Divine Healing

God Is Our Healer

Sickness…injury…pain…suffering—these are not exactly popular topics to talk about. But the reality is that, as human beings, we face these issues every day. It's part of the "human condition." And, yes, even wonderful, God-fearing Christians struggle with the vulnerability of being human. The fact is, since the fall of humanity in the Garden of Eden, every human being has had to deal with a less-than-perfect body subject to weakness, pain, and eventually death. No one is exempt; no one is immune.

All of this would seem pretty dismal were it not for the wonderful provision of divine healing that God made available to those who trust in the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ for our sins, as well as our healing. Divine healing is a clear, powerful reality. Yet, understanding how it all works isn't a simple matter. There are complex issues that apply, including God's sovereignty, personal faith, stewardship of our physical bodies, and more. Then there are questions like, "Why do good people have to suffer?"; "Why doesn't God heal everyone who prays for healing?"; "Why does healing happen instantly for some people while others wait for weeks, months, or years before they're healed?" Then there is the really hard one: "Why doesn't healing ever come to some people who pray and trust God to relieve their anguish and suffering?"

There aren't hard and fast rules, much less pat answers, that can be applied to questions about divine healing. However, Isaiah said it well when describing the purpose of Jesus' death on the cross: "He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Testimonies throughout history and in our present day confirm the truth and reality of divine healing. It is an undeniable provision by the One who declares, "I am the LORD that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26).

1. Sickness, Death, and Sin Are Related.

A. Since the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, humanity has been subject to sickness and death. *(1 Corinthians 15:21,22)*

Sickness and death were not part of God's original plan for mankind. However, when Adam and Eve sinned by violating the command not to eat from the tree in the middle of the Garden (Genesis 3:3), sickness and death became part of the human condition. Every human being born since Adam carries his nature, including the powerful tendency toward sin. First Corinthians 15:22 says it this way: "...in Adam all die."

B. Satan can afflict humans with sickness. *(Job 2:3-8)*

Though limited in his dominion over the world, Satan has at times been allowed by God to use sickness to afflict humans. This, however, cannot extend beyond what God allows.

2. Sin Is Not Always the Cause of Sickness.

A. We must not assume that sickness is a result of sin. *(John 9:1-3)*

While sin and human sickness are connected, a person's physical challenges may have nothing to do with sins he or she has committed. Many faithful, obedient believers suffer from various illnesses and limitations. In John 9, Jesus clearly denied that personal or family sinfulness caused a man to be born blind. All of us are frail humans, subject to the illnesses and weaknesses common to life.

B. Sin within the Body of Christ can hinder effective prayer for healing. *(James 5:16)*

Sin among Christians can hinder God's response to prayers for healing. Occasionally, sin must be openly confessed to one another before the prayers of the church or an individual believer will result in God's intervention to bring healing.

C. Sickness can be the means by which God teaches, disciplines, corrects, or even judges us. *(Numbers 12:1-14; 2 Corinthians 12:7)*

Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (which is not defined) served as a continual reminder to him of his frailty as well as his dependence on God. Miriam was afflicted with leprosy as a result of murmuring against Moses. There are times when our human limitations and weaknesses can sharpen our perspective on what is most important.

3. Healing Was a Major Emphasis in Jesus Ministry on Earth.

A. Jesus came to bring healing to the afflicted and oppressed. *(Isaiah 53:4,5; Luke 4:18,19)*

The prophet Isaiah powerfully foretold the coming Messiah's passion to heal and deliver. The stripes He bore at His crucifixion were not only for our sins, but for our healing. He came to destroy bondage and oppression, physically and spiritually.

B. Jesus' healing ministry is mentioned frequently throughout the Gospels. *(Matthew 4:23,24; 8:16; 9:35; 12:15; Mark 1:34; 3:10; Luke 4:40; 5:15; 6:19; 9:6,11; John 5:1-9)*

While on earth, Jesus healed countless people of all kinds of diseases. He also delivered many people spiritually, setting them free from demonic possession. Jesus healed through personal touch as well as spoken command.

C. Jesus' healing ministry confirmed that He is the Messiah. *(Luke 7:19-23)*

When the imprisoned John the Baptist asked his friends to inquire of Jesus whether He was the "one to come," Jesus instructed the friends to tell John about various miracles of healing He had performed: the blind could see, the lame could walk, lepers were cured, the deaf could hear, and the dead were being raised. Furthermore, the message of salvation was being preached. These things powerfully substantiated that Jesus was and is indeed the Son of God.

D. Jesus still delights in healing today. *(Hebrews 4:15)*

Now seated at the right hand of God the Father, our High Priest, Jesus Christ, is moved with sympathy when we experience the struggles of frailty in this life. He cares deeply about the suffering we experience and is pleased to offer healing to those who trust in Him.

Outline courtesy of: National Prayer Center

4. Faith, God's Sovereignty, and Personal Care Are All Important Aspects To Consider in Divine Healing.

A. Faith = Unwavering trust in God's ability to heal. *(John 4:46-53)*

Jesus' encounter with a royal official from Capernaum powerfully illustrates absolute trust. Simply taking Jesus at His word in this instance would not have been easy. Yet the official's implicit faith in Jesus was beautifully rewarded. This is a superb example of having faith in God rather than directing faith at God, expecting Him to respond simply because a request was made. Prayer offered in faith will have powerful results.

