

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?

The 10 Questions of Session 2

1. *Who were Jesus' supporting medical staff (Matthew 10:2-4)?*
2. *What healing power were His disciples given during Jesus' ministry?*
3. *After Jesus' resurrection what healing power did He promise His disciples?*
4. *What healing power were the disciples given after Jesus' ascension to heaven?*
5. *Why does fallen man generally lack the power to perform miracles? What about believers? What has changed from the time of the early disciples to now?*
6. *What is Christ's reaction to those who apparently perform miracles but disobey God? Did Jesus ever refuse to perform miracles?*
7. *At times prophets were sought for healing before Jesus came. How did those experiences compare to that of Jesus?*
8. *What are the kind of illnesses that most people are suffering with today and how do they compare to diseases in Jesus time?*
9. *What kind of expectations should believers have in regard to healing today?*

1. *Who were Jesus' supporting medical staff (Matthew 10:2-4)?*

Peter — son of Jonas, fisherman from Bethsaida, quick-tempered, impulsive, emotional, outspoken, ardent, strong-willed, at-times brash, headstrong, loyal, enthusiastic, inconsistent, denied Jesus three times at Jesus' trial, repentant, committed, persevered till he was crucified, "pillar" of the church.

Andrew, Peter's brother, son of Jonas, fisherman from Bethsaida, started as a disciple of John the Baptist (Mark 1:16-18), brought brother Peter to meet Jesus (John 1:40), helped Philip tell Jesus about the Greeks (John 12:22), served to introduce others to Jesus, was one of four disciples who asked Jesus privately about the end of the world (Mark 13:3).

James the son of Zebedee, a son of thunder (Mark 3:17), fisherman from Bethsaida, name never appears apart from his brother John in the gospels, little other info, beheaded by Herod (Acts 12).

John the son of Zebedee, a son of thunder (Mark 3:17), man of action; very ambitious; explosive temper, intolerant heart, called himself the disciple who Jesus loved

Philip — from Bethsaida, quick to believe (John 1:45), friends with Nathanael, slow to understand Jesus connection with the Father (John 14:8-9), one of the seven chosen by the disciples to oversee the daily distribution (Acts 6), potent preacher and healer in

Samaria (Acts 8:4-9), heeded the angel of the LORD to go instruct the Ethiopian (Acts 8:26-40).

Bartholomew, aka Nathanael, of Cana in Galilee (John 21:2), Jesus called Him an Israelite indeed in whom is no deceit because Jesus saw him ostensibly praying under a fig tree, one of the first to declare Jesus as the Son of God (John 1:49), ate breakfast with Jesus after a night of fishing with six other disciples after Jesus resurrection (John 21:1-14).

Thomas, called the Twin, devoted and brave, cynical, prone to negativity (John 11:16), slow to understand Jesus' mission and purpose (John 14:5), doubted that Jesus was alive after the resurrection until he put his finger in the wounds on Jesus hands, and his hands on his side (John 20:24-29).

Levi Matthew, son of Alphaeus (Mark 2:14), tax collector, threw a big party for Jesus early in Jesus' ministry (Luke 5:29).

James the son of Alphaeus (Luke 6:15), called the Less (Mark 15:40), brother of the apostle Jude (Acts 1:13), may have been a cousin of Jesus,⁵⁴ Thought to have written the epistle of James.

Judas brother of James (Acts 1:13, Jude 1), also known as Jude, Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus, son of Alphaeus,⁵⁵ slow to understand Jesus purpose and mission (John 14:22), wrote the book of Jude (Jude 1).

Simon the Zealot, also known as Simon the Caananite,⁵⁶ zealots were fanatical, reckless, haters of the Romans.

Judas Iscariot - the traitor, lover of money, served as treasurer, outspoken leader, he was the only Judean, believed to be from Jericho, he betrayed Jesus (Mark 14:10-11), and committed suicide.

These disciples were ordinary, sinful, broken men. **Perhaps not much different than those who are seated here today.** Three sets of brothers on top of several others, having come out of lives of self-will, emotion, passion, ambition, and oneupmanship.

Their training included **three and a half years** of character, medical and pastoral training with the Master Physician, their Messiah and Savior, Jesus.

Story: The Providential story of unworthy me **getting into medical school**

2. What healing power was His disciples given during Jesus' ministry?

⁵⁴ Mary of Clopas (John 19:25), is thought to be the mother of James the Less (Mark 15:40). While Eusebius, about 323 AD, quotes Hegesippus from 180 AD, in Church History Book III, Chapter 11, saying, "Clopas was a brother of Joseph".

⁵⁵ Since James was the son of Alphaeus

⁵⁶ Matthew 10:4 KJV

But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing, 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, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to touch Him. And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, "You are the Son of God." ... And He went up on the mountain and called to [Him] those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. **Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons:** - Mark 3:7-11, 13-15

Jesus appointed His disciples for a purpose. Yes, they were to follow Him and to learn from Him, but on top of that abiding time, **Jesus had a job for them**. For one, the crowd was becoming so large that Mark mentions that Jesus had to move away from the crowd on a small boat in the water "lest they should crush Him." There was a need to appoint disciples so that they could go preach the things that Jesus was preaching. But that was not all. He appointed them also to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons. They were not only to speak truth into their minds, they were to execute Jesus' power to heal into their minds and bodies.

2a. Why did Jesus appoint His disciples?

Mark gives **four reasons**:

1. That they might be with Him
2. That He might send them out to preach
3. To have power to heal sicknesses
4. To cast out demons

2b. That They Might Be With Him

Jesus "appointed twelve, that they might be with Him". The phrase "that they might be with Him" is the secret to how regular people like you and me could be turned into powerful preachers and healers.

The closer they drew to Him the greater the gift of Jesus they were given.

Of all the twelve disciples, **Peter, James, and John held the closest relationship to Christ**. John could be satisfied with a still nearer intimacy, and this he obtained. At that first conference beside the Jordan, when Andrew, having heard Jesus, hurried away to call his brother, John sat silent, rapt in the contemplation of wondrous themes. He followed the Saviour, ever an eager, absorbed listener.

The Saviour loved them all, but **John's was the most receptive spirit. He was younger** than the others, and with more of a **child's confiding trust** he opened his heart to Jesus. Thus he came more into sympathy with Christ, and **through him the Saviour's deepest spiritual teaching was communicated to the people.**⁵⁷

2c. Power To Heal Sicknesses and Cast Out Demons

It's fascinating to see in Mark 3:15 that **part of the reason Jesus appointed disciples** was so that they would **"have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons"**.

Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them **power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases**. He sent them **to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick**⁵⁸. And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece. "Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. "And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them." So they departed and went through the towns, **preaching the gospel and healing everywhere**. - Luke 9:1-6

Compare Matthew 10.

