

WHY WE EMPHASIZE DIVINE HEALING

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One cannot go far in the healing ministry without encountering objections. This is understandable, for not everyone understands this message as we do.

One of the main objections comes, not in the form of a direct challenge to the healing ministry (for most Christians believe that God does heal today) — but in the form of objections designed to diminish *the importance of healing*. We've heard people say things like, "Well, yes, God heals, but that's not as important and soul-winning." —or— "It's great to see God heal the sick, but after all, the greatest miracle of all is the salvation of a soul."

Of course, the most important issue IS winning souls — and, although we can't point to a specific scripture to prove this point, I'm sure that a soul saved, or a changed life, *is the greatest miracle of all*. But when this kind of objection is voice, what's at issue is not exactly what's being said, but what's *behind* the objection.

While this kind of statement *could* be made to promote balanced thinking, I suspect that more often than not, it is to absolve us of biblical responsibility. The simple fact is, the GREATEST soul-winning ministries are also healing ministries! That's because a healing ministry follows the pattern set by the Master Himself. We see that in Jesus' ministry; we see it in the Great Commission; we see it in the Acts of the Apostles; we see it in church history.

Below is a simple outline of 10 Reasons why we emphasize divine healing. I believe this will help dissolve some of the man-made traditions that unfortunately, have made the Word of God of no effect when it comes to fulfilling the Great Commission. *This is not an exhaustive list.*

Why We Emphasize Divine Healing:

1) **Because Jesus did.**

- a) Jesus is our example. Jesus is the Pattern Son; the first-born among many brethren.¹ 1 Peter 2:21 says that, "*Jesus...left us an example that we should follow in His steps.*"
- b) By using a "Harmony of the Gospels," one might learn something about the emphasis Jesus placed on divine healing.² Based on what is recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John:
 - i) 5 ½ times more than Jesus forgave sins, He healed the sick.
 - ii) 11 times more than Jesus cast out devils, He healed the sick.
 - iii) If it was that important for Jesus' ministry — the One who is "the same yesterday, today, and forever"³ — it's important for His Body today.

2) **Because it brings the Kingdom of heaven to earth.**

- a) **Psalm 119:89** says, "*For ever, Oh Lord, Your Word is settled in heaven.*" In **Matthew 6:10**, Jesus told His disciples to pray, "*Come Kingdom of God! Be done, will of God, on earth, as it is in heaven.*"⁴
- b) The healing ministry is an answer to that prayer. Simply put, the healing ministry brings heaven and earth together — and that's the will of God!

3) **Because it establishes dominion over the devil and his works.**

¹ Romans 8:29, cf. Colossians 1:18 and Hebrews 12:23

² Of course, I recognize that not everything Jesus did is listed in the four gospels (see John 20:30), but the Holy Ghost emphasized exactly what He wanted to, when He caused the Gospels to be written the way He did. The fact remains, that when you look at Jesus' ministry, what you find Him doing more than ANYTHING else is, healing the sick.

³ Hebrews 13:8

⁴ Literal rendering

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- a) We talk about Jesus' victory over the devil, but how would it be seen that the devil is defeated unless his works were destroyed? We know from Acts 10:38 that sickness is satanic oppression. That verse sums up the earthly ministry of Jesus.

Acts 10:38 *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, Who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him.*

- b) In Luke 13, we are given a "second witness" — the story of the woman bent together in the temple. When Jesus healed her, He said in Luke 13:16, "*Ought not this woman, whom Satan hath bound, be loosed on the Sabbath day?*"
- c) Healing reversed the human condition. By healing the sick, Jesus established dominion over the works of the devil.

1 John 3:8b *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

4) Because God does not separate sin from sickness.⁵

- a) We usually make a distinction between the two. We hear it said that it's more important to get your sins forgiven than to have your body healed — but God never forces us to make that decision!
- b) When God's benefits are enumerated in Psalm 103:3, forgiveness for sin and healing for the body are presented in the same verse!

Psalm 103:2-3 *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.*

- c) In Mark 2, when Jesus healed the paralytic man carried by four others, He said in verse 9, "Which is easier, to say 'Your sins are forgiven' or 'Take up your bed and walk'". (Another way to say this is, "What's the difference, to get your sins forgiven, or to get your body healed?" BOTH are acts of mercy by a loving God!
- d) In James 5:15, it says the prayer of faith heals the sick, the Lord raises him up, and if he has committed sins, they are forgiven. In other words, the same prayer both heals and forgives!

