

SICKNESS, DISABILITY, AND HEALING

It's been said that, "A person's Theology about sickness and healing tends to change as they get older, or when they or a family member becomes ill."

Glen C. Robertson

WHEN I WAS young one of the members of our church's youth-group said to us, "If you're ministering you won't get tired because God will give you all the energy you need!" And I believed him; it sounded great! After all, wouldn't our Heavenly Father WANT TO give His labouring ministers all the strength they need?

However, the Apostle Paul tells us in Scripture that he prayed three times for healing unsuccessfully, but that God told him, "My grace is enough!"

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

2 Corinthians 12:8-10 The BIBLE

We read that passage without giving it much thought, as, like when we read a lot of other Scripture, it sounds very much like the above Theology of the youth group: something that sounds good, but something in which we don't really have any practical experience or understanding. For, if we take a second look at our Heavenly Father's statement to Paul and put it into modern, rather than King James English, we realize that our Heavenly Father was saying, "Be satisfied with salvation; it's all you need!" So, the great preacher and healer, Paul the Apostle, was denied his healing! Those blind followers of the blind preachers of the, "Name-it-and-claim-it" doctrine, who believe that if one is sick he is sinful or, "unSpiritual," therefore feel a need to be dishonest and falsely claim that they are well when they are not, because if they admit their illness they feel that they are lacking faith. Their preachers do it, and their followers do it. But, even more, they do it because they know that the ill in their midst are ostracized and made to feel faithless, inferior, and sinful: hardly the attitude and actions of a Spiritually mature group! And the teenager who stated so dogmatically that a minister could never get tired, had obviously never regularly or very often ministered; he needed only wait a decade or so, and have a family while pastoring, to realize how naïve he had been a decade earlier! And as he got older and found his body beginning to gradually break down as it approached that final day to which every man is appointed, he would discover that death doesn't usually come to the elderly in only one sudden event,

but over a matter of years and decades, during which the body collects various and sundry ailments which eventually vanquish even the most Godly man! Death, and the ailments that begin to initiate it, start for each person in different ways, to different degrees, and at different times. For Scripture's Timothy, a sickly young pastor, those many ailments began early. We don't read that Paul the healer told Timothy to do nothing more than pray for healing:

23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.
I Timothy 5:23 The BIBLE

The personal nature of this verse isn't a mere quaint sideline of human interest of no personal interest to the Christian reading it today; everything in the Bible is profitable to us; we're told this in Paul's second letter to Timothy:

16 **ALL** scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:
17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
II Timothy 3:16-17 The BIBLE

These passages in Timothy were included in Scripture for OUR instruction, also! This Book of the Bible, speaking of young pastor Timothy's illnesses, is intended to speak directly to also the Christian today! This verse was given, as it was, to the entire Church throughout the ages to teach us, not to drink wine, necessarily, but that being ill is not necessarily a sign of Spiritual immaturity or of being, "unSpiritual," nor sinful. Paul the healer told Timothy that he had nothing to be ashamed of, but, rather, was to be an example to the Church!

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.
I Timothy 4:12 The BIBLE

So the sicknesses of the Christian and the increasing ailments of a Godly man growing closer to His God as he ages aren't the punishment of an evil person or the sign of a worsening sinner; they are the illnesses of a mortal man living on an imperfect earth, and of the increasing ailments of a person blessed by God with the opportunity to grow older!

To say ideally and naively that the righteous don't get sick is just untrue and illogical as saying that the evil don't get rich!

If I had only known my Bible a little better I would have realized that my youth-group friend was rather too idealistic. For Jesus Himself, when He was ministering, often felt the need to escape the madding crowds, and to seek the wilderness or the Garden of Gethsemane to rest, recover, and reinvigorate physically, emotionally, and Spiritually. Without this even He, being human, couldn't have continued to minister nor to be in good health. Jesus and His disciples found even just the busy-ness of the crowd around them mentally and emotionally exhausting.

31 And He said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.
Mark 6:31 The BIBLE

For, without rest and nourishment, Jesus' holy, physical body would have died! In fact, His body was indeed eventually killed by lack of physical succour.