And when He had called His twelve disciples to [Him], **He gave them power** [over] unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. - Matthew 10:1

These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. "And as you go, **preach**, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' "**Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give**. - Matthew 10:5-8.

2d. The Roles Were Woven Together.

Jesus designated that **one of the core roles of the disciples was "to heal."** This role was woven together with preaching, and casting out demons. **All of Jesus' followers were to do this. It was not just the disciples.**

Time of Training — **Sending Out Seventy**

⁵⁷ White, Ellen. Signs of the Times. March 8, 1905, par. 1-2

⁵⁸ Notice the combination of preaching and healing. The same people did it together.

"Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. "And **heal the sick there**, and say to them, '**The kingdom of God has come near to you.**' - Luke 10:8-9.

3. *After Jesus' resurrection what healing power did He promise His disciples?*

Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart,⁵⁹ because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. "**And these signs will follow those who believe:** In My name they will **cast out demons**; they will speak with **new tongues**; "they will **take up serpents**; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by **no means hurt them**; **they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.**" - Mark 16:14-18

"And these signs will follow those who believe:"

1. In My name they will cast out demons;
2. they will speak with new tongues;
3. they will take up serpents;
4. and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them;
5. **they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover**

4. *What healing power were the disciples given after Jesus' ascension to heaven?*

Mark 16:19-20 confirms that after Jesus went to heaven and started His heavenly ministry at the right hand of God that the disciples,

"went everywhere and preached, and **the Lord worked through them**, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs." - Mark 16:20

Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, **bringing sick people** and those who were **tormented** by unclean spirits, and they were **all healed.** - Acts 5:16.

4a. *The Recognition of Spiritual Gifts: the gift of miracles, healing*

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit... But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit [of all]: ... **to another gifts of healings** by the same Spirit, to another **the working of miracles**... Now you are the body of

⁵⁹ The experience of Jesus dying, rising again, and the disciples' hardness of heart had a deep impression on the disciples that completely changed their lives. It was only at that point that they were ready to go and work the works of Jesus.

Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that **miracles, then gifts of healings**, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues...Do all have gifts of healings?...**But earnestly desire the best gifts**. And yet I show you a more excellent way. - 1 Corinthians 12:4, 7, 9-10, 28, 30.

The greatest gift is love⁶⁰.

***Story of **the well and my grandmother's little son**.

The same Creator **who knows how Monarch butterflies can fly from one continent to another**, also has the power and a great longing to bring broken men and women from a place of sin and harm to others to a place where many sick and tormented are healed. This is the story of the disciples of Jesus.

Consider the story of Peter and John who healed the begging lame man at the temple. It has some important lessons:

Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth [hour]. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, **but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.**" And he took him by the right hand and lifted [him] up, and immediately **his feet and ankle bones received strength**. So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them--walking, leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God. Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. - Acts 3:1-10.

Why was Peter now confident to do this for this man?

1. Seeing Jesus wrongfully convicted and then die on a cross along with his denial of Jesus and then re-acceptance by Jesus after His resurrection had reset Peter's life and priorities.
2. Jesus had told the disciples multiple times that they were called to preach and to heal as part of their duties as disciples. Peter was no exception.

5. Why does fallen man generally lack the power to perform miracles? What about believers? What has changed from the time of the early disciples to now?

⁶⁰ See 1 Corinthians 13.

Fallen man, when brought into straightened places, could not have the power to work miracles on his own behalf, to save himself from pain or anguish, or to give himself victory over his enemies. It was the **purpose of God to test and prove the race**, and give them an opportunity to **develop character** by bringing them frequently into **trying positions to test their faith and confidence** in His love and power. The life of Christ was a perfect pattern. He was ever, by His example and precept, teaching man that **God was his dependence**, and that in God should be his faith and firm trust.⁶¹

The **sin of mankind has polluted million's of things** in God's creation, including men and women and, of course, led to death. Should God have prevented the sin of Adam and Eve? If He did, then Satan would have cried foul.

But God meant the sin of Adam for good. He didn't cause the sin but He decided to bring good out of it. **Joseph said the same to his brothers** when they found out he had been made the governor of Egypt decades after they had sold him into slavery. God did this in order to save many from starvation after seven years of drought. Here are Joseph's words,

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; [but] God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as [it is] this day, to save many people alive. - Genesis 50:20

So when illnesses occur, even though God is not the author of disease and corruption, God uses them for His good purpose. God's top priority is our salvation. The primary reason for Jesus coming to this earth was to **save His people from their sins.**⁶² If it was routine to obtain instant healing ourselves in all cases, this would remove an opportunity for people to call out to God in their time of need. This is not to say that we as His followers should not make every effort to treat, heal, and pray for the sick, we should and this will compound the effect of God's love upon the heart of soul in need.

It is very often the case⁶³ that the **illness and trouble came on** as a result of either **our own wrong doing or another's wrong doing**. The effect of an ancestor's wrong doing could also be at play. Satan Himself could bring the illness. Sometimes the cause is not apparent, either through ignorance, or God through His providence has shielded it from us. Rarely God does cause the illness for judgment purposes. Remember the story of Miriam⁶⁴ or of King Jeroboam's shriveled hand.⁶⁵ However the illness occurs **He may not always remove the illness rapidly**. He may use the illness to grow our character,

⁶¹ Ellen White, The Review and Herald, August 18, 1874.

⁶² See Matthew 1:21

⁶³ Not always.

⁶⁴ Numbers 12

⁶⁵ 1 Kings 13

as He did for **Paul the Apostle**,⁶⁶ or the character of a loved one, to remove sin, and to manifest His purposes for the best interest of those for whom it is intended. He may use the illness to give us lessons and to motivate us to bring our lives into harmony with our physiology, thus many times leading to its improvement.

Thus, once the illness is finally removed, we end up significantly better position than we would have if the illness was rapidly removed. Nevertheless, God calls His children to always **work diligently** for the alleviation of illness in our loved ones and **never hold back** when we don't have a clear understanding of the cause. There is always something we can do.

It is more important to God to get rid of sin than it is to get rid of illness. For once sin is gone, then illness can ultimately be removed easily. The results of sin is illness and then death. **God may allow illness to be both a vehicle to draw a person to Him as well as to serve as a judgment on their sin to bring them to repentance.** Sometimes he removes it rapidly.

For example, the **common cold** occurs more easily when we overindulge on sugary or processed foods, neglect sleep, exercise, or sunshine, engage in overwork, become anxious or stressed out, or neglect hand washing, among others. A cold may result. This can serve to help us bring ourselves back into harmony with our physiology. It may force us to rest, encourage us to reduce unhealthy food intake and food intake in general, and give us another opportunity to learn to follow the laws of health. This is all for our good.

