul went through it (a suffering of persecution), and God made it clear that through this kind of suffering Paul would be made perfect and strong. We should embrace this kind of suffering, but reject demonic suffering.”²

The Lord Delivered Paul.

People are entitled to believe however they choose about Paul's thorn, but please consider the following. Ultimately, Paul wrote that he had fought a good fight. Christ made him more than a conqueror (Rom. 8:37). He finished the course. He had a choice, to depart and be with Christ, or to remain and serve the church. And he listed his persecutions and *afflictions* in II Timothy 3:10-11, saying, “but out of them **ALL**, the Lord delivered me.” (Emphasis is mine.)

Paul received deliverance and victory over the thorn, whatever it was. We can too.

Endnotes

1. Marilyn Hickey, *God's Benefit: HEALING*, (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, 1981).
2. Tim Thompson, *A Psychic Discovers Jesus*, (Tulsa, OK: Yorkshire Publishing, 2010).
3. Pastor Tom Brown's comments can be read at www.tbm.org/pauls_thorn.htm.

Questions:

1. In Num. 33:55, God warns Israel that if the people of the land are not driven out, they will become _____ in your eyes and _____ in your sides and shall vex you in the land. Josh. 23:13 says the inhabitants shall be snares, traps and scourges in your _____ and _____ in your _____. Judges 2:3 says the people shall be as _____ in your sides, and their gods shall be a _____ unto you. Would Paul, a well-schooled Pharisee according to Phil.3:4-6, likely know these scriptures from his studies? _____ Is it likely he would use the same phrase in his own writing? _____ Does the Bible always interpret its own symbols? Would God hide the meaning of His word from His people?
2. Acts 19:11,12 describes special miracles God worked through the hand of Paul so that cloth from his body was brought to the sick, and _____ departed from them and the _____ went out from them. With such a powerful anointing, how likely is it an evil spirit could remain on Paul?
3. We know Paul's thorn was to keep him humble. In Job 32:1 says Job was _____ in his own eyes. Does illness necessarily bring humility?
4. The passage in II Cor. 7:10 contrasts godly sorrow with the sorrow of the world. A godly sorrow that works _____ to salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world works _____. What type of sorrow did Peter experience after he denied Christ three times? What type of sorrow did Judas experience?
5. We know Paul's thorn caused suffering in the flesh. Heb. 12:9 says the purpose for chastisement is so that a man may be in subjection unto

the Father of spirits and _____. Does the Father of spirits chastise with sickness unto death?

6. Paul said he could do _____ things through Christ who strengthened him. (Phil. 4:13). Is there anything he could **not** do? What limited him? _____ What limits God? What limits us?

7. Rom. 3:28 says a man is justified by _____ without the deeds of the law. Rom. 4:3 says of the one who believes, his faith is counted to him for _____. Psa. 32:2 says blessed is the man to whom God imputes not _____. If Paul (or anyone) had to achieve a certain standard of righteousness or humility in order to be healed, how much is enough?

8. In Job 42:10-12, the Lord turned the _____ of Job when he _____ for his friends; also the Lord gave Job _____ as much as he had before...so the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his _____. Does this indicate God's ultimate will was for Job to be in health and prosper? _____.

9. In Second Tim. 3:10-12, Paul describes his afflictions as persecutions that came on him at "Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, what _____ I endured; but out of them _____ the Lord _____ me." He added that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer _____. Does he mean illness or persecution?

CHAPTER 14

How Important Are Our Words?

He that guards his mouth, guards his life (Prv. 13:3)

Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me.

Remember that old saying?

It's completely wrong.

Words are the most powerful tool in the universe. God's words and ours. Words can heal or hurt. It's really mind-boggling, especially when you've heard the name-and-claim-it stuff rather than solid, Bible-based teaching.

What an awesome power God has entrusted to us in our spoken words.

Like Produces Like, Each After its Own Kind.

The law of sewing and reaping is in Genesis and also Luke 8:11. On the third day, God created seed to reproduce after its own kind. In Luke 8:11, we read the seed is the *word* of God and it will not return empty.

Our words also are seeds and will reproduce after their own kind.

Most people can grasp the concept that words of faith bring a good harvest. But what about negative words? Can it really be that if we keep on grumbling and speaking negative facts, we get more of the same? Yes, indeed. It's all through the Bible. People reap a harvest from what they sew (plant) with their words, both positive *and negative*.

The mind cannot begin to digest that statement at a single reading. Casual readers will not absorb it. It is astonishing. By words, a person releases blessing or cursing every time he opens his mouth. Proverbs 18:21 says, "The power of death and life is in the tongue."

You might ask, whoever spoke death and had it come to pass?

Jesus did.

He demonstrated the power of words when he cursed the fig tree. Jesus spoke and it withered from the root, significantly right before He taught us to believe that we can have what we say (Mark 11:23-24).

Words of doubt bind God from showering His great love and wondrous blessings upon His people (Mark 6:5).

Jesus said believers would have what they *say* in Mark 11:23-24, in Proverbs 4:24, and many other verses. I never realized that if we are saying bad things, we sometimes get those things too. It's the law of seed and harvest in operation.

Case in point: I have a friend who is constantly talking about what a depleted, spiritual drought he is in. For the last five years, he has maintained that he is spiritually weak. The Holy Spirit cannot bear witness to his words, because the Bible says believers have power, not weakness (Acts 1:8). The more he talks weakness, the weaker he remains.

Abundant grace teaches that instead of establishing those things that are temporary as though they were permanent, he should be saying, "I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me; I am strong in the Lord and the power of His might," regardless of how he *feels*, because speaking the word of truth releases the Holy Spirit to bring victory.

This is not to say my friend does not experience negative feelings. All believers go through deserts at times in their spiritual walk. They get through much quicker when they hold fast to the word of truth and maintain a victorious attitude.

Satan knows this. He is an expert at using words to accomplish his work. If children grow up hearing they are inferior, stupid, lazy, worthless, etc., that is what they become. And the opposite is also true. Telling a child he is God's creation, loved and precious, and he can do all things through Christ's strength, will build victory into his spirit.

Just as faith comes by hearing God's word, fear comes from hearing the devil's doctrines. He always uses what is *seen and heard* to produce doubt. Remember, when Peter saw the wind and the waves, he started to sink, (Matt. 14:28-30).

Satan's original question, *Has God said?* was designed to cast doubt on the truth. He is still asking that same question today.

If satan can get a person to doubt that God means what He says, he can defeat that person. He has kept too many of God's precious people in doubt far too long by that very tactic: Has God said? Does God *really* mean by

His stripes you are healed? Does He *really* mean He has redeemed you from the curse of disease?

Doubt sets in, followed by failure to receive healing.

I asked the Lord to show me where this law of the tongue is in operation on the negative side.

Jacob unwittingly spoke a death curse on his wife, (Gen. 31:32). Rachel died a short time later in childbirth. It is unclear whether Jacob ever found out she had stolen Laban's household gods.

Jezebel is a perfect example of Proverbs 18:7: "A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul." She spoke a death curse on herself when she threatened to kill Elijah. "So let the gods do to me and more also if I make not thy life as the life of one of them (the slain prophets) by tomorrow about this time" (I Kings 19:2). She was thrown out of the tower window, and the dogs ate her corpse (II Kings 9:33-37).

In Numbers 14:28-35 and Deuteronomy 1:34, the ten spies came back with an evil report, saying there were giants in the land, and Israel should not go into Canaan or they would be destroyed. Only Joshua and Caleb were allowed to go into the Promised Land, because they had proclaimed, "We are well able to take the land," based on faith in God's word.

Joshua and Caleb got what they said ... after forty years. It was a long time coming, yet their words eventually reaped a harvest.

The rest of the people, all over age twenty, are described as hard against God by their murmuring and complaining words (Num. 11:1). One translation even reads, "Your words are hard against me."

God said to the murmurers, "As you have spoken in my ears, so will I do to you" (Num. 14:28). This is one of the most astonishing scriptures, and it is actually affirmed by Jesus in Mark 11:23-24.

Those unbelieving people said they could not go into the Promised Land and *got what they said*, according to their fear (which is simply faith in reverse—believing and acting on the devil's words rather than God's). They bound God from blessing them as He had already declared He would do. (See Mark 6:5-6).

I am struck by the fact that the spies were speaking of things they saw. Giants in the land. It was true. There were giants. Yet God called this an *evil*

report, because they doubted they could possess the land He had promised to them.

What has God promised us that we are doubting we can possess?

Speaking Faith Looses Blessings From Heaven.

There are probably many other biblical examples of negative power in spoken words.

However, we want to focus on ordering our conversation aright (Psa. 50:23). The careful student of the Bible notes that God never does anything without saying it first. He spoke and the universe came into existence. He speaks through the prophets. God always releases His faith by words to establish His will in the earth.

All biblical people practiced faith released by words. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is full of them.

Abraham, the father of faith, spoke faith and got what he said.

When he started up the mountain to offer Isaac (his promised child), Abraham acted out a prophetic picture of God the Father offering His only begotten Son as a sacrifice for sin.

What faith words did Abraham say?

“I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you” (Gen. 22:5-8).

Yes, he was planning to offer Isaac on the altar in obedience to God; however, he was *not* planning on coming back down that mountain without his son.

He had a promise from God that Isaac would be the seed of generations to come. His words show he believed the promise, even in the face of what looked impossible.

Abraham also proclaimed, “God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering.”

He probably did not realize he was speaking prophetically of Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God. Abraham got what he said, both at that time and in the latter fulfillment when Christ hung on the cross thousands of years later.

We learn the rest of the story in Hebrews 11:17-19: “Abraham believed God was able to raise Isaac up, even from the dead, from which also Abraham did receive him back in a figure or type.”

Abraham said he was coming back with Isaac.

He said God would provide the sacrifice for the offering.

He acted in obedience.

Abraham got what he said. This is the example of faith-filled words establishing God’s will in the earth.

The entire 53rd chapter of Isaiah is God’s prophetic description of the life and death of Jesus written as if it *had already happened*, some 700 years before Christ was born. Hebrew scholars have read that passage for centuries and no doubt wondered what it meant, little realizing it was God’s will spoken on the earth, decreeing His plan of salvation.

Jonah’s faith confession is no less astonishing. He prayed to the Lord from **inside** the whale’s belly, and proclaimed God had heard him.

Jonah spoke as if deliverance had *already* happened, calling those things not yet manifest as though they were already accomplished.

I went down to the bottoms ... yet thou hast brought up my life from corruption ... my prayer came before thy holy temple ... I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving (Jonah 2:6-9).

After he prayed those words, the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited him out on dry land. That did not happen immediately. Jonah was inside the whale for three days. We know the story is true, and not a fable, from Jesus’ lips. Jonah also was speaking prophetically of the Lord’s body resurrected on the third day from the tomb.

Was he lying or speaking a faith decree? God had not yet commanded the fish to spit him out.

His story may have had a far different ending if he had been inside the whale confessing only the facts. “Poor me. I’ve disobeyed God. I deserve this. I’ve brought it all on myself. Nobody ever got out of a fish-belly alive. I’m going to die inside this stinking fish. It must be God’s will for me to die. He is righteous and just to punish me for my disobedience, bless His holy name.”

Most people would have nodded at the piety of such a prayer.

