

The Truth About
HEALING

by David C. Pack

Herbert W. Armstrong led the Worldwide Church of God (formerly The Radio Church of God until 1968) until his death in 1986. Hundreds of millions heard his voice and read his literature. God called him in the fall of 1926 and he was converted in the spring of 1927. Over the course of Mr. Armstrong's ministry, God revealed through him a great many true biblical doctrines, which had been lost to the Church through the centuries. After his death, his successors ceased to believe and teach these doctrines. Although copyright law prohibits The Restored Church of God from reproducing and distributing literature produced while he led the Worldwide Church of God, we are committed to the preservation and teaching of all of these truths!

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Does God still heal today? Did such miraculous intervention end with Christ and the apostles? Is God now working through medical science? Should Christians ever seek doctors? If so, when—under what circumstances? What about public “faith healers”? Here is the **PLAIN TRUTH** about healing!

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INTRODUCTION

Why must people be sick? Why do so many move from illness to illness and doctor to doctor seeking remedies, cures and relief from a host of ailments, often spanning a lifetime? Why should so many have to spend much of their lives *suffering*—battling every conceivable condition from the common cold to life-threatening strokes or cancer?

Consider the average doctor's waiting room. It is FILLED with people seeking treatment. They have no idea *why* they are sick—or *what* they should do about it. Such people have been trained—*conditioned*—to believe they must seek “expert medical advice” when sick. As a result, work loss is increasing, hospitals and clinics are full, medical and healthcare costs are soaring—with a corresponding rise in cases of physician fraud and malpractice—and there is a constant need for more doctors and equipment to diagnose and treat the skyrocketing number of patients. Suffering and confusion abound! And many are dying long before the end of a full lifetime.

Illness and disease have stalked mankind for millennia. Plagues and sickness have been as inseparable from the history of civilization as the weather or people themselves. Sadly, today, disease and crippling conditions are a fact of life for large segments of humanity.

Medical science once believed that it could control and conquer disease. It has failed. The reality is that new diseases are continually emerging and older ones are rapidly mutating into antibiotic-resistant forms. Therefore, the medical world is losing its main weapon in the war against disease.

News media reports are now filled with rising statistics—and how the battle is being *lost*. Casualties—deaths and debilitating illnesses—are exploding

around the world. Hardly a week passes without reports of new disease outbreaks occurring somewhere on Earth. Civilization seems to be taking two steps back for every one step forward.

Is this what God intended?

No! Jesus said, “I am come that they might have *life*, and that they might have it more *abundantly*” (John 10:10). This verse is hardly compatible with spending a lifetime suffering every possible illness and malady known to man. And then there is the apostle John’s statement, written under the inspiration of God: “I wish above all things that you may *prosper* and be *in health*” (III John 2).

Yes, God’s purpose is that all human beings enjoy robust health. His intention has always been that they enjoy a life of radiant, abundant living. Yet this has never been the case for the majority of mankind. This is because humanity is ignorant of what God says about healing. While *people* have many opinions about healing, we must look to *God* and His Word—the Bible—to see what *HE* says about this subject.

The Question of Healing

The four gospel accounts record that Christ performed many miracles during His ministry. Many of His most dramatic were *healings*. He made the lame walk—gave sight to the blind—healed lepers—healed others with the palsy—and “healed *all* that were sick” (Matt. 8:16). He also performed many healings of the mind by casting out demons from those who were possessed. He even resurrected some from the dead.

Not only did Christ heal large numbers of people, He also commissioned His disciples to do the same. We will learn that His ministers, when asked, still “anoint the sick” today.

Throughout my ministry, I have seen every kind of sickness and disease—and have seen thousands of people anointed. Having done this myself to one or more people weekly, for well over thirty years, I have probably performed additional *thousands* of anointings. Sometimes people have been healed—sometimes not. On certain occasions, I have personally been healed—and on other occasions I have not. This will be explained later.

I have also *counseled* many hundreds who faced serious illness—some that were life-threatening. This caused people to have a number of questions. Generally speaking, they asked the same basic questions.

Does the God of the Bible still heal today? Or has He now commissioned medical science to be His instrument—to take His place? Has the time of miracles and healings passed? What are the “gifts of healing” described in I Corinthians 12:9 and 28? Are today’s “faith healers”—and their “healing revivals”—modern manifestations of these gifts? Is it a sin to go to a doctor or a hospital? If God still heals today, what part does faith play—and what *is* real faith?

Healing—An Artificial Doctrine

Genesis contains God’s description of the creation of man. The creation week and the time immediately following it are described in the first three chapters. The account reveals what God thought of His work after it was finished.

Chapter 1, verse 25 states that each animal was made after “his kind.” Notice: “And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creeps upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.”

Then God said, “Let *Us* [more than one] make man in *Our* image, after *Our* likeness” (vs. 26). Verse 27 continues, “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.”

Next, verse 28 begins with an important statement: “And God *blessed* them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” This verse addresses—though indirectly—the subject of healing for the first time. Let me explain.

If God had instilled viruses, bacteria, parasites, inherited traits that led to certain diseases, and degenerative conditions that would have led to others, at the moment of Adam and Eve’s creation, it could hardly be described as *blessing* them. It would be better described as *cursing* them!

Now consider another key point about the original condition of the first human beings. This account concludes with, “And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was *very good*” (vs. 31). Think about what this scripture is saying. Does it leave room for the hidden presence, within Adam and Eve, of every disease, illness, sickness and ailment known to man? Of course, not! Disease is *not* “very good”—it is *very bad*!

Since God “blessed” this couple and said that their creation was “very good,” disease could not yet have been present. So then, disease must have entered the picture *later*.

It was never God’s original purpose that He would have to heal human beings of illness and disease. Later, we will learn that His Plan for all people is that every form of sickness will disappear forever. But, since man has brought this condition upon himself, God has had to address it and explain His role as Healer!

In the first chapter, we will examine what the Bible—Old and New Testaments—teaches about healing.

EXAMINING THE BIBLE TEACHING

If I wanted to learn to fly an airplane, I would ask a pilot. If I wanted to build a house, I would speak to a contractor. If I wanted to understand plumbing, I would consult a plumber.

The same is true of healing. If one wants to learn about healing, he should not ask a doctor, a nurse, a paramedic or any other “medical expert.” They cannot heal anyone—and most will readily admit this! They will also admit that they do not know what the Bible says about it.

God is the One who heals. If you want to learn about healing, you must ask the One who knows about it.

God says in Hosea, “My people are destroyed for *lack of knowledge*: because you have *rejected knowledge*, I will also reject you” (4:6). All the essential knowledge of God is available to any who seek it. But to get the full picture, the scriptures must be put together carefully and completely. God states that He reveals His purpose and teaching to those mature enough to be instructed: “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. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” (Isa. 28:9-10). Therefore, all the verses on healing are not in one place.

