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Jesus, MD: Health Lessons from the Great Physician¹

Session 1: The Greatest Physician of All Time

The number of miraculous healings that are depicted in the gospel stories of Jesus Christ is unparalleled in history. Jesus was no doubt the greatest physician of all time. There is no comparison. He took the hardest cases. The cases every other physician had given up on, He handled with ease. Hundreds, if not thousands, waited on Him daily. He was always taking new patients. If the patient placed their confidence fully in Him, He would heal them. He never lost a case. He healed every case He took up.

Session 2: His Supporting Medical Staff

Jesus taught His disciples to heal the sick during His ministry and they continued the same after His resurrection and ascension. But what about now? What power of healing do His followers have today?

Session 3: Cleansing the Defiled

Case studies of Jesus, M.D. Come see what Jesus can do. See Him heal the leper, the paralyzed, the bedridden, and the blind.

Session 4: Healing the Sick and Distressed

Case studies of Jesus, M.D. See Him heal a hemorrhaging woman, an edematous man, a sick son, and the demon-possessed.

Session 5: Raising the Dead

Case studies of Jesus, M.D. A widow's son, a ruler's daughter, Lazarus, His own death and resurrection.

Session 6: Lifestyle Medical Ministry Today

God looks upon those who are sick with pitying tenderness. He wants us to minister to them in love that they may see Jesus' character of love and learn to obey His health principles as a preparation for His second coming. What are the guiding principles that we can use to perform such a ministry today?

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Jesus, M.D, Lessons From the Great Physician

It is my goal during this series of classes for us to **learn principles** of medical science, healthy living, and healing while we study the stories and the messages of The Great Physician, Jesus Christ. That we may behold Him, and drink deeply of the love He demonstrates for humankind, be in awe of Him, see how absolutely amazing He is, draw close to Him, and seek healing for ourselves and for others.

Whatever line of investigation we pursue, with a sincere purpose **to arrive at truth**, we are brought... into **communion with the mind of God**. The effect of such communion on body and mind and soul is beyond estimate.²

Session 1: The Greatest Physician of All Time

The number of **miraculous healings** that are depicted in the gospel stories of Jesus Christ is unparalleled in history. Jesus was no doubt **The Greatest Physician of all time**. There is no comparison. He was not educated by man, but rather God. He took the **hardest cases**. The cases every other physician had given up on, He handled with ease. Hundreds, if not thousands, waited on Him daily. He was always taking new patients. If the patient placed their confidence fully in Him, He would heal them. **He never lost a case** with anyone who put their confidence in Him. He healed every case He took up.

“Christ is the greatest medical missionary that ever lived. He never lost a case.”³

Many of us have experienced miracles in our lives. Occasionally, the **miracle is an obvious adjustment** to the laws of physics. Most times it is subtle, where **seemingly random circumstances** occur in a remarkable outcome. One can say little more than that it was **surely providence**.

A Miracle Story: **The orange construction barrel that saved my life.**

As the story illustrates, God in our modern day often may bring about circumstances that show us that He is there and that He cares for us very much. But we can say little more than **that without a doubt it was surely providence**. On the other hand those who refuse to believe could still find a way to doubt. **Jesus’ ministry when He was on earth was different. The miracles were obvious. There was no subtlety.**

² Ellen White, Education, p. 14.

³ Ellen White, 1st Manuscript Releases, p. 387.3

The Four Questions of Session 1

1. *During His earthly ministry, why did God give Jesus power to heal diseases?*
 2. *What was the primary reason why people sought out Jesus during His earthly ministry?*
 3. *In addition to physically healing us and bearing our sicknesses, what example was Jesus, the Great Physician, for us during His ministry that is essential for our healing?*
 4. *Is the lesson of unifying spiritual health and physical health important today?*
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1. *During His earthly ministry, why did God give Jesus power to heal diseases?*

- 1a. To Attest that Jesus was from God.
- 1b. To Fulfill Scripture.
- 1c. To Demonstrate His Power to Forgive Sins
- 1d. To Demonstrate God's Attitude Toward Us

1a. *To Attest that Jesus was from God.*

Jesus of Nazareth, a Man **attested by God** to you by **miracles, wonders, and signs** which **God did through Him** in your midst, as you yourselves also know" - Act 2:22⁴

To **attest** means to provide or serve as **clear evidence of**. The miracles provided or served as clear evidence of God's working through Jesus.

"the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, **that the Father has sent Me.**" - John 5:36.

Having just **performed a miraculously healing**, despite the persecution from the Jews, Jesus stated in John 5:36 that **He did these miraculous works**, so that the **works themselves** would bear witness **that God the Father had sent Him**.

During the early stages of His Galilean ministry Jesus had gone down to Jerusalem for a feast. While there He healed **an invalid man at the pool called Bethesda** (John 5:1-16).