As Jesus began His earthly ministry the devil taunted and tempted Him with good health, saying that if He were 'Spiritual' and right with God, He would have no injury if He jumped from a spire of the temple:

5 Then the devil taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,
6 And saith unto him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Matthew 4:5-7 The BIBLE

- just as well-meaning but Spiritually-immature Christians today taunt the ill, suggesting that if they were right with God they too would have no illness! satan also tried to tempt Jesus to deny and defeat the Godly and Spiritual purpose of His fast's physical hunger by turning rocks into bread, as though Jesus' hunger, a physical shortcoming, were not something Godly, or for Godly purposes! But Jesus told him that living in comfort and good health isn't the only way that one lives the life of the Christian!

2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward an hungred.

3 And when the tempter came to Him, he said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

4 But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Matthew 4:2-4 The BIBLE

The disciples, too, suggested that infirmity was a mark of sin, referring to a blind man:

2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

John 9:2-3 The BIBLE

"The whipping stripes
ripped into Jesus' body,
and the holes pierced
into His hands and side
weren't marks made in
a sinful man. And they
evidenced that even the
very Son of God could
suffer ill health! By
God's ancient plan!"

We read in the New Testament that the idea that illness or injury is the result of sin is the superstitious opinion of not only Jesus' disciples (both then and now) but also of pagans, of the unsaved!

3 And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.

5 And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.

6 Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

Acts 28:3-6 The BIBLE

But God used this affliction of a Godly man to bring healing to an entire island's infirm, and to bless the very victims of Paul's boat's shipwreck. And Jesus said that the blind man's lack of wholeness was part of God's plan to bring God glory; his infirmity was created by God, and would be used by God for His purposes! So it is obvious that if a Christian suggests that illness or infirmity is a result of the person's sin, he's not holding this opinion because of his studying the Bible; this superstitious belief is merely a hold-over from his preChristian superstitious days; the superstitious among the unGodly believe the exact same thing!

What Jesus said of the blind man's infirmity's being intended by God for His glory echoed what God had said of Moses' infirmity:

10 And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

Exodus 4:10-11 The BIBLE

At the beginning of Jesus' ministry God's potential help was spoken of by satan during Jesus' temptation, and Jesus refused to take advantage of that potential help. And at the end of Jesus' ministry, Jesus Himself spoke, at Gethsemane, of God's potential help, but refused it, both times obediently submitting to the suffering mandated by His Father:

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?

Matthew 26:52-53 The BIBLE

Yet, both times, Jesus suffered physical discomfort or harm, and both times that suffering was a mark of Jesus' holiness, not of sinfulness! Even catastrophic suffering, like death on a cross, isn't necessarily a mark of sin (*even when it sometimes is*:

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Galatians 3:13 The BIBLE !)

The whipping stripes ripped into Jesus' body, and the holes pierced into His hands and side weren't marks made in a sinful man. And they evidenced that even the very Son of God could suffer ill health! By God's ancient plan!

2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?

3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.
 4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?
 5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.
 Luke 13:2-5 The BIBLE

In fact, the Book of Job gives us a very telling illustration of how a man's **Godliness** actually brought him evil!

8 And the Lord said unto satan, Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?
 9 Then satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?
 10 Hast not Thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.
 11 But put forth Thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.
 12 And the Lord said unto satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.
 13 And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:
 14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:
 15 And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.
 16 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.
 17 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.
 18 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:
 19 And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.
 20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,
 21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord.
 22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.
 1 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.
 2 And the Lord said unto satan, From whence comest thou? And satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.
 3 And the Lord said unto satan, Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst Me against him, to destroy him without cause.
 4 And satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.
 5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.

6 And the Lord said unto satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.
7 So went satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.
8 And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.
9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.
10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.
Job 1:8 - 2:10 The BIBLE

This illustration also shows us very graphically how we tend to blame God for our misfortunes, and forget that it is satan, not God who is the source of all evil and misfortune, but that, if God should decide to allow it, He does it for His glory. And it might very well be imposed by God upon the sufferer because of his Godliness, not because of his sin!

It's from the Book of Job that we get the term, "Job's comforters," in reference to those who accuse when one should comfort! Such are those with the unGodly so-called, "Gift of Condemnation."

