

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

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## Lesson TWELVE DIVINE HEALTH — THE PROVISION OF GOD

### I. INTRODUCTION

Through the redemption purchased by Jesus Christ on Calvary, God has made provision for every believer to walk in divine health. It has never been God's will for His people to be bound and oppressed with sickness and disease. He told the children of Israel that they could have supernatural freedom from illness if they would walk uprightly before Him (Deuteronomy 7:14,15). God has extended the same promise and provision toward us in the New Covenant, basing it securely in our blood-bought redemption.

Every Christian has the Covenant right to live out his life on this earth free from sickness and disease. Although this does *not* mean that we will never die [death is the last enemy to be conquered by Christ (I Corinthians 15:25,26)], it *does* mean that we can live free from sickness while in this mortal body. Unfortunately, many Christians today suffer torment at the hands of disease, not availing themselves of the divine health that rightfully belongs to them. But this doesn't change the reality of what He has done. Salvation and forgiveness have been purchased for all men and are offered to all. Yet many, whether through ignorance or unbelief or rebellion, do not receive the forgiveness which is so freely offered to them. The same is true of healing.

God's desire is that His people walk completely free from illness. He purchased our healing on the cross and gave us numerous ways in which we can receive that healing. If we will walk uprightly before Him, and not allow any hindrances to healing into our lives, then we will walk in the perfect health which has been made available to us.

### II. HOW TO RECEIVE DIVINE HEALING

God is as eager to see the sick healed as the sick are to be released from their ailments. And so He has given us numerous methods whereby we can receive the healing which He has purchased for us. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God has shown us various ways through which His healing power can be appropriated.

"You shall be blessed above all peoples; there shall be no male or female barren among you or among your cattle. And the LORD will remove from you all sickness; and He will not put on you any of the harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known, but He will lay them on all who hate you."

*Deuteronomy 7:14,15*

For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

*I Corinthians 15:25,26*

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And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

*Hebrews 11:6*

“Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven.”

*Matthew 18:19*

Since faith is the means by which anything is received from God, it is not surprising to find that each of these methods requires some degree of faith in order to be effective. “*He who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him*” (Hebrews 11:6). Because not every believer’s faith is on the same level, God has made these various ways of receiving healing available to us. God will meet us *wherever we are in faith*, so that we may always receive healing from Him.

### A. PRAYER

This is perhaps the most obvious method of receiving healing. It is the natural response of someone in need to seek God in prayer and ask for deliverance. God responds to the prayer of faith offered up by His children and will move in their behalf when asked by them. Jesus specified two basic forms of petition with which we could approach the Father to receive from His hand. They are: 1) the prayer of agreement, and 2) the prayer of faith offered in Jesus’ Name.

#### 1. The prayer of agreement

Jesus said, “*Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven*” (Matthew 18:19). Jesus’ promise was that *any* need will be met, including that of healing, if two or more believers will stand together in faith as to the outcome of their prayer. God the Father will do whatever they had agreed upon. The central issue in this method is that of “agreement.” **All parties involved must be of one mind as to God’s will in the matter and as to their faith in the final outcome.** If the person seeking healing is prayed for and yet he himself still believes his illness to be the will of God, then the prayer of agreement will be ineffective. Before praying the prayer of agreement, it is wise to first determine if everyone involved is indeed in agreement.

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### 2. The prayer of faith in Jesus' Name

Jesus also told His disciples, *"I tell you the truth, My Father will give you whatever you ask in My name. Until now you have not asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete"* (John 16:23,24). Again, Jesus says that anything that we ask for will be granted, and this includes physical healing. The prayer of faith made in Jesus' Name will bring results to those who are in need.

The Gospels do not specifically record *prayer* for the sick in the healing ministry of Jesus and His disciples. (The more common methods were laying on of hands and speaking the Word.) However, elsewhere in the New Testament, we do find instances of prayer for the sick. Paul prayed for the father of Publius on the island of Melita (Acts 28:8). The apostle James specifically instructs that those who are sick are to be prayed for in the Name of the Lord (James 5:15,16). *"Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed"* (James 5:16). It is obvious that prayer for the sick was a common practice in the first century church.

The promise of Jesus still holds today. Those that ask the Father in Jesus' Name, and believe, will receive from the Father's hand the things that they need from Him. If that need is healing, then the prayer of faith in Jesus' Name will bring about a cure for the one who is sick.