On top of developing character and using it as a tool to remove sin in our lives, **another reason why God has withheld miracles has to do with Satan.**

The way in which Christ worked was to preach the Word, and to relieve suffering by miraculous works of healing. But I am instructed that **we cannot now work in this way, for Satan will exercise his power by working miracles.** God's servants today could not work by means of miracles, because spurious works of healing, claiming to be divine, will be wrought.

For this reason the Lord has marked out a way in which His people are to carry forward a work of physical healing, combined with the teaching of the Word. **Sanitariums are to be established, and with these institutions are to be connected workers who will carry forward genuine medical missionary work.** Thus a **guarding influence** is thrown around those who come to the sanitariums for treatment.

This is the **provision the Lord has made whereby gospel medical missionary work is to be done** for many souls.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ 2 Corinthians 12:8-9

⁶⁷ Ellen White, Selected Messages Vol. 2, p. 54.

6. *What is Christ's reaction to those who apparently perform miracles but disobey God? Did Jesus ever refuse to perform miracles?*

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' "And then I will declare to them, **'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'** - Matt 7:21-23

Those who claim modern sanctification would have come boastfully forward, saying, "Lord, Lord, do you not know us? Have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" The people here described, who make these pretentious claims, apparently weaving Jesus into all their doings, fitly represent **those who claim modern sanctification, but who are at war with the law of God**. Christ calls them **workers of iniquity**, because they are deceivers, having on the garments of righteousness to hide the deformity of their characters, the inward wickedness of their unholy hearts. Satan has come down in these last days, to work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. His satanic majesty works miracles in the sight of false prophets, in the sight of men, claiming that he is indeed Christ Himself. Satan gives his power to those who are aiding him in his deceptions; therefore those who **claim to have the great power of God can only be discerned by the great detector, the law of Jehovah**. The Lord tells us if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. The sheep's clothing **seems so real, so genuine**, that the wolf cannot be discerned only as we go to God's great moral standard and there find that they are transgressors of the law of Jehovah.⁶⁸

The miracles of our Lord called into operation power wholly unknown to man, and produced results that cannot be explained on the basis of human knowledge. His miracles were always practical and salvific, that is, they were designed to supply a genuine need and to lead men to find salvation through Him. He never exercised divine power to satisfy idle curiosity nor to demonstrate His ability to perform miracles, nor to benefit Himself. **Upon various occasions Jesus refused to perform miracles** because the necessary preconditions had not been met and because the effect produced would not have served a salvific purpose (Matt. 12:38-39; cf. Luke 23:8-9; John 6:30).⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, August 25, 1885.

⁶⁹ "Miracles" from <https://ellenwhite.org/topics/258>

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "**Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.**" But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and **no sign will be given to it** except the sign of the prophet Jonah. - Matthew 12:38-39

Just as Jonah spent three days in the belly of a whale, so Jesus will be crucified and rise again after three days. This the mind-blowing meaning behind the sign of Jonah.

Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long [time] to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and **he hoped to see some miracle done by Him.** Then he questioned Him with many words, **but He answered him nothing.** - Luke 23:8-9

7. At times prophets were sought for healing before Jesus came. How did those experiences compare to that of Jesus?

Healing Stories in the OT by His Prophets⁷⁰

1. Genesis 20:1-18 Abraham prayed to God and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his slave girls so they could have children for God had closed their wombs.
2. Numbers 12:1-15 God inflicted Miriam with leprosy and Moses interceded for her saying, 'O God, please heal her!' Though there is no record of her healing it must be assumed that the Lord exchanged this act of judgement with the lesser penalty of seven days of disgrace outside the camp. There is no further mention of her having leprosy.
3. 1 Samuel 1:9-20 Hannah received healing from barrenness in response to her personal prayers and Eli, the priest's declaration.
4. 1 Kings 13:4-6 King Jeroboam pointed his hand in judgement at an unnamed prophet and it 'shriveled up.' The prophet interceded for Jeroboam and his hand was restored to health.
5. 1 Kings 17:17-24 Elijah raised a widow's son from death.
6. 2 Kings 4:8-17 Elisha granted a child to the formerly barren Shunnamite woman.
7. 2 Kings 4:18-37 The Shunamite's son died and Elisha raised him from the dead.
8. 2 Kings 5:1-14 Naaman, commander of the King of Aram's army, was healed of leprosy after following Elisha's counsel.
9. 2 Kings 13:21 A dead man was thrown into Elisha's tomb and contact with Elisha's bones raised the man to life.
10. 2 Kings 20:1-7, 2 Chronicles 32:24-26, Isaiah 38:1-8 Hezekiah contracted a terminal illness and prayed for healing. Isaiah received a word from God that he would live for a further 15 years. Hezekiah was healed after applying a poultice of figs to the offending 'boil.'

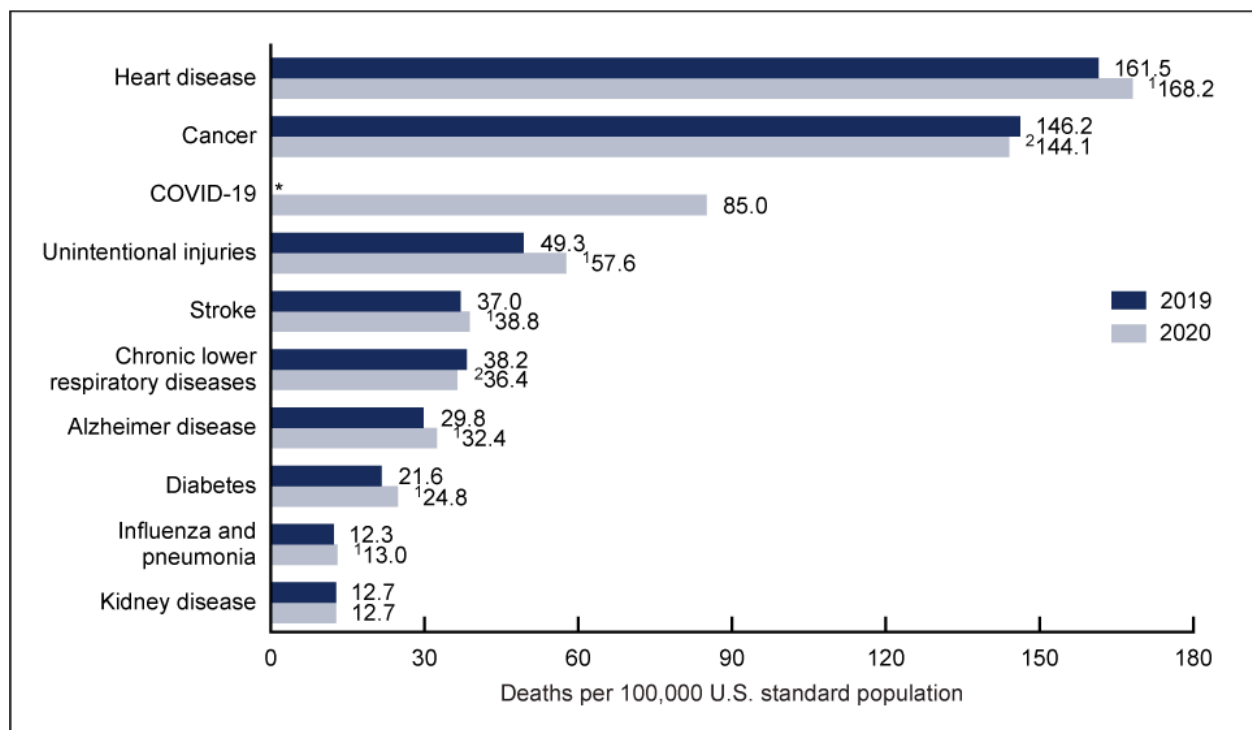
⁷⁰ <https://healednow.life/individual-healings-in-the-old-testament/>