The rest of John 5 is about the question of whether Jesus had the authority to heal disease on the Sabbath. Thus, John 5 is two main sections, **His miracle of healing** (v. 1-16) and **His defense before the Sanhedrin** (v. 17-47):

1. **Miracle of healing (v. 1-16)**. The miracle was the cure of an impotent man that had been diseased thirty-eight years.

⁴ Verses are quoted from the New King James Version unless otherwise stated.

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. - John 5:1

The particular feast is unknown.

Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep [Gate] a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. - John 5:2

Bethesda means "house of mercy". Extensive excavations have occurred of the area confirming the five porches.^{5,6}

In these lay a **great multitude of sick people**, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. - John 5:3-4

Some translations do not contain the latter half of verse 3 and verse 4.⁷ The verse is absent from the earliest greek manuscripts of the New Testament and was first added as a footnote as a result of Tertullian's comments in the early 3rd century to explain why the man was so anxious to get into the pool when the water stirred.⁸ The absence of this section in the earliest manuscripts suggests that the angel coming down was what was **commonly believed** as opposed to John saying this was a fact.

Now a certain man was there who **had an infirmity thirty-eight years**.⁹ When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been [in that condition] a long time, He said to him, "**Do you want to be made well?**" - John 5:5-6

Have you ever wondered why God doesn't heal you? Or why God doesn't heal a certain person? The man by the pool of Bethesda probably had. But at the moment Jesus came He wasn't wondering about that. **Almost four decades into his illness, alas, his**

⁵ <https://www.biblewalks.com/Bethesda>

⁶Originally a water reservoir for the temple in 8th century BCE. 2 Kings 18:17; Isaiah 7:3, 36:2 may allude to it. More detail: <https://torahportions.ffoz.org/disciples/john/the-pool-of-bethesda.html>

⁷ Some translations remove the latter half of 5:3 and all of 5:4 (eg. Latin Vulgate, BBE) or they include it as a footnote (eg. NIV, NLT, ESV, CSB) or in brackets (NASB).

⁸ Wayne, Luke. Was John 5:3 removed from modern Bibles? Oct 31, 2018. <https://carm.org/king-james-onlyism/was-john-53-removed-from-modern-bibles/>

⁹ Jesus is particularly moved by those who have been in a prolonged, intractable experience of suffering. Compare Luke 13:16; 8:43.

trust was in the stirring of the water. He refused to give up hope, however bleak.¹⁰ He thought that if only he could be the first in the pool, he would be healed.

Sometimes Jesus is intervening and we don't even know it.

The prejudice of the Scribes and Pharisees prevented Jesus from healing the many there He wanted to heal. He knew that if He healed them it would **create a great uproar in Jerusalem**, considering the large numbers attending the feast. And thus a large act of healing would **severely hamper His ministry**.¹¹

The sick man answered Him, "**Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool** when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, **another steps down** before me." - John 5:7

The crippled man clearly desired to be healed, but **no one would help him** down to the pool.

Why do you think John mentions this detail in this way?

The Bible's mention of this detail seems to me a **rebuke of the heartlessness and meanness of human nature**. At this apparent place of healing, for him, it was every man for himself.¹⁰ Too often the poor, the unattractive, and the helpless are sadly left to fend for themselves.

Despite the man's frustration, **he still maintained good manners** by acknowledging Jesus as "Sir." This word, the Greek kurios, appears over 700 times in the New Testament. Hundreds of times it is translated as "Lord" or "lord," but as "Sir" only about a dozen times. The term shows **respect and honor for Christ**. In today's society, we see quite a contrast to this example. The opposite attitude is too often present when people address each other, and even when children address parents.¹²

Jesus said to him, "**Rise, take up your bed and walk.**" - John 5:8

The man's faith takes hold upon [Jesus'] word. Every nerve and muscle thrills with new life, and healthful action comes to his crippled limbs. **Without question he sets his will to obey the command of Christ**, and all his muscles respond to his will. Springing to his feet, he finds himself an active man.¹³

¹⁰ Just like this man we too may come into such desperate situations that an unlikely potion, or remedy will cure our situation. Rather, let us look first to Jesus. He will show us the way

¹¹ White, Ellen. Desire of Ages. p. 201.3

¹² Martin G. Collins. The Miracles of Jesus Christ: Healing a Cripple by a Pool (Part Two). <https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/bible.show/sVerselD/26212/eVerselD/26227>

¹³ White, Ellen. Desire of Ages. p. 202.3

And immediately **the man was made well**, took up his bed, and walked. **And that day was the Sabbath.** - John 5:9.

This was his one chance at healing and he took full advantage. He never stopped to doubt. This man was healed **without an overt expression of faith in Jesus**; but in **believing Christ's word and acting upon it, He received strength**. If he had refused to make an effort to rise, there would have been no healing.¹⁴

"The healing occurs by the Word of God; Christ speaks, and it is done by the power of the Holy Spirit. Although the pool was known for its therapeutic qualities, Jesus does not use it in the healing so there would be **no doubt that the power to heal had come through Him**. He does, however, require that the man perform a work to accompany his faith: "Rise, take up your bed, and walk."¹⁵

Recipe for healing — Obey His command to you. "Rise, take up your bed, and walk."