By such words, Jonah would have been observing the facts, giving lip service to circumstance as if it were permanent. Establishing what was instead of what should be (he knew God had called him to preach). Instead he spoke bold faith words, declaring God had brought him up—speaking as if it had *already* happened. Proclaiming he was going to offer a sacrifice with the voice of thanksgiving. He loosed God’s deliverance by words of faith.

He got what he said.

How many times are we in a tight place and whining about it instead of offering a sacrifice of thanksgiving? Complaining about our circumstances instead of praising God and expecting things to change?

God inhabits the praises of his people, not the grumblings. (If I said that before, it’s because I really like to remind myself. Also, please realize I am a teacher, and teachers repeat for emphasis.)

Questions:

1. How important were Jonah’s and Abraham’s words? Prv. 6:2 says you are snared by the _____ of your mouth, you are taken with the _____ of the mouth. Did Jonah and Abraham escape a potential snare by choosing to speak faith instead of bemoaning their circumstances?
2. While he was still inside the whale, Jonah declared God had brought him up. Was he lying, or calling those things, which were not *yet accomplished*, as though they were? Is this an example of confession-is-possession thinking, or is this an example of Mark 11:23-24, you shall have what you say if you believe in your heart and doubt not?
3. Faith is the evidence of things that are not seen. Is Jonah’s prayer also a good example of declaring and believing what is not yet seen?
4. What is the Holy Spirit teaching us to say in these verses? Prv. 15:2,4 says the _____ of the wise uses knowledge aright, and a wholesome tongue is a tree of _____. Prv. 18:21 says death and life are in the power of the _____. Matt. 12:37 says by _____ shall you be justified and by your _____ shall you be condemned. Prv. 12:18 says the tongue of the _____ is _____.

5. Eph. 5:1 tells us to imitate the Father, as children _____ their parents. Abraham is called the father of faith. Can we imitate God and Abraham by speaking words of faith—not our own words but God’s? Is anything more powerful for bringing about changes than God’s word?

6. Unbelief, murmuring, and false tradition can prevent God from pouring out His blessings. Jer. 8:6 says I listened and heard, but they did not speak aright and no man _____ of his wickedness. Can God forgive an unrepentant man? (See Mark 11:26). Can He bless negative, doubt-filled, double-minded words? Can fear hinder the Spirit of God from showing His goodness to the children of men?

7. Joel 3:10 says, Let the weak say I am _____, and II Cor 12:10 says when I am weak, then I am _____. Is this instructing us not to establish what is, but **what should be**, and that we shall have what we say (Mark 11:23-24)? Why, or why not?

8. First Jn. 5:6 says the Spirit bears witness because the Spirit is _____. Can the Holy Spirit bear witness to declarations that are not in agreement with God’s word? For instance, if I continually say I am weak and fearful, can the Holy Spirit bear witness to that? What should I be saying instead?

9. Abundant grace teaches people never to deny a medical fact, but to give God’s word final authority over the fact. Is that faith or presumption? Could that be one reason many people are not operating in the keys of the kingdom (Mark 11:23-24)? Are we saying what we *have* instead of having what we say? Do we take seriously the verse in Num. 14:28, as we have _____ in God’s ears, that will He do? Should we?

10. Words are seeds of power. The mountain got there by words (Gen.1:9). Can words also make it move and be cast into the sea (Mark 11:23)? Why, or why not?

CHAPTER 15

What Does Authority Have to do With Healing?

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (I Jn. 3:8).

Divine healing is not always as simple as asking and receiving the way Margie Lopez and Vickie Haller did as ten-year-old girls. We've explored many scriptural reasons why.

Another reason is failing to understand the realms of authority in the earth. Albert Simpson had difficulty believing he had the authority to trust God for his health. Many people have the same doubts.

We have touched briefly on the three realms of authority. There is a need to look a little deeper for people deeply entrenched in the idea of suffering for God's glory (and, yes, there is a place for that as discussed in Chapter 13). Sometimes, a person remains ill because he fails to understand his authority to wrestle, not against flesh and blood, but against rulers of the darkness of this world (Eph. 5:12).

This takes discernment. For instance, we do not have authority over another person's will, body, or household unless we are asked to pray a prayer of faith for them, or we receive a prompting from the Holy Spirit.

There is also a time when it's useless to ask God to do what He said we should do in the authority of His name (Mk. 16:17-18). (See Brenda Lange's stories of the fire and the mad mamba.)

Most abundant-grace teachers caution that while believers have every right to exercise authority over their own bodies, they are limited in what they can pray for others by the person's willingness to receive. A person who is unwilling, unforgiving, or stubbornly wishes to hang onto sinful addictions, is unlikely to receive healing by the prayer of another—no matter how much faith the intercessor has. Although such people have been known to receive supernatural healing.

What Does Anointing Mean?

Oxford American Dictionary defines authority as "power based on right," and to *authorize* is defined as "to sanction." The word *anoint* is defined as "sanctioned" or set apart. Theologians agree that all believers are

sanctioned, or set apart, by the anointing of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8 and I Jn. 2:20, 27).

E. W. Kenyon (1867—1948), a noted author and a renowned Baptist minister with a widely respected international healing ministry during the late 1800s and early 1900s, addressed the mystery of God’s authority, man’s authority, and the devil’s. In his book, *The Father and His Family*,¹ Kenyon devotes an entire chapter to the three realms of authority by quoting Jesus’ words.

He began by explaining how Jesus identifies satan as both the prince and *god* of this world (II Cor. 4:4).

Oxford American Dictionary defines ‘prince’ as a ruler from a royal family. A ruler exercises dominion and authority. We know God first gave Adam dominion and authority to subdue the earth. We know satan usurped dominion because he offered all the kingdoms of the world to Jesus in exchange for worship.

How did satan get this position? Satan is a created being who lost his position in the royal court of heaven when he tried to ascend above the throne of God (Isa. 14:12-16). Cast down to the earth, he took Adam’s authority by the power of deception.

Adam Was God’s Chosen Prince.

God gave Adam dominion over everything on the earth (Gen. 1:28; Psa. 8:6; Psa. 91:13; and Psa. 115:16). God could have commanded satan to get out of the garden, but he expected Adam to do it. Adam had authority over everything that crept. All he had to do was say, “By the authority of God’s word I command you, creep, to get out of this garden,” and satan would have had to flee.

Instead, Adam disobeyed and legally transferred to the devil the dominion that God had invested in him.

This authority is time-limited. Various scriptures speak of satan as knowing he has but little time. Revelation 16:10 speaks of satan’s *kingdom* on earth as full of darkness.

Had God not been absolutely just, He could have dispossessed satan and punished Man immediately in the garden, but instead His grace makes

provision for Man's redemption from eternal death. His love for Man is based upon perfect justice and righteousness.

According to Kenyon: "This is a hideous fact to contemplate: that the human race has been under the authority of the devil, that his dominion is a legal dominion, and that God will respect it until the lease expires (Luke 4:5-7). However Jesus did not leave us without power. Sin no longer has dominion over us. Thank God, we are no longer satan's subjects."

The disciples were commissioned to heal the sick, cast out devils, raise the dead, and preach the gospel, but until they exercised their authority God could not exercise His power. The lost would not have been saved and the sick would not have been healed. They did not ask God to do these things, if it was His will. They already knew His will and commanded it to be done in the name of Jesus. God's will has not changed.

Best-selling author and Bible teacher Jerry Savelle has said many times on his *Daystar Television* and radio broadcasts, that God has all power. He is sovereign Lord, Creator, all Truth, all goodness, and all faithfulness. However, He cannot go against His own laws. He does not forgive the unrepentant; save the man who refuses to believe, or move the mountains He has commissioned believers to move. God has chosen to administer dominion in the earth through His children—his body of flesh on the earth today. ²

We Wrestled The Powers of Darkness.

By Joshua's Mother

"All parents have dreams and expectations for their children. If those dreams are threatened when your child is at the very beginning of a promising and productive life, the agony can be overwhelming ... unless you have learned to trust God and exercise your blood-bought authority over the enemy.

"As a young mother, God led me to home-school my three children with an emphasis on biblical values, a challenging but deeply rewarding venture for all of us. The one child with a scientific bent above the others was Joshua. He eventually attended a private Christian high school where he excelled and graduated in the top ten-percent of his class.

“We hated to see him go, but Joshua had the opportunity to work at my father’s California-based Sport and Spine Center as an aid to the physical therapists.

“By the time he began attending a Christian university, Joshua was dealing with people in his work environment who had good character and strong work ethics but were not necessarily Christians. These were people he admired. He began struggling with conflicting values. He also suffered the heartbreak of a failed romance and perhaps even began to question how to internalize his own faith. There was another dangerous spiritual issue he ran into, which we didn’t discover until much later.

“As a mom who once had some experience with downward spirals myself, I began to see warning signs in Joshua.

“Then we received the phone call that easily could have dashed all hope for Joshua’s promising future.

We Were Mystified.

“Joshua lapsed into a catatonic condition after accosting a client rather aggressively in my father’s company. Something was going terribly awry. Our promising son had graduated with honors and had done well in everything he put his hand too. What could have happened? We were mystified.

“Things became increasingly bizarre. Joshua was taken to a psychiatric hospital and given medication, which strongly disagreed with him.

“Daniel, my husband, left at once for the west coast. He found our son in a hospital experiencing a very severe chemical reaction to medication—so severe that Joshua asked if he could please just die.

“Daniel entreated the Lord, and Joshua began to recover from the attack.

“Now we had to find out what had put him in that catatonic state.

We Determined To Get Joshua Back.

“My family began a long journey of faith in God’s abundant grace, little knowing we would be wrestling, not against flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers of the darkness.

“What we saw in Joshua could be described as a manic/depressive state. His bizarre behavior included contradictory acts, such as tipping a Sonic

employee with more money than the entire cost of the food he had ordered.

“Other times, he would walk for hours. At one point, when he was very manic and not making much sense, I made the difficult decision to take Joshua to a hospital.

“He stayed in the facility almost a week and was given a diagnosis that would frequently change over the next few years. Doctors suggested every label from obsessive/compulsive and bipolar disorders to schizophrenia.

“Daniel and I had never seen any of these symptoms in Joshua’s growing up years. We read all the information we could find to learn about these disorders. We also knew with certainty that the Lord had not brought this emotional turmoil to our son. We believed with all our hearts that God had the ultimate and lasting answer for Joshua rather than psychotherapy, medications, or any other temporary solutions. We refused to accept the behavior as permanent.

“Convinced and committed, we were taking a faith stand. It would take much perseverance and prayer, and there were discouragements along the way.

“Disappointingly, Joshua was released from an EMT training program, however he did return later to finish the course. He took classes at the Red Cross and also was dismissed from that program.

“Eventually, Joshua tried his hand at basic training in order to get ready for boot camp in the Navy. All was going well. Then we received a call from his supervisor, telling us Joshua did not seem himself, had skipped dinner, and had totally shut down.

“Another disheartening bump on the road.

Joshua Had Opened a Door.

“Three strikes and you’re out? No way. We knew the meltdown was *not* God’s will. We were committed to believing for our son’s ultimate healing and would not accept anything less.

“Because Joshua had shut down so dramatically once again, it was important for me to ascertain how he was thinking.