11. Job 42:10-17 After what some scholars believe to be nine months of serious sickness and loss, the patient and trusting Job prayed for his critical friends and was personally healed.
12. Daniel 4:34, 36 Nebuchadnezzar 'looked to heaven' and was healed of insanity.

Just as three people were raised from the dead as a result of God working through Elijah & Elisha, so also Jesus raised three people from the dead during His ministry, the widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:11–17), Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:40–56), Lazarus of Bethany (John 11).

8. What are the kinds of illnesses that most people are suffering with today and how do they compare to diseases in Jesus time?⁷¹

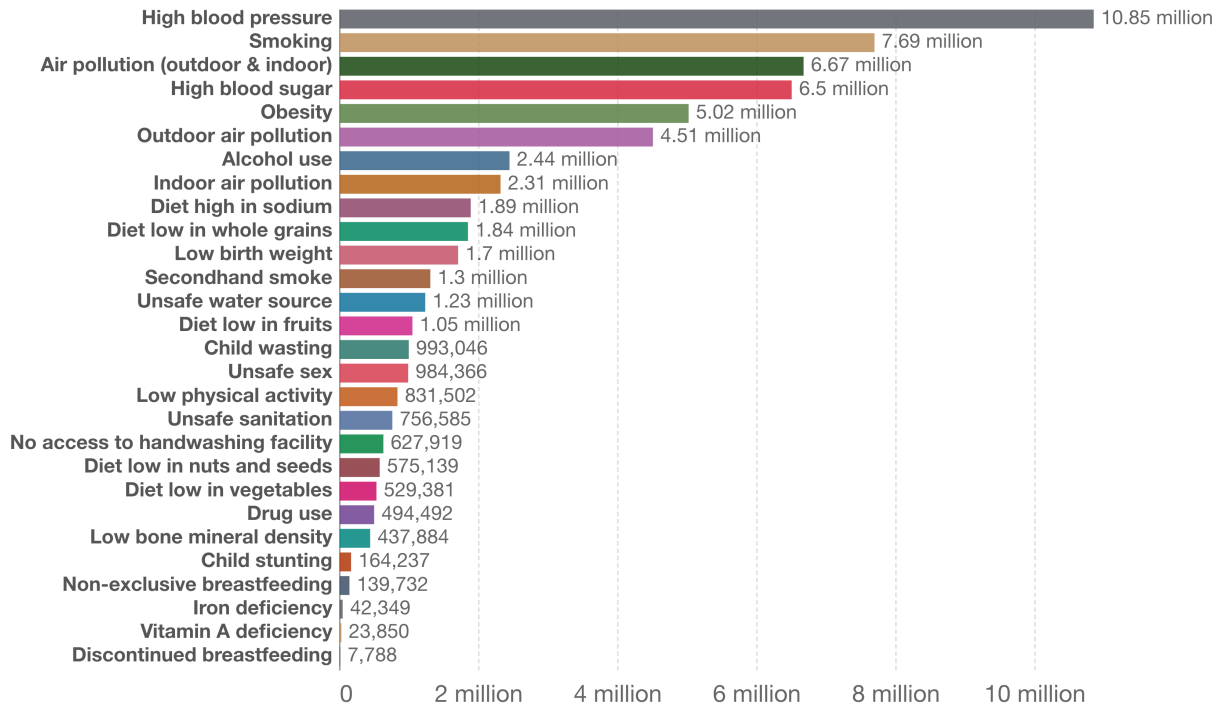
Figure 4. Age-adjusted death rates for the 10 leading causes of death in 2020: United States, 2019 and 2020



⁷¹ Mokdad AH, Marks JS, Stroup DF, Gerberding JL. Actual causes of death in the United States, 2000. JAMA. 2004 Mar 10;291(10):1238-45. National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

Number of deaths by risk factor, World, 2019

Total annual number of deaths by risk factor, measured across all age groups and both sexes.