*"And in that day you will ask Me no question. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you shall ask the Father for anything, He will give it to you in My name. Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full."*  
*John 16:23,24*

*And it came about that the father of Publius was lying in bed afflicted with recurrent fever and dysentery; and Paul went in to see him and after he had prayed, he laid his hands on him and healed him.*  
*Acts 28:8*

*And the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*  
*James 5:15,16*

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### B. LAYING ON OF HANDS

The laying on of hands is by far the most commonly recorded method by which Jesus ministered healing to those who were sick. Although He sometimes simply spoke words over those who were ill (Matthew 8:7,8,13; 9:6,7), most of the time He laid His hands on the sick to heal them (Matthew 8:14,15; Mark 1:40; 7:32-35; Luke 4:40; 5:12,13). Jesus said, just prior to His ascension, that this practice would continue among His followers. "*They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover*" (Mark 16:18). It is apparent from the book of Acts that that is what happened (Acts 5:12; 19:11); laying on of hands is also listed as one of the foundational doctrines of the Church (Hebrews 6:1,2).

And He said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed." And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; let it be done to you as you have believed." And the servant was healed that very hour.

*Matthew 8:7,8,13*

"But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — then He said to the paralytic — "Rise, take up your bed, and go home." And he rose, and went home.

*Matthew 9:6,7*

And when Jesus had come to Peter's home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever. And He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she arose, and waited on Him.

*Matthew 8:14,15*

And a leper came to Him, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean."

*Mark 1:40*

And they brought to Him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they entreated Him to lay His hand upon him. And He took him aside from the multitude by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched His tongue with the saliva; and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He said to him, "Ephphatha!" that is, "Be opened!" And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he began speaking plainly.

*Mark 7:32-35*

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And while the sun was setting, all who had any sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on every one of them, He was healing them.

*Luke 4:40*

And it came about that while He was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man full of leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." And He stretched out His hand, and touched him, saying, "I am willing, be cleansed."

*Luke 5:12,13*

"They will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

*Mark 16:18*

And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico.

*Acts 5:12*

And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul.

*Acts 19:11*

Therefore, leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

*Hebrews 6:1,2*

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### 1. The Old Covenant practice

The laying on of hands is a practice that goes back to the Old Covenant. Under the Old Covenant, it was done in order to transfer inheritance and authority to children or successors. Jacob laid his hands on his grandchildren, Ephraim and Manasseh, to pronounce a blessing over each of them (Genesis 48:14-16). Moses laid his hands on Joshua to transfer his authority and rulership over to him (Numbers 27:18). Laying on of hands was also used to impute the sin of Israel to the scapegoat (Leviticus 16:21). In each of these instances, laying on of hands involved a transfer of something from one party to another.

But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the first-born. And he blessed Joseph, and said, "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and may my name live on in them, and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

*Genesis 48:14-16*

So the LORD said to Moses, "Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him."

*Numbers 27:18*

"Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness."

*Leviticus 16:21*

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### 2. The New Covenant practice

When Jesus came into physical contact with those who had need of healing, there flowed from His person power to bring about healing in their bodies. Often, Jesus would touch the part of their body that was ailing (Matthew 9:29; 20:34; Mark 7:33). The principle that emerges from this is that the power which Jesus had was transferable to the bodies of the sick by physical contact. Hence, we find that the crowds asked Jesus if they could just touch the hem of His cloak to receive that healing power into their bodies; those who touched Him were made whole (Matthew 14:35,36; Mark 6:56). *"And all the multitude were trying to touch Him, for power was coming from Him and healing them all"* (Luke 6:19).

Then He touched their eyes, saying, "Be it done to you according to your faith."

*Matthew 9:29*

And moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they received their sight, and followed Him.

*Matthew 20:34*

And He took him aside from the multitude by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue with the saliva.

*Mark 7:33*

And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent into all that surrounding district and brought to Him all who were ill; and they began to entreat Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were cured.

*Matthew 14:35,36*

And wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and entreating Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured.

*Mark 6:56*

And all the multitude were trying to touch Him, for power was coming from Him and healing them all.

*Luke 6:19*



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And while the sun was setting, all who had any sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on every one of them, He was healing them.

*Luke 4:40*

And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.

