

Reading Report

*The Gospel of Healing* by A.B. Simpson

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## A Review of *The Gospel of Healing* by A. B. Simpson

### I. Summary

Simpson gives his personal testimony in his book, *The Gospel of Healing*,<sup>1</sup> by explaining his own physical trials and the steps that led to him believing in and receiving healing for a heart condition that afflicted him most of his life.

The overriding theme of his book is his belief that physical healing of our current, dying bodies, is a part of the redemptive work of Christ.

If the Lord Jesus has purchased healing for you in His redemption, it must be God's will for you to have it, for Christ's whole redeeming work was simply the executing of the Father's will. If Jesus has promised it to you, it must be His will that you should receive it ....<sup>2</sup>

Simpson states as one of his Principals of Divine Healing that healing should be sought from Christ alone, not with any help from doctors or medicines.<sup>3</sup> He also sees a strong connection between sin and sickness saying, "An impure heart is a constant fountain of disease. A sanctified spirit is in itself as wholesome as it is holy."<sup>4</sup> He illustrates this by claiming that Job's sickness was "designed to lead him to search his heart and his utter need of sanctification."<sup>5</sup>

### II. Interaction

This book will have no role at all in my anticipated ministry. I found it to be rife with assumptions made by the author as well as theological, exegetical and homiletic errors. Simpson lays no theological groundwork for his central claim that present physical

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<sup>1</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Gospel of Healing* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 1883.)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 176.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 31-32.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 64-65.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 75.

healing is part of Christ's redemptive work and is to be experienced immediately. Space constrains me from further illustration of the problems I found in the book.

I agree with the author that Christ is full of compassion and that His desire to heal the afflicted is unchanged. I have no difficulty believing his struggles and healing, but as with so many other writers he attempts to transform his personal experience into dogma. It seems that he has never considered what Paul says in Romans 8:20-23 when he assumes that our bodies are to be healed *now* by the redemptive work of Christ.

For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, *in hope* that the creation itself *will be liberated* from its bondage to decay.... Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, grown inwardly *as we wait* eagerly for our adoption to sonship, *the redemption of our bodies*. (emphasis mine)

The ultimate redemption of the body will only come after death. We are waiting for the time when "the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality."<sup>6</sup> As long as man is in this mortal body, we are part of this groaning creation, in bondage to sickness and decay. When the Kingdom of God breaks forth and brings healing to these dying bodies before we put off this mortality, it is pure grace. Another issue I had was the author's claim that any prayer that includes "if it is Your will" is not a prayer of faith. "Often there is much subtle unbelief in the prayer, "Thy will be done."<sup>7</sup> This was not only the prayer of Christ to His own Father, but also the words the leper spoke to Jesus, "If you are willing, You can make me clean"<sup>8</sup> for which he was not censured. Asking our loving Father for healing should not be this complicated!

*With integrity I affirm I have read this book 100% thoroughly and entirely.*

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<sup>6</sup> I Cor. 15:53.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>8</sup> Mark 1:40.

## Bibliography

Simpson, A. B. *The Gospel of Healing*. Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, Inc. 1883.