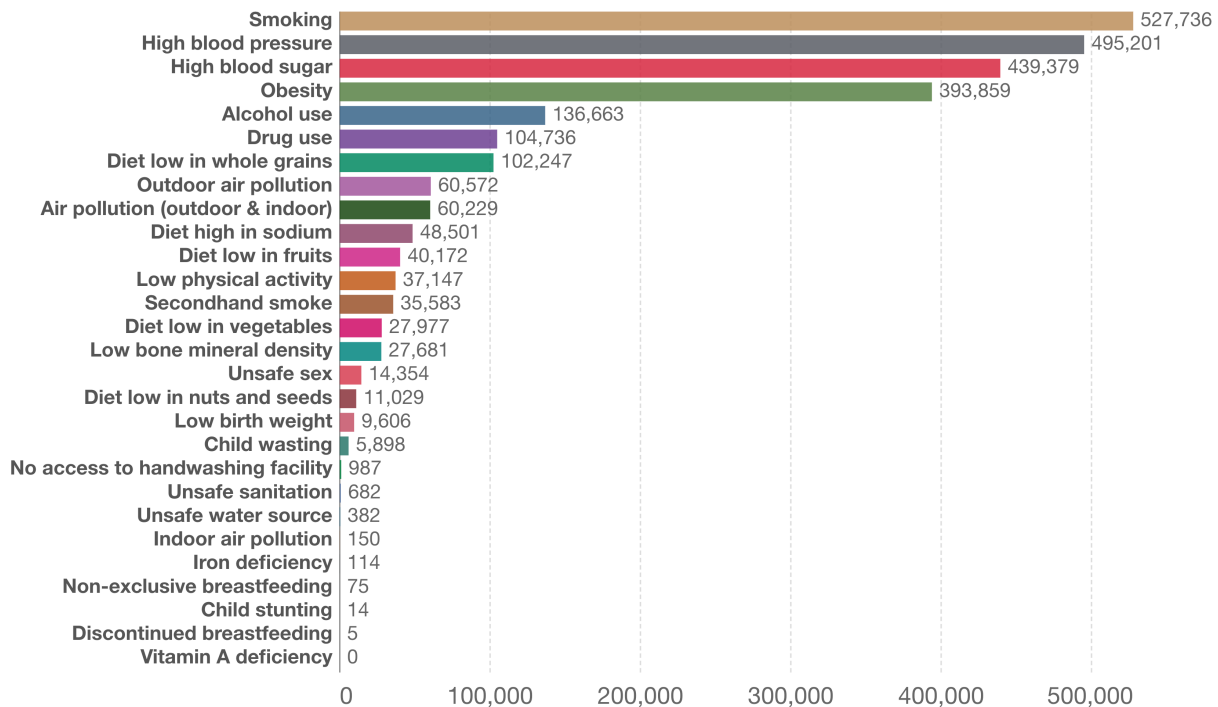


Source: IHME, Global Burden of Disease (GBD)

OurWorldInData.org/causes-of-death • CC BY

Number of deaths by risk factor, United States, 2019

Total annual number of deaths by risk factor, measured across all age groups and both sexes.



Source: IHME, Global Burden of Disease (GBD)

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90 percent of the U.S. annual health care expenditures are for people with chronic and mental health conditions.⁷² According to the World Health Organization, 80 percent of all heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes as well as more than 40 percent of cancer, would be prevented if Americans would stop using tobacco, eat healthy, and exercise.

“Successful treatment of disease depends primarily on prompt, correct diagnosis and the use of effective therapeutic agents. Unfortunately, **people living in biblical times had limited means to diagnose and treat illness.** The best-educated people in biblical times had a **meager understanding** of human anatomy and physiology and even less knowledge about the nature of disease and its effect on the body. No one knew about bacteria and viruses. This fact hampered diagnosis. **Illness was often attributed to sin or to a curse by an enemy.** The main diagnostic tools were observation and superficial physical examination. The physician had few aids to use in his work. There were no thermometers, stethoscopes, microscopes, x-ray machines, or electrocardiograms. Laboratory techniques to examine the blood, urine, and other body fluids did not exist.

Few of the effective ways of preventing and treating disease that people take for granted today were available then. Immunization against disease was unknown. The discovery of antibiotics, vitamins, hormones, anesthetics, and most effective surgical procedures lay far in the future. Illness struck quickly with devastating results. **Life expectancy was short.**”⁷³

While there was a **great lack of knowledge of the causes of diseases** in Christ’s day, without detailed death certificates allowing the production of pretty graphs like we have today, a number of authors, including myself, have taken stabs at what some of the more common causes of death may have been. Here is a list⁷⁴ I gathered from various sources in no particular order:

- Contagion
 - Skin infections leading to sepsis from boils (eg. staphylococcus)
 - Diseases due to poor hygiene (dysentery, plague, typhoid, cholera, etc...)
 - Respiratory diseases (smallpox, chickenpox, influenza, measles, tuberculosis)
 - Polio
- Mosquito-borne illnesses (eg. malaria, yellow fever)
- Sexual diseases (eg. syphilis)
- Leprosy
- Starvation and vitamin and mineral deficiencies

⁷² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. March 23, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/costs/index.htm>

⁷³ Eakins, Kenneth. Holman Bible Dictionary. <https://www.studylight.org/dictionaries/eng/hbd/d/diseases.html>. 1991.

⁷⁴Butler, Trent C. Editor. Entry for 'Diseases'. Holman Bible Dictionary.

- Alcoholism
- Mental illness
- Epilepsy
- Worms (tapeworm, roundworm, pinworm, hookworm, guinea worm)
- Unintentional injuries
- Violence and War
- Birth related infection, injury or death of mother or infant (hypoxia, blood loss, infection, poor nutrition, etc...)
- Surgical complications (circumcision, lanced boils, bone setting, amputations, etc...)

While there is some limited overlap, the **diseases that are most common today in America are quite different** than those that were common in the first-century Roman Empire. We are dealing today largely with **diseases of excess and intemperance**. While diseases of excess certainly existed among the wealthier classes, poverty and lack of technological and physiologic advances, made infectious diseases and diseases of malnutrition the most common maladies during the time of Christ.

9. What kind of expectations should believers have in regard to healing today?

God always wants us to be healed.⁷⁵ The only question is how and when?

Healing for believers may occur according to God's providence when at least one of the following occurs...

1. God in love bestows a **special dose of His grace on an unworthy person**.
2. There is an **act of faith** in God (often displayed during Jesus' miracles).
3. There is **effective treatment of disease** by obeying the laws of physiology.
4. At the **Second Coming** of Christ.⁷⁶

9a. The Call To Come Out of Confusion and Sickness

The power of God to miraculously heal disease at the time of Jesus⁷⁷ is the same power that God uses to heal today. But His working, through His Spirit, is most often focused on empowering us to bring our being into harmony with the laws of human physiology.

⁷⁵ "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." John 3:17 (NIV). The word 'save' in John 3:17 is 'sozo' in greek which means both to save and to heal. "I have seen what they do, but I will heal them anyway! I will lead them. I will comfort those who mourn, bringing words of praise to their lips. May they have abundant peace, both near and far," says the LORD, who heals them." Isaiah 57:18-19 (NLT). See also Jeremiah 17:14.

⁷⁶ See 1 Corinthians 15:51-54 & 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

⁷⁷ Compare Ephesians 1:19-20

Our bodies always want to heal but our flesh is weak.⁷⁸ In most cases, our bodies will heal when natural law is obeyed.

We may have at least a limited knowledge about many of the diseases described above. Knowledge of the disease and effective physiologic treatments help but they are not enough. The sufferer needs the Spirit of God to give power to overcome in both thought and action to realize healing. Often⁷⁹ because many of the underlying causes of disease are primarily caused by failures in the thoughts and actions, reforming those thoughts and actions is essential to success. Why then are so many so slow to reform these thoughts and actions to experience healing?

“For where envy and self-seeking [exist], confusion and every evil thing [are] there. - James 3:16

Envy is the worst of all the wrong kinds of desire which is condemned by the 10th commandment;⁸⁰ while self-seeking is the worst of all the wrong kinds of idol worship, which is condemned by the 1st commandment.⁸¹ We don't understand ourselves. Our minds and hearts are naturally prone to end up in a state of confusion and hopeless dependence on things other than God. We were created to be fully and completely, first and foremost, dependent on God. We were created to follow the laws of nature and physiology as outlined by God.

We can only do this if we focus on the most important thing.

