

**Articles and Sermons :: the gospel of healing by Ab simpson**

the gospel of healing by Ab simpson - posted by brothagary, on: 2021/2/3 16:38

The Gospel of Healing) 4. PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE HEALING

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There are certain principles underlying all the teachings of the Holy Scriptures with respect to healing; which it is important to understand and classify and which, when rightly understood, are most helpful to intelligent faith.

THE CAUSES OF DISEASE and suffering are distinctly traced to the Fall and sinful state of man. If sickness were part of the natural constitution of things, then we might meet it wholly on natural grounds, and by natural means. But if it be part of the curse of sin, it must have its true remedy in the great Redemption. That sickness is the result of the Fall, and one of the fruits of sin no one can surely question. Death, we are told, hath passed upon all, for that all have sinned, and the greater includes the less. It is named among the curses of Deuteronomy, which God was to send for Israel's sin. Again, it is distinctly connected with Satan's personal agency. He was the direct instrument of Job's suffering, and our Lord definitely attributed the diseases of His time to his direct power. It was Satan who bound the paralyzed woman these eighteen years; and it was demoniacal influence which held and crushed the bodies and souls of those He delivered. If sickness be the result of evil spiritual agency, it is most evident that it must be met and counteracted by higher spiritual force, and not by mere natural treatment.

And again, on the supposition that sickness is a divine discipline and chastening it is still more evident that its removal must come, not through mechanical appliances, but through spiritual causes. It would be both ridiculous and vain for the arm of man to presume to wrest the chastening-rod from the Father's hand by physical force or skill. The only way to avert His stroke is to submit the spirit in penitence to His will, and seek in humility and faith His forgiveness and relief; so that from whatever side we look at disease, it becomes more and more evident that its remedy must be found alone in God and the Gospel of His Redemption.

If the disease be the result of the fall, we may expect it to be embraced in the provisions of Redemption, and would naturally look for some intimation of a remedy in THE PREPARATORY DISPENSATION which preceded the Gospel. Nor are we disappointed. The great principle that God's care and providence embraces the temporal and physical needs of his people as well as the spiritual, runs all through the Old Testament. Distinct provision for Divine healing is made in all the ordinances of Moses. And the prophetic picture of the Coming Deliverer is that of a great Physician as well as a glorious King and gracious Savior. The healing of Abimelech, Miriam, Job, Naaman and Hezekiah; the case of the Leper and the Brazen Serpent, the statute at Marah, and the blessings and curses at Ebal and Gerizim, the terrible rebuke of Asa, the one hundred and third Psalm, and the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, leave the testimony of the Old Testament clear and distinct that the redemption of the body was the Divine prerogative and plan.

THE PERSONAL MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST is the next great stage in the development of these principles. His own life was a complete summary of Christianity; and from His words and works we may surely gather the great intent of redemption. And what was the testimony of His life to physical healing? He went about their cities healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people. He healed all that had need of healing, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the Prophet, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Now, when we remember that this was not an occasional incident, but a chief part of His ministry; that He began His work with it, that He continued it to the close of His life; that He did it on all possible occasions and in every variety of cases, that He did it heartily, willingly, and without leaving any doubt or question of His will; that He distinctly said to the doubting leper, "I will," and was only grieved when men hesitated to fully trust Him and when we realize that in all this He was but unfolding the real purpose of His great redemption, and revealing His own unchanging character and love, and that he has distinctly assured us that He is still "the same yesterday, today, and for ever" -- surely we have a great principle to rest our faith upon, as secure as the Rock of Ages.

But redemption finds its center IN THE CROSS of Jesus Christ, and there we must look for the fundamental principle of Divine healing. It rests on the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. This necessarily follows from the first principle we have stated. If sickness be the result of the Fall, it must be included in the atonement of Christ, which reaches

"Far as the curse is found."