“As a teacher and a home-schooling mom, one of the directives the Lord gave me was to ask Joshua to make written reports from books we had in

our library. His heart seemed so terribly broken that I was concerned about his emotions as well as what was going on in the mental arena.

“What he wrote was pure gold, to my great relief. He showed such coherence and clarity, demonstrating all over again why he had been such an exceptional student. He was writing well, however he was simply not able to verbalize with clarity.

“The real Joshua was still inside. How could I draw him out?

“A particular pastor was on duty one singular evening at our church. Not only was he a pastor, he also had a degree in counseling and was working toward a doctorate. A God-incident? I believe so.

“After talking with Joshua, the pastor learned something very startling. It seemed incredible to us, but because of the various behavior issues Joshua experienced, it actually made sense. Pastor Benjamin told us Joshua had tampered with satanic and occult practices at some point.

A Dark Secret Comes to Light.

“We began to understand a little more in the light of this new backdrop. Our son also began to open up more and seemed relieved to be unburdened from this dark secret.

“We took authority over the enemy’s power and bound satan from our son’s life.

“Soon, Joshua started to work successfully for a credit institution and made very close friends with a fellow worker, George, and also his immediate supervisor, Glenda. He showed much consistency and skillfulness, not surprisingly because of his wonderful intellect. He also was on medication at this time and seeing a psychiatrist regularly.

“Daniel and I praised God our son was getting increasingly better. In a short time, he decided to go back to school and study radiology.

“As Joshua continued making progress, I noticed he was keeping a journal and I would catch him sometimes in the evening reading his Bible. Both these practices were making huge differences in his life.

“Joshua and I also took part in the Healing Room Ministry, which was implemented by the renowned John G. Lake at the turn of the century in Spokane, Washington. This is not a church. It is a safe harbor for people to

receive prayer for all kinds of needs—people who might not ask for prayer in a regular church setting.

“During these prayer sessions, Joshua learned how the enemy had gained inroads to his life. This helped him understand his captive condition, and more importantly, showed him how to be set free.

“We began to see even more healthy changes.

“Joshua developed the ability to interact socially with much greater ease, in contrast to his former labored conversation. He met a young lady at the cable television company. He also allowed himself to enjoy life a little more, began seeing some movies, roughhousing with his younger brother, and playing tennis again.

“What once seemed impossible is now a glorious reality. Joshua is living a full and productive life. Praise God. Our doctor once remarked that Joshua could be the poster child for success at overcoming schizophrenia.

“One of Joshua’s favorite verses is from II Timothy 1:7, which says, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

“Another is Romans 12:2, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

“Our family fought the enemy with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. We agreed God’s word is true and proclaimed the above scriptures over Joshua, until the oppressor had to flee from our son. Praise Jesus. He came to set the captive free.”

The Devils Believe and Tremble (James 2:19).

One more word about authority. Tim Thompson, a former satanist, says: “Many satanists, psychics, and occultists will tell you that the most dangerous person on earth is the believer who trusts God. Satan’s servants know from firsthand experience.”³

Tim describes how real these evil spirits are: “When a person humbles himself to trust and obey Jesus, he has such enormous power on his side that the demons get scared of him. They believe and they tremble.

“Most people don’t realize the devil doesn’t care if they believe in God or not. Satan’s only concern is if they *serve* the living God.

“A true servant of the Lord is the most powerful weapon in the universe and has full authority over every demon in hell.”³

* * *

Final Thought

I recently had the delight of interviewing Carol Levergood, author, speaker, and missionary to Brazil for more than twenty years. Carol overcame a serious battle with depression by going to the scriptures. During the extremely debilitating attack, she said satan tempted her to take her own life. She is joyfully radiant today. There is no illness—emotional, mental, or physical—that the power of God’s healing word does not drive out completely.

Once, as I shared a scripture with a foreign student, the Lord allowed me to see into the spirit world. The demon was so afraid of Christ’s presence in me that it fled immediately, allowing me to realize demons are far more fearful of believers than we know. Another time, just the awesome power of the spoken name *Jesus* caused an evil spirit to flee from my room. I realized the literal truth of James 4:7, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” I also realized how very important it is to draw near to God every day.

Endnotes

1. E.W. Kenyon’s quotations in the above chapter are from pp 37-41 of E.W. Kenyon’s book, *The Father and His Family*, (Tenth Edition, Kenyon’s Gospel Publishing Society: 1964).
2. Jerry Savelle radio and TV broadcasts, and www.jerrysavelle.org pod casts.
3. Joshua’s mother chooses to remain anonymous out of respect for her son. She is an inspirational speaker, an award-winning classroom teacher, and a successful author
4. Tim Thompson’s statements are from, *A Psychic Discovers Jesus* (Tulsa, OK: Yorkshire Publishing, 2010) used with permission.

Questions:

1. How does our understanding of authority affect our faith for healing? Eph. 6:12 says we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against _____, against _____, against the rulers of the _____ of this world. If Joshua's parent's had wrestled against flesh and blood (in the natural realm only) instead of also exercising supernatural authority over the enemy, would they have had the same success?

2. Acts 19:12 speaks of cloths brought to the sick from Paul's body and their _____ departed from them and the _____ spirits went out of them. Should prayers for the sick include taking authority over evil spirits? Why, or why not?

3. In Psalm 91:13, those who make the Lord their refuge are promised _____ shall tread upon the _____ and _____, and the _____ shall _____ trample under their feet. All three are also symbols of satan. Does God do the trampling on the dragon, or are His people expected to do it?

4. In Luke 10:17-20, Jesus says I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over _____ the _____ of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Is this power meant for only a selected few, or for all who make the Lord their refuge, as in Psa. 91? How much power over the enemy is given to believers?

5. In Acts. 26:18, the Apostle Paul said his commission was to go and deliver man out of the _____ of satan. In Matt. 4:8-9, satan offers Jesus all the _____ of the world if only the Lord would bow down and worship him. Does Jesus deny that the kingdoms of the world are legally satan's?

6. In II Cor. 4:3-4, Jesus calls satan the _____ of this world. In the parable of Mark 12:1-10, God says He will come and destroy the wicked husbandmen and give the _____ to others. Who do the wicked husbandmen represent? Could God oust them at any moment? Why doesn't He?

7. Rev. 12:12 says the devil has great wrath because he knows his _____ is short. Does God respect the authority of satan's allotted time as prince of this world?

8. Psalm 115:16 says heaven is the Lord's but the _____ He has given to the _____ of men. Psa. 8:4-6, says God has made Man to have _____ over the works of His hands, and God put _____ things under his feet. Who will take dominion over God's works if Man does not?

9. We always hear how our sovereign God is in control, yet Philip. 3:21 speaks of a time when the Savior is able even to _____ all things unto Himself. Does this imply that some things are not yet subdued unto Him? Until that time, does the Lord expect His people, His body on earth, to tread on serpents, scorpions and over all the power of the enemy? Why else would He give them the power?

10. In Matt. 13:58 and Mark 6:5-6 Jesus _____ do no mighty works because of their _____. This verse doesn't say He wouldn't. It says he *couldn't*. Jesus was willing, but unbelief hindered. If unbelief can limit our sovereign God, how much more can we bind the devil by refusing to believe his lies? (I really like this thought!)

CHAPTER 16

What Do We Know of Death?

The things that are revealed ... (Deut. 29:29)

Any discussion on divine healing must acknowledge there are many sincere believers who do not experience it.

Jeanetta Chrystie, Ph.D., inspirational speaker, author, and creative writing instructor, is a throat-cancer survivor. In addition to life-threatening disease, she has faced some of life's more difficult challenges, and she encourages others:

“Making a commitment to follow God’s leading in our lives does not exempt us from life’s troubles. It may even compound them. However, it also does not exempt us from continuing to be obedient and faithful to God. I have learned that faith needs to be present, healthy, and deeply entrenched before tragedy strikes. I’ve also seen many people ‘lose’ their faith over feeling let down by God. I hurt for those people, swallowed by their own disillusionment, anger, or resentment over unwanted events in their lives. I wish I could tell them all the things I’ve come to understand over the years. That is the basis of my ministry now.”¹

We applaud people of faith such as best-selling author, artist, and Bible teacher, **Joni Erickson-Tada**,² who has lived most of her life in a wheelchair and has maintained a victorious attitude. There are many others with debilitating health challenges who live overcoming lives to the glory of God.

Penny Robichaux-Koontz³, founder of Jacob’s House for abused and neglected children near Branson, walks miraculously (and yes, with some difficulty) on leg muscles destroyed by polio when she was a three-year-old child. Her story was featured on Kenneth Copeland’s Believer’s Voice of Victory, 2010 Christmas program and later in the Believer’s Voice of Victory, 2011 spring issue.

Penny says: “The doctors say I use trick posture and if it were not for my spinal fusion I would fall over like a rag doll. I have no muscles in my abdomen to lift myself up off my back. I must turn on my side and use my arms to push up. The doctors say they can take no

credit for why I walk, or for how I recovered from my time in the wheelchair. I know why I walk. It is because of Jesus.”

Dave Roeffers ⁴, a grievously disfigured Vietnam veteran, also comes to mind. Those who are not familiar with Dave’s ministry can find it on the Internet. He returned from Vietnam, burned beyond recognition by a phosphorous grenade and has used his miraculous recovery (from what most doctors considered fatal burns) as a platform to glorify Christ.

What About Those Who Do Not Survive?

The subject of untimely death is surrounded by many mysteries, questions ... and also false assumptions. It seems God has secrets.

“The *secret* things belong to God and His ways are past finding out, however the things He has *revealed* belong to us and to our children that we may do all the words of His law”(Deut. 29:29). (Emphasis added.)

What is revealed about death?

God says we have from seventy-five to eighty years to live. Scripture implies we also have some choice about reaching the full span of our allotted years (Psa. 90:10; Prv. 10:27). We know it is appointed to man once to die and after that the judgment (Heb. 9:27).

The time is not appointed, only the death of the physical body. In Ecclesiastes 7:17, God asks, “Why will you die before your time?”

The Ecclesiastes verse indicates our will is involved regarding length of physical life. Certainly a person who chooses a reckless, over-indulgent, or addictive lifestyle can fall subject to an early death.

The Apostle Paul said he had a choice whether to depart and be with Jesus, which is far better, or to remain with the church (Phil.1:22-23).

Jesus Himself said no man could take His life. No man could kill Him until He became sin on the cross. Even then, He gave up His Spirit of His own free will.

Clearly, the will is involved in the length of a man’s lifespan.

In spite of the promise of long life, for reasons unknown to us, the Father sometimes chooses to take a person to Himself at an early age. I’ve come across stories from pastors who prayed at the deathbed of a child or a young person and felt impressed that God was calling that person home.

Sadly, at the time of this writing, my friend Vickie Haller lost her thirty-one-year-old granddaughter to a sudden heart attack.

Vickie wrote the following to her prayer partners:

“Praise be to our wonderful God. Precious ones, thank you for praying. The Lord is on the throne. He sees the beginning and the end. He knows what is best. We only see the here and now. And in our pain, sorrow, and grief over losing Jennifer, we have comfort in knowing we will have eternity with her. Time here is short.”

Even in her sorrow, Vickie praises God Who is worthy to be praised, no matter what happens here on earth. She chooses to trust God rather than blame Him. As previously stated, no praying family member should ever blame himself if a loved one dies an early death. We can only do what the Holy Spirit leads us to do.

