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Divine Healing and Healers

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Five Messages delivered by M. R. DE HAAN, M. D. over
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DIVINE HEALING

CHAPTER ONE

We believe in divine healing of the body, by the power of God. By this, of course, we mean that God is able to heal our bodies from disease, deformity, and weakness, just as well as to forgive our sins, or to save us. Nothing is impossible with the Almighty. We also believe that God is not only able to heal the body, but that He does heal whenever it is His sovereign will to do so. We certainly would not limit God, an omnipotent God, in anything He does. But this healing must always be according to His revealed Word and will. God cannot and will not do anything contrary to His own Word. The test of divine healing, therefore, is always the Scriptures, and not the claims of men, nor the testimonies of those who profess to have been healed, or even actual cases of healing which were not performed by God but by some other power. We therefore repeat, that God can and does heal whenever it is His will to do so, and when it is according to His sovereign will, and the Scriptures. We do not believe, however, in divine "healers" who make claims contrary to the clear teaching of the Word of God.

POPULAR TODAY

The question of the healing of the body is as old as sin itself and as old as disease and age. The healing art dates back to the earliest antiquity, for since disease is incipient death, and since man naturally dreads death, the search for its abolishment has gone on throughout the ages. To conquer death we must conquer disease and age and the processes of decay in our bodies during the course of the years of our lifetime. Millions upon millions of babies die in infancy, other millions never reach maturity, and all die ultimately, even the few who may attain the four score years and over. It is no wonder then that the question of disease and healing should perennially be one of the greatest concern among mortal men.

Today there has been an unusual upsurge of interest in the healing question, and the past few years have seen a rapid increase in religious healing movements and methods accompanied by claims and testimonies ranging from the most conservative to the most incredible. Throughout the ages, the healing of the bodies was usually left largely to those specifically trained as physicians and surgeons. Among the backward,

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pagan nations of the world, it was usually left to the witch doctor. But today it has taken on a more religious aspect, and scores of persons have acclaimed themselves, asserting they possess God-given, divine gifts from heaven to perform the miracles which characterized the days when Jesus and His apostles were here upon the earth.

THE ONE TEST

It is not at all our purpose in these messages to set ourselves up as judges of any man's claims. We shall merely turn to the Word of God as faithful ministers, and "prove all things" by the Book. As is always the case, every good thing has its counterfeit, and we are not to be surprised if we find the same in regard to divine healing. This is true of all the professions. The Bible teaches that men, not led by God, often seek God's gifts also, not for the glory of God, but for personal gain. There is one such instance found in Acts 8, verse 9. Philip, the deacon, was preaching in Samaria with great success, and among those who believed was a certain sorcerer by the name of Simon. Peter and the apostles had heard of Philip's ministry in Samaria, and had come down, and while they were there had an experience with this man, Simon. Here is the record:

"But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries."

Acts 8:9, 11

"Then Simon himself believed also: . . . and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done."

Acts 8:13

"And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money.

Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost."

Acts 8:18, 19

Now before going on to Peter's answer, will you notice a number of things about this record:

1. Genuine signs and miracles were performed by the apostles.

2. This was, however, an apostolic gift, given to them by Christ in Matthew 10.

3. Simon, (not an apostle) desired this gift for himself and asked Peter to give it to him.

4. His motive, however, was purely commercial. He offered Peter money to obtain it. He wanted it to enrich himself; and the money end, the dollar sign, was the most prominent thing.

5. Simon was a believer. He was willing to mix the gospel with his signs and wonders.

PETER'S ANSWER

Now notice carefully Peter's answer to Simon:

"But Peter said unto him, Thy MONEY perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with MONEY.

Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Acts 8:20-23

Will you again notice a number of things about this record.

1. The miracles and the signs of the Spirit are never to be performed for money. Peter took no offerings, and sold no charms.

2. This gift was an apostolic gift. It was for the apostolic age. Since Simon was not an apostle, Peter says to him:

"Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter." Acts 8:21

SATAN ALSO DOES SIGNS

While we recognize, therefore, the authenticity and the genuineness of the gifts of signs and miracles and healing when performed by those whom God has appointed and called with these apostolic gifts, we must be careful to distinguish between the true and the false. Satan is a great counterfeiter, and can also perform miracles. The Devil can also heal the bodies of men. We have many illustrations of the miracle-working power of the Devil in the Bible. When Moses stood before Pharaoh, and Aaron cast his rod upon the ground and it became a serpent, the Egyptian sorcerers by the power of the Devil were able to do it also. We read in Exodus 7:11,

"Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.

For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.
Exodus 7:11-12

The same thing is repeated again in the second miracle, when Moses lifted his rod and turned water into blood. We read:

"And the magicians of Egypt did so (likewise) with their enchantments."
Ex. 7:22

The very first miracle Satan ever performed was when he incarnated himself in a serpent, and deceived mother Eve, in causing her to believe that she could be a sinner and yet escape the penalty of death, which is disease in its ultimate form. The last miracle Satan will perform will be the healing of the beast from a deadly wound (Rev. 13:3). Moreover, Satan is able to do great signs and wonders, for in 2nd Thessalonians 2 we read of the Devil man, the antichrist, the "man of sin", as follows:

"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."
2 Thess. 2:9-10

In Revelation 13 we read of this same "Devil man", this antichrist:

"And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men."
Rev. 13:12-13

"And he had power TO GIVE LIFE unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

Rev. 13:15

A SOLEMN WARNING

Now we have given these introductory warnings before examining the Bible teaching concerning bodily healing, in order that we may be able to discern between the true and the false. We would have you be able to know that which is truly and genuinely of God, and that which is not of the Lord. This is one of the most important things a believer must

learn, for we would not want to reject anyone or anybody who comes with the authority of God Himself, as tested by the Word of God. On the other hand, we should not be deceived by that which is a counterfeit and a deception. Among all the claims being heard today on every hand, the child of God should be ready and able and willing at all times to accept the truth and to recognize it, but at the same time, be able to reject that which is not according to the "thus saith the Lord". Those who are genuine and sincere will welcome this scriptural test at all times. Those who like Simon the sorcerer are frauds, will naturally object.