The fact that **Jesus' command to him was threefold**, that he understood it, and immediately set his will to obey, shows that **he was allowing the Holy Spirit to work through his being** as every nerve and fiber was suddenly empowered anew.

Jesus' command to rise initiated a **powerful testimony** in the man of the fullness of the power of his healing. Spiritually, it was the restoration of a man living a life little better than death to a new man given a vigorous life. And to think that **it was accomplished by submitting his will to the word of Jesus**.

Jesus' command to take up his bed and walk further demonstrates the power of the healing. He was not only able to stand up, He **now had strength to even carry a load**. No longer needing his bed, **he could clear this remnant of his former life**. And his walk was no hobble. He walked out of there ready to tell anyone of the incredible thing that had been done for him. Jesus' command was both a miracle displaying the power of God as well as a call to action.¹⁴

The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." - John 5:10

The Jewish leaders **didn't seem to know anything of the man**. But they sure noticed his bed and nailed him for the apparent unlawfulness of the act even though the Old Testament gives no mention to suggest that such was a violation. **In fact, Isaiah 58**

¹⁴ Faith requires action. Without the execution of the action there is no healing, and thus, there would be no evidence of this man's belief in the word of Jesus. In this case, His faith and the healing are one.

¹⁵ Martin G. Collins. The Miracles of Jesus Christ: Healing a Cripple by a Pool (Part Two).

says the opposite.¹⁶ To carry his bed was not about work it was about the execution of his restoration.

He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.' " Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk?'" But **the one who was healed did not know who it was**, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in [that] place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. **Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.**" The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. - John 5:10-15

Jesus took a risk in coming to tell the man he healed to sin no more. This action led to Jesus being found out by the Jewish leaders. Jesus had not yet been identified until then. **The necessity of urging the healed man to live a life free of the sin that had led him to his infirmity Jesus clearly felt was imperative.**

2. Defense before the Sanhedrin (v. 17-47). The defense was **Christ's vindication of Himself before the Sanhedrin** for the **charge of Sabbath breaking**, which the Jews used to persecute Him and to seek to kill Him (v. 16).

The **Jews cared more about** following their **misguided sense of keeping the Sabbath** than they did about **doing good, loving a fellow neighbor, and relieving his suffering**. The charge of Sabbath breaking was **no menial issue**. **The penalty for breaking the Sabbath was death.**¹⁷ This was the charge against Jesus.

Jesus' defense does address whether He had the authority to heal disease on the Sabbath; but **He doesn't directly address the Sabbath part immediately.**¹⁸ Rather, in John 5 He addresses the basis for **why the Son of God has the power and authority to miraculously heal at all.**¹⁹

¹⁶ Isaiah 58 urges the reader to help the downtrodden and not exploit them. **Rather than doing their own pleasure** (v. 3), the LORD charges them that **on the Sabbath** they ought to **do the pleasure of the LORD** (v. 13), and delight themselves in the LORD (v.14), which based on the context of Isaiah 58, is to help those in need.

¹⁷ See Numbers 15:32-36.

¹⁸ John does not record Jesus' defense of His authority to heal ON the Sabbath itself until Jesus went secretly to the Feast of Tabernacles in John 7. It was clearly a hot issue. There, Jesus compares **healing on the Sabbath to performing circumcision on the Sabbath**, which the law commanded and all the Jews regularly performed. This was the main thrust of His defense (**John 7:22-24**) at that time. Later, Jesus defends healing on the Sabbath by comparing it to helping a donkey or ox (Luke 13:15; 14:5). Compare Exodus 21:33-34; 23:4.

¹⁹ It's an important question. What authority does the Son of God, the Messiah, have to heal then, during His earthly ministry, now, as we seek healing, and at the end of the age when Jesus comes again?

a. **He asserts his authority as Messiah to heal** (v. 17-29).

I. Verse 18 — “My Father has been working until now and I have been working” to save mankind.²⁰ There are certain things that are more important, strictly speaking, than abstaining from all work, as you define it, on the Sabbath.²¹ Those things are the work of saving, healing, and restoring life to mankind. God is His Father and He is God’s Son, the Messiah. Therefore, **He has the same authority as His Father to do the work of His Father.**

II. Verse 19 — I am just copying what My Father does. **My Father heals, so I heal.**

III. Verse 20 — My Father loves Me and shows Me what to do. And then I do it. **He shows me to heal and so I heal. You think this one healing is a big deal.** You know what Sanhedrin, **you ain’t seen nothing yet.**

IV. Verse 21 — **You believe that My Father raises the dead, so do I.** I give life and raise the dead too.

V. Verse 22 — And you know what, My Father has decided not to be the Judge of this earth, but **He made Me the Judge,**

VI. Verse 23 — so that you will **honor and respect Me** just as much as you do My Father. And if you don’t honor and respect Me, you are not honoring and respecting My Father.