R. L. Brandt, executive presbyter, Assemblies of God, Billings, Montana, says: “We must follow biblical guidelines for healing. We know it is God’s will for us to pray for the sick to be healed, but if God should reveal His will to call a sick person home, we should not contend with Him. He knows best.”

There are also times when a battle-scarred believer simply grows weary and decides to go home and be with the Lord.

Could the following passage reveal at least one comforting and merciful answer to the mystery of early death?

The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil to come (Isa. 57:1, NIV).

While God miraculously rescued the apostles many times, we know He did not spare them from death by cruel Roman persecution. Most of them died martyrs’ deaths. Jesus never promised we would be spared from persecution. To do that would mean restricting the will of the persecutor, which He does not do. However, I believe the apostles were divinely protected until they finished their assignments.

In the beginning, there was no death until sin entered the world and brought the curse (I Cor. 15:21). Yes, our merciful God also created the waster to destroy so that humans might not live forever on earth in a sinful

state (Isa. 54:16). It is good to note that in the very next verse, God promises no weapon formed against the servants of the Lord shall prosper (Isa. 54:17). One day the last enemy, death, will be destroyed (I Cor. 15:21-26).

Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Prv. 18:21). We saw powerful examples of that verse in action when John Lake rebuked death from his sister and also when Brenda Lange called Crispo back to life.

Just a few passages regarding death reveal some rather startling truths:

The Bible speaks of two deaths. One is the death of the physical body. The second death is the spirit's eternal separation from God in the lake of fire (Rev. 10:14).

Satan has the power of death (Heb. 2:14).

Death has no sting for those in Christ Jesus (I Cor. 15:55-56).

God has no pleasure in death (Eze. 18:32).

Even so, precious in God's sight is the death of His saints (Psa. 116:15).

Angels and Demons

Deathbed testimonies have abounded since recorded history. The dying often see angels, departed loved ones, or even Jesus. Many describe heavenly scenes, hear beautiful music, and pass over with great joy. These experiences are well-documented.

Radiation oncologist Dr. Jeffrey Long says if you look at the scientific evidence, you will conclude there is life after death. Drawing on a decade's worth of research on near-death experiences—work that includes cataloguing the stories of some 1,600 people who have gone through them—he published the book, *Evidence of the Afterlife*.⁵ Dr. Long says medicine cannot account for the consistencies in the accounts reported by people from all over the world.

Todd Burpo's 2010 bestseller, *Heaven is for Real*, describes a three-year-old boy's visit to heavenly realms during a near-death experience after his appendix ruptured. Only the most skeptical doubters could refute little Colton's experience.

Hellish visions, such as Officer Sherri Glover's, are also common, although not so well publicized, understandably. Who wants to admit they

went to hell?

Unbelievers have reported seeing demonic tormentors, flames, and nightmarish landscapes. Numerous books are available on the subject. I have personal acquaintance with two people's stories—one who encountered angels and the other demons—during death's approach.

The “Feet” Sisters Describe Demons

During 1969, my first year teaching high school in Arapaho, Oklahoma, I carpooled with another teacher, Miss Foote. She told me a story related by her sister, a nurse and also a Miss Foote. The pair laughingly referred to themselves as the Feet sisters.

The RN Miss Foote described how a dying man, an avowed atheist, screamed and pleaded for rescue from tortuous flames and demonic beings clutching gleefully at him. His features twisted in such absolute horror, becoming so repulsive that the nurses finally covered his head with a sheet, unable to look upon him.

Heart Patient Sees Angels

In the mid seventies, I was teaching an adult education class in McAlester, Oklahoma. One of my students returned to class after recovering from a heart attack and told me the following story: “I could see tall angels standing around my bed. They wore shining white robes with golden belts, and they were smiling.” This fellow was smiling too, confidently saying he no longer feared death because he knew Jesus and was ready to go.

Who Would Want to Come Back?

As Dr. Long's research indicates, modern medical technology is increasingly able to revive a dying person, adding to the growing body of people who travel to heaven (or hell) and back. Some were offered the choice to go back. Others were told they had work to finish and *must* go back, even though they wanted to remain in heaven.

Perhaps that is one reason why some people, who could very well recover and lead a full life, do not do so. They get such a taste of heaven that they choose to remain there.

God Reveals Heaven by His Spirit.

In the early 1970s, I attended a country church with an elderly Oklahoma farm wife who had birthed eleven children at home. She described her last baby as having an enlarged head and all the symptoms of spina bifida. The night she gave birth, she heard a voice saying, “This little one didn’t come here to live.”

When she was able to get to a doctor, the physician examined the baby and said the exact same words, “This little one didn’t come here to live.”

Later, as she grieved over her baby’s death, the Lord gave her a vision of a beautiful meadow filled with laughing children, leaping and playing. There appeared to be angels watching over them. In the vision, she saw a nephew who had been crippled on earth but was now joyfully running and laughing. She also saw her baby, now a boy at play with the others. He turned to look at her and said, “Mother I love you, but I don’t want to leave here.”

We often hear quoted, “Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to imagine the things which God has prepared for them that love Him” (I Cor. 2:9). We take it to mean that we cannot possibly know about heaven’s joys. However the very next verse says, “God has revealed them to us by His Spirit” (I Cor.2:10).

God revealed a glimpse of heaven to a simple farm wife, comforting her in her grief and loss. She was able to see her child in a far better place.

I’ll Accept Death Only From You, Lord.

Years ago, a mother sat in an Oklahoma hospital beside her young daughter who had been severely injured in an accident. The mother prayed almost the very words of John G. Lake:

“Father, Your word says death is an enemy, and it is not Your will for my child to die so young. I resist death and command it to depart in Jesus’ name. Lord, Your word says You gave us 75 to 80 years. My daughter has not lived out her full lifespan. I will not accept death from anyone but You, Father.”

She surrendered her child to God, and the child recovered. Perhaps that is the best way to pray.

Endnote

1. 1. Jeanetta Chrystie, Ph D, website www.clearglassview.com

2. Joni Erickson-Tada's story can be read at www.joniandfriends.org.
3. Penny Robichoux-Koontz' story can be read at jacobshouse.org/about-us/pennys-story.
4. Dave Roevers's blog, message-of-hope archive, is found at www.chronic-illness.org
5. Dr. Jeffrey Long, *Evidence of the Afterlife*. <http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1955636,00.html#ixzz1LJk8jtQl>

Questions:

1. In Deut. 30:19, God sets before us life and _____, blessing and cursing; _____ life so that you and your _____ may live. What does God ask us to choose? For what purpose? Could this be an ongoing, sometimes even a daily choice, in our lives?
2. Some people say God is far above our puny, human understanding. God's ways are higher than our ways, and His ways are past finding out. Deut. 29:29 tells us "The _____ things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are _____ belong to us and to our _____ forever that we may observe to do all the words of this _____." Prv. 4:5 instructs us to get _____ and _____. Is there any reason for not seeking what is revealed in His word?
3. Jesus described a re-birth of the human spirit to Nicodemus (Jn. 3:3-6). Verse 12 in Jude describes evil, rebellious people who are without fruit, _____ dead, plucked up by the roots. What does it mean to be twice dead?
4. Rev. 20:5-6 says blessed and holy are those who take part in the first resurrection; on them the _____ death has no power. The verse in First Cor. 15:26 says death is the last _____ to be destroyed. What does this reveal about God's perception of death?
5. Obviously there are those who do not recover after sincere prayer for healing, and there are times for letting go. Isa. 57:1 says the righteous perish ... taken away from the _____ to come. Can you think of scriptural examples where God took someone away from trouble to come?

6. Everyone knows of genuine and faithful believers who have died prematurely while praying to be healed. Some were even saying they believed they would be healed. Is there a difference in believing God is *able* to heal you in the future and believing that you *receive* healing, as did Kenneth Hagin and Albert Simpson?

7. Selective grace teaches it is not always God's will to heal. In Luke 9:2, Luke 10:9, Mark 16:17-18, Christ first instructed the twelve disciples, next seventy additional followers, and later all believers to lay hands on the sick and heal them. Does this indicate that He wants His people well and that He also uses people to achieve healing?

8. Some people teach a person cannot receive healing without faith, yet Jesus demonstrated His will to heal even those who failed to receive. In Matt. 17:16-30, He set the demon-possessed boy free. Further, He assigned the failure of the disciples to cure the boy, **not to God's will**, but to the disciple's _____. Was Jesus also willing to heal the boy without requiring him to repent or become more righteous?

9. Yes, God is sovereign; however, many things happen in this world that are not His will (II Pet. 3:9), or Jesus would not have taught us to pray for the Father's will to be done on earth. People get very good at explaining why God leaves many prayers for healing unanswered. What are some of the reasonings of human wisdom? Is there any support for these reasons to be found in the gospels?

CHAPTER 17

If God Wants Me Well, Why am I Sick?

The Bible speaks of many ways by which people open a door to sickness:

1. Refusing to forgive (Mark 11:26).
2. A lack of knowledge (Hos. 4:6).
3. Failure to get rooted and grounded in the truth that sets us free.
4. The fowls of the air robbing us of the word.
5. Not rightly discerning the Lord's Supper (wine and bread representing the sacrifice for sin and for healing).
6. The cares of this world choking out the word.
7. The traditions of men (teachings) which make God's word of none effect.

There are probably others, but the above are plainly found in scripture.

Missionary Gene Burgess reminds us:

“Many degenerative illnesses we actually bring upon ourselves. In churches across the country, we find people who are overweight by a hundred pounds and more. Then they are surprised when they need hip and knee replacements. Diabetes is almost a given. And yet few ministers dare to label gluttony as sin. Poor health practices, smoking, and other harmful habits also contribute and can even adversely affect other family members in the home.”

Reverend Burgess says many evangelists, pastors, and lay people (church volunteers) burn themselves out for Jesus: “Unfortunately, when they become deeply fatigued, they can easily be vulnerable to a host of failures. Weakened people, even pastors, sometimes do things they deplore. They fall into sexual sin, hostility with those who don't agree with their ‘obvious genius,’ and other temptations. Fatigue can bring serious errors in judgment. By driving themselves into the ground, people open the door to a variety of stress-related issues.”

What About the Sin Link?

Most people agree that if a person persists in deliberate disobedience, he leaves a door open to the devil to put sickness on him.

The Jews certainly linked sin with sickness, since they lived under the heavy curse of the Mosaic Law, which lists every sickness and disease as a direct result of disobedience (listed in Deuteronomy 28:61). They assumed illness was *always* a direct result of the sin. That's why they came to Jesus asking whose sin was responsible for a man who had been born blind. They were puzzled that an innocent child should be born without sight. How could that be since curses come through disobedience to the law?

Jesus' reply is in keeping with His mission to save rather than condemn the world. It was not because the blind child's parents sinned nor himself (even though the Bible teaches no one is born without sin). Rather it was an opportunity for God's mercy to be seen at work. In this instance, Jesus discounted sin and pointed toward the remedy—Himself.

John Lake taught that even though some have understood this passage to mean God *caused* the man to be blind so that God could show His power, the man's blindness was the *opportunity* for Jesus to demonstrate the Father's grace and mercy, which brings Him glory.