It is not in vain that the Bible says, "Be not deceived". So great will deception become, as we approach the end of the age that the Lord said:

"If it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."
Matt. 24:24

When the disciples of our Lord asked Him in Matthew 24,

"Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming?"
Matt. 24:3

the very first sign which He gave to them was:

"Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall! deceive many."
Matt. 24:4-5

Now I do hope that I am not misunderstood. We want to help and to encourage everyone who carries on his work for the Lord faithfully, according to God's own instructions, but at the same time, we also want to protect those very ones from the others who by using the Word of God deceitfully (2 Cor. 4:2) bring reproach upon the entire cause of Christ, and make it more difficult for those who are true and faithful and genuine, to do their work for Him.

The Holy Spirit has thoroughly instructed us to discern the Spirits to see if they be of God. John says in 1st John 4:1,

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
1 John 4:1

In 1st Thessalonians 5:19 we read:

"Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

1 Thess. 5:19-21

We are warned never to condemn anyone, but merely test all things by the Word of God. We are not to "quench the Spirit" by rejecting anything just because we do not agree with it. We are not to despise prophesying or preaching, even though it may not be by one of our own particular sect or crowd, but to test it by the Word of God, and then retain that which is according to His will and Word.

If there is one gift that we should desire above all else, in these confusing days, it is the gift of "discernment." In 1st Corinthians 12:4 we read:

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." 1 Cor. 12:4

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

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

To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another DISCERNING of spirits."

1 Cor. 12:8-10

If there is one gift that we should desire, it is the gift of being able to discern the spirits, to see whether they be of God. We must learn to try the Spirits, and to distinguish the true from the false.

In order to help you to do this, we have brought you this message. With all the strange voices raised in the world today, we as believers must be able to recognize that which is of God and that which is of Satan. And the only way to know is to know the Bible. Only as we know this Book can we discern between right and wrong, the true and the false, the genuine and the counterfeit. In our coming messages, therefore, we shall do nothing but study what God has to say, for after all nothing else counts. Error feeds on ignorance, and spiritual error thrives on ignorance of the Word of God.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2:15

CHAPTER TWO

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor. 1:22-24

The Bible records hundreds upon hundreds of miracles, signs and supernatural wonders in its pages. It records for us scores and scores of bodily healings from diseases and infirmities, both with and without natural means. This fact no one, of course, can deny. The question which arises, however is this: Can we, Must we expect God to do all these things today as He did in days gone by? Did Jesus mean when He said: "Greater things than these shall ye do", that we would be able to duplicate all the signs and the miracles which had been performed in the past, even in a greater measure than He did? We ask the question, Is this the program for this age, that signs and miracles and healings will be done today just as in the days of Israel, or the days of Christ, or in the days of the apostles? If our God is still dealing in the very same identical way, and the oft-quoted texts, "I the Lord change not", and "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and forever" apply to these miracles and signs and wonders and healings, then we must, of course, expect that all of them shall be present, and not only healing by itself. The Bible records many, many miracles besides healings; such as raining manna from heaven, providing water from the rock, sending fire from heaven, healing snake bite, parting seas and rivers, cleansing lepers, raising the dead, feeding 5,000 with a few sardines and cookies, walking on the water, making iron to float, restoring lost members, and hundreds and hundreds of others. We therefore, ask the question, "If some of these are for us today, then why not all of them, if this is what Christ meant when He said, "Greater things than these shall ye do"?

Why dare we to claim only the miracle of bodily healing? Why not multiply loaves and fishes, and feed the starving multitudes in the world today? Or ask God to send bread from heaven? Why not the miracle of walking on the water, changing water into wine, and replacing amputated members, and all the other signs? This is a fair and honest question, and

should have a fair and honest answer. In trying to arrive at the answer we must, of course, turn only to the Word of God, and see what it has to say about those miracles which it records.

KINGDOM SIGNS

It is a very significant fact that there are few, if any, miracles, signs and wonders recorded during the first two thousand years of human history. It is not until we come to the history of Israel, two thousand years after Adam that signs and wonders begin to appear. The first great miracle was the birth of Isaac, supernaturally conceived by a miracle which God performed upon Abraham and Sarah. This marked the beginning of the nation of Israel, and from there on we have hundreds upon hundreds of miracles. Israel, therefore, is peculiarly God's miracle nation, and the nation of miracles. All during her history she has been miraculously preserved, fed and kept. When their Messiah, Jesus, came to offer them the Kingdom, nineteen hundred years ago, the greatest era of miracles and signs and wonders was ushered in, as recorded in the four gospels, and the book of Acts. Miracles, then, are inseparably associated with God's dealing with the nation of Israel. Paul says, "the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom." Miracles are peculiar to the nation of Israel and their history, and are related to the Kingdom, rather than to the church age. This is also made clear by our Lord when He commissioned His disciples to preach the message of the Kingdom. In Matthew 10 we read:

"And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." Matt. 10:1

We would have you notice in this particular commission, that it was given specifically to the twelve appointed apostles. They in turn could lay hands on others, and impart these gifts, but there is no record that it ever went beyond this. These gifts in Matthew 10 were apostolic gifts given for the apostolic age for an apostolic ministry. To emphasize the exclusiveness of this apostolic commission to the twelve apostles, Matthew then gives the name of these twelve in verse 2:

"Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; . . . Peter, Andrew . . . James . . . John; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew . . . James . . . Thaddaeus; Simon . . . and Judas." Matt. 10:2-4

These twelve are the ones whom Jesus definitely sent forth and He calls them by name. In this we see the Lord seeks to emphasize that this commission was distinctly apostolic, exclusively for the apostles, for these twelve, and then He commands them saying:

"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Matt. 10:5-6

This command of our Lord, then, is explicit and unmistakable, that they are to go with this apostolic message and with these apostolic gifts only to the nation of Israel, and not to any Gentile whatsoever. It was a strict command: Go only to Israel, the Kingdom nation.

THE MESSAGE

Will you next notice the message they were to preach:

"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 10:7

Now this, of course, is the kingdom message, and then follow the Kingdom signs which were to accompany this particular message:

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils." Matt. 10:8

You see, this commission went far beyond healing a few sick. They were also to cleanse the lepers and to raise the dead as well. They were not to accept money for their services, they were not to take any provision, but live on the kindness and charity and the generosity of the people to whom they ministered. Plainly Jesus says:

"Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses.

Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat." Matt. 10:9-10

No lolling around in luxury for these apostles, no extensive wardrobe or flashy clothes, no shoes on their feet, no expensive hotel suites, but theirs was to be a life of rigor and self-denial, a life of poverty as became the followers of Him who "had no place where to lay His head", who was born in a

stable, depended on the charity of His friends, rode on a borrowed colt, and died on a sinner's Cross. If then this commission in verse 6, "Heal the sick", is to be taken for us today, it also should involve all of these other instructions which the Lord gave in this connection. This verse is constantly quoted as a reason for the same miracles today, but surely consistency alone demands that the rest of the passage be made to apply as well. Comparing many of the movements which we see about us today, with this norm as given in the 10th chapter of Matthew, should make it very easy for us to distinguish between that which is Scriptural and that which is not genuine.

FOR SPECIAL PURPOSE

The signs, miracles, and the wonders Jesus and the apostles performed were also for a definite purpose. The only part of the Bible in existence at the time was the Old Testament. Not a single book of the New Testament had been written. These signs, therefore, were the authentication of the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. These gifts were to approve their ministry as being of God, and were to serve as their credentials while the New Testament was still unwritten. Then when the canon of Scripture was completed, and the New Testament written, there was no more need for these signs and miracles. We are now expected to believe the gospel, and not to seek for signs and wonders. We are to walk by faith in God's Word and not by sight. These signs were for God's miracle nation, primarily, and so Paul says:

"The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

But we preach Christ crucified."

1 Cor. 1:22-23

PETER'S TESTIMONY

The apostle Peter also makes this clear in His sermon at Pentecost. He says in the course of his great sermon:

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man APPROVED of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you." Acts 2:22

Will you notice two things in this particular passage. First of all, Peter is addressing Israel, and speaking only to the children of Israel, and addresses them as "YE MEN OF ISRAEL". He is not speaking to the Gentiles. Then notice next that the signs and the wonders that Jesus did were God's APPROVAL

of His authority and His divine mission. By these signs He proved to Israel that He was their Messiah and proved it by never failing once in helping all who came to Him. One single failure on the part of Jesus would have disqualified and disapproved Him immediately. There is no record that Jesus ever attempted to heal anyone, and failed to do so. Everyone of His miracles of healing was successful. This was the proof of His divine mission, and that is the test by which the Bible declares we are to judge the ministry. One failure to heal on the part of Christ would have discredited Him as not having been sent from God. Apply this test to those who claim these same powers today.

SAME OF THE APOSTLES

The same is true of the apostles. In Hebrews chapter 2, verse 4, the author, in speaking of the apostles says:

"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." Hebrews 2:4

Just as Jesus was approved of God in His ministry by signs and wonders, without a single failure, so too the apostles after Pentecost were approved of God by signs and wonders and these same miracles. These then became the sign of God's authority and approval upon their apostolic ministry. They did not heal everyone, they did not promise that everyone could be healed, but the miracles they did attempt were always successful, without a single failure. They never had occasion to excuse their own failure to perform a miracle, because of the lack of faith of the afflicted one, but every miracle was performed because it was:

"According to his own will."

But how are we to demonstrate God's approval upon our ministry? Listen to Paul in 2nd Timothy 2:15,

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2:15

We are to be approved of God by rightly dividing the Word of Truth. That is the test of the true ministry of the gospel today — rightly dividing the word, giving to Israel that which belongs to Israel, and to the Church that which belongs to the Church, and the world that which belongs to the world.

The question then is not, Is God able to do these wonders today? Can God bestow the gifts of healing on men today, just as He has done before? That question is in itself absurd. Of course, God is able. All things are possible with Him. The question is not this at all, but is rather, Is it His will to do so? Is this the program for today? Certainly God has not changed, but God does not deal exactly in the same way in every age. He deals quite differently in different ages. He fed Israel in the wilderness with manna. He kept them from disease and from sickness. Their clothes never waxed old, and their shoes never wore out for forty years (Deut. 29:5). Beloved, God is still able to do that, but He doesn't do it today for us, not because He cannot, but simply because there is no occasion for it, and it is not His program today to do so. And so whenever we seek to know the truth about any matter, we must always ask two questions:

1. Is it God's will?
2. Is it according to His Word?

If we apply this test to every claim of men, we can never go astray. In our next message we shall study one by one some of the incidents and signs and wonders in the Scriptures and seek to arrive at the truth as it is in the Word of God. If we come in submission to God's will, and are willing to follow His Word, we have a right to ask God to do the unusual and the miraculous.

CHAPTER THREE

Do you have a good physician in whom you have perfect confidence, and to whom you can turn in time of trouble? If you do, have you ever prayed for him, and for God's blessing upon his ministry? Have you ever thanked God for good physicians in this world? The apostle Paul evidently appreciated the services of a devoted and competent physician, for we read in 2nd Timothy 4, verse 11:

"Only Luke is with me."

2 Tim. 4:11

This was when Paul was in prison, just before he was to be executed for his testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ. In these last days, just before he died, he was left all alone except for

one dear, precious friend, Dr. Luke. In Colossians 4:14 he calls him "Luke, the beloved physician". The apostle Paul appreciated the services of this man, and it seems from the record that Dr. Luke, the physician, was Paul's constant companion on most of his journeys. He evidently accompanied Paul because the apostle frequently required skilled medical attention in his bodily affliction. We know that Paul suffered from some severe chronic malady, called by him "a thorn in the flesh", for which he had besought the Lord three times for deliverance, but instead of healing Paul, God had graciously supplied him with a good doctor, Dr. Luke, to give him relief and comfort instead. Here is Paul's own testimony as given in 2nd Corinthians 12:

"There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

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

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

2 Cor. 12:7-9

It was evidently a physical infirmity. The thorn was in his flesh, and God permitted it, to keep Paul humble and conscious of his own weakness and his dependence upon the Lord. Paul could be of greater service WITH his illness than without it. Paul wanted to be relieved of this infirmity, and he prayed God three times for healing, but God's answer was NO! No, Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee." It is better to experience His grace in suffering, than to enjoy health and to be less useful. And so God said to Paul, it is My will that you should not be healed. I know best what is good for you.