The Bible reveals God’s will—His understanding and teaching—on every spiritual matter. It has much to say about healing. We must examine many verses in order to strip away the mystery behind this subject. You *can* understand healing. God’s willingness to heal you *can* be known. Answers to the most commonly asked questions about healing *are* addressed in the Bible—and this booklet will reveal its PLAIN ANSWERS!

Two New Testament Healings

Two vital New Testament scriptures set the stage for all that we will study.

Mark 5 records the case of a woman who had a chronic “issue of blood.” After many physicians had made her condition worse, she sought Christ for healing. Notice: “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” (vs. 25-26). Christ healed her and concluded with this all-important statement: “Daughter, *your faith has made you whole*; go in peace...” (vs. 34).

Doctors did not, and could not, heal her. But Christ could, and did—and *faith* was the key.

Next, Matthew 9 shows how healing is always directly tied to faith: “And when Jesus departed there, two blind men followed Him, crying, and saying, You son of David, have mercy on us. And...the blind men came to Him: and Jesus said unto them, Believe you that I am able to do this? They said unto Him, Yes, Lord. Then touched He their eyes, saying, *According to your faith be it unto you*” (vs. 27-29). These men believed that Christ could give them sight. His answer? “According to *your faith* be it unto you.”

Christ asked, “When the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8). This verse speaks of conditions just before the time of His Return. Christ leaves this an open question. He understood that almost all would *not* have faith at the end of the age—just before the establishing of the kingdom of God. He knew that most would *not* be willing to believe direct statements from the Bible. He recognized that conditions on Earth would create an anti-faith atmosphere, making it very difficult for people to believe even plain scriptures. He knew that very few would be willing to take God’s promises at face value!

But Christ promised 2,000 years ago that He would build His Church (Matt. 16:18). It would be composed of the few (Luke 12:32)—not the many—who *would* be willing to believe God, and “live by faith” (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17) and “every word of God” (Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4; Deut. 8:3).

Faith and healing are inseparable. You cannot be healed without true faith. This booklet will make this point absolutely clear.

Yet, what *is* faith? Without understanding what it is, one cannot have it. In the second chapter, we will thoroughly discuss what the Bible teaches about *real* faith—sufficient for healing, or for receiving *any* promise of God!

First, we will examine many Old Testament scriptures about healing. As we do, you must be willing to *believe* what the Bible says.

The Old Testament Teaching

Does healing first appear in the *New* Testament? Certainly Christ and the apostles did perform miracles and heal many who were sick. It is commonly

supposed that these things first happened in the New Testament, for the sole purpose of proving that Christ was the Messiah.

This is simply not true. Healing did *not* first appear in the New Testament. The Old Testament records numerous miraculous healings. It is here that God *first* reveals Himself as the One who heals. Prepare to be surprised!

Almost immediately after God delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt, He had to perform a miracle just for them to have water to drink. It was at this point that He revealed Himself as the God who heals. Notice: “If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD your God, and will do that which is right in His sight, and will give ear to *His commandments*, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon you, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the *LORD that heals you*” (Ex. 15:26).

In the Old Testament, God uses several names to designate who and what He is. In this verse, He introduces Himself as *Yahweh-Rapha*, meaning the “God who heals”—or the “healing God.”

Soon after this, God told Israel that they were not to serve any other gods. Here is His instruction and promise to them if they obeyed: “You shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but you shall utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images. And you shall serve the LORD your God, and He shall bless your bread, and your water; and *I will take sickness away* from the midst of you” (Ex. 23:24-25).

In Deuteronomy, God added, “And the LORD will take away from you”—heal—“all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you know, upon you” (7:15). And then, “See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and *I heal*: neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand” (32:39).

God establishes Himself as our Healer in these plain verses.

King David understood this. In Psalm 6:2, he prayed, “Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, *heal me*; for my bones are vexed.” Psalm 41:4 is similar: “I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: *heal my soul*; for I have sinned against You.” After these kinds of prayers, David was able to say, “O LORD my God, I cried unto You, and You *have healed me*” (30:2).

David also prayed, “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not *all His benefits*” (Psa. 103:2). Most today do not understand that there *are* many wonderful BENEFITS to serving God. He is often depicted as a God of “Thou shalt nots...” instead of as the God who desires to bless His people. David knew that God is always willing to forgive and to heal every kind of sickness and disease. Notice the very next verse: “Who forgives all your iniquities [sins]; Who *heals all your diseases*” (vs. 3).

Sometimes people become sick through foolishness—poor diet, lack of rest or wrong living and thinking. Others are injured in unnecessary accidents due to carelessness. God is still willing to forgive such people—and heal them. Consider this passage: “Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhors all manner of meat; and they

draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and He saves them out of their distresses. He sent His word, and *healed them*, and delivered them from their destructions” (Psa. 107:17-20).

Take notice that Psalm 103:3 said in the same verse that God forgives all iniquity (lawlessness) *and* heals all diseases. David had asked God for mercy in Psalm 41. Mercy is required when forgiveness is necessary. Healing involves the forgiveness of physical sins.

No doctor, drug or medication can forgive sin—only God can do this! Therefore, no doctor, drug or medication can heal. But God can! It is vital that we understand why healing and forgiveness of sin are often mentioned in the same context. God is the only One that can do *either*!

Three Examples

Now we must examine three separate Old Testament case histories that each involved a king. Critically important *lessons* come from these accounts.

David was not the only one that God healed. King Hezekiah of Judah had been told personally by the prophet Isaiah that he was going to die. Ask yourself: What would I do in such circumstances? II Kings 18:5 records that Hezekiah “trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.”

Here is the account: “In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus says the LORD, Set your house in order; for you shall die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, I beseech You, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before you in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in your sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of My people, Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father, I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears: behold, *I will heal you*: on the third day you shall go up unto the house of the LORD. And I will add unto your days fifteen years... *and he recovered*” (II Kings 20:1-7).

In faith, Hezekiah tearfully sought God. He did not rush off to a hospital or seek doctors. He sought to overturn God’s will through prayer and faith.

The next account involves King Ahaziah of Israel, son of the wicked King Ahab. His example is far different than that of Hezekiah. Notice: “And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease. But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that you go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus says the LORD, You shall not come down from that bed on which you are

gone up, but shall surely die. And Elijah departed. And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are you now turned back?" (II Kings 1:2-5).

Baal-zebub was the patron deity medicine god, who was located in the city of Ekron. His name literally means "the lord of dunghills" or "the lord of flies." Anciently, people understood that flies were filthy and transported many diseases. Of course, they are commonly seen on dung of all types. Baal-zebub's intervention was sought by inquiring through his priestly representatives. Yet God says that He is the one who heals.

God was not pleased that Ahaziah sought a different god—one that could not heal. The result? Ahaziah died. Hezekiah's account indicates that it may have been needlessly. Had Ahaziah sought the true God who heals, he might have been granted many more years to live.