Elihu, the friend of the righteous man Job, said of his righteous friend:

7 Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?
8 Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.
Job 4:7-8 The BIBLE

Bildad, Job's friend, said:

6 If thou wert pure and upright; surely now He would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.
Job 8:6 The BIBLE

Zophar, the friend of the righteous Job, seeing Job's misfortune and illness, said:

5 But oh that God would speak, and open His lips against thee;
6 And that He would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is!
Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.
Job 11:5-6 The BIBLE

Such are those who lack the Spirit and the wisdom of God!

The Book of Job compels us to believe that the Holy Spirit, and experience too, should inform and help dictate our Theology, rather than the Scriptures alone! Age and experience, and the wisdom that emanate from them, are essential in establishing a true understanding of God and His ways. Job said:

12 With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.
13 With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.
Job 12:12-13 The BIBLE

Paul said:

3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

2 Corinthians 3:3-6 The BIBLE

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

--

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

1 Timothy 3:2,6 The BIBLE

Why did Jesus forgive a person's sins before healing them?

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, ***and I should heal them.***

16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

Matthew 13:14-16 The BIBLE

Jesus first forgave peoples' sins before healing them not because their sins had necessarily caused their illness, but because they needed ***faith in Him*** in order to be healed. And it is easier to believe in Jesus for forgiveness than for healing

2 And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.

4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

Matthew 9:2-7 The BIBLE

So, when Jesus healed He healed the whole person, and He did it in stages, working in each person individually as the person was able to receive it. Faith for forgiveness was the first work that Jesus accomplished in the person; faith to receive forgiveness was the first step toward the man's salvation. The next step, and stage in the person's life, a more difficult step, was faith for healing.

9 Whom shall He teach knowledge? and whom shall He make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little,

and there a little:

Isaiah 28:9-10 The BIBLE

Jesus healed, not after they had repented of their sins, but after the ill person expressed faith in Him! As Matthew 13:15 (*above*) says, they would be healed after they opened their eyes, ears, and hearts to the Gospel, and were **converted!** Their first faith would be faith in Jesus, this man who forgives sin. That would help them upward to faith in Him for healing. Lastly, the miracle of healing that they had just received would work in them more than a faith in a man, more than a faith for just healing, but a faith, now, **in Jesus as God**, and a **complete** repentance from sin. The faith that had begun in the blind man as faith in Jesus, to send him to the pool of Siloam for healing, later saw its completion as Jesus followed that up by telling him to now believe in Him, **the Son of God**, for **Salvation**. As in everyone, faith and salvation came/comes gradually, in stages, and was accomplished both sides of the act of healing. The initial act of believing in Jesus for forgiveness made possible a faith in Jesus for healing. The healing, in turn, made possible the person's eventual realization of Jesus' Divinity, and thus completed conversion/salvation. Step by step.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him, and it Is He that talketh with thee.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him.

39 And Jesus said, For judgment I Am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

John 9:35-39 The BIBLE

The faith that would heal them was accomplished by their initial faith for forgiveness! For who ever heard of an unrepentant sinner who was healed, unless they had first asked God, **in faith**, to heal them!

"But," one might say, "faith in Jesus' ability to heal isn't the same as faith in Jesus to save from sin and hell!" But it is faith! Faith in Jesus! Scripture tells us that Abraham's faith in God to give him a son was sufficient to save Abraham from Hell, and to give him eternal life!

5 And He (*God*) brought him (*Abraham*) forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

6 And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness.

Genesis 15:5-6 The BIBLE

3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Romans 4:3 The BIBLE

It wasn't Abraham's faith-for-a-son that saved him; what saved him was his faith-in-God. So Jesus was using the ill persons' faith in Him for forgiveness, initially, to next accomplish in them sufficient faith in Him for healing. And He could then finish up by completing in them a faith for actual, full salvation. Step by step.

8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in His Spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, He said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up

thy bed, and walk?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (He saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

Mark 2:8-12 The BIBLE

See footnote below¹

So Jesus wasn't suggesting that their sin was the cause of their illness, and therefore needing to be forgiven for them to be healed. Much as He had done in Abraham, Jesus was using faith in God for an easier thing, as a 'springboard,' or step-up, to accomplish faith in God for a more difficult thing. Jesus was using 'faith-for-healing' to also accomplish in their hearts a 'faith-for-salvation!'