"The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. - Matthew 6:22-24 RSV

Eye instability leads to confusion where sin is often close at hand. And he who sins is a slave to sin, even an enslaved mind. A confused, enslaved mind is not a peaceful mind. A state of confusion is a state of powerlessness. And all this leads to sickness.

⁷⁸ See Matthew 26:41. The flesh is weak both physically, in that the tissue often lacks the physiologic power it needs to heal effectively, and spiritually, in that the person keeps doing things that bring on the disease or impede its healing.

⁷⁹ But not always. Examples include addictions, such as tobacco, as well as dietary excesses. There are cases where the illness comes on due to no apparent personal flaw in behavior or habit. Examples include sickle cell disease, cystic fibrosis, and certain causes of blindness.

⁸⁰ “Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's wife, nor his bondman, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.” Exodus 20:17 DBY.

⁸¹ “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” Exodus 20:3 DBY.

To mimic Revelation, confusion is fallen, is fallen.⁸² Come out of confusion my people!

But too often our hearts deceive us because they are deceitful and desperately wicked.⁸³ We keep thinking we know better and fail to harness the secret of Christ's success at Gethsemane, "Not my will, but Thine be done."⁸⁴

As mentioned, Scripture calls the dependence on things other than God idolatry.⁸⁵ Scripture states that idolatry brings confusion.⁸⁶ Modern day idolatry does not typically come in a molded image of a calf, Satan is much more subtle and sophisticated.

He has developed a long list of idols including various forms of technology/phones/ computer screens, professional sports, entertainment, sex and pornography, gambling, money and material things⁸⁷, jobs and status, physical appearance, influence & fame, overeating, substances (food, tobacco, alcohol, caffeine, opiates, methamphetamines, cocaine, etc...), even our own personal identity or that of our family or children, along with many other things can keep people in a state of dependence, worship, confusion and ultimately sickness.

Are there things in our lives now that are distracting us from sound eyes and free minds, making our brain's confused and weakening our ability to get our bodies well? Are they weakening our ability to obey the LORD and to do what is right in our lives?

There is no need to despair, Jesus has overcome.

"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." - John 16:33.

He is calling us to put our eyes and our minds back on Him,

"for God is not [the author] of confusion but of peace." - 1 Corinthians 14:33.

⁸² The second angel's message in Revelation 14:7 states, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." The Hebrew word Babel or Babylon, בָּבֶל, means "confusion" (by mixing) and is derived from the Hebrew word, balal, which means "to mix, mingle, confuse, confound". The name, Tower of Babel, is fitting since God confused the builders' language so they couldn't understand one another.

⁸³ See Jer 17:9

⁸⁴ See Luke 22:42

⁸⁵ "You shall have no other Gods before me." - Exodus 20:3.

⁸⁶ See Isaiah 41:29.

⁸⁷ cars, jewelry, houses, clothing, bank accounts, etc...

“You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.” - Isaiah 26:3 ESV.

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. - 1 John 2:28.

9b. Christ In You, Healing Your Actions and Your Body

The testimony of the life history of Jesus is that He kept His Father’s commandments.

"I have kept My Father's commandments" - John 15:10.

Since Jesus kept His Father’s commandments, when we, by the Spirit, **receive Him** into our being, we receive, by the Spirit, **His ability to overcome**...

“For we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, **I will dwell in them, and walk in them**; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” - 2 Corinthians 6:16 ASV.

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. "I will put My Spirit within you and **cause you to walk** in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do [them]. - Ezekiel 36:26-27

Speaking of the promise of Ezekiel 36:26-27, W.W. Prescott said the following,

“This is the promise of God. But when He says, “My Child, this way,” and I choose to go another way, He does not cause us to walk in His way. He does not cause us to do contrary to our will in this matter. But when one says, Lord, show me the way (Ps. 119:33), He shows him the way, and causes him to walk in it. That is the way of His working.”⁸⁸

Those who receive Christ, sit down with Him, abide with Him, and heed His loving rebukes will overcome.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. **If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.** "To him who **overcomes I will grant to sit with Me** on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. - Revelation 3:19-21.

⁸⁸ W.W. Prescott, “Abiding in Christ and Walking in Christ.” October 20, 1895 Aramadale Camp Meeting Talk, transcribed and published in *The Bible Echo*, Dec 2 & 9, 1895. All available Aramadale talks were compiled by Fred Bischoff, entitled 1895 Evangelism—Resources from A Period of “Manifest Demonstration of the Spirit” (The W.W. Prescott Aramadale Sermons) found online at c767201.r1.cf2.rackdn.com/ministryww-prescott-armadale-sermons.pdf

Every spiritual problem and every health problem are explainable. We, as people, may not be able to explain it or to know the remedy; but Jesus Christ, M.D. knows how to explain it and how to cure it. The problem you are in, whether spiritual, medical, or some version of both, may be inexplicable to you and to every elder, pastor, doctor, or researcher in the world, but it's not inexplicable. There is One who has the answer.

As a result of what God was going to do through Christ, He frankly announced hundreds of years before He came what He was going to do in us:

"But this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: **I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts;** and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." - Jeremiah 31:33.

This includes both spiritual and health laws. He writes the spiritual and health laws in our hearts and minds, which creates in us a situation where when we are carrying out the health and spiritual laws of God, we are carrying out our own impulses.⁸⁹

A similar concept is in 2 Corinthians 5:21:

For He made **Him who knew no sin [to be] sin for us**, that we might become the **righteousness of God in Him**. - 2 Corinthians 5:21

It is our duty to come to Jesus and plead for healing until He grants us our request according to His will. We are also to bring others to Him to plead for healing.

It is your duty, poor, afflicted soul, to come to the great Healer. He is as much afflicted by your afflictions today as when He was upon the earth. **He**

⁸⁹ "All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us." DA 668.3

"As Christ lived the law in humanity, so we may do if we will take hold of the Strong for strength. But we are not to place the responsibility of our duty upon others, and wait for them to tell us what to do. We cannot depend for counsel upon humanity. The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else. If we come to Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Our hearts will often burn within us as One draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. Those who decide to do nothing in any line that will displease God, will know, after presenting their case before Him, just what course to pursue. And they will receive not only wisdom, but strength. Power for obedience, for service, will be imparted to them, as Christ has promised. Whatever was given to Christ—the "all things" to supply the need of fallen men—was given to Him as the head and representative of humanity. And "whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." 1 John 3:22 DA 668.4

sympathized with all human woe. “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth,” He says. **Then come to your Saviour who can heal all your sicknesses and all your diseases.** He conquered death. He is the risen Saviour, the Lord of life. Will you come just as you are, and pray in faith to be healed of all manner of diseases, of all maladies which afflict the soul and the body? Center your faith so deeply and securely in Jesus Christ that no circumstance of any kind will jostle your faith. Let your life be hid with Christ in God.⁹⁰

9c. Healing is Often A Complex Interplay of Actions

While our interest and attention may often be focused on issues related to physical health, when it comes to helping the sick we must realize that each case has its own complex interplay of actions. **Regardless of whether a case, in order to heal, needs to primarily overcome habits, confess sins, gain a new understanding of certain health topics, or obtain a straight-up miracle from God, the prayer of faith is vital.** Again, some things will have to wait for the Second Coming. Each and every one of us requires divine intervention but in different ways.