The final account involves the fascinating story of King Asa of Judah. Asa was a righteous king who initially trusted in God. As a result, God blessed and protected Judah for over thirty-five years. II Chronicles 15:17 records that "the heart of Asa was perfect all his days." His obedience to God was perfect, but his *faith* was not. This is the critical lesson here.

While God had promised that He would always fight Judah's battles, Asa lost faith and paid tribute money to the king of Assyria in exchange for his assistance as an ally. God consistently condemned His people to captivity for seeking physical alliances with surrounding nations, when He was perfectly willing and able to defend them—to fight for and in place of them. Almost as consistently, Israel rebelled and would not seek the true God first.

Here is Asa's account: "And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign 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.*" Because Asa ignored God's role as Healer, he "slept with his fathers, and *died* in the one and fortieth year of his reign" (II Chron. 16:12-13).

The rest of the account shows that the prophet Hanani had visited Asa to jolt him into recognizing that he had drifted from God. But Asa became angry and threw him in prison. It was only a short while later that Asa fell sick.

Two Gospels

Many New Testament verses address healing, but we are not yet ready to examine and understand them. It is important that some additional background material first be brought into the picture.

Throughout Christ's 3 1/2-year ministry, He preached—as an advance *announcement*—the gospel of the coming kingdom of God. Mark 1:14-15 records the first statement of Christ's purpose and commission—His message: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the *kingdom of God*, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the *kingdom of God* is at hand: repent you, and believe the gospel."

When speaking to a group of listeners in the desert, Christ explained His purpose—His responsibility: “And He said unto them, I *must* preach the *kingdom of God* to other cities also: *for therefore am I sent*” (Luke 4:43).

In the Old Testament, Jesus was prophesied to come as a MESSENGER—He was sent with a MESSAGE—of the gospel. Notice Malachi 3:1: “Behold, I will send My messenger [John the Baptist, prior to Christ’s first coming], and he shall prepare the way before Me: and the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, *even the MESSENGER [Jesus Christ] of the covenant*, whom you delight in.”

Christ was the Messenger, not the *message*. His message—the gospel of the kingdom of God—is the very core of the entire Bible.

Now compare this verse with another: “The law and the prophets [only the Old Testament scriptures had been preached previously] were until John [the Baptist]: *since that time the KINGDOM OF GOD* is preached, and every man presses into it” (Luke 16:16).

The preaching of Christ’s message was accompanied by miracles and healings. These always went hand in hand. Notice: “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people” (Matt. 4:23).

The world is ignorant of the true gospel. The leaders of this world’s brand of Christianity have suppressed it and substituted a variety of false gospels in its place. The apostle Paul powerfully warned those who would twist or pervert the gospel, or replace it with a counterfeit. Here is what he told the Galatian Christians: “I marvel that you are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ” (1:6-7). It states the gospel “of” Christ, not “about” Christ. Remember, Christ’s gospel was about the kingdom of God.

Paul went on to warn, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any *other gospel* unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any *other gospel* unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed” (1:8-9).

Strong words! Woe to any who would preach a false gospel! Yet for almost 1,900 years, the true gospel was not preached. It was not until the twentieth century that God restored the knowledge of what *is* the true gospel to the world as a whole.

Satan is the god of this world. He has been able to blind humanity for thousands of years to the truth of the coming kingdom of God. Paul also warned the Corinthian brethren not to be deceived. Speaking of Satan, he wrote, “In whom the *god of this world* has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (II Cor. 4:4). Revelation 12:9 states that Satan “deceives the whole world.”

How has he done this? More specifically, how has he deceived the masses of *traditional Christianity*?

The New Testament Church was warned to reject those who brought “another gospel,” or “another Jesus,” or derived their authority from “another spirit.” Seven chapters later in II Corinthians, Paul explained how Satan (11:3) deceives so many: “For if he that comes preaches *another Jesus*, whom we have not preached, or if you receive *another spirit*, which you have not received, or *another gospel*, which you have not accepted, you might well bear with him” (11:4). Generally speaking, this “other Jesus” that professing Christianity follows is one who does *not* heal and did *not* suffer horribly for our sins (as we shall understand later), prior to crucifixion.

Many to be Deceived

Now understand! The devil does not personally walk up and down the street or enter churches teaching a false gospel or false doctrines. He uses his ministers. Notice Paul’s additional warning to the Corinthians: “For such are *false apostles, deceitful workers*, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if *his ministers* also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (11:13-15).

Yes, Satan has ministers—and they *appear* as ministers of light and righteousness. They *seem* to be God’s ministers. It is not surprising that those who bring a *false* gospel would not understand the miracles and healings that always accompany the preaching of the *true* gospel.

In Matthew 24, Christ discusses the most important trends, conditions and events to appear just prior to His Return. His disciples wanted Him to explain what would happen: “And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the *sign of Your coming*, and of the *end of the world*? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man *deceive you*. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall *deceive many*” (vs. 3-5).

Many *have* come claiming Christ’s authority—and many *have* been deceived! Satan’s ministers have failed to announce the coming, world-ruling kingdom or government of God. They have most often replaced Christ’s message about the kingdom with a message about the Messenger. The Messenger is *not* the message. His announcement was the message—and still is.

But Christ foretold that, just prior to the end, His Church would preach the true gospel around the world. Notice: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be *preached* in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the *end* come” (vs. 14).

Mark’s account of this same prophecy adds, “And the gospel must first be *published* among all nations” (13:10). Three chapters later, Christ commissioned His followers—the apostles, and those true ministers who would faithfully teach

His message—to faithfully carry the true gospel to the world: “And He said unto them, Go you into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (16:15).

Matthew 24:14 plainly states that the preaching of the kingdom of God would occur prior to “the end.” If this had been occurring for the preceding nearly 1,900 years, this statement would make no sense. (Only a relatively few people secretly heard the true gospel through this time.) How could it be prophesied to occur at the end if it was happening throughout history? But Christ foretold that a final period of witness and warning *would* happen prior to His Return. And, beginning in 1934, it did!

The Restored Church of God continues to preach this gospel today! (To learn more about this subject, read our booklet *Which Is the True Gospel?*)

Two Churches

However, neither Matthew nor Luke recorded that *public* healing would accompany the preaching of the gospel at the end of the age. This is because healing is now *for the Church* (Jms. 5:14-15), which Christ promised to build (Matt. 16:18). It was to be a commandment-keeping Church comprised of those seeking to please God in everything they do (I John 3:22).

Revelation 12 describes in summary the 2,000-year history of Christ’s true Church. The small, faithful few of God’s flock (Luke 12:32) have been persecuted, suffering extreme hardship and martyrdom at the hands of another church, described in Revelation 17. This *large* church is described as politically powerful and controlling this world’s rulers, nations and kingdoms. It is also pictured as “drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs.” It has suppressed the true gospel of God’s government coming to earth, and has described *itself* as “the kingdom of God on earth,” present in “the hearts of men.”