James 5:15 *And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

5) Because God loves people.

- a) It's been said that the reason Jesus healed the sick was to prove His divinity. Nowhere does the Bible say that. What the Bible says is that Jesus healed the sick because He loved the sick! Just one example is Matthew 14:14.

Matthew 14:14 *And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.*

- b) If you have any doubt about God's nature of love toward you, I encourage you to meditate on 1 John 4, verses 8 and 16, which tell us that "God is Love" — and Psalm 145:8-9.

Psalm 145:8-9 *The Lord is gracious and FULL of compassion; slow to anger and of great mercy. The Lord is good to ALL, and His tender mercies are over all His works.*

6) Because people are in desperate need.

- a) All around you are people who need the grace, mercy, love and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b) In Matthew 9:36-37, it says that Jesus was moved with compassion when He saw the multitudes as sheep having no shepherd, and He gave us a picture of the desperation of humanity under the works of the devil. He said, "*the harvest is great, but the laborers are few.*" While this passage is usually applied to soul-winning, the context is Jesus' ministry of teaching, preaching and healing (verse 35). As people needed laborers then, they need laborers now.

7) Because Jesus commanded it.

⁵ To put this another way, God does not deal with sin and sickness separately. He treats both the same, having provided the remedy for both.

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- a) In Matthew 10:7-8, Jesus said, “*As you go, preaching, saying, ‘The Kingdom of heaven is at hand; heal the sick!...’*” He said, “*Freely you’ve received the Kingdom, freely give (the Kingdom).*” Jesus reiterating this in the Great Commission, when He said in Matthew 28 to “*teach all nations everything that I’ve taught you*” (verse 19). When He uttered the Great Commission, He was speaking to His disciples — *ALL of whom He had taught the healing ministry.*
- b) In Mark 16:18b, Jesus said, “*[Believers] shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.*” (We have taken this as a prophecy, but this is really a command.)

8) Because it enlarges the Kingdom of God.

- a) One of the main objections to healing the sick is that it is not as important as winning souls. While such a statement is true on the surface, is it often used as an excuse to absolve oneself of the responsibility for ALL of the Great Commission — by denigrating something the Bible gives a lot of importance, namely divine healing. As I said earlier, the GREATEST soul-winning ministries are also healing ministries! That’s because a healing ministry follows the pattern set by the Master Himself. *If you really want to win souls, get involved in healing the sick!*
- b) *Whenever* we obey God in *any area*, we’re enlarging the Kingdom of God. “Enlarging the Kingdom of God” means expanding God’s domain. “Kingdom” means “the king’s domain”. So by obeying God, He is exalted and the enemy’s kingdom retreats.

9) Because our bodies are God’s temple — *God’s house.*

- a) To devalue our human bodies is Gnosticism, not biblical Christianity. Real, New Testament Christianity includes the understanding that our bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost. (So says 1 Corinthians 6:19, among other scriptures.)

1 Corinthians 6:19 *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

- b) If you understand that your body is God’s house, you’ll want it to be kept clean, pure and holy. That means keeping it free of anything that has to do with the Kingdom of darkness — *like sickness and disease.* With this understanding, you will want to receive healing *in order to honor the owner of the house.*
- c) How did Jesus cleanse the temple?⁶ Aggressively. Violently. *That should be our approach when it comes to sickness, disease, infirmity, weakness and pain.* That’s why it’s important to get free of the religious thinking that says, “It’s not that important.” That so-called “non-important body” is actually God’s house! You’re a steward of it, as I am of the body I live in. So when it comes to sickness, don’t hope for it to leave. *Drive out sickness,* like Jesus drove out the money changers!
- d) 1 Thessalonians 5:23 says, “*And the very God of peace sanctify (or set apart) you wholly (or completely); and I pray God your whole spirit AND soul AND body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” According to the Apostle Paul, wholeness for the body is vital, just like wholeness for the spirit or soul.

10) Because it brings glory to God.

- a) Just after the Apostle Paul told us that our “*bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost*” (1 Corinthians 6:19), he commanded us to “*glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are God’s*” (verse 20). One of the ways we do that is by healing the sick!
- b) When the man at the Gate Beautiful was healed through the ministry of Peter and John, *it glorified God* — and according to Acts 3:8-9, everyone saw it. Healing the sick often leads to people publicly glorifying our God.

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⁶ Matthew 21:12-13, John 2:13-17