*** One or multiple of the following may be a key aspect in bringing healing.

- 1) Healing will only come if, by faith, bad habits leading to disease due to ignorance or due to chains of habit or addiction are replaced with knowledgeable good habits leading to health.
- 2) Healing will only come if, by faith, God’s believing children through love, kindness, and compassion, pray fervently and sometimes persistently, sometimes while engaging in personal effort for the person. Personal effort could be many things including: friendship, counseling, helping with tasks, giving gifts, using some natural remedy such as hydrotherapy, massage, cooking instruction, giving herbs, among other things.
- 3) Healing will only come if a natural or medical treatment is undertaken in order to quicken physiologic healing mechanisms.
- 4) Healing will only come if confession of sin is made, and, if necessary, amends performed.
- 5) Healing will only come by hearing and obedience to a particular word of God.
- 6) Healing will only come if a miracle from God miraculously sets the person right. Or, by faith, the elders of the church lay hands on the sick and pray for them and a miracle from God miraculously sets the person right.
- 7) Healing may only come if, by faith, the person dies and is resurrected in the first resurrection of the saints at the second coming of Christ.

I do not wish to say if healing would not come.

9d. When Healing Requires Personal Lifestyle Changes

⁹⁰ White, Ellen. Manuscript Releases Vol 21. p. 24.4

When a behavior or lifestyle change is needed, it is God's Spirit that humbles the person, helps them feel their need to change, and creates a situation where the person can have an opportunity to learn new information, obtain support, and begin to take steps to permanent change. It is the job of the one in need to respond appropriately when humbled and not resist the motivating force upon them. It is the job of the one in need to read or listen to any new helpful information that will help them and then act upon the concepts and practical advice learned, giving every effort to make it happen. And while the new habits may be in force for a period of time, the enemy is continually seeking to tempt the person to fall back into the old habit. Recidivism or relapse is often therefore very common. But again, it is the Spirit of God who provides the divine power to do for the person what they can't do for themselves, bringing them to fall in love with the new habit, and to stimulate them to cultivate the habit to the point that it sticks and becomes a standard process in their lives.

Overcoming habits that lead to our common modern day diseases requires divine intervention. Reversing these habits, and subduing excessive indulgence makes the Biblical counsel in James 5 highly relevant, where the author urges prayers of faith in order to save the sick.

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. - James 5:13-15

Notice how careful James is here. He says the LORD will save the sick, that He will forgive the sick one's sin, and raise him up. He makes no promises that will guarantee an instant physical miracle. No doubt, to be born again and to be given a new spiritual heart is a miracle that God wants to do immediately with all. Even though, I am sure James saw many miracles in his time as an apostle, the author avoids using language that would promise an instant miracle of physical healing.

While certainly, God is able at any time to perform a miracle, most often he avoids doing it. The reason is most illnesses are the result of choices and habits that have broken down the life forces through violation of the laws of health.⁹¹ Many times, rather than providing an instant healing without reforming the habits, God wants the healing to come through bringing the life into harmony with these laws, which takes time, effort, and sacrifice. It occurs hand in hand with divine intervention.

Notice the focus on the ability of nature to do its work in the following excerpt:

⁹¹ Again, this is not without exception. Illnesses can and do occur based on no fault at all of the person experiencing the illness. Part of what is needed in achieving healing is a careful assessment of the diagnosis and causes of the disease, with a clear conception of actions needed to bring a remedy.

The use of natural remedies requires an amount of care and effort that many are not willing to give. Nature's process of healing and upbuilding is gradual, and to the impatient it seems slow. The surrender of hurtful indulgences requires sacrifice. But in the end it will be found that nature, untrammelled, does her work wisely and well. Those who persevere in obedience to her laws will reap the reward in health of body and health of mind.⁹²

It is Jesus who heals. It always has been. See Psalm 103:3,6. Jesus through the Spirit not only heals by moving upon us to give us power to align our desires with righteousness, as we are willing, but he also heals by giving us education not only on our habit's influence on our disease process, but also how to do the things needed to change those habits. Not only do we learn through personal experience, but He also uses His children to provide that education.

9e. Healing Today In Light of Increased Knowledge

Considering how incredibly prevalent diseases of excess, intemperance, and ignorance have been over the last hundred plus years, it is remarkable to see the insight God provided His people when the focus of Seventh-day Adventists began to move toward healthy living, lifestyle change, and natural remedies. This focus has affected the whole of society, though I am sure God would have longed for even a much greater impact.⁹³

Thanks to the massive effort by researchers the world over **we have learned a great deal** about the laws of health and physiology. The first task Jesus had starting his ministry was engaging in fasting, using it to overcome temptation. Interestingly, according to modern research, fasting is also highly multifaceted to significantly help our health. Let's look briefly at one example, fasting, and a little of the scientific evidence that has accumulated on the practice.

What is fasting?

⁹² Ellen White, *Child Guidance*, p. 366.2 See also *Ministry of Healing* p 227

⁹³ A few examples — John Harvey Kellogg, invented the idea of a healthy, plant-based breakfast in his capacity as the director of the widely-acclaimed Seventh-day Adventist Sanitarium in Battle Creek, Mich. He popularized many methods of natural healing some of which continue to this day (wheat gluten, nut butters, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, heliotherapy, etc...). He and his brother Will started the breakfast cereal industry selling corn flakes, & granola. The founder of Post Cereals learned how to make flakes from the Kellogg's. Jack LaLanne, fitness pioneer who founded the workout gym industry in America, was raised by a Seventh-day Adventist mother. Lenna Cooper, a Seventh-day Adventist, pioneered the dietetic profession and co-founded the American Dietetic Association. John Kelly, M.D. a Seventh-day Adventist, founded the American College of Lifestyle Medicine. Adventist companies, Worthington Foods and Loma Linda Foods, were widely influential on the growth and popularity of meat analogues. Harry Miller, M.D., was the first to widely sell soy milk in the U.S. in the 1940's and 50's.