*Acts 19:11,12*

“And you shall make of these a holy anointing oil, a perfume mixture, the work of a perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil. And with it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony.”

*Exodus 30:25,26*

“And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place.”

*I Kings 19:16*

“And you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him; and you shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve Me as priests.”

*Exodus 28:41*

“About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince over My people Israel; and he shall deliver My people from the hand of the Philistines, for I have regarded My people, because their cry has come to Me.”

*I Samuel 9:16*

Then Samuel took the flask of oil, poured it on his head, kissed him and said, “Has not the LORD anointed you a ruler over His inheritance?”

*I Samuel 10:1*

When Jesus laid hands on the sick, He didn't do it for ceremonial reasons. The laying on of hands is not a “symbolic” ritual. It is a means by which the power and anointing of God can be transferred to the sick. In the town of Capernaum, the entire city brought their sick, and Jesus laid His hands on every one of them to heal them (Luke 4:40). The power of God was transferred from Jesus to those sick bodies when Jesus touched them, or when they touched even a part of His clothing. The Acts of the Apostles records that this healing anointing was even retained in cloth, so that pieces of Paul's clothing could be taken to the sick, and the power of God which remained in the cloth was enough to effect release for those afflicted (Acts 19:11,12).

Today, this is still a God-given way for receiving healing. Jesus said that **believers** would lay their hands on the sick, and they would recover. *Because the life and power of God resides within every believer, every believer has the ability to transfer that life and power to a person who is in need of healing.* Laying on of hands is still one of God's ways of transmitting His healing power into the bodies of the sick.

### C. ANOINTING WITH OIL

Anointing with oil also has its roots in the Old Covenant. In that dispensation, people and things were consecrated to God by anointing them with oil. The Tabernacle and its furniture, built by Moses, were dedicated for service in this way (Exodus 30:25,26). Prophets (I Kings 19:16), priests (Exodus 28:41), and kings (I Samuel 9:16; 10:1; I Samuel 16:1,12,13) were set apart and endued for service by being anointed with oil. It was symbolic of the Holy Spirit, which came upon these men to empower them for service. *The oil was a visual reminder that they were covered by the Holy Spirit* (Psalm 133:2).

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In the New Testament, the sacred practice of anointing with oil is found in connection with the healing of the sick. When the disciples were sent out by Jesus to preach and heal the sick, the Bible records that they anointed the sick with oil and healed them (Mark 6:12,13). This was not a medicinal anointing, such as was common in that day (Luke 10:34); it was a sacred, symbolic anointing which resulted in supernatural healing. Thus, James commands that the elders pray for the sick, “. . . anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (James 5:14).

James makes it clear that it is the prayer of faith which saves the sick (James 5:15). Oil cannot supernaturally heal anyone. But the oil does give the one who is ill a point of contact for his faith. His faith is not in the oil, but in God; the oil helps him to engage his faith toward the fact that the power of God is going into his body to effect a cure in him. The oil is symbolic of the presence of the Holy Spirit, coming upon that person to drive out disease.

Now the LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected a king for Myself among his sons.” So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. And the LORD said, “Arise, anoint him; for this is he.” Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.  
*1 Samuel 16:1,12,13*

It is like the precious oil upon the head, coming down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, coming down upon the edge of his robes.  
*Psalms 133:2*

And they went out and preached that men should repent. And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them.  
*Mark 6:12,13*

And came to him, and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.  
*Luke 10:34*

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.  
*James 5:14*

And the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.  
*James 5:15*

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To another faith by the same Spirit,  
and to another gifts of healing by  
the one Spirit.

*I Corinthians 12:9*

But to each one is given the  
manifestation of the Spirit for the  
common good.

*I Corinthians 12:7*

And God has appointed in the  
church, first apostles, second  
prophets, third teachers, then  
miracles, then gifts of healings,  
helps, administrations, various  
kinds of tongues.

*I Corinthians 12:28*

But one and the same Spirit works  
all these things, distributing to each  
one individually just as He wills.

