

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Sickness and Healing

Sickness and Healing - posted by Suord (), on: 2007/5/28 9:44

Is it true that a Christian should never be sick. what are the scriptures that back it and why is it wrong or right?

Re: Sickness and Healing - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/5/28 12:26

Hello Suord,

No, it is not true.

Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities. 1Ti 5:23

Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. 2Ti 4:20

Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber. Act 9:36-37

Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me. Php 2:25-30

The unfortunate opportunity taken by some to misinterpret or misrepresent different forms of extremism would certainly come from;

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Jas 5:13-16

Jas 5:13 -

Is any among you afflicted? - By sickness, bereavement, disappointment, persecutions, loss of health or property. The word used here refers to suffering evil of any kind, (κακοπαθειΦ kakopatheî.)

Let him pray - That is, prayer is appropriate to trial. The mind naturally resorts to it, and in every way it is proper. God only can remove the source of sorrow; he can grant unto us "a happy issue out of all our afflictions;" he can make them the means of sanctifying the soul. Compare 2Ch_33:12; Psa_34:4; Psa_107:6, Psa_107:13, Psa_107:28. It matters not what is the form of the trial, it is a privilege which all have to go to God in prayer. And it is an inestimable privilege. Health fails, friends die, property is lost, disappointments come upon us, danger threatens, death approaches - and to whom shall we go but to God? He ever lives. He never fails us or disappoints us if we trust in him, and his ear is ever open to our cries. This would be a sad world indeed, if it were not for the privilege of prayer. The last resource of millions who suffer - for millions suffer every day - would be taken away, if men were denied the access to the throne of grace. As it is, there is no one so poor that he may not pray; no one so disconsolate and forsaken that he may not find in God a friend; no one so broken-hearted that he is not able to bind up his spirit. One of the designs of affliction is to lead us to the throne of grace; and it is a happy result of trials if we are led by our trials to seek God in prayer.

Jas 5:14 -

Is any sick among you? - In the previous verse the reference was to affliction in general, and the duty there urged was

one that was applicable to all forms of trial. The subject of sickness, however, is so important, since it so often occurs, that a specific direction was desirable. That direction is to call in the aid of others to lead our thoughts, and to aid us in our devotions, because one who is sick is less able to direct his own reflections and to pray for himself than he is in other forms of trial. Nothing is said here respecting the degree of sickness, whether it is that which would be fatal if these means were used or not; but the direction pertains to any kind of illness.

Let him call for the elders of the church - Greek "presbyters." See the notes at Act_15:2; Act_11:30. It cannot be supposed that this refers to the apostles, for it could not be that they would be always accessible; besides, instructions like this were designed to have a permanent character, and to be applicable to the church at all times and in all places. The reference, therefore, is doubtless to the ordinary religious teachers of the congregation; the officers of the church intrusted with its spiritual interests. The spirit of the command would embrace those who are pastors, and any others to whom the spiritual interests of the congregation are confided - ruling elders, deacons, etc. If the allusion is to the ordinary officers of the church, it is evident that the cure to be hoped for Jam_5:15 was not miraculous, but was that to be expected in the use of appropriate means accompanied by prayer.

It may be added, as worthy of note, that the apostle says they should "call" for the elders of the church; that is, they should send for them. They should not wait for them to hear of their sickness, as they might happen to, but they should cause them to be informed of it, and give them an opportunity of visiting them and praying with them. Nothing is more common than for persons - even members of the church - to be sick a long time, and to presume that their pastor must know all about it; and then they wonder that he does not come to see them, and think hard of him because he does not. A pastor cannot be supposed to know everything; nor can it be presumed that he knows when persons are sick, any more than he can know anything else, unless he is apprized of it; and many hard thoughts, and many suspicions of neglect would be avoided, if, when persons are sick, they would in some way inform their pastor of it. It should always be presumed of a minister of the gospel that he is ready to visit the sick. But how can he go unless he is in some way apprized of the illnesses of those who need his counsel and his prayers? The sick send for their family physician; why should they presume that their pastor will know of their illness any more than that their physician will?