Footnote:

¹ When Jesus began a healing by first forgiving a man's sins He wouldn't have forgiven the damning sins of someone unrepentant; there is a difference between damnable sins and those which are not.

16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

1 John 5:16-17 The BIBLE

Jesus knew their heart, and which persons were both sincere toward Him and righteousness and ready to receive healing and salvation, and those who were not, and therefore not ready to receive healing nor salvation. God will not forgive damnable sins that a person does not repent of and ask Him forgiveness of; gaining forgiveness for those sins is the responsibility of the sinner: He must ask God for it; God is a gentleman, and will not go against a person's wishes! Jesus looked at and knew the heart of man, both generally and individually. So, when Jesus began to minister to a person He knew exactly where their heart was, and how they sincere they were; and He therefore knew exactly how to minister to that particular person most effectively.

25 And (*Jesus*) needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man.

John 2:25 The BIBLE

The persons who were insincere and therefore did not have the faith for Forgiveness, Salvation, and Healing Jesus could not minister to.

54 And when He was come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath This Man this wisdom, and these mighty works?

55 Is not This the carpenter's son? is not His mother called Mary? and His brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

56 And His sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath This man all these things?

57 And they were offended in Him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

58 And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

Matthew 13:54-58 The BIBLE

22 When therefore He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them; and they believed the Scripture, and the Word which Jesus had said.

23 Now when He Was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day, many believed in His Name, when they saw the miracles which He did.

John 2:22-23 The BIBLE

Jesus came to earth not to heal, but to save; Jesus' healing ministry was merely the means by which He accomplished in people the faith they needed to believe in Him also for salvation. Jesus first forgave a sick person's sins before He healed him because Jesus didn't come to earth to heal peoples' bodies, but to cleanse of sin. When Jesus' acts of healing were preceded by His first telling them that He was forgiving their sins, He was also putting into perspective why He was there in the first place: He was focusing them on the more important thing (a kind of: "You've come to me with faith to heal your body, but I've come to you to save your soul! Let's do first-things-first; believe in Me to forgive your sins. Now believe in me for healing. Next, use your faith-in-me-for-healing as also faith-for-much-greater-things-than-that!").

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing (*damnation*) come unto thee.

John 5:14 The BIBLE

In John 9 Jesus said that God created the man blind in order to glorify God.

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

John 9:2-7 The BIBLE

For all his life this man had been blind. No doubt, if he or his parents had had faith in God they would have prayed for his healing. But, regardless of whether they had faith, it was God's desire that he should remain blind for those many years.

Content in our situation

It was their responsibility, therefore, before God, to be content in that situation.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for **I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.**

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Philippians 4:11-13 The BIBLE

15 For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; **In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength:** and ye would not.
Isaiah 30:15 The BIBLE

10 **Be still, and know that I am God:** I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.
Psalm 46:10 The BIBLE

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 The BIBLE

Paul's being afflicted with his "thorn in the flesh," what we believe was a physical ailment (perhaps poor eyesight:

2 And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.

3 Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?

4 And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest?

5 Then said Paul, I didn't know, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

Acts 23:2-5 The BIBLE)

... wasn't a result of sin in his life; rather, it was because of his having been blessed by God! It was because our Heavenly Father drew him close and showed him great things, that he was given that physical ailment! Yet there are those who would suggest that physical ailments are a sign of sin, and because of sin, punishment from God! Rather than because of sin, Paul had a physical ailment **because he was close to God!** Paul received from God not healing of his thorn in the flesh, but something better! Rather than because of sin, Jacob, son of Isaac, and grandson of Abraham, was made lame by God **because he pursued God and successfully secured God's blessing! Genesis 32:24-32 Because of His zealous pursuit of God Jacob received from God a physical injury; He received not a healthy body, but something better!** That limp that forever afterwards he was known for was a visual reminder to everyone who saw him that this was Jacob, the man who had wrestled a blessing from God!