This false church, described as a “great whore,” began in AD 33, under the leadership of Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8)—and by the second century was masquerading as God’s true Church. Jude 4 describes those who “crept in unawares...turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness [license].” II Kings 17:18-24 describes how, in 718 B.C., Samaria, in northern Israel, became the headquarters of the Babylonian mystery religion—from which the false church received her doctrines (Rev. 17:5).

But the kingdom of God is still being proclaimed—and it is going out in power around the world today. When *that* gospel is being preached, healings and other miracles will take place. Miracles *do* still occur in God’s Church. The true Church of God teaches *and practices* the truth about healing. The result? Miracles and healings occur—and are increasing!

Healing in the New Testament

Some will admit that the Old Testament shows that God heals. But at the same time, they seem unwilling to understand many basic New Testament scriptures

that are just as plain. Instead, confusion reigns due to the lack of faith in God's clear promises.

Some think that God still heals, but that He only does it through medical science—that God raised this up for us today. Others believe God healed in the past, but only through Christ and the apostles in the first century. Still others go further, believing that God *can* heal, but are not sure that He *will*—or that He will heal *them*.

Of course, we saw in Matthew 4:23 that Christ healed “*all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.*” After Christ's Sermon on the Mount of chapters 5-7, chapter 8 records, “When He was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, *if You will*, You can make me clean. And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, *I will*; be you clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed” (vs. 1-3).

Did you notice that, when asked by the leper if He would heal him, Christ said, “I will.” It *was* Christ's will to heal him. It still is His will to heal.

Two verses later, Christ encountered a Roman centurion, demonstrating that God also heals Gentiles: “And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, And saying, Lord, my servant lies at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus said unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant *shall be healed*. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant, Do this, and he does it. When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom [the Jews of that day] shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go your way; and as *you have believed*, so be it done unto you. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour” (Matt. 8:5-13).

What *is* Healing?

Recall that David asked for mercy—forgiveness—when he sought God to heal him. Also recall that this is because healing involves forgiving sin.

We must understand. Paul wrote that “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). But what *is* sin? Many proclaim themselves “sinners,” while having no idea what this means. *How* did they sin?

I John 3:4 states, “sin is the transgression of the law.” This is critical knowledge that directly relates healing to the kingdom of God. How? God's spiritual law of love (Rom. 7:14, 13:10; I John 5:3) will be enforced in His

kingdom. It is best described as the “give” way of life and is summarized in the Ten Commandments.

Sin carries a terrible penalty. Romans 6:23 states that “the wages of sin is *death*”—*eternal* death. It could be said that the wages of *physical* sin is sickness and disease. Violation of *spiritual* law will result in eternal death. Violations of physical law can result in illness or even physical death.

But sin has other consequences. It cuts people off from God (Isa. 59:1-2), and this includes His *blessings* (Jer. 5:25). When God set His great spiritual law in motion, automatic penalties for disobedience were set in motion with it.

But how is one released from the penalty of sin—physical or spiritual?

While most traditional Christians never *fully* understand Christ’s sacrifice for our spiritual sins—and what it means—they do generally know “Christ died for us.” Take time to read Colossians 1:13-16 and Ephesians 3:9. His shed blood paid the penalty for broken spiritual laws. But what about the forgiveness of physical sin? How does this work? Most do not even know that there is such a thing as the forgiveness of *physical sin*—partly because almost no one understands and uses the term.

Let’s understand. Human beings are made from the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7). No matter how long a person may live, eventually, he dies. There are no exceptions (Heb. 9:27).

But your body was made with numerous inter-connected systems that, when functioning properly together, result in good health. When physical laws are broken, systems break down and no longer work in harmony. Things go wrong—and sickness and disease is the result. This is the penalty for disobedience to one or more of these laws.

Let’s return to Matthew 8. After the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law, the account picks up in verse 16 with critical understanding of Christ’s prophesied role in our healing. First let’s read: “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: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, *Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses*” (vs. 16-17).

This is a plain New Testament verse about Christ’s fulfillment of a prophecy to bare “our”—including ours today—infirmities and sicknesses. That is what it said. This is God’s promise—and it was always part of His Plan that Christ physically suffer so that He could remove the penalty of broken physical laws hanging over us.

Jesus Christ willingly paid the penalty for every physical mistake human beings make that result in bad health. Every condition, pain, suffering, disease, illness, injury, physical infirmity—and even death itself—is covered within Christ’s promise.

Jesus literally takes your physical sins and bears them on your behalf. They are not placed in some kind of suspended condition. They are *removed* by Christ. Through God’s miracle, they are *gone*!

Isaiah's Graphic Prophecy

Matthew referenced Isaiah. This prophet recorded two astonishing passages describing Christ's terrible suffering *prior* to His crucifixion on the stake. Examining and considering their meaning reveals *how* Christ was able to bare our infirmities and sicknesses. This time, let's read in the Revised Standard Version: "As many *were* astonished at Him—His appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and His form beyond that of the sons of men—so shall He startle [shock, astonish] many nations; kings *shall* shut their mouths because of Him; for that which has not been told them they shall see, and that which they have not heard they shall understand" (52:14-15).

Yes, Christ's true suffering and condition will one day be shocking—startling!—to a great many. Notice that *two* groups are mentioned when referencing what Christ endured. Those who "were" astonished at what He suffered—and those that "shall" be startled by this knowledge, and by the supreme power and glory Christ will have when He returns as King of kings and Lord of lords. At that time, the entire world will recognize Christ as both King and Healer of every sickness known to man!

This extensive passage actually continues past the manmade chapter division. These verses complete the picture of Christ's fulfillment of His role—and how the vast majority of mankind would misunderstand and "reject" the true Christ. Now continue: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him *stricken*, *smitten* of God, and *afflicted*. But He was *wounded* for our transgressions, He was *bruised* for our iniquities: the *chastisement* of our peace was upon Him; and with His *stripes* we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (53:3-6, KJV).

These are graphic words. What Christ suffered was not a light thing. The typical picture of Him hanging on the stake only shows a tiny amount of blood where the spear entered (John 19:34) and a little more coming from His crown of thorns (Matt. 27:29). This picture falls *far short* of how He really looked!

One additional New Testament passage summarizes the picture we have just seen. I Peter 2:22, 24 speaks of Christ, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth...who His own self bore our sins...by whose *stripes* you were *healed*."

Christ's Beating

The apostle Peter spoke of Christ's "stripes." Does the New Testament record when and how this was done? Notice: "When Pilate saw that he could prevail

nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see you to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had *scourged* Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified” (Matt. 27:24-26).

Two other gospel accounts confirm what happened: “And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had *scourged* Him, to be crucified” (Mark 15:15). Also: “Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and *scourged* Him...*Then* [afterwards] delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led Him away” (John 19:1, 16).

These passages clearly reveal that Christ’s “scourging” happened before He was led away to be crucified. It was a *separate* event. It carries distinct and important meaning. Now you understand why it happened.