PAUL'S REACTION

And now we want you to notice how Paul reacted to this. Did he become despondent and complain, and begin to find fault, because God hadn't answered his prayer? Does he allow someone to upset him by telling him that he didn't have faith enough to be healed? Did he keep on pleading and commanding God to heal him? No, my friend, nothing of the kind. Paul instead submitted himself to the will of God. If God chose to heal him, Glory be to God, and if not, Glory be to God anyway. And so here we have Paul's answer:

"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 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 Cor. 12:9-10

Paul placed the entire matter in the hands of God, and submitted himself to His will, rather than his own personal desires.

MANY METHODS OF HEALING

But Paul did take Dr. Luke with him, and we doubt not that it was for this very definite reason. There is, therefore, no wrong in desiring to be healed. It was no sin for Paul to pray for healing, but it would have been a sin if he had rebelled at God's answer of NO. There are many, many agencies in the world today for the relief of sickness and disease, which are God's good gifts to men, and for which we should praise Him. We have the medical ministries through honest and reputable physicians, and remedies God has placed at the disposal of man. Through these, scourges which formerly wiped out entire populations have virtually disappeared from the earth. Diphtheria, typhoid, typhus, bubonic plague, small pox, not to mention many others, have virtually been wiped out in epidemic form through God's blessing upon the research of men, endowed with the knowledge and skill to find these remedies. Today, thanks to more recent discoveries, pneumonia, syphilis, gonorrhoea, and others, are also on the way out, we believe. Let us not be so foolish as to ignore this progress under the blessed hand of Almighty God.

IN THE PSYCHIC REALM

In recent years the emphasis has been greatly increased in the field of psychological treatment of disease. We recognize, of course, the power of mind over the body. We must face the fact that disease can be mental as well as physical. While there is a certain amount of quackery, including religious quackery in this field of healing, just as there is in all other professions, we must admit the usefulness of mental therapeutics, the efficacy of faith, and the tremendous power of suggestion in the relief and cure of many maladies associated with psychic, emotional and mental disease, imaginary ailments, neuroses, and psychoses. As the tempo of this modern age increases, and more and more nervous and mental maladies occur, the field for this

method of healing will undoubtedly continue to widen.

But there are also many other means of healing of the body. Sometimes disease is due to an occupational hazard, wrong diet, overwork, and worry. These can therefore often be relieved by a change of occupation, by removing the cause, by correction of the diet, discontinuance of the use of irritants, and substances which produced these symptoms, sometimes by rest and many other means. These too are ministries of healing, no different than the use of medicines, surgery, massage, exercise, proper adjustments, and other forms of therapy.

But, when we speak of divine healing, in the modern, accepted sense, we do not think of or include these commonly accepted methods. By divine healing we mean as a rule, healing without the ordinary, natural means of medicines, rest, diets, surgery, adjustments, psychiatric treatments, and so forth. We think of a miraculous touch of the power of God without any human or physical means. That God is able to do this, no one, of course, will deny. There are too many instances where God has instantaneously healed in answer to prayer, or even without prayer. It is not a matter of God's ability, therefore, not a question of whether He is able, but always remains a question of whether it is His will and part of His program.

THE USUAL MEANS

But it is not the usual method during this present dispensation and church age. God has given us certain means, in the form of medicines and remedies and treatments, and also some common sense, and He expects us to use all of them. To refuse God's good gifts in these matters, and then expect God to do the miraculous is not faith, but presumption. When all human help has failed, and there is nothing that man can do, then God can heal, if He so wills it. But if we exercise our faith and trust God to bless the ordinary means of remedies and rest and exercise, or whatever it may be, we can be healed also if it is His will. God is not limited to any one form of treatment. Exercising our faith does not imply that we must refuse to use our common sense, and the things which God has placed at our disposal.

Surely God is best qualified to take care of these bodies of ours. He made these bodies Himself. Way back in eternity He planned the universe, and when the time came to create, He spoke the Word and something came out of nothing, and nothing became something, as He strewed the planets in the infinity of space, paved their pathway through the skies, and arranged them in their order of galaxies and systems and con-

stellations. But listen, my friend, He also instituted certain laws which would keep them in their courses and travelling in their own orbits. In the same way the Master Architect planned the human body. He it is that made us, "wonderfully and fearfully," consisting of billions of cells, fed by miles of blood vessels, with its 25 trillion little carriages, the red corpuscles, to carry nourishment to each cell to keep them alive and healthy. He planned that moving picture camera, the eye, with its automatic shutter control, its sensitive photographic plate, the retina, containing two million rods and cones, to record the tiniest bit of light. He built that three-storied library of memory to record all those pictures taken by that eye, to file away every sound which came through the ear, that delicate harp of 24,000 strings. Every impression received through the ear, the nose, the eye, taste, or the sense of touch is permanently recorded and filed either in the upstairs studio of your conscious mind for current use, or the main floor of the sub-conscious mind, for occasional use, or the basement library of the unconscious, to be reproduced by the proper association of impressions of all these three.

He made that nervous system with its great central office, its miles and miles of cables of nerve trunks, its countless billions of nerve wires, reaching every part of that human body. He made that digestive system with its ability to transform the raw materials of protein, fat, carbohydrates, salts and other chemicals into bone and hair and thought and memory, life and action. To say, therefore, that He who made these bodies does not know how to repair them is to reveal one's own stupidity.

But sin entered these bodies, and so completely ruined man that these natural bodies are destined to be destroyed. Death is written upon every one at the very moment of birth. God's purpose therefore is not to fix up these mortal bodies, but ultimately to give us who believe, new bodies, immortal bodies, incorruptible bodies, when He comes again. It is appointed unto men once to die, and nothing can stop it. God is therefore not primarily interested in the healing of our bodies, but the salvation of our souls, and then as a result, the redemption of these bodies at Jesus' coming. It is therefore not the rule, we believe, that God wills to heal our bodies on every occasion. We repeat, He can if He wills to do so. But to say that all can be healed, that all who are not healed lack faith, is entirely foreign to the Word of God. All men eventually must die, and will continue to do so until the Lord Jesus comes. Of course, the Lord expects us to keep our bodies, though dying

bodies, as healthy as possible for His service, and if we neglect to use the God-given means, we have no right to expect God to do the miraculous.