God did not cause the blindness. If that's how God receives glory, He could just go about striking humanity with disease, followed by healing. However, in that case, God would be working against Himself, and a house divided against itself will fall. Consistently throughout the New Testament, witnesses glorified God whenever Jesus performed a healing—not when someone became blind, ill, or died.

Jesus did not come to condemn the world but to save it. He moves on from the question of blame to Himself as the Answer for both sin and sickness. Jesus is willing to transform lives, even when the mess in our lives is entirely our own fault (as it often is).

Before I was afflicted I went astray (Psa. 119:67).

Of course disobedient, sinful, rebellious, or unforgiving people can open a door to the oppressor. Patricia Parks left the door to her heart unlocked by unforgiveness.

Tim Thompson, formerly a hopeless drug addict and practicing satanist, whose story is highlighted in *Charisma Magazine*, November, 2010, and in

the book, *A Psychic meets Jesus*¹, became ill to the point of death before he finally called out in desperation to Jesus. Today he ministers to people who have become entangled with satanic deception.

Tim says God does not afflict. People step out from under His protection. They can also repent, come back to God, and be healed (Jas.5:15). A believer knows when he is out of fellowship, and he knows the way back. A sinner may not know his need for the Savior until he is at the end of himself, helpless, and broken. Healing and forgiveness are equally available to both.

Like the comforters of Job, people find it easy to assume a sick person falls into the category of transgression, requiring God's discipline.

We know the whole world is under Adam's curse. Even animals get sick, but not because they sinned, since they are not accountable to moral law. Animals are simply subject to the curse on the earth. People are also subject to the curse and may fall ill for that reason alone.

But remember, Christ has redeemed believers from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us (Gal. 3:13).

That sounds too good to be true. Most of us, including myself, probably do not understand the full impact of this law of the Spirit, and many simply haven't known how to believe it in the presence of disease.

Is Suffering Scriptural?

Many embrace a doctrine of suffering for Christ's sake. Yes, there is a place for that as noted in Chapter 13. Pastor Tom Brown defined four areas of suffering, only two of which Christians go through.

It is important to know what form of suffering Christ redeemed us from.

In Romans 8:2, Paul is not speaking of a law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that sets us free from persecution, a guaranteed part of every believer's walk. Scripture indicates the world will hate believers and families will be divided over who chooses to follow Jesus.

Paul is not saying Christians won't have the natural and emotional storms, which are common in every life. However, we are promised the house built on the rock will not fall.

Paul did not promise freedom from tribulation, which Jesus said is part of this world.

He never claimed we would be set free from fiery trials of our faith, which James said would work patience in us and bring us forth as pure gold after the dross (impurity) is burned away.

Paul is speaking of being redeemed from the curse of the law, including every sickness and plague (Deut. 28:61) described as oppression by the devil (Gal. 3: 13; I Pet. 2:24; Acts 10:38).

I know of a woman in Singapore whose medical tests plainly revealed a cancerous tumor. She went home and read in the I John 4:17 “ ... as He is, so are we in this world.” She said to herself: “Does Jesus have cancer? Am I not as He is? Am I not a member of His body on the earth, redeemed from oppression by the devil? In the Name above all sickness and disease, I refuse to have cancer!” When she returned to the hospital, further tests showed no tumor. This woman knew her standing in Christ’s redemption.

Shocking to the Educated Mind

Oppression by the *devil*? Hmmm. What does that mean? Does it really mean devils can cause disease?

It has often been said that one of satan’s most successful strategies has been to convince the world he does not exist. He also has convinced many, who will agree that God heals supernaturally, to adamantly resist the idea of any supernatural cause of sickness.

Most churchgoers agree that all sickness is the result of Adam’s sin (Gen. 4:7). Some teachers differentiate between natural causes and demonic attacks.

Many educated people strongly resist the suggestion of demons as a cause of illness. They scoff at so-called faith healers who rebuke devils when commanding sickness to leave the body. They would never submit themselves to such foolishness. Yet we have it from Jesus’ own lips that the woman stooped over for eighteen years had a *spirit* of infirmity (Luke 13:11). His diagnosis is one of many in the gospels attributed to demons.

We also know that evil spirits are subject to the authority of the believer (Mark 16:17; Luke 9:1; Acts 19:12). What if the skeptics are wrong? What

if that's why some people remain sick after a prayer for healing—they simply don't know how to resist the devil and watch him flee?

God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wisdom of the wise (I Cor. 1:27).

No doubt many will be 'confounded' at the following testimony of one of England's most prominent evangelists, Smith Wigglesworth.

Wigglesworth, an uneducated plumber born in 1859, Yorkshire, England, became known as "the twentieth century apostle of faith." In 1907, Smith was baptized in the Holy Spirit in Sunderland, England and soon began a ministry known for his aggressive approach to winning souls. In his day, nobody scoffed. Historically, he is credited with ten cases of the dead raised to life during his ministry and thousands healed from all manner of diseases in numerous countries. That was validation enough for the most skeptical observer.

In the Book, *Ever Increasing Faith*,² Wigglesworth's personal healing began with an attack of appendicitis, which he suffered on and off for six months. By the time his wife called a doctor, it was too late. The physician gave him up for dead, saying the organ had ruptured, and his system was too poisoned for him to survive surgery.

That night, three people came to the Wigglesworth house and began to pray. One man jumped up on the bed and shouted, "Come out you devil; I command you to come out in the name of Jesus!"

No Devil Inside Me!

Wigglesworth later wrote, "I never would have believed there was a devil inside me; however it left my body, and I was instantly healed."

He arose, dressed and went on about his plumbing business. Soon the Lord called him into full-time ministry. From that time until his death in 1947, Wigglesworth prayed in the same manner for numerous people suffering from appendicitis and they were up and dressed within a quarter of an hour. His book is filled with healing testimonies from around the world.

Wigglesworth's famous words, "I am not moved by what I see; I am not moved by what I feel; I am moved only by what I believe," have echoed

down through the teachings of men with hugely successful healing ministries such as Albert Simpson, John Lake, and Kenneth Hagin.

Can a Person Lose His Healing?

The above-named ministers each taught that it is important to know how you got healed in the first place and what you are redeemed from. If you don't have rock-solid foundation, you can easily experience returning symptoms, receive them, and be even sicker than before.

They each saw numerous people in prayer lines, who experienced complete relief from symptoms, and a few weeks later, their symptoms returned. These people automatically assumed they did not really get healed at all. They started seeing themselves sick again, acting sick again, and soon enough, they were even worse off than before.

That's one reason many evangelists with a genuine gift of healing (as listed in I Cor. 12:9) often lose credibility and draw scoffers and skeptics. Yet even Paul left Trophimus sick at Miletum (II Tim. 4:20). It's the devil's job to muddy the water. He does it well and consistently.

Some time after Kenneth Hagin's dramatic healing from paralysis, he had a recurrence of his former irregular heartbeat. He simply started to laugh and ordered the devil to get out. The alarming symptoms did not go immediately, but after a time of resisting, Hagin got complete relief. ³

He also stressed that **if** he had begun to act sickly, start taking his previously prescribed medications, and stop his normal activities, he would have been right back in bed again.

The same is true for numbers of people who see themselves sick instead of well. They do not cast illness from their imagination, and they do not hold fast to their confession of faith. They start to believe lying symptoms instead, and the symptoms become real.

I Don't Deserve to be Healed.

A Missouri man, a friend and neighbor, shuffled stiffly across the room in obvious pain. That evening, a pair of believers laid hands on him and prayed. The next morning, he was out walking normally and said he had not required any pain medication throughout the night.

Surprised neighbors noticed him working in the yard without his customary difficulty of movement. They were aware something wonderful

had happened.

Soon the pain returned.

As I pondered why, I recalled his first words after the prayer for his healing were, “I don’t deserve this.”

The teachings of John Lake, Kenneth Hagin and Albert Simpson echoed in my mind:

If you base your faith for healing on your own worthiness, you will have a difficult time receiving. It is through Christ’s sacrifice that you receive salvation and not your own righteousness. It is also His righteousness that sets you free from the curse of sickness, and not your own. If you could be righteous enough to earn salvation or healing, you would not need Jesus.

They also stressed the importance of forgiving others. All three ministers spoke of instances where a person was not healed until he *chose to forgive* those who had sinned against him.

Missionary Brenda Lange once experienced excruciating back pain after a botched corrective surgery had left a broken support bone crushing her leg nerves. The Lord showed her she had unforgiveness in her heart toward the two erring doctors. She repented, and when she truly forgave them, she was healed.

“I see now that forgiveness is not so much for the person being forgiven as it is for the person doing the forgiving. It is a healing action, whether spiritual or physical. Forgiveness is the key to unlocking God’s healing power. It was there all the time, but out of reach and inaccessible until I chose to forgive,” says Brenda, quoting Mark 11:26, “If you do not forgive, you will not be forgiven.”⁴

Kenneth Hagin also taught Rhema students how important it is to resist the devil when he tries to steal your health. Many times, Kenneth made it a point to instruct people, sometimes for days, before he ever consented to pray the prayer of faith over them. After learning how to trust God’s word, people received their healing and kept it most successfully.

Endnote

1. Tim Thompson, *A Psychic Meets Jesus* (Yorkshire Publishing, Tulsa, 2010)

2. Smith Wigglesworth, *Ever Increasing Faith* pp 21-22(Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, MO 1924).
3. Kenneth Hagin's radio and televised broadcasts repeat his teachings on a weekly basis from various networks in Oklahoma.
4. Brenda Lange's words are from a direct interview with the author.

Questions:

1. Psa. 103:10 says God has not dealt with us after our _____; nor rewarded us according to our _____. If God is waiting for us to become righteous before blessing us, when are we ever good enough?
2. In Ezekiel 34:4 the prophet receives the word of the Lord to declare to the shepherds of God's people: "You have not strengthened the weak, or _____ the sick or bound up the injured." Who is our sovereign God holding responsible for the sick, weak, and injured people? Why did He not step in and heal them?
3. Jesus healed all that were _____ by the devil (Acts 10:38). Smith Wigglesworth said he would never have believed his appendicitis was caused by a devil, yet "it left" and he was instantly healed. Is this foolishness to the natural mind? Should prayers for the sick include taking authority over evil spirits?
4. While it is true that many illnesses are due to poor nutrition, lack of good hygiene, poor medical care, neglect, addictions, etc., Acts 19:11-12 says God worked special miracles through Paul's aprons or handkerchiefs brought to the sick and their _____ departed from them and _____ went out of them. Can this mean some diseases are caused by evil spirits? Why, or why not?
5. Second Cor. 5:21 says we are made the _____ of God in Christ. Is there a difference between our legal spiritual position in Christ and our experiential position? For instance, we are declared righteous by the atonement, but we don't always act righteous in the flesh. (I'm speaking for myself here.)
6. In I Pet. 2:24, we are also declared healed by His stripes, (our legal physical position) but we may not always have physical wellness in the flesh. Once we learn what is legally (positionally) ours by Christ's

sacrifice, can we then claim victory over both sin *and* sickness? Why or why not?

7. Luke 12:32 says it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the _____. James 1:17 says every good and every perfect _____ is from above and comes down from the Father of _____. Is there any illness in heaven for the Father to send down?