Pause for a moment and reflect on what Christ was willing to endure on behalf of those who need God’s marvelous healing power. Ask yourself when, if ever, have you heard even one of this world’s preachers explain, or be willing to describe, the terrible beating that Christ was willing to endure so that human beings could be restored back to perfect health from every conceivable physical malady one can imagine.

God describes Himself as a Father “who pities His children” (Psa. 103:8-13). All parents know how painful it is to see their children sick or suffering. And we are merely physical human beings. How much more compassionate would God, as our spiritual Father, feel toward His sick children, than would any human parent?

God is eager to apply Christ’s physical sacrifice of suffering on your behalf. He is neither reluctant nor grudging in His desire to see you “prosper and be in health” (III John 2)—and enjoying the “abundant” life (John 10:10). Though we must be willing to acknowledge that we have broken certain laws—and be willing to change—God is *anxious* to heal!

Satan hates the laws of God. Ephesians 2:2 states that his spirit “works in the children of *disobedience*.” He wants mankind to believe that it can disobey God’s laws—physical and spiritual—and suffer no penalties. Then, when certain natural penalties do occur, people reach for medical science to remove the effects—sickness and disease.

Christ Our Passover

I Corinthians 5:7 states that “Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.” Each year, on the night of the Passover, Christians are commanded to assemble for a very solemn memorial service, which looks back at Christ’s suffering and crucifixion. It is unlike any other occasion in the year.

Paul explained, “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed *took*

bread: And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take, eat: *this is My body*, which is *BROKEN for you*: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood: this do you, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread, and [two separate symbols] drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death till He come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, *and* drink this cup [both] of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body *and* blood [both] of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation [judgment] to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep [have died]*" (I Cor. 11:23-30).

Christians are instructed to pause—to stop activity—and reflect soberly on what Christ endured. Some in Corinth neglected to do this. They did not appreciate how Christ would have healed them. The result? “Many [were] *weak and sickly*...and many [*died*]"—needlessly.

God wants us to understand the forgiveness of sins. This is why Paul wrote of Christ's “body, which is *broken* for you.”

Matthew 9, Mark 2 and Luke 5 all contain a parallel account of Christ healing “a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed” (Matt. 9:2). Luke explains it in the most detail, and it makes absolutely clear how healing directly involves the forgiveness of sin. Carefully read this long passage:

“And...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 Judea, and Jerusalem: and the *power* of the Lord was present *to heal* them. And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when He saw their faith, He said unto him, *Man, your sins are forgiven you*.

“And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaks blasphemies? *Who can forgive sins*, but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answering said unto them, What reason you in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, *Your sins be forgiven you*; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man has power upon earth *to forgive sins*, (He said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto you, Arise, and take up your couch, and go into your house.

“And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things today” (5:17-26).

Consider what this account is actually saying. Christ says that telling someone he is healed (“Rise up and walk”) and forgiving him (“Your sins be

forgiven you”) are one and the same. Of course, the Scribes and Pharisees did not understand this, and considered it blasphemy. (Of course, as God, Christ had the power—the authority—to forgive sin.) Men today do not understand that doctors cannot heal because doctors cannot forgive sin.

But now *you* understand!

The “Prayer of Faith”

I mentioned previously that healing is now for those in the Church. Where does it say this? The apostle James describes those in the Church who are sick being “anointed” by the ministry. (Acts 19:12 states that this is sometimes done through use of an anointed cloth sent by mail.)

Let’s read it: “Is any *sick* among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, *anointing him* with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the *sick*, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” (Jms. 5:14-15).

We will return to this verse later, but we should recognize here that it introduces the crucial element of faith to God’s equation for healing. The verse speaks of the “prayer of faith” bringing “forgiveness of sins” and saving relief to the “sick.”

What then is the Bible definition of faith? It is all-important to establish this understanding. All who wish to be healed must learn to understand and demonstrate real biblical faith.

In the next chapter, you will learn what true, believing faith is!

DEVELOPING REAL FAITH

The Bible states that “without faith it is *impossible* to please [God]” (Heb. 11:6). This is an incredible statement—yet, it is in the Bible! Take it for exactly what it says. Just think! Anything a person does, in attempting to be Christian, means absolutely *nothing*, if he lacks faith. For without faith, he has no hope—*no possibility* of pleasing God. Any who are not pleasing God are Christians *in vain*. That is serious! Consider yourself. Do you have real faith? Is it sufficient for healing? Can you know? You can! This chapter will explain how.

A Lack of Real Faith

Through the years, people have often asked, “Mr. Pack, I lack faith. I do not feel the presence of God or His power in my life. How can I have more faith?”

What about you? Do you lack faith to know that God is with you? To overcome sin and guilt? To believe all things in His Word? Do you lack faith that “all things [will] work together for good” if you love God (Rom. 8:28)? To believe God will work out injustices you have received? To believe God will provide for you? To believe that you can endure severe trials and persecution? Or that God will deliver you from them? Do you lack faith to see the soon-coming kingdom of God more clearly and that you can be in it?

Do you lack faith to be healed of disease?

The Bible says that you need not lack faith in *any* of these areas! You CAN develop real faith. However, the Bible says that most people, in the age preceding Christ’s Return, will *not* have sufficient faith to confidently claim *any* of these or other promises from God’s Word!

Faith Found When Christ Comes?

This world is in trouble. Problems are escalating everywhere on a planet removed from God. The Return of Christ is imminent. This event will only occur *after* certain catastrophic events have taken place. Wars, famines, disease epidemics, religious confusion, economic upheaval and catastrophic weather will have first rocked civilization to its foundation.

Again, when speaking of our time—the last generation before His Return—Christ asked, “When the Son of Man comes, *shall He find faith on the earth?*” (Luke 18:8). Think of the incredible implications of this question! Is it possible that true faith could be completely gone from earth at Christ’s Second Coming? Christ was able to look forward, into our time, and know that conditions would exist allowing this to be true—*almost!*

An article entitled “A Famine of the Word of God,” by reporter Wendy Griffith, discusses the issue of people’s ignorance of the Bible:

“It is clear that many Americans do not know their Bible, and a recent George Barna study backs up that notion.

“Barna’s research showed that 60 percent of Americans cannot name half of the Ten Commandments and 63 percent can’t name the four gospels of the New Testament. Eighty-one percent believe that ‘God helps those who help themselves’ is a direct quote from the Bible...”

What a shame! What a terrible indictment of the most blessed nation on Earth. And it is the single greatest reason why so little genuine faith is to be found.

But recall that Christ said that He would build His Church and He promised that it would never be destroyed (Matt. 16:18). His Church—God’s true Church—is where people *do* have true faith according to the Bible definition. Therefore, the presence of God’s true people on Earth will ensure that at least a few people will be found to have faith when Christ returns.