ISRAEL'S EXPERIENCE

In conclusion let me give you an example from the history of Israel. During Israel's wilderness journey from Egypt to Canaan God gave them a promise, and said:

"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee." Exodus 15:26

Now this was a special provision of the Lord for Israel while they were in the wilderness. They had no means for sanitation, quarantine, or for the treatment of disease, for they were constantly on the march. They could not resort to the physicians in Egypt any more. They had no physicians in their company, for they had been slaves all their lives. And so God, to meet this emergency, miraculously kept them as a special provision for a special time, from sickness and disease. But there were also other special provisions which God made at the same time. He also gave them the manna from heaven, because they could, of course, raise no crops while they were marching in the desert. He also gave them water from the rock, for there were no springs in the land through which they travelled. Moreover, their clothes waxed not old, and the shoes did not wear out for forty years. These were special provisions from the Lord in order that they might survive. So then if we take the verse in Exodus 15:26, "I am the Lord that healeth thee", as our basis for healing today, then we must also depend upon God to give us manna without farming, water without digging wells, clothes that are good for forty years, and shoes that never would wear out. All of these were given together at one time for one purpose. But now will you notice carefully, as soon as Israel came into Canaan the manna ceased. God says in Joshua 5:12,

"And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year."

Joshua 5:12

Now you see, they were able to raise their own crops and the manna immediately ceased. If they had waited for a miracle when God wanted them to use the available means for the production of their food, they would have starved to death.

And the water also ceased, and God expects them now to get busy and to dig some wells. They now had the material to make their own clothes and shoes, and they had to get busy or go naked and barefoot. Oh, beloved, let us not tempt God by expecting Him to do by miracle, what He has enabled us to do in the natural means. Only when the natural means have failed have we a right to expect God to do the miraculous. If the miracles performed in Israel and in Jesus' day, therefore, are for us today, then why not claim all of them. Why not feed five thousand people, change water into wine, restore lost fingers and hands and limbs as Jesus did. Why not then also walk on the water and save many miles of transportation. I again ask, if some of these are for us because He performed them, then why not all? Why should we limit it only to the healing of the body, and not all the miracles which were performed?

And then when Israel entered the land the healings also changed. They now had received laws of hygiene, sanitation, diet, cleanliness, segregation of infectious persons, disinfection, and sterilization. We have but to read the detailed Levitical laws concerning the disposal of garbage, the boiling and burning of contaminated clothing and articles, washing of hands under running water, quarantine of lepers, handling of dead bodies, to see that God now expected them to use the means for the maintaining of their health. Yes, beloved, let us remember that when there is no other means God will often perform the miraculous, but it must be His will. Submission to God's will is far more important than the granting of your own desires and wishes. Let us remember as we come to the close of this message that even the Lord Jesus Christ did not seek His own will, nor command God when He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. He said:

"Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Matt. 26:39

This, I believe, must be the pattern and the norm for every believer. We have a right to come to God for all of our petitions, and all of our wants. We have a right to ask Him for everything we honestly and sincerely desire, but we must always do it in complete submission to His will, recognizing that He

knows best what is for me, and whatever He decides will be the best for us in the end. We may have to wait until He shows the purpose in it all, but I am sure that when we get to Glory we shall know that all things did work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Bible contains many, many hundreds of accounts of bodily healing, both by natural means and the miraculous touch of God without natural means. These healings were most common during Israel's history, beginning with father Abraham, and gradually becoming less frequent as God began to deal more specifically with the Gentiles. Nowhere, therefore, do we find such a concentration of miracles, signs and wonders and mighty works as in the four gospels, while the Messiah of Israel was offering the Kingdom to the nation of Israel. Hundreds upon hundreds of miracles and signs were performed by Him while He was here.

These gifts of miracles which Jesus performed were then committed to the twelve apostles and continued during the apostolic age. Paul tells us that the proof of his apostolic ministry were the signs and miracles he performed. He says in 2nd Corinthians 12:12,

"Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."
2 Cor. 12:12

IN ANSWER TO FAITH

In studying these miracles of healing in the Scriptures, we find that faith was often a primary requisite for healing. Jesus said to one individual, "According to your faith, so be it unto you." But He said this to one individual, and to make it a rule for everyone is to ignore the rest of the plain teaching of Scripture. An example of great faith in healing is the case of the woman who had suffered with an issue of blood for twelve years without relief, and whose great faith in merely touching the hem of Jesus' garment was rewarded with instant healing on the part of our Saviour (Matthew 9:22).

Another example of great faith was the healing of the

nobleman's son in answer to Jesus' simple word that the boy was healed, even though the father had entreated the Lord to come to his home (John 4:50). Again there are instances of weak faith which Jesus honored. Mary and Martha believed that Jesus could heal their brother but they didn't have the slightest idea or have enough faith to believe that He could raise him from the dead.

FAITH OF OTHERS

But faith on the part of the afflicted one is not always necessary. Sometimes Jesus healed in response to the faith of other persons who came in behalf of the afflicted one. A case in point, you will remember, is the healing of the paralytic who was carried by four men on a stretcher and let down through a hole in the roof at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the entire narrative there is no hint that this paralytic had any faith whatsoever, but the four who carried him did, and we read, therefore:

"When Jesus saw THEIR FAITH."

Mark 2:5

Here, you will notice, it was the faith of others rather than of the afflicted one. But there are also many instances of miraculous healing without any faith at all on the part of anyone. When Peter cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest in the Garden of Gethsemane, no one had faith that Jesus would replace the severed member, or was even looking for it, but the Lord Jesus did it just the same, without any apparent faith (Luke 22:50-51). Surely the maniac of Gadara did not have faith to be delivered, but instead begged the Lord to leave him alone (Mark 5:7).

Or think with me of the resurrection of the widow's son in Luke 7. No one besought the Lord Jesus to break up that funeral procession. There is no mention of any faith on the part of anyone, or that anyone anticipated the miracle. Jesus just stepped up and raised him from his bier (Luke 7:14-15).