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1 Peter 4:12-13 The BIBLE

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Hebrews 11:32-40 The BIBLE

All these people suffered great things, not because they were sinful, but because they were obedient, and close to their Lord! So the fact that a person is ill, and has prayed for healing, does not necessarily mean that they are suffering because of sin, (it **could** be for that reason:

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

1 Corinthians 11:27-31 The BIBLE

- but Scripture lists a single, specific sin [*taking Communion unworthily*] that can cause illness)

So the fact that a person is ill, and has prayed for healing, does not necessarily mean that they are suffering because of sin any more than these great saints of God suffered what they did, because of sin! Scripture here tells us that these people suffered as they did ***because of their great faith!*** So if one wishes to ascribe a Spiritual source to another believer's suffering there is far more Biblical precedent for suffering caused by Godliness, than there is for suffering caused by sin! But of course it's natural, more fleshly and carnal, for the Spiritually immature to wish to feel or to appear superior to another and therefore to condemn, rather than to lift up and encourage. This, 'Gift of Condemnation,' reflects more on the character and condition of the condemner than on that of his victim.

God does heal. And He heals us. Now. In this present time. Often. And we declare our faith in Him for this, even though we ourselves, perhaps receive not the promise of healing, but something better! And until He heals us we will maintain our faith in Him, and be content!

MOSES and PAUL, the STUTTERING, INSECURE SERVANTS OF GOD

The Hollywood movie, "THE TEN COMMANDMENTS," is quite accurate in its depiction of God's deliverance of the nation of Israel escaping from Egypt. But, in true Hollywood fashion, its depiction of Moses is very very wrong! The stuttering, insecure and fearful Moses was NOT so confident and outspoken as the movie would seek to portray him! In fact,

3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)
Numbers 12:3 The BIBLE

11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?
Exodus 3:11 The BIBLE

10 And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

13 And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send.

14 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

15 And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

Exodus 4:10-16 The BIBLE

Our Heavenly Father used Moses not despite his weaknesses, insecurities, and inabilities, but **because of** them! Our Heavenly Father will not share His glory!

8 I Am the Lord: that Is My Name: and My glory will I not give to another, neither My praise to graven images.

Isaiah 42:8 The BIBLE

11 For Mine own sake, even for Mine own sake, will I do it: for how should My Name be polluted? and I will not give My glory unto another.

Isaiah 48:11 The BIBLE

And when, in our reading of Scripture, we get to the New Testament, we find that our Heavenly Father continues this same principle and practise: He chooses the UNable!

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:3-5 The BIBLE

10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

2 Corinthians 10:10 The BIBLE

6 But though I be rude (poor) in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been throughly made manifest among you in all things.

2 Corinthians 11:6 The BIBLE

In fact, when Paul felt that he might better serve his Heavenly Father without a physical ailment and asked God to heal him, God taught him that, in fact, his Heavenly Father would be better served by a person who was weak and infirm!

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

II Corinthians 12:7-10 The BIBLE

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. *(In other words, "The Gospel in us is as though treasure in is being stored in mere clay pots, so that the contents aren't outdone by the packaging.")*

II Corinthians 4:7 The BIBLE

So, do you wish to be used by God? Do you wish to minister for Him? Don't wait; the more skilled you get, and confident in your own abilities, the less you'll use the power of your Heavenly Father! Just open your mouth; HE will fill it!

6 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

7 But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

8 Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.

9 Then the Lord put forth His hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put My Words in thy mouth.

Jeremiah 1:6-9 The BIBLE

11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; **if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability WHICH GOD GIVETH**: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to Whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:11 The BIBLE

And, once again, we quote the above passages on being content with the conditions our Heavenly Father has given us:

Content in our situation

It is our responsibility, therefore, before God, to be content in our situation.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Philippians 4:11-13 The BIBLE

15 For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

Isaiah 30:15 The BIBLE

10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

Psalms 46:10 The BIBLE

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 The BIBLE

But unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings ...

Malachi 4:2a

But our God DOES heal! Today! Scripture tells us of various Spiritual Gifts He gives to His people in the Church:

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but It Is the same God Which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; **to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;**

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 The BIBLE

The Holy Spirit gives various of these gifts to the children of God after they have first been Born Again, and then when they receive the Second Experience from God, the Infilling of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus promised, and even commanded us to wait upon Him to give us.

49 And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Luke 24:49 The BIBLE

The present writer has written elsewhere about

Receiving these Spiritual gifts:

www.Micaiah.com/filled.htm

so we invite the reader to read that message also.