*I Corinthians 12:11*

And it came about soon afterwards,  
that He went to a city called Nain;  
and His disciples were going along  
with Him accompanied by a large  
multitude. Now as He approached  
the gate of the city, behold, a dead  
man was being carried out, the only  
son of his mother, and she was a  
widow; and a sizeable crowd from  
the city was with her. And when the  
Lord saw her, He felt compassion for  
her, and said to her, "Do not weep."  
And He came up and touched the  
coffin; and the bearers came to a  
halt. And He said, "Young man, I  
say to you, arise!" And the dead  
man sat up, and began to speak.  
And Jesus gave him back to his  
mother. And fear gripped them all,  
and they began glorifying God, say-  
ing, "A great prophet has arisen  
among us!" and, "God has visited  
His people!" And this report con-  
cerning Him went out all over  
Judea, and in all the surrounding  
district.

*Luke 7:11-17*

### D. THE GIFTS OF HEALINGS

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul lists twelve spiritual gifts; among these twelve gifts that are enumerated is "*the gifts of healing*" (I Corinthians 12:9 — the original Greek makes both words plural, yielding gifts of healings). Kenneth Hagin defines the gifts of healings in the following way: "It is a supernatural manifestation of healing power through one individual to another."<sup>1</sup> Each of the twelve gifts, including the gifts of healings, is given for "*the common good*" (I Corinthians 12:7). The gifts of healings, then, is another distinct method by which people can obtain healing from the Lord.

*"And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues"* (I Corinthians 12:28). God has appointed **men** who are supernaturally gifted in the areas listed. Thus, gifts of healings refers not to a person receiving healing *from* the Lord (even though all healing comes from Him, whether directly or indirectly), but rather it refers to God supernaturally empowering **men** in the body of Christ to bring about cures in people's bodies. Sometimes God anoints men for healing of particular areas of the body (e.g. ears, eyes, or backs); that is why this spiritual gift is plural, "*gifts of healings.*" This is not merely a generalized power to heal. It is a specific anointing for a specific need at a specific time.

#### 1. As the Spirit wills

The operations of the gifts of healings (as with any of the other spiritual gifts) are manifested **as the Spirit wills**, and not as man wills (I Corinthians 12:11). In other words, men cannot dictate how and when the gifts of healings are going to operate; that is entirely up to God. Very often, the person who receives healing as a result of this gift has operated little faith or no faith at all; God has sovereignly moved in their behalf. This was evident with the widow of Nain's dead son (Luke 7:11-17). When Jesus raised him from the dead, the mother wasn't exercising any faith, and the dead son certainly was not. Yet the gifts of healings operated through Jesus, and the dead man was raised. This was a special anointing from the Holy Spirit to bring about the resurrection of a dead man.

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### 2. Know the difference

That the gifts of healings operate only as the Spirit wills means that we can't always explain why some do not receive healing in this way. It is important that we understand the difference between these types of healings, which are initiated sovereignly by God, and those which are initiated by the faith of a believer. God sometimes sovereignly moves to heal, as He did at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:2-4). But when God is moving in this manner, not all receive their healing in this particular way. This is not to say that others could not be healed by exercising their faith. Often, those who witness the gifts of healings in operation are stirred to exercise their own faith and receive their healing from the Lord.

However, no sick person can dictate to God that the gifts of healings must operate in their behalf. Only the Spirit can dictate how and when this spiritual gift will operate. Thus, it is foolish to wait for God to move sovereignly in one's own behalf, when God has made many other ways of receiving healing available to us. Not everyone will be healed by the sovereign move of God, apart from their own faith. But, *all* those who exercise faith in God's Word and obey the instructions for receiving healing that He has given there can receive from God, without having to wait upon a sovereign action of God — which may never come.

### E. THE WORD AND THE NAME

This is the best method, by far, of receiving healing from the Lord. As we have seen, the Word of God is explicit as to what belongs to us through the redemptive work of Jesus. When attacked by physical symptoms of sickness, we simply stand on the Word of God and confess the truth of that Word which declares, "*By His wounds you were healed*" (I Peter 2:24). Jesus Christ bore all our sickness and pain, so that we would not have to suffer with it. The Bible clearly states that healing is part of the redemptive plan of God for our lives. This means that we must have an understanding of our healing being a past-tense reality, rather than a future-tense expectation.

Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame and withered, [waiting for the moving of the waters; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.]  
*John 5:2-4*

And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.  
*I Peter 2:24*

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“And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.”  
*Acts 3:16*

Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.  
*Philippians 2:9-11*

This does not mean that it is wrong or in any way displeasing to God if we receive healing by any of the other methods which we have listed. God Himself is the One who instituted the methods which we have enumerated. But, God desires that His children reach a level of faith and scriptural understanding from which they can resist the devil when he attacks with sickness, and defeat him. Thus, He has given us **His Word** and the **Name of Jesus** to combat the forces of Satan and defeat them.