Jesus had boldness. He was not afraid to set straight those who were asserting a corrupted authority. And yet He did it in love, as it says in Ephesian 4:15, “speak the truth in love” (NLT).

b. **He asserts his authority to give eternal life and to be the final Judge of Mankind.**²²

VII. Verse 24 — You can rest assured that if you listen to me and believe what I am telling you, **you have everlasting life** and I will make sure that you won’t **need to worry about the judgment.** You have “**passed from death into life.**”

VIII. Verse 25 — And in case you didn’t know, and this you can know for sure, there is a time coming and it is coming very soon, when **those who are dead will hear My voice, the voice of the Son of God,** “and those who hear will live again.”

²⁰ Restoring mankind is a legitimate activity on the Sabbath. Also, compare John 4:34-38, where Jesus said that His food was to do the will of His Father and to finish His work. He then goes on to speak of sowing and reaping a harvest for eternal life.

²¹ To put it another way: while the Sabbath does ask us to abstain from regular customary work, the work of Jesus in restoring people, is not merely engaging in labor and performing transactions for our livelihood. It is the work that perfectly embodies what the Sabbath is all about — restoration of the physical, mental, and spiritual faculties, and ultimately the eternal restoration of the heaven and earth to their sin-free, harmonious condition.

²² Regardless of when Jesus Christ decides to miraculously heal each of us, whether during his earthly ministry, now, or at His Second Coming, the legal authority for Him to heal us must be established. Why? He is not just talking to us on earth. He is speaking to other inhabitants of other worlds (Hebr 1:2), as well as to angels and demons alike.

IX. Verse 26 — meaning, God The Father, is life, He is where life comes from. And He gave me **that same life also**.

X. Verse 27 — He also gave me the authority that He has to Judge Mankind, because I am the Son of Man. **This means that I know what it's like to be human too**. I get you. I know your struggles.

XI. Verse 28-29 — At a time that is coming I am going to resurrect **everyone** who is dead in two separate resurrections, **the resurrection of life** for those who have done good, and **the resurrection of condemnation** for those who have done evil.

XII. Verse 30 — I don't act on my own desires or whims. All that I hear and all that I judge I do righteously because "I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent me." I, therefore, assert to you that I am and will be a just Judge.

c. He asserts that He Himself is not His only Witness to the claim that His Father Has sent Him.

- His Father serves as a witness.
- John the Baptist serves as a witness.
- the miraculous healings serve as a witness
- and the Scriptures themselves serve as a witness.

"Thus, He proves His authority by the testimony of his Father, of John Baptist, of his miracles, and of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and condemns the Jews for their unbelief (v. 30-47)."²³

For these reasons Jesus then, now, and in the future has the authority to heal. The miraculous power attests that He is from God.

1b. To Fulfill Scripture.

"He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be **fulfilled...saying: "He Himself took our infirmities and bore [our] sicknesses."** - Matthew 8:16-17.

What exactly did Jesus do when He fulfilled this verse?

Matthew says **Isaiah 53:4 was fulfilled as a result of the healings that Jesus did**.

Compare the King James Version with the Christian Standard Bible:

Surely he hath borne our **griefs**, and carried our **sorrows**: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. - Isa 53:4 KJV

Yet he himself bore our **sicknesses**, and he carried our **pains**; but we in turn regarded him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. - Isa 53:4 CSB

²³ Matthew Henry Commentary on John 5.

Amazingly, Jesus healed many who were sick, but their illnesses did not just instantly vanish. According to the passage, **the disease was miraculously taken from the sufferer and borne by Jesus**. This only added to the heavy weight He carried to Gethsemane, and to the cross. He **not only carried our sins but also our illnesses**.

Matthew 8:17 uses the word “infirmities”, while Isaiah 53:4 uses “griefs”/“sicknesses” in Hebrew יָלַן (kḥōlî) meaning sickness, malady, calamity, disease, grief.

Notice how יָלַן (kḥōlî) is used in a famous promise from Deuteronomy:

And the **LORD will take away from you all sickness** [יָלַן (kḥōlî)] - Deut 7:15
ESV.

Now that’s confidence. God is stating it matter of factly. If you listen to me and keep my covenant, all your diseases and sicknesses will be gone. I love that promise. Is His attitude any different now as compared to then? Would He not do the same thing for us today?

Psalms 103:2-3 NKJV - Bless the LORD...**Who heals all your diseases**,

A remarkable statement in the present tense, the LORD heals **ALL** our diseases.

In Hebrew **sorrows/pains in Isaiah 53:4**, is מַכָּבֵד (maḵḇēḇ), both **mental & physical pain or anguish**.

Notice how מַכָּבֵד (maḵḇēḇ) is used in the story of Israel’s exodus from Egypt:

Then the LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their **sufferings** [מַכָּבֵד (maḵḇēḇ)], - Exodus 3:7
ESV

Indeed, one would think there would only be rejoicing for so many to have had their diseases removed by Jesus; but instead the **verse says we viewed Him in a very negative light**. Paul says he became a **curse for us** (Gal 3:13).