And let them pray over him - With him, and for him. A man who is sick is often little capable of praying himself; and it is a privilege to have some one to lead his thoughts in devotion. Besides, the prayer of a good man may be of avail in restoring him to health, Jam_5:15. Prayer is always one important means of obtaining the divine favor, and there is no place where it is more appropriate than by the bed-side of sickness. That relief from pain may be granted; that the mind may be calm and submissive; that the medicines employed may be blessed to a restoration to health; that past sins may be forgiven; that he who is sick may be sanctified by his trials; that he may be restored to health, or prepared for his "last change" - all these are subjects of prayer which we feel to be appropriate in such a case, and every sick man should avail himself of the aid of those who "have an interest at the throne of grace," that they may be obtained.

Anointing him with oil - Oil, or unguents of various kinds, were much used among the ancients, both in health and in sickness. The oil which was commonly employed was olive oil. See the Isa_1:6 note; Luk_10:34 note. The custom of anointing the sick with oil still prevails in the East, for it is believed to have medicinal or healing properties. Niebuhr (Beschreibung von Arabien, s. 131) says, "The southern Arabians believe that to anoint with oil strengthens the body, and secures it against the oppressive heat of the sun, as they go nearly naked. They believe that the oil closes the pores of the skin, and thus prevents the effect of the excessive heat by which the body is so much weakened; perhaps also they regard it as contributing to beauty, by giving the skin a glossy appearance. I myself frequently have observed that the sailors in the ships from Djidda and Loheia, as well as the common Arabs in Tehama, anointed their bodies with oil, in order to guard themselves against the heat. The Jews in Mocha assured Mr. Forskal, that the Mohammedans as well as the Jews, in Sana, when they were sick, were accustomed to anoint the body with oil." Rosenmuller, Morgenland, in loc.

In the name of the Lord - By the authority or direction of the Lord; or as an act in accordance with his will, and that will meet with his approbation. When we do anything that tends to promote virtue, to alleviate misery, to instruct ignorance, to save life, or to prepare others for heaven, it is right to feel that we are doing it in the name of the Lord. Compare, for such uses of the phrase "in the name of the Lord," and "in my name," Mat_10:22; Mat_18:5; Mat_18:20; Mat_19:29; Mat_24:9; Mar_9:41; Mar_13:13; Luk_21:12; Luk_21:17; Rev_2:3; Col_3:17. There is no reason to think that the phrase is used here to denote any peculiar religious rite or "sacrament." It was to be done in the name of the Lord, as any other good deed is.

Albert Barnes

There is also an admonition not to be overlooked that is mentioned here:

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. 1Co 11:26-32

The problem with this idea is one of duration. It is not that healing from sickness is not possible only what or Who rather determines the cut off point? Being that saints keep on dying at an alarming rate and that primarily due to sickness, where does the 'never get sick' stop being never?

Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, of the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Joh 11:1

These things spake he: and after this he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Joh 11:11

Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. Joh 11:14

And though the Lord raised him from the dead, again he died, as we all do. The healthiest saints in the world suffer atrophy and the degenerating effects of age on the body and there is no stopping it. It is the price to be paid for sin, death. The proponents of this ideal have to deny much to hold on to their assumption.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: Rom 5:12

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: Heb 9:27

Re: Sickness and Healing - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2007/5/29 17:11

Hi Suord...

You ask, "Is it true that a Christian should never be sick. what are the scriptures that back it and why is it wrong or right?"

First, can you tell me a little about the experiences of Christians in Ghana? Over here we hear stories that in some places in Africa, healings often take place.

As to whether Christians should ever get sick or not, Crsschk in his post has shown from Scripture that even back in the early Church (which was a strong Church) Christians got sick. And throughout history that has been the case. Christians, true Christians, do get sick.

However, we are living in days when the Church, generally speaking (at least here in our Western Society) is weak. And therefore, sickness among Christians is a big problem. I myself have been very sick for many years.

Crsschk quoted the passage from I Corinthians Ch. 11 in which Paul shows that when a vital communion is taking place, it should minister health and healing to the saints. We are sadly lacking that intimate Holy-Spirit Communion of the broken Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ these days. And because of that, "many are weak and sickly among (us) and many sleep" (I Cor. 11.30).

So, while it is true that Christians can and do get sick, we don't want to just accept this as the norm, the way it's always meant to be. We don't want to lose sight of the heritage that we have in Christ Jesus our Lord, that in His Cross and Resurrection, there is provision for health, and healing.