B. Faith always must be balanced with a proper view of God's sovereignty. *(Isaiah 55:9; Mark 7:37; Ephesians 1:11; 1 John 5:14,15)*

God sees the big picture. His ways are above our ways. We cannot possibly comprehend all that He knows and understands. Yet we can be assured that He does all things well in His time and in His way. Paul wrote that God works in conformity to His will. And we can be confident that when we ask according to His will, it will be done for us. God's sovereign intervention may mean that not being healed at the time or manner for which we have prayed, or even not being healed at all, has nothing to do with lack of faith on our part. It is the outworking of God's sovereign purpose and plan.

C. Personal care is an important part of maintaining good health. *(Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:19,20; Ephesians 2:10)*

We are, as Romans 12 illustrates, God's crowning creation. As a result, it is important that we take proper care of ourselves. This is part of honoring God with our bodies. Disregard for basic hygiene, proper diet, exercise, and rest can make us more vulnerable to illness and hinder our effectiveness for God. Drugs, tobacco, and alcohol also must be avoided to maintain health and bring honor to God.

5. God Understands the Impact of Emotional Anguish and Pain.

A. Anxiety, fear, and depression are a real human concerns. *(1 Kings 19:1-4; Acts 27:1-20)*

There are times when life's circumstances can become so overwhelming that we do not know where to turn or what to do. Believers and non-believers alike can have their lives dramatically altered by the impact of anxiety, fear, and depression.

B. God cares about people experiencing deep hurt, sadness, and depression. *(Psalm 34:18; 147:3; Isaiah 61:1)*

Hurt and pain are not always physical. Many people caught in bad relationships or who have lost loved ones, been abused, or suffered emotional trauma of other kinds desperately need to experience God's love and compassion, on display through the actions of believers.

6. Follow the Steps to Healing.

A. Staying in right relationship with God and following His Word open us to His blessing of healing. *(Exodus 15:26; Matthew 6:33; John 15:7)*

Obedience to the precepts and teachings of God's Word is always a key factor in receiving God's blessings. A right relationship with God keeps the communication lines open in our time of need. God is pleased to pour out His blessing of healing on us as we follow Him faithfully.

B. We are invited to pray for the sick. *(Psalm 34:18; 147:3; James 5:13-16)*

When we face illness, injury, or any other kind of infirmity, we are instructed to call upon mature believers to pray for us. Anointing oil has no power in itself; however, it is a powerful symbol of the Holy Spirit that encourages our faith in God's ability and willingness to heal. The prayers of righteous people are powerful and effective.

If you need healing today, be assured that the way for that healing to become reality has been made by Christ through His death on the cross. Trust in His sovereignty and His incredible love for you, and receive help from Him today.

Outline courtesy of: National Prayer Center

Divine Healing
God Is Our Healer

1. Sickness, Death, and Sin Are Related.

A. Since the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, humanity has been subject to sickness and death. ***(1 Corinthians 15:21,22)***

B. Satan can afflict humans with sickness. ***(Job 2:3-8)***

2. Sin Is Not Always the Cause of Sickness.

A. We must not assume that sickness is a result of sin. ***(John 9:1-3)***

B. Sin within the Body of Christ can hinder effective prayer for healing. ***(James 5:16)***

C. Sickness can be the means by which God teaches, disciplines, corrects, or even judges us. ***(Numbers 12:1-14; 2 Corinthians 12:7)***

3. Healing Was a Major Emphasis in Jesus Ministry on Earth.

A. Jesus came to bring healing to the afflicted and oppressed. ***(Isaiah 53:4,5; Luke 4:18,19)***

B. Jesus' healing ministry is mentioned frequently throughout the Gospels. ***(Matthew 4:23,24; 8:16; 9:35; 12:15; Mark 1:34; 3:10; Luke 4:40; 5:15; 6:19; 9:6,11; John 5:1-9)***

C. Jesus' healing ministry confirmed that He is the Messiah. ***(Luke 7:19-23)***

D. Jesus still delights in healing today. ***(Hebrews 4:15)***

Outline courtesy of: National Prayer Center

4. Faith, God's Sovereignty, and Personal Care Are All Important Aspects To Consider in Divine Healing.

A. Faith = Unwavering trust in God's ability to heal. ***(John 4:46-53)***

B. Faith always must be balanced with a proper view of God's sovereignty. ***(Isaiah 55:9; Mark 7:37; Ephesians 1:11; 1 John 5:14,15)***

C. Personal care is an important part of maintaining good health. ***(Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:19,20; Ephesians 2:10)***

5. God Understands the Impact of Emotional Anguish and Pain.

A. Anxiety, fear, and depression are a real human concerns. ***(1 Kings 19:1-4; Acts 27:1-20)***

B. God cares about people experiencing deep hurt, sadness, and depression. ***(Psalm 34:18; 147:3; Isaiah 61:1)***

6. Follow the Steps to Healing.

A. Staying in right relationship with God and following His Word open us to His blessing of healing. ***(Exodus 15:26; Matthew 6:33; John 15:7)***

B. We are invited to pray for the sick. ***(Psalm 34:18; 147:3; James 5:13-16)***