Of particular contrast is Isaiah 53:3 —

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of **sorrows** [מַכָּבֵד (maḵḇēḇ)] and acquainted with **grief** [יָלַן (kḥōlî)]; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. - Isa 53:3
ESV

Here Jesus is depicted as **suffering as a result of our** mistreatment, from disappointment, rejection, loneliness, affliction, pain, grief, sorrow, and suffering. Of course, **the cross was the pinnacle** of our mistreatment of Him, having experienced this treatment throughout His ministry. And yet, because of “the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame” (Hebrews 12:2).

Finally, compare 1 Peter 2:24 —

who Himself **bore our sins in His own body** on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed. - 1 Peter 2:24

1c. To Demonstrate His Power to Forgive Sins

Having told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven, the scribes began to question in their hearts, whether He was committing blasphemy. Then Jesus said,

Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? **But that you may know** that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"--he said to the paralytic-- "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." - Mark 2:9-11 ESV

Just as the **paralytic was sure** that **he had been healed**, he could be **just as sure by the word of Jesus** that his **sins were forgiven**.

With the **same care** that he used to perform each **miraculous healing**, so also with the **same care He cuts the sins out** of each sinner who comes to Him. And having taken our sins upon Himself, He received the final consequences on our behalf: lashings, humiliation, and a **cross "once for all."**²⁴ And despite the great weight of taking upon Himself this curse, He was still capable as an expert surgeon, to graft us into His righteousness.²⁵

1d. To Demonstrate God's Attitude Toward Us

—Jesus was the unwearied servant of man's necessity.

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world as the **unwearied servant of man's necessity**. He "took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," that He might minister to every need of humanity. Matthew 8:17. The burden of disease and wretchedness and sin He came to remove. It was His mission to bring to men complete restoration; He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character.²⁶

²⁴ See Romans 6:10

²⁵ See 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 11:17

²⁶ White, Ellen. Ministry of Healing, p17.

He was always willing to go help someone in need. **He never grew tired of helping humanity**, even though we were full of endless **woe, illness, feebleness, misery, and wretchedness**.²⁷

—To demonstrate the compassion and sympathy He has toward us.

And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and **He was moved with compassion for them**, and healed their sick. - Matthew 14:14.

The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. **He showed His sympathy for them**, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me."²⁸

When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. The more they were called, the more they went away; they kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning offerings to idols. Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk; **I took them up by their arms, but they did not know that I healed them**. I led them with cords of kindness, with the bands of love, and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws, and I bent down to them and fed them...**My people are bent on turning away from me...How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim? My heart recoils within me**; my compassion grows warm and tender. -Hosea 11:1-4,7-8 ESV

By healing people when Jesus walked on this earth we got a profound glimpse of the character of God. The power Jesus used to heal physically is the same power He uses and will use to give us "complete restoration", along with "health and peace and perfection of character."²⁹

2. What was the primary reason why people sought out Jesus during His earthly ministry?

Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and **they brought to Him all sick people** who were afflicted with various diseases and torments...and **He healed them**. - Matthew 4:24

When evening had come, **they brought to Him many...and healed all who were sick**, - Matthew 8:16

And **great multitudes followed Him**, and **He healed them all**. - Matthew 12:15

²⁷ The church in Laodicea is full wretchedness, misery, poverty, blindness, and nakedness (Revelation 3:17). Is not Jesus available to us to cure our brokenness, maladies today?

²⁸ White, Ellen. Ministry of Healing, p143.3.

²⁹ White, Ellen. Ministry of Healing, p17.

But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude...came to Him. So He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him **because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him. For He healed many,** - Mark 3:7-11

When the sun was setting, **all those who had any that were sick** with various diseases brought them to Him; and **He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.** - Luke 4:40

...and **great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.** - Luke 5:15

...a **great crowd of his disciples** and a **great multitude of people**...came to hear him and to be **healed of their diseases**...And all the crowd sought to touch him, **for power came out from him and healed them all.** - Luke 6:17-19 ESV

The gospels repeatedly declare that **vast crowds of people sought Jesus** because they were sick. The sickness may have been **physical, mental** or even some kind of **supernatural torment**. Regardless, they wanted Jesus to heal them. **Just like today** there was plenty of sickness and a lot of people needing to be healed.

While seeking healing was **the main reason** people sought Jesus, the above verses also mention a **desire to hear Him**, suggesting that **there were those who wanted more than just physical healing**. They respected what He had to say and knew He could impart something to them of great value.

Christ gave a **perfect representation of true godliness** by combining the work of a **physician and a minister**, ministering to the needs of both body and soul, healing physical disease, and then speaking words that brought peace to the troubled heart. CME 41.4

3. In addition to physically healing us and bearing our sicknesses, what example was Jesus, the Great Physician, for us during His ministry that is essential for our healing?