Of course, there are some health and prosperity preachers who distort this, and teach that sickness or lack of prosperity is an indication of God's disfavour or of some "secret sin" in your life.

That is false teaching. Yes, there may be cases where a person is afflicted because of disobedience or sin. But largely, sickness is the product of the sin of Adam, it's something that is part of our natural inheritance from our first father, Adam ; it comes our way just because we are part of the human family.

However, we have an inheritance in the last Adam, the Second Man, Jesus Christ the Lord, and part of that inheritance is health in our mortal bodies. His cross cuts off that curse we inherited from Adam, and His resurrection makes us heirs of a whole New heritage!

And there is much Scripture (both in the Old Testament, and in the New) to back this up.

Read the passage in Matthew 9: 1-8 in which Jesus heals the paralytic. He equates healing with forgiveness of sin. "For whether it is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then saith he to the sick of the palsy) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house."

So right there we see that the fruit of forgiveness of sins is healing. (This, obviously, is territory in our spiritual heritage that we as a Church have entered very little into. If sickness is the result of original sin, then forgiveness of sin can only mean health, and healing! Now, rather than water this down so it lines up more easily with my experience, I prefer to believe exactly what it says, and confess, Lord, I am short of this. Do what You need to do to make my experience line up with what I read. Yes, I know my sins are forgiven, and I praise You for justifying me, but obviously there is something deeper to be apprehended here: I see You are able to minister such a powerful forgiveness that it liberates me not only from sin and guilt, but also from sickness!)

Here are two or three other verses that link healing and our Lord's righteousness together.

"Bless the LORD, O my soul... who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases..." (Ps. 103. 1-3).

"And the inhabitant (speaking of Zion; link this up with Heb. 12.22) shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity" (Isa. 33.24).

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings..." (Mal. 4.2).

"But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8.11).

Notice this: the body is still mortal, still capable of dying; yet by His Spirit resident within us, there is a "quickenings," an impartation of LIFE to that mortal body, so that "the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal flesh" (II Cor. 4.11). Once again, here is a "depth" our experience is short of. I know I have His Spirit dwelling in me. In a measure. But Paul says there is an indwelling of His Spirit that actually QUICKENS OUR MORTAL BODY!

Let us seek Him for this!

And there are many other Scriptures. Just one more here:

"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the LORD-that-healeth-thee" Ex. 15.26). It is part of His very Name: I am Jehovah-Ropheka. This, and many other aspects of His Name. And His great desire and intention is to reveal in His people His Name.

I think it likely that the reason we see so little of Jehovah-Ropheka (the LORD-that-healeth) manifested these days is because we as God's people don't have the same intense interest in knowing Him as Jehovah-Tsidkenu (the LORD-our-Righteousness) and Jehovah-M'kaddishkem (the LORD-who-Sancitifies-you, that is, the Lord who makes us holy). (I'm no Hebrew scholar, so forgive the spelling, please.) But if we want healing just so we can get on with our lives and enjoy a nice earthly life, and have no interest in righteousness and holiness... will our Lord be all that interested in revealing Himself as our healer?)

...So, healing is part of our heritage in Christ. This must become more than mere doctrine, or teaching to us: we must earnestly seek to subdue our enemies, and enter into our heritage, the true Canaan.

"Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set" (Pr. 22.28). Healing, health, is part of our heritage. And not only the early apostles, but men all through the Church age (I think of George Fox, A.B. Simpson, John G. Lake, Charles H. Price, to name only a few) have fought the good fight of faith to keep that ancient landmark from being removed.

These days we are obviously short of it! But it is ours! let us press into it!

In closing I just want to emphasize strongly one thought I brought out earlier. Contrary to what certain teachers teach, there should be no condemnation on any Christian who is sick. They may be righteous, godly, loving Jesus with all their heart. Yet still sick. All it indicates is that we as a corporate people are very impoverished these days; the heavenly riches are there in the storehouses of Heaven, but we have somehow lost the Key that opens them, or forgotten what that Key even is.