We see therefore from these miracles which Jesus performed that while faith is desirable in some cases, and necessary in others, it certainly was neither essential nor present in all of them. Lack of faith therefore is not necessarily the reason for a person failing to be healed. There is only one case in the whole Bible where lack of faith resulted in failure. When Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration with Peter, James and John, his other disciples had encountered a real problem. They were unable to heal a lunatic and the father came to Jesus and said:

"And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him."

Matt. 17:16

After the Lord Jesus, however, had healed him, these disciples naturally came to the Lord and said:

"Why could not we cast him out?"

Matt. 17:19

And the answer of our Lord is significant. He said,

"Because of your lack of faith."

It was not lack of faith on the part of the afflicted one, but it was lack of faith on the part of the disciples. I want to repeat that statement. It was not lack of faith of either the lunatic or his father. Jesus blamed these would-be healers, and not the poor victim. Today the common excuse when people fail to experience healing is that they did not have enough faith to be healed. This, beloved, it seems to me is both unscriptural and cruel, and a baseless excuse for failure to accomplish what we claim to do. It has led to all kinds of sorrow, frustration, loss of confidence and spiritual agony and mental suffering. It is indeed most cruel, yea it is wicked to blame the poor victim for our own failure and our own weakness. Fully one-third of all the miracles recorded in the Bible make no reference to faith at all on the part of the one who was to be relieved or healed.

WITH OR WITHOUT MEANS

We come next to another important observation in the study of these Bible miracles. Healing may be with or without natural means. If there is a proven remedy or available means for healing, we are expected to use them. Practically all the healings in the Bible were incurables, or chronics, for which there was then no known remedy at all. Many examples of the use of means are recorded in Scriptures. Moses healed the bitter waters of Marah by casting in a piece of wood (Exodus 15:25). Elisha healed the poisonous pottage by adding meal (2nd Kings 4:41). Again he caused an ax-head to float on the water of Jordan by casting a branch into the water (2nd Kings 6:6). These are all means by which the miracle was performed. In the case of Hezekiah's sickness, the prophet Isaiah prescribed a poultice of figs to heal his carbuncle (Isaiah 38:21). Jesus applied clay to the eyes of a blind man (John 9:6). Paul advised the delicate Timothy to take a tonic

"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."

1 Tim. 5:23

To say, therefore, that we should not use remedies, that we should never call a physician because this would reveal lack of faith, is to go squarely against the Word of God in these instances. Our Lord Jesus Himself said:

*"They that be whole need not a physician, BUT
THEY THAT ARE SICK."*
Matt. 9:12

There is not a single verse in the entire Bible which discourages the employment of remedies or means or reputable physicians, whether they use remedies, surgery, mental treatment, diet, change of environment or massage, physical manipulations, or psychic therapy or mere faith. Many diseases, we know have a psychic cause, and are due to neuroses, and many are imaginary and are mental, and without question can often be helped by other means not involving medicines. Thousands of people imagine they are ill, while entirely normal. Such cases often respond to suggestive therapy. Just taking pills (even sugar pills) often will do the work. Just the idea of "taking something" is many times enough to make some people feel better. Then again we acknowledge the fact that faith is the method which is used in healing as we shall see later on.

SOME OBJECTIONS

A verse often quoted to prove that it is wrong to engage a physician is found in 2nd Chronicles 16:12. King Asa of Israel was:

"... diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians."

But there is absolutely nothing in this verse against the employment of physicians. Asa's mistake was not that he sought the physicians but the emphasis should be placed on the other part of the verse. His error was that in his disease "he sought NOT THE LORD." If he had sought the Lord and trusted Him to bless the physician's treatment, there could have been no wrong, I am sure. One more instance that is quoted again and again is the case of the woman in Mark 5 where we read:

"And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,

And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse."
Mark 5:25-26

Now you will notice from this that the woman had suffered many things of many physicians. But this is after all nothing surprising. She had a disease no physician could cure. This is told us definitely by Dr. Luke who certainly was in a position to know. Listen to Dr. Luke as he tells us in Luke 8:43,

"And a woman . . . spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any."

Luke 8:43

Note very carefully that Dr. Luke says, she could not be healed. Her disease was beyond medical help. As a result, this poor woman had gone from one doctor to another for Mark tells us, "she had suffered many things of many physicians".

She had tried them all, and undoubtedly among them were quacks and charlatans and racketeers. She had used all the nostrums and patent medicines recommended by all of her well-meaning but mistaken friends. It is perfectly natural that in her search for relief of her incurable disease she had fallen into the hands of quacks and charlatans and fakes, and had spent her all on nostrums and fake remedies. People will try anything in cases like that. We have examples all around us of this same thing today, but certainly this is no reflection upon the honest members of a noble profession. But when all help had failed, Jesus brought her relief in answer to her faith.

NOT COME TO MEETING

Notice the next thing with regard to Bible healings. Sometimes the afflicted came to the Lord Jesus. More often Jesus went Himself to the afflicted ones. The nobleman came first to the Lord, and then Jesus went with him to his home. Our Saviour did not tell him to come to His healing center or mass meeting for healing. When the sick called for Him, He went. He did not seclude Himself or tell them He was too busy in His campaign to make a personal call. How unfortunate this would have been for the poor, bed-ridden souls who could not come themselves, or had no one to take them. He did not send them a prayer cloth, or ask them to lay their hand on the radio, or read a book of instructions or subscribe to His magazine or take an offering first! Jesus went to heal Peter's mother-in-law in her home. All who came to Him received immediate attention. No standing in line, no "come back tomorrow night", no great healing centers, no high-powered advertising program, no claims that ALL can and will be healed, but He healed all who came, and all who sought Him out. The man at the pool of Bethesda did not come to Jesus, but Jesus went

to him and healed him. He did not heal any of the great number of others who lay there, neither did He attempt to. This one man was the only one that He "willed" to heal.

APPARENT TO ALL

And in this connection we observe that the healings of the Lord Jesus were evident to everyone. He did His miracles without a single failure, before them all. Peter says in Acts 2:22 that Jesus did:

"... miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."
Acts 2:22

Jesus did not go to Spain or Egypt and Africa and Korea, and then come back to tell of the wonders He had performed there, but He did them in their MIDST, and they could see with their own eyes. It is a remarkable fact that almost all the miracles which Jesus performed were visible maladies: paralytics, stone blind, raging fevers, epileptics, amputees, dead people. We read nothing about kidney trouble, heart disease, internal cancer, stomach trouble, or other invisible maladies, except the woman with an issue of blood, whose malady was of such a private nature that it prevented it from being made public.