3a. Jesus Overcame Appetite

After Jesus' baptism, the first task of His ministry was to engage in a brutal, severe, and long, **time of fasting, prayer, and temptation** (Matt. 4:1–11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1–13). According to Luke, "**He ate nothing**" (Luke 4:2). The **test of appetite was the first test** that He must overcome on our behalf. That alone was no easy battle. Here He was in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights with no trappings of ease, no entertainment, no conveniences, totally alone, completely dependent on His Heavenly Father. **He fulfilled once and for all, for us, that which Moses and the Israelites, the Law, and even, we could never do.**

Let's face it. **Not eating or drinking** for 40 days and remaining alive is a **supernatural event**. It is **impossible** for any person **in their own effort** to accomplish. And **that's the point**. It is **only God who is able** to make us an overcomer on the issue of appetite.

Jesus temptation in the wilderness echoed the experience of Moses. Moses had fasted forty days and forty nights³⁰ on behalf of the Jews before they were to receive the covenant law, that is the **Ten Commandments** (Deut 9:9).³¹ When he came down from the mountain and saw that the children of Israel had made a **golden calf** to worship as an idol, he threw the two tablets of the Ten Commandments down on the ground and broke them in front of all of them. Then he ground the golden calf into powder. See Deuteronomy 9:16-21 where Moses recounts the story. **Amazingly, Moses fasted for another forty days** right after that so that the LORD would **not destroy** them:

"And I fell down before the LORD, **as at the first**, forty days and forty nights; I **neither ate bread nor drank water**, because of all your sin which you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. "For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which the LORD was angry with you, to destroy you. But the LORD listened to me at that time also. - Deuteronomy 9:18-19

Even then, Moses, only through God's supernatural power, having given all he could on behalf of the people, miraculously fasting a whopping total of eighty days, presenting God's perfect law to them, **they still went on to rebel over and over again**. And what was the temptation that led them to make the golden calf?

Sinful indulgence. Appetite. Lust.

They all had failed, but now Jesus had come. Jesus was better and He was going to do it better. He was going to make a better covenant.³² He was going to do what we couldn't do. Not only was He first going to do it for us, on our behalf, but by His Spirit, He was going to make it happen in us.

Jesus showed that **through the power of God, appetite can be overcome**. Therefore we can have confidence to approach Him boldly,

"that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man**, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;" - Ephesians 3:16-17

³⁰ According to Deuteronomy 9:9, Moses, "neither ate bread nor drank water."

³¹ Deuteronomy 4:13 expressly equates the covenant with the Ten Commandments. They are one and the same.

³² See Hebrews 7:22.

3b. Jesus Showed that Physical Health³³ and Spiritual Health³⁴ are One

Jesus showed us during His ministry that physical health and spiritual health are inextricably woven together. **One cannot exist without the other.**

Isaiah predicted the healing ministry of Christ:

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert." - Isaiah 35:5-6

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD [is] upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach **good tidings** to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the **brokenhearted**, To proclaim **liberty** to the captives, And the **opening of the prison to [those who are] bound**...To **comfort** all who mourn, To **console** those who mourn in Zion, To give them **beauty for ashes**, The **oil of joy for mourning**, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified." - Isaiah 61:1-3 NKJV

Isaiah 35 is more focused on the physical aspect of Jesus' healing ministry, while **Isaiah 61 is more focused on the spiritual aspect.**

In the paralytic's story from Mark 2, Jesus addresses the spiritual AND the physical healing needs of the paralytic. We will address this more later.

The Saviour ministered to both the soul and the body. The gospel which He taught was a message of spiritual life and of physical restoration. **Deliverance from sin and the healing of disease were linked together.**³⁵

We will touch on this topic more deeply as we look at individual miracles of Jesus in upcoming lessons.

4. Is the lesson of unifying spiritual health and physical health important today?

³³ Physical health is defined as the well-being of the body and the proper functioning of the organism with bodily functions and processes working at their peak.

³⁴ Spiritual health is defined as the search for and/or discovery of that meaning, purpose, transcendence, connectedness and the values for which God has called each of us to live. It involves a God-given self concept & self-worth, a God-given love of others, a God-given harmony with nature, and a deepening & daily abiding with God.

³⁵ White, Ellen. Ministry of Healing, p. 111.1

4a. A Lesson From Human Physiology

Lessons from human physiology also teach us the importance of holding together the physical and the spiritual.³⁶

Here is one example. If we eat either the wrong kind of food³⁷ or eat food in the wrong way,³⁸ leading to rapid elevations in our blood sugars, then over the next few hours our minds may be affected negatively. Our verbal memory (delayed and immediate), attention, and phonological fluency suffers,³⁹ along with eventual cognitive decline should we continue the same practice over many years.⁴⁰

This is a great lesson for us. This teaches us that we ought not to neglect the physical if we want to experience the blessings for our spiritual health.