But, again, it is most distinctly stated in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, as we have seen: He is said to have borne our sickness and carried our pains, the word "bear" being the very same used for the atonement of sin; the same used elsewhere to describe the act of the scapegoat in bearing away the people's guilt and the same used in the same chapter with respect to His "bearing the sins of many." In the same sense, then, as He has borne away our sins has he also borne our sicknesses. And Peter also states that "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree . . . by whose stripes we are healed." In His own body He has borne ALL OUR BODILY LIABILITIES for sin, and our bodies are set free. That one cruel "stripe" of His -- for the word is singular -- summed up in it all the aches and pains of a suffering world; and there is no longer need that we should suffer what He has sufficiently borne. Thus our healing becomes a great redemption right, which we simply claim as our purchased inheritance through the blood of His Cross.

But there is something higher even than the Cross. It is THE RESURRECTION of our Lord. There the Gospel of Healing finds the fountain of the deepest life. The death of Christ destroys the root of sickness: sin. But it is the life of Jesus which supplies the source of health and life for our redeemed bodies. The body of Christ is the living fountain of all our vital strength. He who came forth from Joseph's tomb, with the new physical life of the resurrection, is the Head of His people for life and immortality.

Not for Himself alone did He receive the power of an endless life, but as our life. He gave Him to be Head over all things for His Church, which is His body. We are members of His body, His flesh, and His bones. The healing which Christ gives us is nothing less than His own new physical life infused into our body from His own very heart, and bringing us into fellowship with His own inmost being. That Risen and Ascended One is the fountain and measure of our strength and life. We eat His flesh and drink His blood, and He dwelleth in us, and we in Him. As He lived in the Father, so he that eateth Him shall live by Him. This is the great, the vital, the most precious principle of physical healing in the name of Jesus. It is the very life of Jesus manifested in our mortal flesh.

It follows from this, that it must be wholly A NEW LIFE. The Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ have made an awful gulf between the present and past of every redeemed life. Henceforth, if any man be in Christ, he is A NEW CREATION. Old things have passed away, ALL THINGS HAVE BECOME NEW. The death of Jesus has slain all our old self. The life of Jesus is the spring of all new life. This is true of our physical life. It is not the restoration of the old natural strength to life. It is not the building up of our former constitution. It is the letting go of all the old dependencies. It is often the failure and decay of all our natural strength. It is a strength which "out of weakness is made strong," which has no resources to start with; which creation-like, is made out of nothing; which resurrection-like, comes out of the dark tomb, and the extinction of all previous help and hope. This principle is of immense importance in the practical experience of healing. So long as we look for it in the old natural life, we shall be disappointed. But when we cease to put confidence in the flesh, and look only to Christ and His supernatural life in us for our strength of body as well as spirit, we shall find that we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us.

It follows from this that the physical redemption which Christ brings, is NOT MERELY HEALING, BUT ALSO LIFE. It is not the readjustment of our life on the old basis, leaving it thenceforward to go like a machine upon the natural plane, but it is the infusion of a new kind of life and strength. Therefore it is as fully within the reach of persons in health as those who are diseased. It is simply a higher kind of life, the turning of life's water into His heavenly wine.

Therefore, it must also be kept by constantly abiding in Him, and receiving from Him. It is not a permanent deposit, but a daily dependence, a renewing of the inward man day by day, a strength which comes only as we need it, and continues only while we dwell in Him. Such a LIFE is a very sacred thing. It gives a peculiar sanctity to every look, tone, act, organ and movement of the body. We are living on the life of God, and we must live like Him and for Him. A body thus divinely quickened adds tenfold power to the soul, and all the service of the Christian life. Words spoken in this Divine energy, works done through the very life of God, will be clothed with a positive effectiveness which must make men feel that the body as well as the spirit is indeed the very Temple of the Holy Ghost.

The great agent in bringing this new life into our life is THE HOLY GHOST. The redemption work of Jesus cannot be completed without His blessed ministry. Not as a visible physical presence does this Jesus of Nazareth now meet the sick, and halt, and blind, but through a spiritual manifestation. It has all the old physical power, and produces all the ancient results upon the suffering frame, but the approach is spiritual, not physical.

The presence must be brought to our consciousness; the contact of our need with His life must come through the Holy Spirit. So Mary had to learn in the very first moment of the resurrection. "Touch me not -- I ascend." Thus, henceforth, mu

st she know Him as the Ascended One. So Paul had ceased to know Christ Jesus after the flesh. So He had to guard the disciples at Capernaum, where, speaking of the Living Bread -- the Source of healing -- He adds: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing."