Teach us, Lord. We bow before You. Show us the Key. Grant us the grace to seek You for it. The call is for those who hear: we take courage that, regardless how far we have fallen short in this our day, You are ready to pour out grace upon those who seek You, and seekers shall become finders. Amen.

AD

Re: "THY will be done.", on: 2007/5/30 1:33

2Co 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

2Co 12:8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

2Co 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

2Co 12:10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Psa 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

Psa 119:71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

Psa 119:75 I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

Exo 4:11 And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?

I don't think anyone in their 'right mind' would ever 'choose' to be ill.

Every sick person I've ever known has asked The LORD daily for healing and would naturally prefer it.

I'm in a few Christian Support Groups for chronically ill brothers and sisters.

Some were Missionaries, some Pastors, some Pastor's wives, etc. etc.

Most were in some sort of major ministry.

All have prayed for years to be healed and have lived admirable lives.

But, if you ask them what they have gotten out of their years of being disabled or in pain they all say "A closeness to Christ that they never had before".

Also, their compassion level has risen beyond what they ever felt before.

They hear from God better now than those with healthy bodies.

They Love Him more dearly now for the same reasons that Paul mentioned in the first Scripture passages above.

Most say they wouldn't trade what they've learned and experienced of His Grace and Presence and of "being held", if they could do these past years over.

Yet all still pray to be healed, with Jesus' submissiveness ... "nevertheless, not my will but Thine."

The most important prayer anyone can pray is "Whatever brings YOU LORD more or ALL of the GLORY."

Would "we" like to be healed right now --- you betcha --- but it's "self" motivated desires.

HE sees the beginning from the end and if a disability or temporary illness will get our attention or pliability or as what happened to Paul above, to "have our strength made "perfect" in weakness, then most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the Power of Christ may rest upon me."

It's easy to serve GOD with a perfect body. "Easy" for US you see it's all "SELF" centered which is just what "we" need to die to.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus

Pray for healing as Paul did - but know that the Key is HIS Omniscience.
Not a sparrow falls without Him allowing it.

Those who bear fruit will be pruned

Pruning is not chastisement, but it hurts, so that we can bear even more fruit.

If we miss the reason "why" God allows these physical infirmities, while we're going through them, we've possibly missed the greatest lesson of our lifetime.

It is not just sin or Adam's fall that causes sickness and Satan cannot afflict unless God permit it for some Romans 8:29 reason.

The key is to die to self. For it is God which works in you both to WILL and to do of HIS good pleasure.

Pray for His Sovereignty over our lives.
He's the decision maker, our Creator and Author and Finisher of our faith.

Most of the folks "these days" are extremely "comfort" minded and surely don't want to feel an ounce of pain, unlike Paul who suffered many times being beaten, whipped, stoned, ship-wrecked, imprisoned in painful chains, etc.. Modern day folks aren't ready for these "discomforts", nonetheless a thorn in their flesh - obviously.

If healing brings HIM Glory it will happen to a dedicated saint.

If infirmity can be accepted by a "Christian" as a Rom. 8:28 thing - when they are not healed on demand or repeated petitioning - then God can use that to do the most important healing they could ever experience. The breaking of the self-will as Jesus and Paul, etc. exemplified.

Re: - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2007/5/30 19:06

Quote:
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" The breaking of the self-will"

and oh what a 'will' it is!

And what love He sheds upon us to take the time and patience to break such a will as ours.

Lord, not mine but thy will be done.

In His Love

pastorfrin

Re:, on: 2007/5/30 19:35

Way ta go Pastor. 8-)

After I signed off I wanted to sign back on and add that we also need to die to our "self-power".

You know.

And as Paul's thorn was for --- PRIDE.

That monster is the toughest guy in town. Problem is we don't even know we have it ... that's why I like those verses David wrote in Ps. 119.

We work and do things for "HIM" so much in the flesh, that we can barely discern flesh from Spirit anymore so then He needs to do "whatever" if we are HIS.

We're in those days when many will "go home unexpectedly" but Praise God for His giving us notice of all things before they happen. Is 57: 1 & 2.

Looking forward to resuming great-Godly-uplifting-Spirit-building dialog.

Yes ~ In His Love ~ Amen.

Phil 3:7-14

The sign that something is "alive" is "hunger-thirst and constant Growth" :-)

Bless you.