4b. Taking the Spiritual More Seriously

Too many health workers in today's world neglect this part. Most surveys show that "the spiritual needs of patients are often ignored or not satisfied."⁴¹

In the book *Healthful Living* by Ellen White⁴² there is a great section called the Restorative Power of the Spirit of God.

Here are a few clips from there that urge us to take the spiritual more seriously when dealing with disease.

³⁶ The examples are numerous: numerous medical conditions (brain tumors, , overwork, dehydration, poor sleep, other aspects of diet such as toxins, poor cooking, hyper-processing of processed fats & oils; vitamin or mineral excesses or deficiencies, lack of or excess exercise, excesses in weight loss or weight gain, intense grieving and/or stress,

³⁷ Examples: high glycemic load foods, greater processing of carbohydrate rich foods. However, fruit may actually slow high post-meal blood sugars due to the presence of other phytochemical that slow sugar absorption (eg. Mangiferin in mangoes,

³⁸ Examples: Rapid eating of carbohydrate rich food, eating large amounts, eating later in the day.

³⁹ Sanchez-Aguadero N et al. Postprandial effects of breakfast glycaemic index on cognitive performance among young, healthy adults: A crossover clinical trial. *Nutr Neurosci*. 2020 Jan;23(1):1-7.

⁴⁰ Gupta M, Pandey S, Rumman M, Singh B, Mahdi AA. Molecular mechanisms underlying hyperglycemia associated cognitive decline. *IBRO Neurosci Rep*. 2022 Dec 13;14:57-63

⁴¹ Oken, Barry S, ed. *Complementary Therapies in Neurology: An Evidence Based Approach*. Taylor & Francis, 2003, p. 224.

⁴² White, Ellen. Chapter 34 — Rational Remedies For Disease. *Healthful Living*. p. 234-235.

The influence of the Spirit of God is **the very best medicine for disease**. Heaven is all health; the more deeply heavenly influences are realized, the more sure will be the recovery of the believing invalid.

Sickness of the mind prevails everywhere. **Nine tenths of the diseases from which men suffer have their foundation here.... The religion of Christ**, so far from being the cause of insanity, **is one of its most effectual remedies**; for it is a potent soother of the nerves.

In nine cases out of ten the **knowledge of a sin-pardoning Saviour** would make them better both in mind and body.

Those who are reduced by disease are sufferers in more than one sense. They can endure bodily pain far better than they can bear mental suffering. Many carry a **violated conscience**, & can be reached only by the principles of Bible religion.

A sore, sick heart, a discouraged mind, needs mild treatment; and it is through **tender sympathy** that this class of minds can be healed. The physician should first gain their confidence, and then point them to the all-healing Physician. If their minds can be directed to the Burden-Bearer, and they can have faith that he will have an interest in them, **the cure of their diseased bodies and minds will be sure**.

A person whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is in the pathway to health.

The **assurance of God's approval** will promote physical health. It fortifies the soul against doubt, perplexity, and excessive grief, that so often sap the vital forces and induce nervous diseases of a most debilitating and distressing character.

The exalting influence of the Spirit of God is the best restorative for the sick.

Jesus knew how important it was to reach us in our spirit. He knew that IF He could give us confidence that He **is able to heal us physically**, then we would gain confidence that **He is also able to heal us spiritually**. Both aspects take a miracle, one being visible and the other invisible, for both are contrary to our sinful tendencies, whether cultivated or inherited.

That is to say that He will give us healthy spirituality⁴³...

new attitudes,
new choices,
new loves,
new pursuits,

⁴³ The Beatitudes in Matthew 5 are a great example of what is involved in healthy spirituality.

godly humility,
true repentance,
freedom from guilt,
pure hearts,
new joy,
deep peace,
new abilities to help others,
good judgment,
holy characters,
wise dispositions,
And many other good things...

Most importantly, for the purposes of our discussion, he will give us motivation and skill to gain the knowledge and ability we need to free us from our health conditions.

For this reason, it is the case then that when God heals us **spiritually it will lead to physical healing**. This physical healing may **be immediate, gradual, or may be ultimately seen only when Jesus comes again** at His Second Coming and gives us a new body.

In other words, **often sickness is the result of poor choices**, an outgrowth of our dispositions toward evil, whether cultivated or inherited; but we need the spirit of God to know which choices were poor, how they led to illness, and how to receive the power from God that we need to adopt better thoughts, good choices, and ultimately, good habits.

To explain it in another way, both spiritual health and physical health need each other. Without physical health the mind may be foggy and unable to understand what is needed for spiritual health. But without spiritual health there is a lack of insight into what actions are harmful that are injuring our own as well as other's physical being.

Another way to discuss spiritual health is to discuss it in terms of wisdom. Wisdom typically contains four things: the fear of the LORD, good judgment, experience, and knowledge.⁴⁴ Without wisdom there is confusion. Where there is confusion, disease is surely to follow.