NO FAILURES

One more observation we want to make before we conclude. There were no failures in Jesus' ministry. While He did not heal ALL who were ill, He did heal ALL who came to Him, and ALL whom He claimed to relieve. The objection is made that in Mark 6 we read:

"And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk." Mark 6:5

I think that a careful reading of the passage will show the real meaning. To take this verse out of its context distorts the meaning entirely. If we read the preceding verse, we have the answer to it:

"But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." Mark 6:4

These people rejected the Lord. They did not want to be healed by one of their own boys who had been raised in their own midst. They were not interested in him. In verse 3 they said:

"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon?... AND THEY WERE OFFENDED AT HIM."

Mark 6:3

And then follows the verse:

"And he could there do no mighty work."

Mark 6:5

It was not because Jesus could not, but they would not. To prove that He could, He did lay His hands on a few sick, and they were healed.

Yes, indeed, we believe that God can heal. We believe that God does heal, but it certainly is not His will that all shall be healed. We are to trust Him to know what is best for us. It is better to be obedient and submissive, than to be healed. Then this final thought. Mary and Martha wanted Jesus to come and heal their brother, Lazarus. They had faith that He could, but He didn't do it. Instead He tarried deliberately until Lazarus had died. Now we ask the question, Why did He do this? Why all the extra grief over their departed brother? The answer is very evident. It was because He had something better for them than a miracle of healing. It was the thrill of seeing Lazarus resurrected. For four long days they had wondered, and then they found out why. My precious soul, have you also wondered why God delays His answer to prayer? Maybe it is because He has something better for you also, something which you do not anticipate now, but something which when you receive it, you would not exchange for anything else that you have asked for. The great lesson to be learned in all these things is the lesson of trust and obedience, and being able to say with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: "Not my will, but Thine be done."

CHAPTER FIVE

"You can prove anything by the Bible." This is an expression you may have heard, and in a sense it is absolutely true. Taking one verse, or one passage, isolated by itself without reading it in the light of all the rest of Scripture and in its context may lead to all sorts of misinterpretations and strange

doctrines. The Bible says, for instance, "There is no God". You will find this in Psalm 14, verse 1. But to take just this phrase out of this verse to prove that there is no God is of course foolish, for the entire verse reads as follows:

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

That is quite another matter. In the same way, quoting a text to prove a doctrine proves nothing, unless it is interpreted and in harmony with the rest of the context and all the rest of God's revelation. Because of the danger of hanging a doctrine on one single peg of Scripture, we want to examine today a number of texts constantly quoted in regard to divine healing. We have no quarrel with anyone who believes in or practices healing, if it is according to the Word of God. We bring these messages, not to judge anyone or condemn anyone's claims, but merely to try and show what the Bible has to say. If it is Scriptural, then I endorse it, I am for it; but if it is unscriptural, I naturally must reject it. God tells us to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21).

THE MOST COMMON TEXT

Probably the most frequently quoted text in connection with our subject is Exodus 15:26. The phrase at the close of the verse is the one in question:

"I am the Lord that healeth thee."

Since we have already referred to this incident in a previous message, we want to dispose of this quickly. This, we pointed out, was a specific provision for Israel during their wilderness journey only. There is no evidence that it continued after they reached the land of Canaan. There were of course no facilities for obtaining medicines or the help of a physician in the wilderness, and this army of two million would have perished quickly from disease, except for a miracle. Moreover, this was only one of many special provisions for this particular occasion, all of which ceased at the end of their wandering. God not only prevented sickness while they were in the wilderness, but He provided manna from heaven, water from the rock, gave them shoes that did not wear out, clothes that lasted forty years. When the need for these passed, the miracles also ceased. If it ceased for some, it must have ceased for all. If the miraculous healing is then for today, as given in Exodus 15, then the others must of necessity be treated in the same way.

But this was more than healing; it was prevention of sickness. God said:

"I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee."
Exodus 15:26

The Lord says that He will KEEP them from becoming sick—that is still better than healing after they have become ill. It is also very significant that the verses immediately preceding this one (Exodus 15:23-25) record the healing of the bitter waters of Marah, when Moses at God's word threw a tree into the waters. This healing was by means, the means of a stick, and not without means. Where natural means therefore were available God would not do the miraculous.

ISAIAH FIFTY-THREE

Another Scripture which mentions healing is Isaiah 53:4,

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."
Isaiah 53:4

We are told upon good authority that the correct translation of this verse is: "He hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sicknesses." Now this translation is absolutely correct, and it refers to bodily healing. However, it is asserted by some that Jesus DIED for our sicknesses and diseases just as He died for our sins on the Cross. From there the statement is made that if this be true, then healing is in the atonement, the same as salvation. But this is incorrect. All who believe on Jesus are saved, but are not necessarily healed. This verse therefore has nothing to do with the atonement or the death of Christ. To say that all men are healed by exercising the same faith for healing which we exercise for salvation is a dangerous error, leading to frustration and needless agony.

BIBLE EXPLAINS ITSELF

But the Bible explains itself. The verse in Isaiah 53:4, "He hath borne our infirmities, and carried our diseases", is fully explained and interpreted by Matthew in Matthew 8:14-18. After Jesus had healed Simon's mother-in-law, we read this:

"When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed ALL that were sick."
Matt. 8:16

He healed ALL who came. No failures, no excuses, and no alibis. He healed ALL who had come. Now note carefully verse 17. This healing was the complete fulfillment of Isaiah 53:4, for we read:

"That it might be FULFILLED which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

Matt. 8:17

You will notice from this that Isaiah 53:4 was fulfilled, NOT when He died on Calvary, NOT when He succumbed on the Cross, but when He went about during His ministry, before the Cross, healing all that were sick. Nothing else can be the meaning of these words, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." This Scripture then was fulfilled while Jesus went about on the earth, healing all who came to Him.

The same is true of Isaiah 53:5. In this verse we read:

"With His stripes we are healed."