8. In Matt. 13:19, when anyone hears the _____ of God and does not _____ it, the _____ one comes to steal what was sown in his heart. What must the wicked one steal in order to rob us? How do we prevent it?

CHAPTER 18

Seeking the Giver, Not the Gift

Seek ye my face (Psa. 27:8).

The Author's Testimony

It might have been storming violently outside that day.

Rumbling thunder, spears of lightning, even shrieking winds would have gone unnoticed.

The storm in my soul was all encompassing.

In severe pain, both physical and emotional, I lay on my couch desperately praying my body would not miscarry. The year was 1970 in McAlester, Oklahoma.

My idea of spirituality was that you go to church once in awhile, and sometimes when you really needed Him, God would answer your prayers.

This was the time I really needed Him.

My husband John and I had waited almost five years to start our family, and were so delighted when the doctor confirmed my pregnancy. I couldn't imagine that only three months later our joy would be turning to sorrow.

I called my pastor, thinking he was a godly man and would pray that I would not lose the baby.

He did not.

Instead he prayed something that sounded very pious and humble. Something about God's will being done and me accepting it. This was greatly disappointing.

I lost the child.

I also lost faith in my pastor's prayers.

Everything I knew about God (not much at the time) was that He was supposed to answer prayer. Something had to be wrong with God, with my pastor, or with me.

It was time to find out.

I wanted to be right with Him. I also wanted a child.

A memory verse I'd learned as a youngster in Bible school kept whispering in the spirit of my mind: *When you seek Him with your whole heart, then you will find Him.*

How does a person seek God? I wanted someone to tell me all about Him. Someone who knew Him. Someone who knew how to pray a prayer of faith.

Eternal truths are too important to leave up to another's understanding. It was time to go to the Source of Truth and learn for myself. After all, I would be accountable to Him for my life, so I wanted to get it right. I also began wanting to know Him.

As a high school teacher of English literature, I had found the Bible filled with difficult metaphorical language, stories out of sequence, time gaps, dull and boring genealogy, prophecies that seemed to have little relevance to the modern world. The Holy Book is completely unlike any book written by a man.

Of course. It was not written by a man, but by the Holy Spirit.

Books, until read, are wiser than the reader. I knew these pages contained the very wisdom of God. Though challenged, I was determined not to give up reading as I had in times past.

Holy Spirit, Lead Me Into All Truth.

God saw my heart when I asked the Holy Spirit to show me the true meaning of scripture and how to apply it to my life. After all, that is His appointed ministry.

It became exciting to ask a question and soon discover the exact answer leaping off the pages. (He even shows you what questions to ask.)

Learning to know God became all-encompassing. Even so, I still yearned for motherhood.

My obstetrician advised me to call the minute I suspected I might be pregnant. He feared I might be what he called a "habitual, spontaneous aborter" and wanted to prescribe a hormone to prevent a second miscarriage.

An entire year of reading, praying, and hoping went by. During that time, I devoured the word with ever increasing amazement.

Finally one evening, I got down on my knees and prayed aloud. “Father I have been seeking You with my whole heart. Please let me find You.”

I was not asking for a child at that time. Just seeking God. I didn’t know what to expect. Maybe some kind of nebulous, inner peace. Instead, a supernatural Holy Presence enveloped me in an invisible cloud of glory filled with indescribable love and gentleness. It was quite tangible.

Overwhelmed by a sudden fearful awe, the incredibly loving, Holy Presence immediately withdrew. Oh, the gentle tenderness of the Lord. He would not allow me to be frightened even for a second.

Nobody told me. My first amazed thought was, *wow! Nobody ever told me the Lord is so real.*

Of course, I had been told. I’d simply assumed it was metaphorical language. If you have no point of reference, the language of the Spirit has little meaning. There are no earthly words to describe the holiness of such an experience, however when the apostles spoke of being in the Spirit of the Lord, filled with the Spirit, or born of the Spirit, I now understood what they meant.

The reader will note this did not happen in a church setting. I did not repeat the ‘sinner’s prayer.’ I simply came to God with a seeking and hungry heart, honestly believing that if I did what He said to do—seek Him—something would happen.

Something did.

I could hardly wait to get into the Holy presence of the Lord again.

I wondered naively if I was the only one who’d had this heavenly experience and wanted to tell everyone how real the Lord is. Such an overwhelming, life-changing, and joyful experience *must* be shared.

Zeal without wisdom. It can be disruptive. Dropping “truth bombs” as my good friend Barb Cortner says, can be damaging. I sincerely apologize to anyone who had to endure my over-zealousness in those days.

I was focused on one desire. Now that I knew Jesus in a seriously supernatural way, He would surely hear my prayers for a child. Yet, much like Marilyn Hickey’s experience, my disappointment continued, month after month.

Why Don't You Fast?

Something else also happened month after month. A still, small voice whispered to my mind, *Why don't you fast?*

Fast? What is that? Who fasts today? And what for?

I had checked out a giant-size reference Bible, so I looked up fasting and became convinced I should do it.

That first day without eating, I came home from school famished. Opening the fridge and seeing some of my favorite foods, I wondered if I were only playing a game with myself. My stomach growled. I started to fill a plate, but stopped, realizing I had pledged a three-day fast to the Lord.

Perhaps, like Gideon, I should give God a chance to confirm the fast really was His idea. I decided I would let my enormous study Bible fall open, and say aloud, "God if you really want me to fast, please confirm it with a verse."

Actually, I was pretty sure I'd get to eat dinner.

Not just once, but three times, the pages fell open to a verse that read, "... and they sanctified a fast unto the Lord."

Three times. How could I doubt?

That night, I went to bed hungry, but joyful in my obedience.

The second day of the fast was glorious. As soon as I got home from school, I sat down with my Bible. This time the Holy Presence enveloped me in a cloud of glory so powerful I didn't know whether to cry, laugh, or just bask in His overwhelming love.

Seeking the Giver, Not the Gift

Never again have I experienced such fullness of joy, unspeakable and full of glory.

Lifting my hands toward heaven, I said, "Father, if I never have a child, that's okay with me. Knowing You is all I want and everything I need in this lifetime. I love you, Lord."

That was my Abraham moment. I sacrificed my deepest longing on the altar, with joy in my heart, knowing I had touched the throne room of heaven and been touched by the Spirit of God.

I had learned to seek the Giver and not the gift. I believe this is a moment every believer faces at some point in his life as did Job, Captain Dale Black, and Patricia Parks.

Will we still love God if He doesn't answer our prayers, or satisfy our deepest longings? Will we still serve Him for who He is and not just for what he can do for us?

One month later, I was pregnant. In my heart, I knew our baby would be perfect. Barbara, a co-worker, my spiritual mentor and close friend, told me she'd had a dream that my baby was on the way. Two other prayer partners also gave me the same confirmation.

In the mouth of two or three witnesses let all things be confirmed. I did not go to the doctor for a full three months. I did not take hormones or even bother to take the prescribed pre-natal vitamins, and I felt wonderful throughout the nine months.

Our first daughter was born weighing ten pounds, nine-and-a-half ounces. My private joke with the Lord is that He had done 'exceedingly and abundantly above all' I had asked for. She truly was a 'Whopper Junior.'

She looked just like the Gerber baby, my favorite doll as a little girl. The nurses had even combed her hair into the Gerber-baby curl when they brought her to my room. She was the very desire of my heart.

Not until twenty-two years later did I learn how miraculous the births of our two precious daughters actually were. At that time, I had to undergo a hysterectomy. My surgeon, Doctor JoAnn Holoka, of Rockford, Illinois, came into my room and said, "My dear, you had everything wrong with your reproductive organs that could be wrong. And you were *born* that way."

Some people will reason that God intended for me to miscarry so I would seek Him. I believe satan meant it for bad, but God worked it for good.

He is the author of life, not death.

He did not kill my unborn child.

CHAPTER 19

Evil Voice in the Night

While in deep sleep, a spirit passed by; the hair of my flesh stood up (Job. 4:15)

During the 1970s as a new student of the Bible, I believed Jesus was my Savior and also my Healer because He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Yet I did not know how to receive healing beyond asking God to do something. If that didn't work, I would ask others to pray for me, trying to get God to change His mind and remove the symptoms from my body or my children's bodies. Usually, I ended up going to a doctor (and there's nothing wrong with going to the doctor).

After struggling and floundering, hit-and-miss, for a few years, I became discouraged and defeated in the healing arena. Not that my family was sickly. Minor ailments, common colds, and occasional winter flu were all we had to contend with. The seed was planted, but I had no root as yet. That's important.

I had no idea I would eventually be facing my own battle with life and death.

The attack came in 1982 in Wichita, Kansas where I was teaching English in a Christian school.

In a startling similarity to Patricia Parks' experience, my battle began with an evil, sneering voice speaking to me in the night. I felt a searing stab in my right breast and heard the voice predict, "You're going to have cancer. You're going to have to have surgery." It sounded like the hissing of an angry serpent. I knew immediately this was a messenger from satan.

Where is your faith now?

My heart pounded. I woke up trembling and sweating. For a moment I felt very relieved that the whole experience had been a dream. However, it was more than just a dream. The very real stabbing pain continued like a knife repeatedly thrust into my body. The sneering voice in my head taunted, "Where is your faith now?"

I climbed out of bed, stood at the window, and began to pray. “My faith is in the word of God, and I resist this in the Name of Jesus.” The pain lessened, but did not go away. I continued to pray.

By morning, I was exhausted from sleeplessness and pain. I wanted to go back to bed but determined instead to go about my daily activities. I drove my daughters to school and began teaching my English classes, still aware of the repeated stabbing sensation. It was so troubling that I wrote down the vivid and unusual dream and my prayer of faith on the back of the school’s daily bulletin (September. 3, 1982).

Slowly the stabbing sensation lessened and by noon, it disappeared. Soon, I forgot the entire episode.

The evil prediction was fulfilled. On July 10, 1993, I received an unwelcome birthday surprise, a diagnosis of breast cancer. At that time, I did not recall the evil threat, which had disturbed my sleep eleven years earlier.

This was the year I was overwhelmed by a flood of devastating events sweeping over me, wave after wave. My dear friend Margilee was lying in a medically induced coma, dying from injuries she had sustained in a car wreck. Margilee’s family and I waged a faith battle together, coming against death with every weapon of spiritual warfare we knew at the time. Sadly, we lost her. Perhaps she had a glimpse of heaven and did not want to leave. I’d like to think that’s what happened.

Again I heard a voice. This time I understood there would be another car wreck, but I did not know who would be involved. The night Margilee died, my teenage daughter underwent surgery at the same hospital for injuries from the predicted car wreck.

During that same time period, my father had a recurrence of cancer. And on the very day of my appointment with the radiologists to discuss my treatment options, I received word that both my parents had been severely injured in yet another car wreck two states away. This unexpected shock coming on the heels of Margilee’s death, my daughter’s injuries, and a cancer diagnosis left me reeling.

God is so merciful. Only later did I realize that during these ordeals, the Holy Spirit had strongly impressed me to pray for my younger daughter’s safety on the road. The night she turned into the path of an oncoming

vehicle, I knew with absolute certainty before I answered the telephone (a word of knowledge) that she had been injured.

Thankfully, a doctor was first on the crash scene and kept her head immobilized until the ambulance arrived. God mercifully spared her from permanent injuries and protected her beautiful face, even though she struck the windshield and shards of glass imbedded in her forehead. Her two passengers escaped with only minor injuries.