When Peter met the lame man at the Beautiful gate, he commanded him to be healed in Jesus' Name. He later told the onlooking crowd that it was Jesus' Name and faith in that Name which had healed the man (*Acts 3:16*). We have been given the Word of God, which informs us of our covenant rights. And we have been given the Name of Jesus which is above every name (*Philippians 2:9-11*). With these two weapons every believer should be able to resist the devil when he attacks with illness. This is the best way to receive healing from the Lord, because once one has stood on the Word for healing and received, it is not as likely that he will have that healing stolen from him, as so often happens to those who receive by a sovereign move of God. The one who has stood on the Word knows how to deal with the lying symptoms of the enemy.

### F. MEDICINE AND DOCTORS

A commonly asked question concerning divine healing regards the place of medical science. The primary thing one must recognize about physicians and medical science is that they view sickness and disease in the same way as God does; it is an enemy which they seek to eradicate. Medical science and divine healing are not antithetical. Doctors are fighting the same foe that God, through divine healing, opposes.

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### 1. No condemnation

A Christian should never feel condemned if he ever uses the services of a physician. It is not necessarily "unbelief" to use medicine, just as it is not necessarily "faith" to stop using medicine. Many have stopped using prescribed medication, thinking that this outward action, in and of itself, was faith, and many have suffered needlessly because of their misunderstanding. Faith is of the *heart*; it is an inward rest and assurance, not merely an outward action. Thus, a person can build his faith for complete deliverance while still on medication for an illness. Faith and medicine are not mutually exclusive.

### 2. Natural and *supernatural* assistance

One must make a distinction between the methods used by God and by medicine. Medicine uses natural means to eliminate disease; divine healing is God using *supernatural* means to do so. These two must not be confused. Doubtless, God is indirectly behind the great medical advances made in the recent past, since many lives have been saved and many people helped. But, healing by medical science and healing by God are not the same. One is natural, while the other is completely supernatural.

God's perfect will is that none of His children ever experience sickness. If we are attacked by the enemy in this area, then God wants us to be healed. If a person's faith isn't to a point where healing is being manifested, then God isn't opposed to that person seeking whatever help medical science can give. But, God wants us to grow in faith. Believers should always be striving to develop their faith and patience to a point where they don't need natural assistance, but can stand on the Word and receive supernatural healing from the Lord. This is God's best way of receiving healing, even though He doesn't condemn or upbraid those that seek such help as medical science can offer.

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### III. HINDRANCES TO RECEIVING HEALING

Whenever one discusses divine healing, the questions often arise: "What about those who fail to receive divine healing? Did God fail them? Did He fail to perform what He said in His Word?" Of course, we know that God cannot fail. He is utterly faithful and true. Thus, when healing does not come, we cannot look to God, as if the fault for this failure lay with Him. Those who do not receive healing cannot say to God, "You have failed to do what Your Word says You will do!"

Since God cannot lie and He cannot fail His Word, then the responsibility for failure to receive healing must lie with us, and not with God. When a person is not healed, it is due to some hindrance in that person's life, which is blocking the power of God from flowing into his body. When these hindrances are dealt with and removed, then healing will come. God is always willing to heal, but many times, actions or attitudes within those seeking healing hinder God from being able to perform His Word in their behalf.

#### A. IGNORANCE

Very often, people fail to receive healing simply because they are ignorant of the fact that healing has been provided in our redemption. They don't know that by His wounds we were healed, nor do they know that Jesus Himself bore our infirmities. They aren't even aware that it is God's will for them to be well. In the last lesson, we saw that knowledge of God's will is necessary before one can appropriate what God has freely given to us. "*Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*" (Romans 10:17). This is as true of healing as it is of salvation. Faith for healing comes as one hears the Word of God which declares God's will and His provision in the matter.

Thus, as long as a person remains ignorant of the Word's declaration about freedom from sickness, he will be hindered from receiving healing. He will never be sure that it is really God's will to heal, because he hasn't yet heard the "good news" concerning healing. But when a person begins to meditate in God's Word and dispels his ignorance with

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.  
*Romans 10:17*

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spiritual understanding, then faith will arise within his heart, and he will be able to receive the healing that he is seeking.