This is taken to mean that Jesus died for our healing just as He died for our sins. But this healing by His stripes has not the remotest connection with bodily healing. Peter makes this crystal-clear in 1st Peter 2:24. Listen to the words of Peter:

"Who (Jesus) his own self bare our SINS in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to SINS, should live unto righteousness: BY WHOSE STRIPES YE WERE HEALED." 1 Peter 2:24

This is the direct quotation from Isaiah 53:5, but there is not the remotest reference to bodily healing, but the healing of the SIN question, by His stripes. He bare our sins, (not our sicknesses) on the tree, that we being dead to SINS (not dead to sicknesses) might live unto righteousness, BY WHOSE STRIPES YE WERE HEALED.

YE WERE HEALED

Now notice also that this is the past tense. He does not say, "By his stripes ye shall be healed", but Peter says, "You have been healed". It refers to His finished, accomplished work. Our sins were atoned for by the stripes of the Lord Jesus Christ. You see then, to use passages like this to prove that this was accomplished on the Cross of Calvary is to disregard the interpretation of the Holy Spirit Himself and proves how hard pressed these "healers" are for Scripture proof. Of course, we realize that the ultimate healing of our bodies is in the atonement just as the redemption of our bodies, but that must wait until Jesus' coming, as Paul says in Phillippians 3:20,

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

Phil. 3:20-21

The commission of our Lord given to the apostles in Matthew 10 is also used for this same purpose. But Jesus said not only to the apostles, "Heal the sick", but also "cleanse the lepers, and raise the dead." He also said NOT to go to the Gentiles, but to Israel only. He also said they were not to take extra clothes or shoes, or take any money. Careful reading of Matthew 10 will soon show that this was an apostolic commission for Israel only.

JOHN FOURTEEN: TWELVE

Another common text often quoted is John 14:12,

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." John 14:12

I confess that I cannot find any reference here at all to a special gift of healing. This promise is for any believer, not only for certain ones. Jesus says:

"He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also."

He does not say, "the miracles that I do," but "the works that I do". If we are to do the miracles that Jesus did, then we must be able to multiply loaves and fishes; walk on the water; catch fish with money in their mouths, to pay our taxes; raise the dead; put back amputated ears; wither some fig trees; and all the other miracles which He performed. But Jesus adds:

"And greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

What greater miracles can we do than those Jesus did? What greater miracle can we perform than raising the dead? He is speaking therefore of works, and not miracles. The work of Christ was the saving of souls. Jesus came not primarily to heal men and women, but to save them. That was His great work. In 1st Timothy 1:15 Paul says:

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1 Tim. 1:15

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus said, "Greater works shall ye do, because I go unto my Father." What has His going to the Father to do with the greater works which we are to perform? He explains it all in John 16:7,

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."
John 16:7

For the Spirit to come on the day of Pentecost, Jesus must of necessity go back to heaven, and so after he ascended, He sent back the Person of the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit first endowed with power the apostles, and inspired these disciples to write the New Testament, and then made possible the spreading of this work of salvation in a way which was impossible even for Jesus while He was here. He left Palestine only once. He was confined in His ministry to a territory a hundred miles by fifty, and almost entirely to one little nation, but since He went to the Father, and sent the Holy Spirit, greater works have been possible. Paul could say that he had preached the gospel to the whole world. First came the written Scriptures of the New Testament which were not in existence during Jesus' time. Soon the gospel went over all the world. Then came the printing press, and now the radio, so that in one broadcast we are able to reach more people than Jesus did in His entire ministry. These are the "greater works" which Jesus said we should do, not merely relieving a few sick folks, to struggle on for a few more years, and then ultimately to die, but rather, broadcasting eternal life to men and women around the entire world.

We have time just to deal with one more Scripture, Hebrews 13:8.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."
Hebrews 13:8

Does this have anything to do with the performance of miracles, and does it mean that the things which Jesus did while here must be repeated by us? There is again not the remotest hint in the entire context that it has reference to signs and wonders and miracles at all. It speaks of the unchangeable nature of His character, not of His actions. Jesus is not the same from eternity in His humanity. For an eternity He was God, not man. Then nineteen hundred years ago He became a man, and came in human flesh. He was not the same in this respect before His incarnation as after. Instead, therefore, this passage speaks of the unchanging faithfulness

of Christ. In the entire context the writer is remembering the suffering of the saints which they had to endure, and says in verse 6:

"So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Hebrews 13:6

And in this connection we read:

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

But notice the next verse, which may well be a fitting warning to us not to be deceived by false teachers. Here is the entire passage:

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

(And now notice carefully the next verse.)

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines."
Hebrews 13:8-9

And now, in conclusion, may I urge you to study your Bibles, check everything you hear by the Book.

*"Despise not prophesyings.
Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."*
1 Thess. 5:20-21

Reject not that which is genuine, but be able to discern between the true and the false, be able to prove all things by the Word of God, and hold fast that which is good. And to you who are sick, take your sickness to the Lord. Use the blessed means which He provides if they are available. And if these fail, then you have a right to trust Him, and to come to Him, and then if it is His will to heal you, praise His Name. If for some reason, known to God alone, He deems best to say instead, "No, My child; My grace is sufficient for thee: My strength is made perfect in weakness"; then ask God to give you the victory to say with Paul:

"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities."
2 Cor. 12:9

And so we close once more with the admonition of John:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
1 John 4:1

facts YOU SHOULD KNOW about the **RADIO BIBLE CLASS**

THE RADIO BIBLE CLASS is a modern miracle! Beginning with one small station in 1938, the broadcast is now heard over the Mutual and the ABC radio networks, in addition to independent stations here at home and abroad.

This is truly a remarkable example of God's grace and blessing, since the Radio Bible Class is supported exclusively by the free-will offerings of its listening friends. No valuable time has ever been taken on the air to make financial appeals, and there is no "follow-up" plan of circularizing those who write in for the free booklets. As the facts are placed before our friends in this manner, we trust the Lord to lay it upon the hearts of those who have been blessed, to help make possible the continuance of this program.

The Radio Bible Class is organized under the laws of the State of Michigan as a non-profit religious corporation. All funds received are deposited in the name of the Radio Bible Class and are used exclusively to support this Bible-teaching ministry.

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