Just as a person with medical illness must make a search, often diligently, whether by gathering information or seeing a physician, in order to find a solution; so also, a person with a spiritual malady must seek diligently for a solution.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Based on a study of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job. On the fear of the LORD see Prov 9:10. Eccl 8:5 and Prov 2 speak of good judgment for wisdom. See Job 12:12 on experience.

⁴⁵ Compare Proverbs 2:1-5. Those who search for spiritual health as for hidden treasure, will find it,

Blessed [are] those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. - Matthew 5:6 (NKJV)

4c. Jesus Christ, M.D. Is the Answer

Self-control over **appetite** and selfish desire is **foundational to a life of victory** over sin and relief from disease.⁴⁶ It was foundational to the **initiation of Christ's ministry** as a **symbolic fulfillment** not only of **Moses twice fasting 40 days**, but also of the **Israelite's 40 years** of wandering in the wilderness. The **primary failures of the Israelite** wilderness wanderings were the **very issues upon which Christ had victory**. They involved **appetite & lust**⁴⁷, being **dissatisfied with God's simple provisions**⁴⁸, God's timing⁴⁹, and a recurrent manifestation of distrust in the action of God's chosen leaders and distaste of the prospect of difficulty⁵⁰.

On the contrary, consider John The Baptizer when he said, "[Jesus] **must increase** and **I must decrease**" (John 3:30). He increased by greatly humbling Himself when He came from the eternal heights of glory to become a symbol of the worst of the worst, a man cursed of God,⁵¹ on our lowly, broken earth:

...he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, **he humbled himself** by becoming **obedient to death--even death on a cross!** - Phil 2:7-8 NIV

Just think of it, **how many diseases could be prevented** if we overcame as Christ did on just the one point of appetite, let alone the other things? Many diseases caused by

⁴⁶ O LORD, I plead, give it to us. Please give it to us. Only you are able. I will search, plead, and lay myself down until every thought, every word, every action, can sing in harmony, "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57 ESV.

⁴⁷ The children of Israel desired sinful even sexual pleasure when they made the golden calf (Exodus 32). As judgment God sent a medical illness described as a plague (Exod 32:35). In Numbers 11 they complained that they didn't have fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic like they did in Egypt. In response God gave them quail and then struck them down with "a very great plague", leading to the death of those who had the craving.

⁴⁸ The children of Israel complained about the manna they had for 40 years in Numbers 11:6.

⁴⁹ In the water from the rock story (Exod 17:1-7), the people grumbled severely against Moses because of an apparent delay in the provision of water.

⁵⁰ The people bitterly complained and wept all night when word was brought back by the spies that the land of Canaan had large men. So they decided to choose a leader and head back to Egypt (**Numbers 14**). Korah, Dathan and Abiram rebelled because it was taking too long to leave the wilderness and they were tired of Moses and Aaron telling them what to do (**Numbers 16**).

⁵¹ He became "a curse for us--for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" - Galatians 3:13 ESV

overindulgence that may lead to type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, obesity, several types of cancer, and many others, would be prevented. Many diseases caused by **smoking** cigarettes, would be prevented. Many diseases caused by **alcohol**, would be prevented. Many diseases caused by **drug abuse**, would be prevented. How much relational distress⁵² and the resulting disease would be prevented if the point of appetite was overcome? For then our minds would be clear and our words would be much more carefully chosen and our conflicts resolved much more quickly. It just goes to show how **important self-discipline and self-sacrifice** are for both **physical and spiritual health**. **Only Jesus can give it to us**. We are **completely and radically helpless** without Him.

Read the following verses that refer to Christ's healing power. Notice where exactly the power comes from to heal the people.

And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all the crowd sought to touch him, **for power came out from him** and healed them all. - Luke 6:17-19 ESV

He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction. - Ps 107:20 ESV

But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but **only say the word**, and my servant will be healed. - Matt 8:8 ESV

That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with **a word** and healed all who were sick. - Matt 8:16 ESV

Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But **say the word**, and let my servant be healed...And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick. - Luke 7:7,10 ESV

Oh Jesus, **say the word to me**. **Say the word to those who read this** that we may finally and permanently no longer indulge ourselves, finally and permanently no longer give ourselves over to temptation?⁵³

Remember the parable of the persistent widow in Luke 18:

⁵² Depression, anxiety, autoimmune disease, cancer, heart disease, dementia and many others are associated with emotional stressors such as relational stress.

⁵³ O LORD, you have demonstrated that you are able. Make us willing to depend our life on a touch from you. Show us the way. Show us how.

And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought **always to pray and not lose heart**. He said, "In a certain city there was a **judge** who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a **widow** in that city who **kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.'** For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because **this widow keeps bothering me**, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'" And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. And **will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily**. Nevertheless, **when the Son of Man comes**, will he **find faith on earth?**" - Luke 18:1-8 ESV

The Bible promises that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to...cleanse us from all unrighteousness." - 1 John 1:9.

Keep coming to Him, and pleading with Him, for the faith you need, and He will speedily give you the righteousness you need.

Story of fear turned to redemption — My dad was saved by a cop car.