Many Christians, in their ignorance of God's Word and will, have prayed for healing using the phrase, "If it be Thy will!" They believe that God's answer will be evident by how the circumstances work out. And if healing does not come, they place themselves in a category with Job, saying, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away" (Job 1:21). The hindrance of ignorance has kept many from receiving healing from the Lord.

### B. DOUBT AND UNBELIEF

Another great hindrance to receiving healing is doubt and unbelief. Doubt and unbelief will keep a person from receiving from the Lord, because they hinder the hand of God from moving. Jesus often reprimanded His disciples for the littleness of their faith, and He rebuked those who simply did not believe in the power of God that was operating through Him.

Unbelief can arise in two forms: corporate or community unbelief and individual unbelief. Both are equally effective in their power to hinder one from being healed by the power of God.

#### 1. Community unbelief

Jesus called the generation among which He walked an "*unbelieving and perverted generation*" (Matthew 17:17). These words Jesus addressed not to His disciples, but to the crowd that had surrounded them after their failure to deliver a demon-possessed boy (Luke 9:37-43). Jesus was aware of the unbelief prevalent among the whole mass of those people.

And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."  
*Job 1:21*

And Jesus answered and said, "O unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me."  
*Matthew 17:17*

And it came about on the next day, that when they had come down from the mountain, a great multitude met Him. And behold, a man from the multitude shouted out, saying, "Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only boy, and behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming at the mouth, and as it mauls him, it scarcely leaves him. And I begged Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not." And Jesus answered and said, "O unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you, and put up with you? Bring your son here." And while he was still approaching, the demon dashed him to the ground, and threw him into a violent convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. And they were all amazed at the greatness of God.

*Luke 9:37-43*



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And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands upon a few sick people and healed them. And He wondered at their unbelief.  
*Mark 6:5,6*

And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his home town, and in his own household." And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

*Matthew 13:57,58*

And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands upon a few sick people and healed them.  
*Mark 6:5*

And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

*Matthew 13:58*

And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible to you."

*Matthew 17:20*

"Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it shall be granted him."

*Mark 11:23*

But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

*James 1:6-8*

This same kind of community unbelief hindered Jesus from doing any great miracles in His own home town of Nazareth (Mark 6:5,6; Matthew 13:57,58). These scriptures do not indicate that Jesus was unwilling to perform any miracles in Nazareth; His compassion for the people of Nazareth was no less than for the people of any other town. But the Bible says, "He could do no miracle there" (i.e. He was not able) (Mark 6:5), and affirms that the hindrance was their corporate unbelief (Matthew 13:58).

Community unbelief often manifests itself in the form of religious traditions. This is evident in the various erroneous concepts about healing that are prevalent among Christians. The tradition which says that the age of miracles has passed is community unbelief, because it is so widely accepted in the Church. Religious tradition often is ingrained in a person's thinking without that person being consciously aware of it. It is simply a part of the society in which he lives and moves, and thus has become a part of his thinking. But this hindrance can be easily removed by rejecting the traditions of men, and cleaving wholeheartedly to the Word of God.

### 2. Individual unbelief

When the disciples asked Jesus why they were not able to cast the demon out of a boy, Jesus didn't pamper them with soft answers; He simply told them the truth: "Because of the littleness of your faith" (Matthew 17:20). This often isn't the type of answer people like to hear when faced with a failure to receive healing from the Lord. But, very often it is the very reason for that failure. Jesus said that if we would speak to the mountain, it would obey us *if* we did not doubt in our hearts (Mark 11:23). The hindering factor that will keep the mountain from obeying us is doubt, or wavering on God's Word. The apostle James said that the one who wavers should not expect to receive anything from the Lord (James 1:6-8). Doubt or wavering (by which we mean being caught between two opinions) will block the power of God from operating in a person's behalf.

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Individual unbelief and doubt are overcome in the same way as community unbelief: through diligent meditation in God's Word concerning healing. Only as a person begins to take in the truth of God's Word will he dispel the unbelief.

### 3. Fear: the reason for wavering

Christians often waver in their conviction concerning the healing power of God because they fear that *this time* God will not be faithful to His Word. The enemy often uses fear to shake a believer off his conviction of God's faithfulness. When this happens, a person will begin to waver between two opinions: the one — God's Word is true, and God is true to His Word; the other — *this time*, God is not going to come through. It is a vacillation between faith and fear, hope and despondency.