Notice Galatians 5:22-23: “But the *fruit of the Spirit* is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, *faith*, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” We must establish another important point relating to the life of all true Christians. Real faith comes from the Spirit of God—it is a *fruit* of the Holy Spirit. No one can have it—or even be a true Christian—without God’s Spirit.

But what *is* faith? Surely God would not state that those lacking faith cannot possibly please Him—and then withhold the real definition of faith from all who seek to know it. Before examining what the Bible says about real faith, one must examine what people think it is.

Various Counterfeits

There are several common ideas about faith. If you doubt this, then merely ask a half-dozen people to explain it—to precisely define it for you. Be prepared for just as many different ideas—probably all of them wrong.

I have known many people who believed that faith is an intangible “feeling” that cannot be defined. It is often thought to be personal, mysterious and unique to each person. This feeling usually has no definition, structure, or clear purpose and, inevitably, is whatever people want or need it to be. In other words, for almost every person, there is a different description and definition of faith. It is strange how many people view faith this way, yet the Bible has never said anything of the sort.

Others believe that faith is some kind of “positive thinking.” It is as though as long as people take an optimistic view and remain upbeat about events and circumstances, they are demonstrating faith. The Bible nowhere describes faith with the words positive or optimistic—though these are certainly good qualities of mind.

Other views of faith are that it is *hope* or *confidence*. Neither is true! Hebrews 10:35 does say that confidence is important. Notice: “Cast not away therefore your *confidence*, which has great recompense of reward.” While this passage reveals that confidence is vital for Christians, confidence alone is *not* faith. Regarding faith being hope, I Corinthians 13:13 states, “And now abides faith, *hope*, charity [love], these *three*; but the greatest of these is charity [love].” If faith and hope are the same thing, why are they listed *separately*? Why does God refer to them as “these *three*”? When mentioned with love, should He not have said, “these *two*”? Obviously then, faith is different from hope.

Still others believe that one’s faith is the equivalent of the church denomination or affiliation they attend. This description of faith is seriously flawed and unscriptural. Notice Ephesians 4:4-5: “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, *one faith*, one baptism...” If faith is a church denomination, and there are well over 2,000 different churches in the United States alone, then there cannot be just “one faith.” Of course, this idea would also make the apostle Paul wrong. He should have written that there are “thousands of faiths.”

Bear in mind that you have just seen in your Bible that there is only *one* kind of faith! We will soon explore whether the Bible precisely defines that *one* kind of faith or leaves it up to individuals to guess its meaning.

The last and perhaps most common idea is that faith is any general belief that Jesus died for your sins. As with the idea that faith is a feeling, the extent of people’s “personal” belief in the sacrifice of Christ becomes the deciding factor in how each professing Christian chooses to define it. Certainly we will see that the true definition of faith does *include* this important belief. There is no doubt that if someone does *not* believe the most basic understanding that Christ died for his or her sins, this person does not have saving faith. Remember, without faith it is impossible to please God, and if someone doubts Christ died for his sins, he certainly is not pleasing God *and will not be saved!* Believing that Christ died for your sins is a direction—an avenue—of faith, but not what faith *is!*

What Faith Is

It is now time for the most fundamental question in this chapter. Does the Bible give an exact definition of *faith*? Since it says there is *one* faith, does it, in fact, give one definition of that faith? Is there a place where the Bible says, “Faith is...” and a precise definition follows? If so, *where* is it, and *what* does it say?

Hebrews 11 has often been called the “faith” chapter. It describes many of God’s greatest servants and how *their faith* enabled them to perform great acts and miracles, or to endure severe trials. This long chapter is very inspiring, and all who want to have real faith should periodically read it. It contains the word *faith* two dozen times. Verse 2 says, “For by it [faith] the elders [these Bible figures] obtained a *good report*.”

How could they have obtained a “good report” unless they understood faith? Now for God’s definition in verse 1: “Now *faith is the substance* of things hoped for, the *evidence of things not seen*.” Did you notice that faith involves “evidence” of things “not seen”? The marginal rendering of “substance” is “*assurance*.” Faith involves an ASSURANCE “of things hoped for.” But, if something is hoped for, that something has not yet been *received*. Therefore, where faith is involved, there is an ASSURANCE that it *will be received*!

But how can *evidence* be related to something that is *not seen*? Do we not rather think of evidence as involving things that *are* seen?

In a courtroom, evidence is what *can be proven*. It involves facts visible to a jury. In other words, evidence only involves things that *can be seen* or demonstrated. How then can faith involve evidence that is *invisible—not seen*?

Faith involves evidence in the following way. Real faith, in *any* promise made by God, is actually the evidence. It is the *belief* that is the *evidence*. If God promises to do something, it is impossible for Him to lie (Heb. 6:18). Your evidence that He will perform it is the very unwavering faith that you hold. Do you understand this? Remember, Hebrews 11:1 said, “faith is...*the evidence*.” If you have true Christian faith, you do not need to search for the evidence—you already possess it!

The Doctrine of Faith

We have read the biblical *definition* of faith, but faith is also a *doctrine*. Notice: “The principles of the *doctrine* of Christ...of faith toward God...” (Heb. 6:1). Faith is always exercised toward God, but it is Christ who makes this possible.

Faith is something Christ teaches—this is why the Bible calls it “the doctrine of *Christ*.” By now, you realize that faith is important for all Christians to understand. You need not be confused about it, though people around you may be. We must eliminate the misunderstanding and deception about faith.

Perhaps when Christ returns, He will find real faith in you!

For every doctrine of God, there are endless ideas that *people* conjure up about it. The Bible explains what *God* says and thinks about His doctrines. If a doctrine comes from and belongs to *God*, we ought to examine what *HE* says about it. You should never be concerned with the opinions of people. The balance of this chapter will explain the Bible's true teaching about the doctrine of faith toward God. Prepare to be surprised!

Not the Five Senses

Almost everyone believes that faith involves *feelings*. But physical feelings merely come from the human senses and have nothing whatsoever to do with God—or faith!

Human beings accept knowledge that they have received through the five senses—seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting. These senses all involve *physical* information—*physical* knowledge. The mind receives and processes this information in order to draw conclusions about circumstances, things and events taking place around it. Faith is *spiritual*, not physical. It is a *confident assurance*, which comes from the Spirit of God in the mind of a converted human being.

So many today lack the strength—the *POWER*—to believe that God will perform the promises contained in His Word. He seems far away, vague and ethereal to billions of human beings caught up in a materialistic world. The vast majority do not have time for God. There seems to be no room for prayer, Bible study, fasting and meditation. All these things draw us closer to God. Most give up trying to do them, and then wonder why they have no faith! This leaves them forced to rely solely on their five senses for guidance. Most people feel that anything derived from a source *other* than these is not to be trusted.

No one would ever wish to lose his or her *physical* sight. Certainly no one would ever consider driving a car if he were blind. Now, consider the following verse: “FOR WE WALK BY FAITH, *not by sight*” (II Cor. 5:7). Practicing true faith means learning to disregard what you *see*. Literally, sight does not count in relation to *what* God has promised to do or *when* He will do it.

