



## **Gospel Light Positional Paper on Healing**

### ***Introduction:***

*The subject of healing is much debated today. Extreme views such as "God must heal all my sicknesses" at one end and "there is no real miraculous healing today" at the other are dangerous positions to take. This paper seeks to bring biblical clarity on the subject of healing.*

### **Biblical Statements about Healing:**

- 1) All sicknesses are ultimately the result of sin, though they may not be the direct consequences of an individual's personal sin (Genesis 2:17).
- 2) God does allow and inflict illness (Numbers 12:1,9,10, 2 Chronicles 26:16-20; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9).
- 3) God is the healer (Exodus 15:26, Deuteronomy 32:39).
- 4) It is not always God's will to heal (John 11:14,15 ; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9).
- 5) Accounts of God's miraculous healing are spectacular, complete and direct (i.e. with a clear cause-and-effect dynamic) (there are many examples of healing by Jesus in the Gospels such as Matthew 8:13,16; 9:1-8; John 5:1-9; 9:1-11).
- 6) God can use sickness to achieve good. Sickness can be given for our benefit and for the glory of God (2 Corinthians 12:7-9; John 9:3; John 11:4, 15).
- 7) Some sicknesses are the direct result of sin (Numbers 12:10; 2 Kings 5:27; 1 Corinthians 11:30).
- 8) Satan can cause sicknesses (Job 2:7; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9).
- 9) There are spiritual gifts of healing (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30).
- 10) We can pray for healing (James 5:14-15; 1 John 5:16).
- 11) God can use secondary means for healing (1 Timothy 5:23; Colossians 4:14).
- 12) There will be no sickness in the New Heavens and New Earth (Revelation 21:4).

## **FAQ**

### *1. What is the gift of healing?*

It is a supernatural and Spirit-given ability to heal (1 Corinthians 12:29). The examples of healing by Jesus and the apostles are spectacular, direct, and complete (e.g. the blind saw, the lame walked and the dead were raised to life.)

### *2. Do people have the gift of healing today?*

The Bible does not conclusively state that the gift has ceased but the claims of the gift of healing must be tested according to Scripture. For example, are they spectacular, direct, and complete? Thus, faith healers must be discerned by genuine acts of healings and not simply by their claims.

### *3. Does God always heal miraculously?*

No. The examples of Paul (2 Corinthians 12:7-9; Galatians 4:13-14), Timothy (1 Timothy 5:23), Ephraim (Philippians 2:27), Trophimus (2 Timothy 4:20), etc. show that God does not always heal miraculously in this life. But there is complete healing in the resurrection to come (Revelation 21:4; 22:2).

### *4. Does having faith in God mean that we'll always be healed?*

It is not always God's will to heal as we had discussed in question 3.

God can use sicknesses to work out His greater purposes in our lives (Job 2:6-7; 42:5-6; John 9:1-3). Pain and suffering can be used for good for the Christian (Psalms 119:67, 71; James 1:2). Faith in God means that we believe God is our good Heavenly Father, and that He is working all things out for the good of his children even when He chooses not to heal or alleviate our suffering (Romans 8:28; Hebrews 12:6-11).

### *5. Can Christians seek medical help?*

While God can heal directly, He may also use secondary means to provide healing. There are many verses that speak of using "medical treatments" such as applying bandages (Isaiah 1:6), oil and wine (Luke 10:34), leaves (Ezekiel 47:12), wine (1 Timothy 5:23), and salves, particularly the "balm of Gilead" (Jeremiah 8:22). Christians are free to seek medical help but our faith should rest upon our God who heals.

### *6. Is sickness a curse?*

Sicknesses can be a curse (Numbers 12:10; 2 Kings 5:27) but not every sickness is a curse. God can use sickness to work out His greater purposes in our lives (Job 2:6-7; 42:5-6; John 9:1-3; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9).

### *7. If God heals, why don't we see more of it today?*

There is no doubt instances of miraculous healing that are spectacular, direct and complete are way fewer today than in the days of Jesus and the Apostles. One of the purposes of miraculous healing was to authenticate God's messengers (Acts

2:22; 2 Corinthians 12:12). With the completion of the canon of Scripture, God's messengers are now identified primarily through the faithful teaching and practice of God's Word.

8. *Doesn't Isaiah 53:5 promise physical healing today?*

God does heal and God can heal, but He doesn't always heal. What Jesus did on the cross is surely able to reverse the curse of sin, which includes sicknesses (Matthew 8:17). That is what Heaven is about. In the meantime, while we await ultimate deliverance (Romans 8:18-22), sickness will continue to be part of our experience.

We rejoice that Isaiah 53:5 is a promise primarily for spiritual healing today. Isaiah 53:6 talks about how we have gone astray due to sin, and how Jesus takes up the punishment for our sins. First Peter 2:24, which cites Isaiah 53:5, is also about spiritual healing today.

9. *How should I approach sickness today?*

- a) Examine my life for any unconfessed sin.
- b) Pray for healing and wisdom, and confess known sins.
- c) Ask fellow believers or the church to pray for healing.
- d) Seek medical help.
- e) Rejoice that God is working out His sovereign will for good even if He chooses not to heal.
- f) Remain humble and teachable in the journey of sickness.