Fasting is defined as the **voluntary abstinence** of some or all foods and beverages for therapeutic, spiritual, or political reasons.⁹⁴

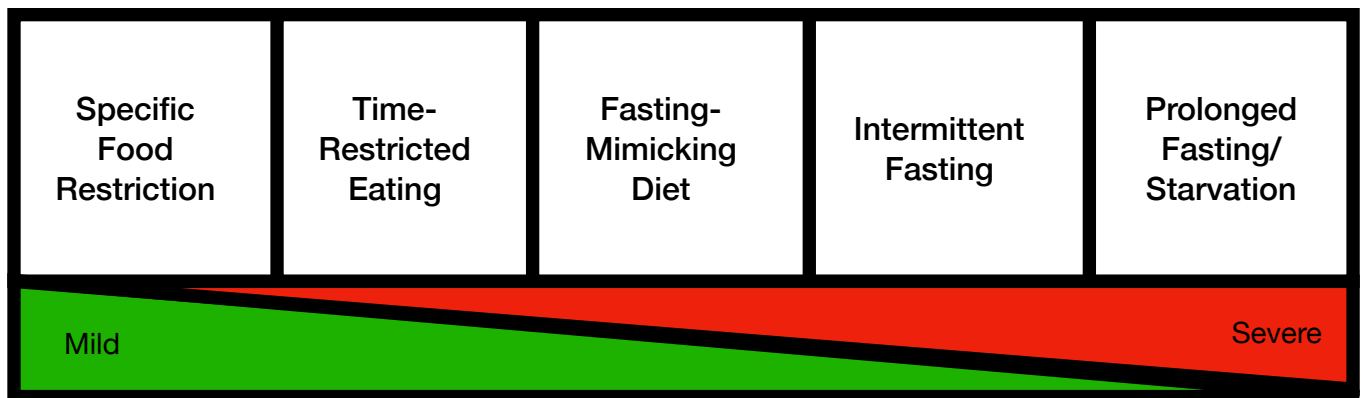
What can fasting do for us?

Fasting is a **helpful discipline**, but it is not for everyone depending on each person's situation.⁹⁵ A few become too extreme in their efforts. For most, however, fasting improves their health. Most fast too little. If fasting were more widespread, we would struggle with far less obesity and overweight.

Fasting improves body weight and it improves blood biomarkers for metabolic health, stress resistance, and suppresses inflammation. Fasting protects against abdominal obesity, T2DM, hypertension, dyslipidemia, inflammation, cardiovascular disease, and digestive diseases. It may improve autoimmune disease. Fasting may delay aging processes.

Calorie restriction is usually focused on those with excess weight but it also improves health in normal weight individuals. A 12% calorie restriction improved aging-related biomarkers without negatively influencing psychological or behavioral outcomes. Fasting also regenerates Beta cell function in type 1 diabetes. It makes the body tolerate stress better reducing oxidation and reactive oxygen species which contributes to aging. Fasting reduces IGF-1 levels reducing the risk of cancer.

There are **different kinds of fasting**, from mild to more drastic: specific food restriction, general caloric restriction, time-restricted eating, fasting-mimicking diet, intermittent fasting such as the 5-2 plan, & prolonged fasting. A favorite of mine, the 5-2 plan, has a person only eating a moderately sized regular breakfast and nothing else for the rest of the day twice per week. For most people this would mean skipping four meals a week, which is about the amount of fasting needed to create strong enough clinical changes



⁹⁴ Attinà A, Leggeri C, Paroni R, et al. Fasting: How to Guide. *Nutrients*. 2021;13(5):1570. Published 2021 May 7.

⁹⁵ Generally, those with type 1 diabetes on insulin should not fast.

for most to kick in cancer prevention, cholesterol reduction, reduced fatty liver disease, improvements in blood sugars, etc...

9f. What about the modern day gift of healing?

The **gift is still in His church**, but the Lord still chooses when and how to manifest it. Healing miracles happen among God's remnant people all over the world in response to the fervent prayers of pastors and members. These occur sporadically, in isolation from each other, through the silent presence of the Spirit among us. The Lord has probably chosen to do it this way because at the close of the cosmic conflict **the forces of evil will use miracles** to validate their claims to be from God (Rev. 13:13; 16:14). Our safety is not in miracles and healings but in the teachings of Scripture.

As we get closer to the end of the cosmic conflict apostasy and confusion will reach global dimensions, and God will manifest the power of the Spirit in a most glorious way. He will intensify the manifestation of the Spirit among us, and the prophecy of Joel will find its ultimate fulfillment (Joel 2:28-32). **God will validate the message and mission of His remnant people** through the Scripture and through the magnificent display of the power of the Spirit. - Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, Do Adventists Believe In the Gift of Healing?, Biblical Research Institute. <https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/do-adventists-believe-in-the-gift-of-healing/>

Additionally,

Today we experience the gift of healing through medical services—yes, medical services. **Jesus defeated evil powers** through His healings, and today He can do it through those who find ways to prevent, treat, and heal diseases. Those involved in **medical missionary work** and research are participating in the **cosmic conflict at the cellular level**, and the Lord gives them wisdom to **assist Him** in bringing healing to a world in distress and suffering. The wisdom given them by the Lord is His gift to His church for the benefit of humanity. Therefore the **medical missionary work**, performed by people **consecrated to the Lord** who **seek only to give Him glory**, is a valid manifestation of the gift of healing that transcends the boundaries of the church and is from our sovereign Lord. - Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, Do Adventists Believe In the Gift of Healing?, Biblical Research Institute. <https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/do-adventists-believe-in-the-gift-of-healing/>

Miracles may be of divine or of satanic origin (Acts 19:11; 2 Thess. 2:9).

Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, - Act 19:11

The coming of the [lawless one] is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, - 2Th 2:9

In view of the fact that there are **counterfeit miracles**, it would be as much an act of **intellectual folly** to accept all purported miracles without critical investigation as it would be to reject all miracles as being, a priori, impossible. With miracles, as with all other phenomena, the Christian will weigh the evidence on the basis of appropriate objective criteria, and arrive at his or her conclusions accordingly. In a **purported miracle of divine healing**, for instance, there would have to be competent medical testimony that a certain physical **condition actually existed** prior to the miracle, which was **not present afterward**, that the change could not be attributed to any other known cause, and that human knowledge and skill could not have effected the cure. Because of the **absence of such data** in much of **modern faith healing**, so-called, and also because the principles and methods on which the **popular faith healers** operate differ so notably from those reported in Scripture, Seventh-day Adventists **do not accept** the claims made for these so-called miracles. If the teachings and life of the human instrumentality **do not conform to God's will as set forth in Scripture**, and especially if the methods are sensational, **Christians can assume** that supernatural power—if indeed such was present—**did not come from God**. On the other hand, there are relatively rare instances in which all the requirements for a genuine miracle are present, and the facts are certified by competent witnesses.⁹⁶

See this article for a more detailed discussion: MIRACLES - <https://ellenwhite.org/topics/258>

⁹⁶ MIRACLES - <https://ellenwhite.org/topics/258>