This is the reason why many find it hard to meet the Healer. They do not know the Holy Ghost. They do not know God spiritually. The sun in the heavens would be but a cold and glaring ball of ice were it not for the atmosphere which brings His warmth and light to us and diffuses them through our world. And Christ's life and love cannot reach us without the intermediate Spirit, the Light, the Atmosphere, the Divine Medium who brings and sheds abroad His life and light, His love and Presence in our being, the taking of the things of Jesus and showing them to us, extracting the very essence of His life and frame, and sweetly diffusing it through every vessel, nerve, organ and function of our being.

Yes, He is the great Quickener. It was through the Holy Ghost that Jesus cast out devils on earth,

and now, 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 body through His Spirit that dwelleth in us.

This new life must come, like all the blessings of Christ's redemption, as the FREE GRACE OF GOD, WITHOUT WORKS, AND WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF MERIT OR RESPECT OF PERSONS.

Everything that comes through Christ must come as grace. There can be no works mingled with justifying faith, except those which come after justification, and as its fruits. Any others are dead works, and fatal to our salvation. Even so, our healing must be wholly of God, or not of grace at all.

IF CHRIST HEALS HE MUST DO IT ALONE. This principle ought to settle for ever the question of using means in connection with faith for healing. The natural and the spiritual, the earthly and the heavenly, the works of man and the grace of God, cannot be mixed, any more than you could expect to harness a tortoise with a locomotive, or make a great sea a part of iron and part of hemp. They cannot work together. The gifts of the Gospel are Sovereign gifts. God can do the most difficult things for us Himself. But HE CANNOT HELP OUR SELF-SUFFICIENCY to do the easiest. A hopeless case is therefore much more hopeful than one where we think we can do something ourselves. We must

"Venture on Him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude."

If healing is to be sought by natural means, let us get all the best results of skill and experience. But if it is to be through the name of Jesus it must be by GRACE ALONE.

It follows also in the same connection that if it be a part of the Gospel and a gift of Christ, it must be an impartial one, limited only by the great "whosoever" of the Gospel. It is not a special gift of discriminating favoritism, but a great and common heritage of faith and obedience. It is "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." It is true all who come must conform to the simple conditions of obedient faith; but these are impartial without respect of persons, and within the reach of all.

The simple condition of this great Blessing, alike the condition of all the blessings of the Gospel is: FAITH WITHOUT SIGHT. Grace without works and faith without sight must always go together as twin principles of Glorious Gospel. The one thing God asks from all who are to receive His grace is that they shall trust His simple word where they have nothing else but His word to trust. But this must be real trust. It must believe and doubt not. If God's word be true at all it is absolutely and utterly true.

A very small grain of mustard seed will do, and it will split open with its living roots the great rocks and mountains, but it must be an entire grain. The grain must be in its integrity. One little laceration will kill its life. And one doubt will destroy the efficiency of faith; and therefore it must begin in the soul, taking God simply and nakedly at His word. A faith that is going to wait for signs and evidence will never be strong. Plants that begin by leaning will always be fragile and need a trellis. Indeed the faith which rests upon seeing is not faith. Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.

Abraham had to believe God and take the new name of faith and fatherhood before there was any indication of probability and when, indeed, every natural sign contradicted and stultified it. It is beautiful to notice the form of expression in Genesis 17. First he is told, "I will make thee a father of many nations." Then comes the change of Abraham's name which was the profession of his faith, and the acknowledgment before a scorning world that he believed God. Then follows God's next word. But how wonderful! The tense is completely changed. It is no longer a promise, but an accomplished fact; "I

HAVE MADE THEE a father of many nations." It is done. Faith has turned the future into the past, and now God calls the things that are not as though they were. So we must believe, and receive the healing life of Jesus and all the blessings of the Gospel.