This type of wavering is often the reason why many don't receive the healing that they are seeking. God is not unwilling to heal, but a person's unbelief hinders His mighty hand, just as the unbelief of Jesus' home town hindered Him from doing any miracles there. **The fear that leads to wavering can be countered by meditating upon God's faithfulness.** God is faithful to His Word and will not fail to perform it if we will retain our confidence in Him and in His Word. The Bible exhorts us not to cast away our fearless confidence (Hebrews 10:35 Amplified). If we will remove the hindrance of wavering and hold onto our confidence in God and His Word, the promised results will come.

### C. SIN

Sometimes sin and disobedience to God are reasons why people don't receive healing from the Lord. The Bible states explicitly that sin will hinder a person's prayers from being answered. "*If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear*" (Psalm 66:18). "*The face of the Lord is against evildoers, to cut off the memory of them from the earth*" (Psalm 34:16). If a person is openly practicing sin, he cannot expect to receive healing. The apostle Paul states that the sin of abusing the Lord's Supper caused the sickness and early death of a number of believers in the Corinthian church (I Corinthians 11:28-30). Their wanton abuse of the communion table resulted in sickness.

Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.

*Hebrews 10:35*

Do not, therefore, fling away your fearless confidence, for it carries a great and glorious compensation of reward.

*Hebrews 10:35 Amplified*

If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear.

*Psalm 66:18*

The face of the LORD is against evildoers, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

*Psalm 34:16*

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

*I Corinthians 11:28-30*

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Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you — unless indeed you fail the test?

*II Corinthians 13:5*

And My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

*II Chronicles 7:14*

“And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

*Mark 11:25*

The solution to the hindrance of sin is simple: repent! To repent means to turn around and stop doing the thing that you are doing. From time to time Christians need to examine themselves to see if there is anything that they are doing which is contrary to the Word and the Law of God (II Corinthians 13:5). This doesn't mean that we assume that there is something wrong; but it does mean that we shouldn't assume that there is *not* anything wrong. The Bible says that we are to examine ourselves; if we do this honestly, God will show us if there is anything that needs correction, so that we can deal with it.

“(If) My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (II Chronicles 7:14). This God spoke to Israel as a people. But, the same principle holds true for every believer individually. If sin is a hindrance to healing, then repentance will turn the situation around, bringing the power of God on the scene with healing.

### 1. Unforgiveness

“And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions” (Mark 11:25). We live in an imperfect world, where people tread on our toes and wrong us, knowingly and unknowingly. Thus, for the believer, forgiveness must become a way of life. However, when a Christian harbors bitterness in his heart against another, this often hinders God from moving in his behalf for healing. This scripture makes it plain that unforgiveness blocks God from moving in any way on our behalf; those who will not forgive are not walking uprightly before God. God has forgiven us such a massive debt, we have no right to withhold forgiveness from anyone, no matter what may have been done to us. One cannot expect God to heal him if he is knowingly bearing a grudge against another (i.e. knowingly sinning!).

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### 2. Immorality

It should go without saying that anyone who engages in such practices as fornication (i.e. sex outside of marriage), adultery, theft, lying, etc. cannot with good conscience stand in faith for healing. Yet many times, blatant sin like this is overlooked by some, while they simultaneously seek healing from the Lord. The Bible says that God's ears are open to the prayer of those who walk uprightly, whose hearts are right towards Him. But a person who blatantly sins, knowing that it is wrong, will not be heard by God (I Peter 3:12). It is absurd to think that God will heal someone who openly flaunts God's Word. Although that healing is not a "reward" for clean living, openly living in sin will be a hindrance to anyone who desires to be healed by the power of God.

**"For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears attend to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."**

*I Peter 3:12*

## IV. WALKING IN DIVINE HEALTH

God's best for His children is that they live totally free from illness. This is a state of **divine health**. Divine healing is the provision that God has made for those who are experiencing sickness. But His best is that we live completely free from the oppression of sickness, walking by faith and defeat the enemy every time he tries to afflict us with symptoms of disease. This does not mean that we should be condemned if we are attacked by the devil; it is simply a statement of God's perfect will for His people. The adversary may well attack, but a believer with a firm knowledge of the Word and the will of God will resist that onslaught and win.