This verse reveals that Christians do not walk by what they see!

Think of this example in the following way. Just as you would never consider driving a car WITHOUT SIGHT, a Christian is not permitted to walk through life BY SIGHT! This is not a principle that people learn overnight. The very concept of this kind of spiritual understanding is foreign—COMPLETELY ALIEN—to human thinking. Unlearning the wrong idea of faith requires a lifetime of practice.

Prayer, study, fasting and meditation are *spiritual* activities. God is Spirit and Christ explained, regarding Christians, “They that worship Him [the Father] *must* worship Him *in spirit* and *in truth*” (John 4:24). Of course, people who do not KNOW the truth of all the *other* doctrines of God, though they may

know the truth about faith, cannot possibly worship God “in truth.” They may strive to worship God “in spirit” but it is impossible to worship Him in truth if they are doing it in ignorance of many crucial Bible truths. However, for our purposes here, at least all who read this booklet will no longer be unaware of the truth about the doctrine of FAITH—and how it relates to worshipping God in spirit.

Many wonder why they are never healed—or why their prayers are not answered. They wonder why they are not blessed or are not receiving deliverance from God when it is needed. They lack faith, which comes from the Spirit of God. If they had faith, they would have *evidence*—assurance—confidence—that they would be healed, blessed, delivered or receive answers to their prayers! They would KNOW that these things were coming, *in advance* of their arrival.

Christ Had *Real* Faith

We have already seen that faith is a fruit of God’s Spirit. Obviously, Christ had tremendous faith. Filled with God’s Spirit, and possessing it from conception, Christ was the most converted Person who ever lived. It gave Him tremendous understanding of the importance of the power of God’s Spirit. This is why He said, “I can of Mine own Self do *nothing*” (John 5:30)! He knew that “*the Father that dwells in Me, He does the works*” (John 14:10).

It was through the power of God’s Spirit in Him that Christ accomplished *everything* that He did. He understood completely that it was only the presence of the Spirit of God in Him that allowed Him to perform miracles. He perfectly exercised the fruit of faith present in Him because of the Holy Spirit. No doubt, God gave Him the additional *gift* of faith (I Cor. 12:1, 7-9) that He would need to endure all He was to face through His sacrifice as Savior of the world.

Christ went on to say in John 14, “He that believes on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and *greater* works than these shall he do” (vs. 12). All the apostles, evangelists and others (including even deacons) performed mighty miracles after Christ’s Resurrection and the start of the New Testament Church. The Bible records this. Through the power of real faith, ordinary people can do amazing things!

But can *you* have the same kind of faith that Christ had—or that the apostles had? Do Christians today have a *different* kind of faith?

The Faith *OF* Christ

What kind of faith does God expect you to have? Most people think that they must “work up” faith through human effort. They see it as something from within that they can WILL themselves into possessing. This is terribly wrong and the Bible plainly says so. Do you realize that you can have the exact same faith that Christ possessed? You not only can—you MUST!

Notice: “Knowing that a man is not justified...but by the faith *OF* Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith *OF* Christ” (Gal. 2:16). This is an extremely important verse. It differentiates two vital points. *First*, it states that “*we* believe[d] in Jesus Christ”—this is something *we* do. *Second*, it is the faith *OF* Christ—Christ’s actual faith *in us*—that justifies us (makes us righteous). Most people never get this understanding straight. Faith starts with human belief, but must quickly move to the real faith *OF* Christ, which enters a person at the moment of baptism and conversion with the receiving of God’s Holy Spirit.

The Bible describes a certain *temporary* human faith that many people have. In the New Testament, when Christ healed people, *none* of them were converted. Yet, He sometimes told them, “your faith has made you whole” (Matt. 9:22) or “according to your faith be it unto you” (vs. 29). These people lacked God’s Spirit but they did have a temporary *human faith* that allowed Christ to heal them.

It is this growth *FROM* human faith *TO* the faith of Christ that Paul referred to when he said, “the righteousness of God is revealed *from faith* [human] *to faith* [of Christ in us]” (Rom. 1:17). If there was not human faith and the faith of Christ in us, how else could people go “*from faith to faith*”? If one is in a room, that person cannot go to a different room and still be in the *same* room. Do you see this point? It is the same with faith. Human faith is like a *small* room, which true Christians must leave to enter the great room of Christ’s faith working in them.

Human faith wavers continually and goes up and down according to how one feels at any given moment in time. It is much like a rollercoaster. When events seem positive or look good, human faith is *up*. When things look bad and the outcome of a matter appears gloomy, human faith disappears in an instant. God’s faith is permanent and does not waver. He requires that all who come to Him in prayer, with requests, do “not waver.” He considers all who waver to be unstable in everything they do, and says that they will receive nothing from Him (Jms. 1:6-8).

The Bible Contains Promises

Every time you demonstrate faith in God, it involves a specific promise. A promise can involve healing, answers to prayer, receiving blessings (Jms. 1:4-8), deliverance in a trial, guidance in a difficult decision and, most importantly, receiving salvation. In every instance, faith involves claiming a specific promise made by God. We will see the importance of searching His Word to find those promises.

Consider: “Above all, taking the *SHIELD of faith*, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (Eph. 6:16). Now notice: “*Every word of God is pure: He is a SHIELD unto them that put their trust in Him. Add you not unto His words, lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar*” (Prov. 30:5-6).

When put together, these two verses show that God, through faith, becomes a SHIELD to all who trust in exactly what the Bible says. To doubt His Word, or to alter it in any way, is to call God a LIAR! That is serious! Understand. When God makes a promise, He keeps it. *Human beings* may break their promises, but God does not. If He tells you that He will do something for you, if you meet certain conditions, He *will* perform His promise. You have faith as an *assurance* that He will. So, browbeating yourself into faith is silly. It suggests that you doubt God will do His part after you have done yours. Faith is relaxed. It is calm. It is sure. Where most people might have great doubt, the person led by faith is confident that God is guiding the final outcome of matters.

When you claim a promise, *expect* it to be carried out by God. Do not try to figure out *when* or *how* He will do it. I have learned two things about answered prayer. First, God always answers my prayers, if I seek His Will, but second, He almost never answers them in the way that I expect. This is why walking by faith cannot include sight. “Looking” for God to answer prayer a certain way or in a certain timeframe is a waste of energy. Besides, it is far more important *that* God answers our prayers and fulfills His promises, than *HOW* He does it! And He always knows the best time and way to do it anyway.

Always Examine God's Word

No promise of God can be claimed unless you have learned what the promise is. God promises some things and does *not* promise others. Therefore, the only way to know whether He has made a particular promise or not is to continually study His Word.

In any matter, always ask yourself, “What does the Bible say?”