Even with this evidence of God's tender mercy, it seemed I was being defeated in every battle. I felt depleted, whipped, and empty.

The enemy had attacked from several fronts simultaneously. My faith was at an all time low. I had no strength left to fight. However I had one powerful weapon left. I kept praising God, believing He is worthy to be praised regardless of negative experiences.

The Thing I Feared Came Upon Me.

Looking back, I realize the thing I feared had come upon me. As a teenage girl, I once read a *Reader's Digest* article about breast cancer titled, "The Disease Women Fear." Those fearful words lodged in my heart. The wrong seed bears the wrong fruit. (That's why it's important to guard the heart with all diligence.)

Like most Christians, I believed God could heal if it was His will. If I had enough faith, or was righteous enough, or obedient enough, I could be selected to receive His healing grace. Somehow, the focus was on my worthiness, rather than on Christ's.

At this point in time, I had to make instant decisions. Not being rooted and grounded in the healing gospel, I opted for surgery, but flatly refused radiation. I needed to recover quickly in order to assist my injured parents. I didn't realize they would be spending several weeks in a hospital and also a recovery center. As it turned out, I was not in any shape to assist them. A stubborn staph infection set in, requiring two additional surgeries and leaving me ill for an entire year.

Dad went home to be with the Lord on April 19, of 1994.

It was not until three months after the mastectomy that I found the school bulletin folded inside a worn Bible on which I'd written about the demonic voice threatening me with cancer. I remembered the very real stabbing pain.

It was exactly where the surgeon made the incision. *Exactly* where I have a scar to this day.

I was stunned. Truly I had prayed for healing. Why had God permitted this?

Don't we always blame Him when we have disappointments? Even though He has equipped us with more than enough weapons, authority, power, and sufficient grace to overcome all things.

It's easy to get mad at God when we forget He's on our side. I soon learned He had kept His healing hand on me all along. The tumor had showed up on my baseline mammogram three years earlier, but the radiologist had missed it.

The second mammogram showed it clearly, and by God's grace it had *not changed* at all. The baseline and the later mammogram were the same, even though I had been on hormone replacement therapy for the entire three years between screenings.

I'm convinced the disease actually came upon me in 1982, when the evil messenger stabbed repeatedly into my chest—eleven years before the diagnosis.

God did not bring it on me. He did not permit it to grow, because I had resisted it when I declared my faith in His word.

Mayo Clinic doctors said they found the hormone replacement therapy (HRT) most interesting. At that time, it was widely believed hormone therapy would cause breast cancer to grow. Whether or not that is the case, the tumor had remained exactly the same—unchanged for the entire three years I was on HRT.

Much later, I realized, like Patricia Parks, I had left open a door in my heart. Over the next few years, the Lord showed me some garbage that needed dumping.

He had not permitted the cancer. I had.

I recovered, without radiation, and have remained healthy since that time in 1993, but perhaps I would have recovered without radical surgery if I had known how to go before God for an examination of my heart, to resist the devil, to speak His word over my body, and fight a good fight of faith.

Instead, I believed the symptoms, the images on the screen, and the doctor's report.

How important it is to become grounded in the word of Truth so that when the test comes you will not allow the fowls of the air to steal the good seed.

The Lord brought people into my life. In November of 2009, living in Missouri and enjoying four beautiful grandchildren, the Lord brought several people to my attention. All had received healing through the abundant-grace view—including my own mother. Christine Barnett speaks life and health to her body, according to Mark 11:23-24. She doesn't ask God. She commands her blood sugar, cholesterol, and blood pressure to be normal in Jesus' name, and—not always instantly, but gradually—she has what she says. I have seen those health indicators become perfect.

An octogenarian and a widow since 1994, she runs her own cattle ranch and enjoys good health. Most recently, she spoke to a small lump, which had been biopsied and diagnosed as a basal cell cancer. While sitting in church, she laid her finger on the bump and said, "In the Name of Jesus, you are eradicated." She felt it pop and leave her body.

My Experience Should Line Up With God's Word

For more than twenty years, I suffered from excruciating headaches. Doctors diagnosed four bulging disks, which were pinching the nerves in my neck. A neurologist said I had degenerative arthritis. At times, the pain was so severe I vomited. I had to take an expensive prescription which caused dizziness, and even that did not always bring relief. Driving was not an option during an attack.

There were times the tears streamed down my face, and I would beg God's help. I never had the slightest relief.

Sleep was especially difficult. If I turned over the wrong way, or slept on my left side, the headache would set in. My right hip started to ache from sleeping only on the right side. I plumped multiple pillows just right to elevate my neck. Nightly my hands and upper arms would go numb, presumably from pinched nerves whenever I was lying down.

I resigned myself that God works in mysterious ways, and it must not be His will to heal every time.

However, something inside me never could accept that.

Shouldn't I be expecting my experience to line up with Matthew 8:17, which says Jesus bore my sicknesses, rather than re-interpreting God's word to line up with my experience?

Shouldn't I let God be true and every contrary fact a lie (Rom. 3:4)?

The people in this book overcame disease by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimonies. Stalwart men and women of God, they chose to actively resist the devil, rather than to believe they must passively suffer in God's will. They didn't beg for healing. They agreed with God's word (*by His stripes we are healed*). They spoke God's word over their bodies, and they received God's word manifest in health.

Yes! That resounded in my spirit.

I could find no error in the testimonies recorded here.

I asked myself every question at the heading of each chapter in this book, followed by another: If this is true, why am I suffering?

My begging and pleading prayers had never worked. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results, yet many people pray the same way over and over, and after years of no results, they eventually come to expect none. That's when they begin to re-interpret the word. They reason that God doesn't always answer prayer, or heal everyone. However, according to what He says, the prayer of ***faith*** shall save the sick.

There Must be a Better Way to Pray

As a new believer, I once participated in a fervent prayer for God to heal a man facing surgery. When the people got up off their knees, I expected them to shout the victory. Instead, they muttered fear and doubt about his recovery. Their whole attitude was *let's wait and see*. I remember thinking, "You just prayed; don't you believe?" The Holy Spirit impressed on me that this was ***NOT*** the prayer of faith.

The Lord also began to impress on me that the standard words, *if it be thy will*, are wrongly used when asking for something that is already clearly expressed as God's will in the Bible. Those ***if-y*** words usually lead to weak, ineffective praying since there is no faith-demand in them. They also offer a ready excuse if the prayer goes unanswered—it must not be God's will.

What is the Prayer of Faith?

I have been a student of the Bible for more than forty years, and I've never found Jesus or the apostles using the if-it-be-thy-will phrase. I do not find them saying a prayer for the sick that is not a simple command. Why not imitate their prayers?

The first step was renewing my mind.

Like A. B. Simpson, I came to believe Jesus paid for both my sin and physical healing by His death on the cross. Like Kenneth Hagin, I also realized that I had been speaking to God about the mountain of pain, asking Him to take it away. Read Mark 11:23: *Truly I tell you that whosoever shall say to this mountain, be removed and cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe those things he says shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he says.* Who does the speaking and what does he say?

Like Brenda Lange, I finally saw that *I* should be commanding the mountain (the headache) to be removed and cast into the sea. God was not going to do that for me. He expected me to do the speaking.

The second step was giving God's word the authority over my symptoms. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Like Dodie Osteen and Marilyn Hickey, I began to say, "Lord, I believe I am healed according to your word." My head would hurt and my mind would shout, *How can you believe what you do not see?* I would answer, *I believe because it's the word of God.*

Remember when your mother used to say, *because I said so, that's why?* Faith is letting what God said be so, believing the evidence of things not yet seen. The evidence is God's word. I am healed because He said so, that's why. He does not lie. The healing may not be obvious immediately, but faith-word-seeds do produce results.

Radical thought, huh? Please don't think I denied the pain. I never said I was not having a headache during an attack. I am not promoting a radical, confession-is-possession doctrine.

What's radical about praying like this?

Lord, You said to put You in remembrance of Your word. You came to set the captive free. You sent Your word to heal all my diseases. I believe it

is Your will to set me free of disease. I examine myself before You and ask You to reveal anything that prevents total healing. Please remove it from my body, soul, and spirit by the blood of the Lamb. I choose to walk in forgiveness to anyone who has ever hurt me. I speak to my body and command it be well by the authority of Jesus' name. I stand on Your word in agreement with I Pet. 2:24 and Gal. 3:13, and I say that I receive healing from the curse of disease. According to Your word, I shall have what I say. I give You all praise and glory for going to the cross for me. Thank You, Jesus! Amen.

I kept repeating daily, as Patricia Parks did, "According to I Peter 2:24, by Your stripes, Lord, I am healed." I began to thank the Lord for bearing my sins and sicknesses and setting me free from the curse of arthritis.

This went on for months with little change. The headaches began to diminish in frequency, but the severity did not lessen.

I have to admit, it's not easy to take a faith stand. As I repeated the healing scriptures, my mind and body would be screaming at me, *None of that is true in your body*. Yet my spirit would whisper, nothing is more powerful than the word of God.

The third step was acting on the word. Learning to act as though God's word is true, regardless of pain, was going to take faith muscles.

I flexed mine, ready for the fight, fully convinced that by Jesus' stripes I am healed, regardless of symptoms.

How did I act like God's word is true? On mornings when pain made me want to stay in bed, I walked on the path with my neighbors. One night, as I plumped up my two pillows, I seemed to hear the Holy Spirit whisper, "A healed person can sleep on either side."

"That's right, Lord. I'm going to sleep on either side and not worry about propping my head on two pillows."

Normally, I would have suffered a headache and numb hands from sleeping carelessly. Not this time. I woke the next morning feeling great.

From Victim to Victory!

Gradually, those sickening, debilitating headaches began to disappear. As my faith increased in my authority as a believer, I could demand the pain to

be gone in Jesus' name, get up and act like God's word is true, and it would soon disappear.

Praise the Lord my Redeemer, Who Himself took all my pain. I don't accept those sick headaches anymore. I know where they come from. God really is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. By His stripes I really am healed and redeemed from the curse of arthritis. He really is the Lord Who heals all my diseases.

I have victory in Jesus. Really!

That doesn't mean I don't catch a cold or have a seasonal illness now and then. However, I have learned to recover much more quickly, sometimes in just a few hours, by believing, speaking, and *acting* like Gal. 3:13 and I Pet. 2:24 are true.

I have gone from victim to victory.

CHAPTER 20

Mr. Smith And Mr. Peavey

When I read over what I have written, I can see the obvious doubts, questions, and standard objections. I have anticipated and attempted to answer some of these.

Ask and you shall receive. Some will ask why the healing took so long. Why, during all those many years of begging and praying, did God choose not to heal my pain? I asked the Lord this very question, and the Holy Spirit whispered, **You never believed you received.**

I can look back now and see that I did *not* believe.

I was waiting until the pain left before believing. I never doubted God could heal me; however, I never believed that I received healing. Instead, I thought my faith was being tested, or I was being chastised for something. I didn't know what, but eventually I would learn patience, or develop some other virtue. I didn't know the chastisement of my peace, as well as my sins and sicknesses, had already been paid for by Jesus.

