

Tell Me About

**DIVINE
HEALING**



ARLO F. NEWELL

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Healing of the physical body is an important facet of God's saving grace. Salvation brings wholeness, restoration of both body and soul. Most churches have a clear teaching regarding salvation from sin, but much confusion exists about divine healing. Many questions surface: Did Christ heal people only to help them believe in him? Did healing cease with the end of the apostolic church? Is the gift of healing to be exercised in the church today (1 Cor 12:9)?

Divine healing is both biblically taught and intellectually reasonable. God's people experienced healing in the Old Testament (Ex 15:26). Foretold in Isaiah 53:5 as a work of the Messiah, healing was authenticated by Christ (Luke 4:18), revealing his compassion for the afflicted (Matt 8:14–17; 14:14). Continued by the apostles (Acts 3:6), healing became a perpetual part of the New Testament church—preaching, teaching, and healing. Good physical health was included in spiritual wholeness (3 John 2).

Today, most people acknowledge that healing miracles continue to take place. Modern medicine cannot and does not always bring healing. Most physicians recognize the therapeutic value of prayer, which many times results in healings beyond their ability to understand. Some even refer to these healings

as miracle cases. True science and biblical theology recognize that all healing is of God. The God who created us in his own image, he alone knows every muscle, sinew, tissue, and blood cell of our body. Scripture teaches that the Great Physician continues to visit the sick, bringing healing for our brokenness.

Healing in any form—whether instantaneous or gradual (Mark 8:22–25)—is divine healing. As the body of Christ, the church continues to be “moved with compassion” (Matt 14:14 KJV) and seeks to bring healing and wholeness to all who suffer. Let these seven steps help increase your faith and enable you to claim divine healing:

HOPE IN CHRIST

Hope is the hand of faith that reaches out for healing. Despair is the result of having no hope, but hope claims the promises of God. “I am the Lord who heals you” (Ex 15:26) is more than an Old Testament promise, it is present reality. Hope believes that God is able to “accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine” (Eph 3:20).

The psalmist asks, “Why are you cast down, O my soul...? Hope in God” (Ps 42:5). Remember, there are no hopeless cases. Lazarus was even raised from the dead (John 11:44).

EXAMINE YOUR LIFE HONESTLY

Let us pray with the psalmist, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me

and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me” (Ps 139:23–24). Physical examinations may check our blood pressure, heartbeat, temperature, and weight because all of these affect our well-being, but God examines our spirit (1 Sam 16:7) because the main issues of life have a spiritual origin (Matt 15:18–19). God also knows our thoughts and their relationship to our health. Negative and impure thoughts have a debilitating affect upon the totality of our lives, physical and spiritual. Jealousy, hatred, anger, and revenge become a kind of poison. Healing is helped by thinking on things that are true, honorable, just, and pure” (Phil 4:8). Let the Great Physician examine your heart and mind when you ask for healing.

ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR DEPENDENCE

The very term *divine healing* indicates that we acknowledge “our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth” (Ps 124:8). Limited in our human abilities, we reach for the divine. We can travel to the moon, produce clones, and even rebuild body parts, but there comes a point beyond which we cannot go. We are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps 139:14). So, there may come a time when the surgeon must lay down his scalpel, the chemo treatment is no longer effective, and the pharmacist has dispensed the last pill, but the Great Physician is still at work. We can place our total dependence in him.

LISTEN TO THE STILL SMALL VOICE

“Be still, and know that I am God!” (Ps 46:10). Many times healing is hindered because we will not be quiet long enough to hear God’s voice. He wants to speak peace to our tormented minds and pain-wracked bodies. He encourages us to come apart and rest awhile (Mark 6:31). Meditation, waiting in silence before God, puts us in a place where healing can begin.

The prophet Elijah was in severe depression, even to the point that he wanted to die (1 Kings 19:4). He was being tormented by fear, fatigue, and loneliness. Although he knew God, he was not listening to God. Elijah did not hear God’s voice in the rushing wind, the earthquake, or the fire. But in the silence, healing and guidance became clear for his life.

The raucous clamor of our culture, even the well-meaning noise of praise worship, may not be helpful to healing. The still, small voice of God’s Spirit is often heard as we read God’s Word. Spend time in personal prayer. Remember that listening in prayer is as spiritual as pleading. Let God’s Word silently penetrate your heart (Heb 4:12), making you aware that he is in control as you trust your life to his care. Turn off the TV, the cell phone, and the computer. Listen for God’s voice.

OBEY THE LORD’S INSTRUCTIONS

Jesus’ first miracle recorded in the Gospels is helpful to our understanding of divine healing. Mary, the mother of Jesus, knew there

was a need, and she believed that he could meet that need. So she said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you” (John 2:5). They were not to question, to reason it out, or to justify their actions. They were just to obey the Lord’s instructions. Divine healing is that way. First, you must believe that Christ is able to heal because he has all authority in heaven and earth (Matt 28:18). He is the Great Physician and you have a physical need that he can meet. Therefore, “do whatever he tells you” to do.

Scripture clearly gives the church instruction about how to seek divine healing in James 5:14–15. “Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven.” Notice what we are to do:

- We are to *call*. (We really do need each other and should not hesitate to ask for help.)
- We are to call the *elders*. (These are not necessarily those with a church office or years of Christian experience, but spiritual leaders in the church, persons in whom you have confidence.)
- The elders are to offer *prayer*. (The prayer of faith is the purpose for which we call the elders. They should pray for our comfort and healing.)

- They are to *anoint* us with oil. (This is an act of obedience, the oil being a symbol of the Holy Spirit, who brings healing.)
- They are to anoint us in *the name of the Lord*. (We need to acknowledge that Christ is the healer in whom we place our trust.).

NOW, BE PATIENT

David the psalmist counsels us to “wait for the Lord” (Ps 27:14). Healing does not always come when we want or in the manner we desire. Even Jesus, when the cup of suffering was not removed, prayed nevertheless, “Not my will but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). Waiting patiently before the Lord enables us to develop a faith that truly “overcomes the world” (1 John 5:4 RSV).

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

Give thanks for the One “who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases” (Ps 103:3). Give thanks for a God who gives songs in the night (Ps 77:6), even the dark night of pain and suffering. Give thanks for the One who has risen with healing in his wings (Mal 4:2), assuring us of ultimate healing in the resurrection.

Give thanks for a Savior who cares and is able to “sympathize with our weaknesses” (Heb 4:15). He understands and cares. Give thanks to God, who assures us that in health or sickness, in life or death, he has made us “more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Rom 8:37).

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