For the present purposes we will speak here only on

Receiving healing from our Lord:

Many, who have not received that Second Blessing from the Lord, the Infilling of the Holy Spirit, believe and preach that healing, and the gift of healing, are no longer promised nor given the Church by our Lord. That tendency shows us how valuable experience is, in forming our Theology.

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

8 How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?

II Corinthians 3:6-8 The BIBLE

When one doesn't have the experience of receiving the Holy Spirit anointing/The Holy Spirit Infilling/The Baptism in the Holy Spirit (in greater measure *after* salvation), he has nothing to inform his knowledge, Theology, and belief system, but a Book (the Bible) that, though the very source of Life itself through Jesus Christ, is yet totally unable to do anything but condemn to death, in anyone who has not been Born Again, receiving new life in Jesus Christ. It is only when one has received the First experience of Holy Spirit (Salvation/Being Born Again) that the Bible will give him new life; otherwise that same Bible condemns him to perdition. Similarly, it is only when one has received Second experience in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit infilling, that that same Bible's Words enable him to understand and receive the full extent of the Holy Spirit's power in his life and ministry. It is only when he has received the Holy Spirit Infilling that his Theology of healing will be complete and correct. Just as the basic steps one must take for salvation (i.e., realization of one's sinfulness, and helplessness to change, sorrow for sin, repentance and turning from sin, realizing Jesus' Divinity and making Him Lord, etc.) aren't listed in chronological and logical order in any one place in the Bible, but truly realized by the individual in their entirety and as an essential group only after they have received salvation, so also a Christian is unable to understand the necessity and method of receiving the Fulness of the Holy Spirit (the Holy Spirit

Infilling/Baptism in the Spirit) until *after* they have received it! Both these essential experiences are able to be realized and Theologically delineated as such only *after* they have been experienced! The Spiritual life of salvation and holy living and ministry consist of *experience with God*, rather than mere Theological or doctrinal mandates, rules, lists, and written outlines in the Bible. The written, the Bible, merely helps and describes it. Each of these two, the experience and the written, is possible without the other. But only the experience (even without the writings) is salvation; the written without the experience is death. And without the experience (in either Salvation or Holy Spirit Infilling) the written can hope for only partial truth.

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

8 How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?

II Corinthians 3:6-8 The BIBLE

So do NOT accept the vehement denials and claimed impossibilities or even unlikelihoods of those who haven't experienced them! The Holy Spirit Is present to Save, to Fill, and to Heal today, just as He was when Jesus walked the earth and then gave the same to His followers after His death. But only when the people present are willing, faithful, and prepared to receive that power.

17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as He Was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

Luke 5:17 The BIBLE

58 And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

Matthew 13:58 The BIBLE

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Matthew 17:20 The BIBLE

The first step is to be Saved/Born again. As Jesus said, that is an easy first step: it is easier to believe God for forgiveness. Once you have been forgiven by God, and experienced His love and forgiveness it is easier to now believe that He can and will give you even greater things!

Find a church that preaches and practices healing. Such churches are called such things as, "Pentecostal," "Charismatic," "Apostolic." We have already read that our Heavenly Father gives some people the Gift of Healing; these people, more than others, are the ones to seek out when looking for healing. Listen to the accounts of others who have been healed, especially by these particular people with that Gift. Read your Bible, especially the passages in the Gospels and Acts that speak of God's healing people, because the Bible says,

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
Romans 10:17 The BIBLE

Jesus said that a person seeking healing must believe that He, God, can and will heal him.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He Is, and that He Is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.
Hebrews 11:6 The BIBLE

And, most importantly, ask God for the faith you need,

23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.
24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!
Mark 9:23-24 The BIBLE

- because YOU CANNOT, by yourself, build the faith you need; it is a gift from God!

9 To another **faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;**
1 Corinthians 12:9 The BIBLE

And pray. God, as we have read already in Hebrews 11:6 (above) "Is a rewarder of them that diligently (*enthusiastically/strenuously*) seek Him.

5 And He said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;
6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?
7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.
8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.
9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.
10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.
11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?
12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?
13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him
Luke 11:1-13 The BIBLE

Content in our situation

If, however, our Heavenly Father does not give you the healing that you have asked for, it is our responsibility, before God, to be content in our situation. His grace, His salvation, His Presence in our life is sufficient for us. We are seeking Him, not the mere gifts He may give us.