THE OBLIGATION

Is there any principle involving the obligation of faith in reference to physical healing? Is it an optional matter with us how we shall be healed, and whether we shall trust God or look to man? Is it "an ordinance and a statute" for us, and a matter of simple obedience? Is it His great prerogative to deal with the bodies He has redeemed, and an impertinence for man, and unsanctified man, to tamper with them, and an equal impertinence for us to choose some other way than His? Is the Gospel of salvation a commandment as well as a promise, and is the Gospel of healing of equal authority? Has He chosen to legislate about the way in which the plague which has entered His world shall be dealt with, and have we any business to interfere with His great Health Laws? HAS HE AT ENORMOUS COST, PROVIDED A REMEDY FOR HIS CHILDREN as part of His redemption, and IS HE JEALOUS FOR THE HONOR AND RIGHTS OF HIS DEAR SON'S NAME in this matter? Does He claim to be the owner of His children's bodies, and does He claim the right to care for them? Has He left us one great prescription for disease, and is any other course, unauthorized, disobedient, and at our own risk? Surely these questions answer themselves, and leave but one course open to every simple and obedient child of God.

THE ORDER of God's dealings with our souls and bodies is regulated by certain fixed principles.

A. He works from within outwards, beginning with our spiritual nature and then diffusing his life and power through our physical being. Many persons come to God for healing whose spiritual life is wholly defective and wrong. God does not refuse the healing, but He begins in the depths of the soul, and when it is prepared to receive His life, he can begin to heal the body.

B. There is a constant parallel between the state of the soul and body. John prays that Gaius "may be in health and prosper, EVEN AS his soul prospereth." A little cloud of sin upon the heart will leave a shadow upon the brain and nerves and a pressure upon the whole frame. A malicious breath of spiritual evil will poison the blood and depress the whole system. And a clear, calm and confident spirit will bring vigor into all the physical life, and open the way for all the full strong pulses of the Lord's own life in us.

C. Hence, also, healing will often be gradual in its development, as the spiritual life grows and faith takes a firmer hold of Christ. The principle of the Divine life, like the natural, is "first the blade; then the ear; after that the full corn in the ear. There must ever be much preliminary work. The seed must be planted and die." "The stalk must rise and grow strong enough to bear its heavy fruit. Many persons want the head of wheat while the blade is yet tender. Now it would only overwhelm us by its weight. We must have deep and quiet strength to sustain our higher blessing. Sometimes this preparation is all completed beforehand. Then God can work very rapidly. But in each case He knows the order and process best adapted to the development of the whole man, which is ever His great end in all His workings in us.

THE LIMITATIONS of Healing are also fixed by certain principles.

A. It is not the immortal life. Why should people ever die if Christ will always heal? Because faith can only go as far as God's promise, and God has nowhere promised that we shall never die during this Dispensation. The promise is fullness of life and health and strength up to the measure of our natural life, and until our life-work is done. True, it is the life of the resurrection which we have; but it is not the whole of it, but only the first fruits. In speaking of our immortal life in 2 Cor. 5:5, the Apostle says: "Now He that hath wrought us for this self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit" That is, as our earnest was a handful of the very soil of the purchased farm, but only a handful, so God has given us now, by His Spirit, in our new physical life, a handful of the very life of the resurrection. But it is only a handful, and the fullness will not come until His coming. But that handful is worth all the soil of earth and the natural life a hundredfold.

B. The next limitation has reference to the measure and degree in which we can expect this life in our present state. Shall we have strength for all sorts of supernatural exploits and extraordinary exertions? We have the promise of sufficient strength for all the will of God and all the service of Christ. But we shall have no strength for mere display, and certainly none to waste in recklessness, or spend in selfishness and sin. Within the limits of our God-appointed work, and these limits may be very wide -- much wider than any mere natural strength -- we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us, and may fearlessly undertake all labors, self-denials, and difficulties in the face of exposure, weakness, unhealthy conditions of climate, and the most engrossing demands upon strength and time, where Christ clearly leads and calls us

; and we shall have His protecting power and find that "God is able to make all grace abound so that we, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work." But let us touch the forbidden earth, get out of that sacred circle of His will, or spend our strength on self or sin, and our life will wither -- like Jonah's gourd and Samson's arm. Yes, it must be true in our life; all true -- not one part wanting, "OF Him, and THROUGH Him, and TO HIM - are all things to whom be glory for ever. Amen."