In order to live in divine health, there are certain things which the believer must do. No one will ever receive anything from the Lord without exercising some degree of diligence. Laziness is not the way to receive from the Lord. There are also certain natural laws which cannot be ignored if one is to remain in health. God will not bless or condone stupidity. But if a believer will obey the Word of God and fulfill the criteria which the Word lays out, then he can expect to be able to live in divine health, successfully thwarting the attempts of the enemy to place sickness on him.

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And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

*Hebrews 11:6*

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

*Hebrews 11:6 NIV*

“And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”

*Jeremiah 29:13*

My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their whole body.

*Proverbs 4:20-22*

Who pardons all your iniquities; Who heals all your diseases.

*Psalms 103:3*

“But you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst. There shall be no one miscarrying or barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.”

*Exodus 23:25,26*

### A. DILIGENCE IN THE WORD

Faith for healing and health, as faith for anything else, comes from diligent meditation in the Word of God. The Bible says that God is a rewarder of those who “earnestly” seek Him (Hebrews 11:6 NIV). When we seek the Lord or the things of the Lord, we must do so with all our hearts. “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13). No one will receive from the Lord with a half-hearted attitude toward God and His Word.

The Bible declares that the Word of God is health to a person’s flesh, if he will be diligent with it. “My son give attention to My words; incline your ear to My sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh” (Proverbs 4:20-22). This is God’s “prescription” for divine health. We must give the same kind of diligence to God’s “prescription” for healing and health, as we would give to a doctor’s prescription for better health. The expressions “give attention,” and “incline your ear” indicate wholehearted attention to the Word of God. When this wholehearted attention is given to the Word, then the Word will become health (or “medicine” KJV marginal reading) to a person’s flesh. If God’s prescription is taken as directed, then the promised results will be manifested in a believer’s life.

### B. OBEYING NATURAL LAWS

While we live in our mortal bodies, we are still subject to the laws of nature which govern it. Divine healing through the Word and the power of God is not a license for presumption. Thus, while one can believe God for healing from the attack of disease, one cannot believe God for health while simultaneously abusing his body. Divine healing goes only so far as the Bible promises. The Word says that we can be healed of all disease (Psalm 103:3) and live free of its oppression (Exodus 23:25,26). But, nowhere does the Bible promise us we can be reckless and irresponsible with our bodies and expect to stay well.

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Unwisely driving our bodies beyond their point of endurance will result in sickness, because God will not bless or endorse foolishness. Believers have a responsibility to take proper care of their own temples; from this stance they can stand against Satan's attacks of illness. For example, it would be presumption for a Christian to go without sleep for days at a time, while all the time believing God to remain in perfect health. It would be foolish for a Christian to stop eating altogether, and then believe God that he could survive with no food. The Bible does not promise that we will never tire physically, nor does it promise that we can live without food. It simply promises that we can live out our lives in these mortal bodies free from sickness and disease.

We are accountable to take proper care of our bodies, for they are the temples of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:19). When we act sensibly, and not foolishly, then we can expect the blessing of divine health. But if we abuse our bodies, ignoring the laws of nature, then we must repent. Foolishness and presumption will hinder a believer from walking in the divine health that God has for every one of His children.

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

*I Corinthians 6:19*

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### V. SUMMARY — THE PATH TO DIVINE HEALTH

**Divine health** (that state of being in which one is not always seeking healing, but rather is enjoying health and successfully countering the attacks of the enemy) is God's provision for the entire body of Christ. That many in the Church don't experience this does not change the fact that it is God's will. Through His Word, God has revealed to us numerous ways by which we can be freed from sickness and begin to walk in divine health. The prayer of agreement, the prayer of faith in Jesus' Name, laying on of hands and anointing with oil (to name a few), were all given by God so that the sick could receive deliverance from illness.

But, by far the best way for a believer to be healed is simply to claim his covenant right by faith and confess the Word concerning his healing. This is the path of growth, a path which leads to a place where the attacks of the devil are more and more easily thwarted. A mature believer who has successfully stood on the Word for his healing is not ignorant of any of Satan's devices and knows how to deal with them better when they arise again. Until the Lord Jesus returns, no believer will ever get to a place where the enemy cannot attack him. But, a Christian can grow to a place where Satan's attacks are easier and easier to deal with through the Word.