Why did it take so long after I began to believe and to say I believed I received my healing? I don't know. Perhaps because I had walked by sight (bowing to the pain in the natural realm) so long that it took awhile for me to learn how to act on faith in the unseen.

Read Mark 11:23: *Truly I tell you that whosoever shall say to this mountain, be removed and cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe those things he says shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he says.*

How many times does the word *say* appear? Could it be we must do three times the saying, in order to develop mountain-moving faith?

The third day is when God created seed bearing plants, each producing after its own kind. According to Luke 8:11, faith words are seeds also and will produce a harvest. Any farmer knows the seed needs good soil, rain, and sun. Faith comes by hearing and hearing the word according to Romans 10:17. This implies a continual process, just as seeds need continual watering and nurturing in order to bear fruit.

Perhaps my spiritual soil was so choked by doubt that I had to weed it in order for faith to develop. It took renewing my mind to God's truth. It took praising Jesus. It took developing my puny faith, so that I could see past the very real pain to the even more real, eternal answer. Once I glimpsed the reality, that truth is truth, regardless of what I feel, I had only to act like it was so, and it became so.

This is not the case for many people who readily grasp truth and act on it. Margie Lopez, Vickie Haller, and Marla Woodmansee simply believed they received, while Captain Dale Black, Marilyn Hickey, Annet Oomen, and many others spoke faith words for months before their healing manifested. I do not know why the delay.

International Evangelist Perry Stone, director of one of America's fastest growing ministries, The Voice of Evangelism, and author of numerous best-selling inspirational books, encourages believers to speak healing scriptures when assaulted by sickness.

He offers the following word of caution: "When you quote healing scriptures in this manner, there is always going to be someone who reminds you that they had a friend or knew someone who tried this *method* of using scripture, but that person died anyway ... this should not prevent a believer from quoting the Holy Scriptures. After all, Christ is our example, as seen in each of the three temptations Satan offered." ¹

Stone says God is not obligated to get us out of difficulty. He is only obligated to perform His word and covenant and is attracted to those who continually seek Him, learn His word, and speak it in faith. I have come to believe this statement is accurate.

I know from personal experience that many readers will not grasp the concept of faith released by speaking God's words. Some will scoff and continue prayers of pleading with God to heal the sick if it is His will. Others will receive this message with gladness, but when the trial comes, let it fall by the wayside. The seed of the word must take root in good soil before it produces a harvest. Seekers will take the time to renew their minds, meditate, and put into practice what these people of faith have done. Their harvest is on the way.

As I said in the introduction, I am still learning. I must leave it to the reader to seek out the answers to whatever questions he has. God is a

rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Instead of a summary, I offer the following story of Mr. Smith and Mr. Peavey based on an actual event I heard from a minister years ago. It encapsulates the entire message of the book.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Peavey

A visiting evangelist asked the congregation if anyone needed prayer. Many went forward and received remarkable healings. Two men, each having visible goiters, also went to the altar.

Mr. Smith, a new believer, had little knowledge of the Bible. The congregation felt he still exhibited “questionable” behavior at times. However, the same people who raised eyebrows at Mr. Smith greatly respected Mr. Peavey, a devout and faithful member, known for his faithful attendance and many good deeds.

The evangelist anointed the two men with oil and prayed the prayer of faith over them, one at a time.

Mr. Smith immediately began to shout praises to the Lord, dancing and proclaiming, “I’m healed, praise God, I’m healed!” Yet the swollen lump under his chin remained unchanged.

The pious Mr. Peavey reached up to touch his throat, also felt no change in the goiter, and walked back to his pew in obvious disappointment.

A month later, Mr. Smith got up to testify how Jesus had wonderfully healed his goiter.

Everyone could see the lump plainly visible under his chin.

Mr. Peavey did not testify. The swelling in his throat also remained the same.

This went on each time the congregation had the opportunity to tell what the Lord had done in their lives. “Praise God, the Lord healed my goiter,” Mr. Smith would proclaim joyfully.

An entire year passed. People began to scoff at Mr. Smith saying, “Can’t you see the goiter is still there?”

In spite of this, Mr. Smith maintained steadfastly that he had been healed because he had been prayed for and the prayer of faith shall heal the sick.

A second year went by in much the same manner. People rolled their eyes. Mr. Peavey silently prayed for Mr. Smith to stop lying. Church members pointed to the fellow's throat and flatly denied that any healing had taken place. Finally after an especially bitter rebuke, the disheartened Mr. Smith went home and prayed, "Dear Lord Jesus, I know I'm healed, but would you please take this lump away so the other folks will know it too?"

The next Sunday, when Mr. Smith came to church, the lump in his throat had completely disappeared. Everyone rejoiced with him over the obvious miracle.

Unlike Mr. Smith, they had not been willing to believe until they had visible evidence.

His goiter never returned.

Mr. Peavey said nothing. His goiter remained until the end of his life.

I recall what Albert Simpson said in the first chapter:

"I'm sure I would have lost my healing if I had waited until I felt it. God made me commit myself to His healing covenant before He would fully bless me with a new heart.

"I have since known hundreds to fail just at this point. They are afraid to testify, based on God's word alone, that they have been healed before symptoms leave. They want to wait until symptoms disappear before they believe. They do not understand that the word is true whether or not they have symptoms."

From the time I began researching this book, I have continued to meet people who reached the same conclusions independently. They did not ask God to heal them. Instead they spoke to the mountain of illness, commanded it to leave by the authority of Jesus' name, put God in remembrance of His healing word, believed they received *when* they prayed, and doubted it not in their hearts. Then they acted like it was true, and it became so.

Significantly, they never doubted God's will was to heal them.

If that is radical, then so be it.

I'm thoroughly, radically healed! Praise God.

Endnote

1. Perry Stone, *Purging Your House, Pruning your Family Tree*, (Lake Mary, Florida: Charisma House) p. 189.

Questions:

1. Like Albert Simpson, John Lake, and Kenneth Hagin, Mr. Smith believed before his symptoms left, based on James 5:15. Was he lying when he said he was healed, or was he agreeing with God's word?
2. Did the congregation and Mr. Peavey base their faith on the evidence of things unseen, or on the evidence they could see with their natural eyes? Which evidence is faith, according to Heb. 11:1?
3. Is there any devil, disease, or circumstance more powerful than God's word? Does His word lose any power when spoken by a believer?
4. When my body is telling me—none of these healing scriptures you're saying aloud are true in your body—do I give up? Or can I keep on believing and confessing (not that I am free of symptoms, but that God's word is true and by His stripes I am healed) the way Marilyn Hickey, Annet Oomen, and Mr. Smith did?
5. Rom. 3:4, says to let God be true, but every man a liar ... that you might be _____ in your _____ and might overcome when you are judged. What sayings does God justify?
6. Some people will call the following statement radical: Once I believed I was suffering in God's will and had no confidence at all that I could be healed unless God chose to act. Today, I choose to believe that by His stripes I am healed before symptoms leave, giving His word final authority over my body. I command the pain to go, and it goes. Is this a radical statement? Why, or why not?
7. There are those who believe that *whatever* happens is God's will. If that is true, Jesus would not have taught us to pray for God's will be done on earth as it is in Heaven, nor would He have prayed to the Father to deliver us from the evil one. Ecclesiastes 9:11 says time and _____ happen to all men. By chance, a person may be exposed to a deadly virus, but to assume it was God's will leads to a weakened position when fighting illness. God's will to heal His people is

expressed in 151 scriptures throughout the Bible. Seek and you will find them.

8. If we are going to doubt anything, it should be the devil's lies, because we do not get what we doubt. **How do we discern the devil's lies from the truth that sets us free?** That is, I believe, the central question.

9. A lie is telling an untruth. We *would* be lying if we say we have no symptoms, when symptoms clearly remain. We would *not* be lying if we say, *according to God's word I am healed*. Do you see the difference?

10. Prv. 18:7 says a fool's _____ is his destruction and his _____ are the snare of his soul. Though we do not deny negative things, how likely is it we can change them by speaking about the things that ARE (disease symptoms, lack of control, physical weakness, tendencies to overeat, etc.) as though they were permanent? Remember Jonah in the whale's belly. He didn't get out by speaking of his circumstances, but rather by speaking the answer.

11. Prv. 8:7-8 says my mouth shall speak _____; and wickedness is an _____ to my lips. Could it be wickedness to grumble and continually complain of sickness, weakness, or feelings of spiritual depletion? Remember the ten spies with the evil report of giants in the land. They got what they said and could not go into the Promised Land. Can it be that we establish the wrong things in our lives by complaining?

12. If we have what we say, why not say we are more than conquerors through Christ Who strengthens us? Why not declare we are strong in the Lord and the power of His might? Why not say Christ has redeemed us from the law of sin and death and by His stripes we are healed? Why not shout the VICTORY? Praise Him for the answers we do not yet see, except by faith in His word?

Final Thoughts

Mysteries ...

Yes, there are mysteries when it comes to divine healing, and no one has all the answers.

However this I know surely. We do not get what our sins deserve. (Psa. 103:10).

Under Mosaic Law, blessings have to be earned by obedience.

Under the law of the Spirit of life, the blessings of obedience have already been earned for us. Jesus paid the price with His own righteous blood. We aren't qualified to do that.

Praise God for His goodness to the children of men.

Based on the finished work of Christ, I'm not going to allow the oppressor to keep sickness on me.

Like Mr. Smith, I choose to believe, say, and act like God's word is true whether I feel like it or not.

Whether I look like it or not.

Whether I go to a doctor or not.

The devil's advocate says, "Oh yeah? What if you get sick and die?"

In the words of Job, *Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.* **(And I'll win because I'll be living with Jesus forever!)**

Abundant or Selective Grace?

What about those who remain in doubt whether it's God's will to heal every time? Perhaps the people in this book received revelation knowledge on how to believe God in the face of disease symptoms.

I cannot give the reader revelation knowledge. I can only offer information and pray the Lord reveals the word, rightly divided, to each individual.

I believe you should ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any interpretation of scripture if you are uncertain of the application. He will lead you into all truth.

I also believe the people in this book each experienced healing—legally theirs.

Purchased by Christ's stripes.

Received by speaking faith-filled words, in agreement with God's words.

Never doubting it was God's will to heal them.

Acting like God's word is true.

They have the victory.

You have it too.

Answers From Jesus

I began this book with a series of questions. Let's end it with a series of answers from Jesus.

What if you never heard the voice of the Lord?

Does that mean He doesn't speak?

Jesus said, *My sheep know my voice.*

What if you never had a prayer answered?

Does that mean God doesn't answer prayer?

Jesus said, *Ask and you shall receive.*

What if you never saw a miracle? Does that mean miracles do not happen?

Jesus walked on water, calmed the stormy sea, turned water into wine, opened deaf ears and blind eyes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He also said, *Greater works than these shall you do because I go to my Father.*

Do you doubt because you have not seen?

Jesus said, *Blessed are they who believe and have not seen...*

Those who diligently seek Him will find great rewards.

I am come that you might have life, and that more abundantly (Jn. 10:10).

God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Amen.

About the Author

Harriett Ford is a veteran investigative reporter, humor columnist, former classroom English-literature teacher, and a three times First-Place Award winning author in regional and national writers' contests. She is a member of the Ozarks Writers League and the author of four books.

More importantly, she is a 40-year student of the Bible, and a longtime leader of home Bible studies for women.

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