Paul wrote, “Prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, *will of God*” (Rom. 12:2). Proving involves study. Study involves effort. Then, knowledge of God’s promises brings confidence to those who pray about them. God is eager to bless people, but He cannot do this if people are ignorant of what He is willing to do. Paul also wrote, “Wherefore be you not *unwise*, but understanding what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:17). Let’s face it. It is terribly “unwise” for people to live in ignorance of God’s promises. Why? Because they cut themselves off from so much that He is willing to do for them! Therefore, you do not have to wonder about God’s viewpoint. His Word reveals it on every single important aspect of life. (Take a moment to read II Timothy 3:14-17.) But this is not the only condition to consider regarding faith.

Faith Has Other Conditions

As we have seen, most people believe that the only kind of “faith” needed for salvation is to “just believe.” It is popular to recite, “if you shall confess

with your mouth...and believe in your heart...you shall be saved” and “for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:9, 13). But is this all there is to receiving salvation? Can it really be *this easy*? If so, then the Bible should be two verses long. The rest of it becomes unnecessary and can be thrown out!

It is amazing how millions of people are content to accept outright twisting of the Bible in order to practice a “Christianity” of their own devising. Peter wrote, “no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation” (II Pet. 1:20), and this is true of every other Bible doctrine (Isa. 28:9-10). All the scriptures pertaining to *any matter* must be taken together in order to have the complete picture. Seizing “pet verses,” and taking them out of context, leads to deception, confusion and outright ignorance.

What about law, sin, grace, faith and works? How do these work together? Do they bring any requirements to those who practice true faith? Is faith alone sufficient for everything? Or do Christians have to *obey* God? Are there any *works* attached to salvation? Most people believe the answers to the last two questions are “no.” They want to believe that Christ “died for their *sins*,” and that they are saved by “faith alone” without doing anything about sin in their lives. Human nature does not want to obey God (Rom. 8:7). Yet Paul taught, “Not the HEARERS of the law are just before God, but the DOERS of the law shall be justified” (Rom. 2:13).

If the law is done away, then nobody can be guilty of sin. But Romans 3:23 states, “For all have sinned...” How is this possible if there is no law to be kept? Several things must be carefully considered. I John 3:4 states, “sin is the transgression *of the law*.” All professing Christians are certainly willing to acknowledge that Christ “died for their sins,” but they continue with the assumption that, because Christ died for *past* sins, they no longer need to worry about *future* ones. This is a ridiculous argument. Yet it has effectively swallowed hundreds of millions of professing Christians for nearly 2,000 years.

Now consider Ephesians 2:8-9: “For *by grace* are you saved *through faith*; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift* of God: *not of works*, lest any man should boast.” People love to quote this verse. It is also common for people to quote Romans 3:20: “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight...” Few are willing to read the very next phrase in Romans, which says, “for *by the law* is the knowledge of sin.” We could ask: What would be the purpose of having any law except for keeping it? Would its only purpose be to demonstrate that people may freely break it without worrying because Christ “died for their sins?”

The purpose of the law has never been to forgive sin or bring justification. (No law could do this.) This is what the blood of Christ is for—and it is why mankind needs a Savior. The purpose of the law is to *point out sin!*

Consider the prison systems in most countries of the world. Convicted criminals are sometimes pardoned or their sentences are commuted. Others are

released from prison early through what's called "shock probation." Are these people pardoned and released with the idea that they can re-enter society and repeat the EXACT SAME CRIMES that put them in prison? Of course not!

The very idea is absurd. The police would simply re-arrest them and incarcerate them again—probably with a *stronger* sentence! How is it that Christians can believe that the judgment of the great God of the universe then somehow requires less justice with *His* Law than do physical, civil authorities with theirs? It insults God to suggest that He would give His Son for people's *spiritual* crimes (sins), only to see them continue in the very things that required Christ's death.

What pitiful human logic!

To believe the deception that forgiveness, through Christ's blood, permits people to freely break the law is hypocrisy. It not only insults God, and the intelligence of His Master Plan, but it ignores the following extensive series of verses in James 2. These plain verses explain how law, sin, faith and works fit together.

Consider this longer passage carefully: "What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he has faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?...Even so *faith*, if it has not works, *is dead*, being alone...I will show you my faith *by my works*. You *believe* that there is one God; you do well: the devils [demons] also believe, and tremble. But will you know, O vain man, that *faith without works is dead*? Was not Abraham our father *justified by works*, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? See you how faith wrought with his works, and *by works was faith made perfect*?...You see then how that *by works a man is justified*, and not by faith only" (vs. 14, 17-22, 24).

Like the demons, many people *do believe* God exists. However, most of these same people do *not tremble* at the existence of God—which even demons do!

Remember, we must never "add to God's Word," because "every word of it is pure." God says what He means and means what He says. The above verses do *not* teach that works save us. They *do* teach that faith must be *accompanied* by works. This is what Paul meant when he asked, "What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? GOD FORBID" (Rom. 6:15).

What about *grace*, faith and works? How do they work together? Notice again: "Shall we continue in *sin* [transgressing the law], that grace may abound? GOD FORBID. How shall we, that are dead to sin, *live any longer therein*?" (Rom. 6:1-2). The answer to Paul's rhetorical question is obvious. We cannot. Finally, notice how the Bible asks, "Do we then make void the law through faith?" It answers its own question. "GOD FORBID: yes, we ESTABLISH THE LAW" (Rom. 3:31). The ministers of this world may permit people to break God's Law—usually because they want their congregation to pay them a salary—but GOD FORBIDS law-breaking!

The devil will not obey God's Law because he hates it. Neither will "his ministers" (II Cor. 11:13-15). They deliberately ignore these verses and many

others. They deceive people who seem to willingly accept their shallow arguments—arguments that are ignorant of the PLAIN TRUTH of Scripture.

Paul taught that God’s Law is *holy, just, good* and *spiritual* (Rom. 7:12, 14). It endures forever (Psa. 111:7-8) and is perfect (Psa. 19:7). James calls the Ten Commandments “the royal law...of liberty” (Jms. 2:8-12). Christ said it will never be done away (Matt. 5:17-19). Deceiving impostors teach that Christians must focus on “just having *love*,” while ignoring plain scriptures like Romans 13:10, which says, “Love is the fulfilling of *the law*.” (Also see I John 5:1-3.) No wonder the apostle John said that any who claim to “know Him [Christ], and *keeps not the commandments*, is a LIAR, and *the truth* is not in him” (I John 2:4).

Strong words! I have known many people who claimed to know Christ but did not keep the commandments. We now see how God views them.

It takes faith in Christ for the Christian to be able to keep God’s Law. Recall that Christ said that He could of His own self do “nothing,” and that the Father did the works in Him. Christ kept the Law perfectly, and a Christian “follow[s] His steps” (I Pet. 2:21).

Christ Taught Law-keeping

With God’s help, you will be able to keep the commandments. Do not ever allow anyone to tell you otherwise.

Jesus *never* taught that people should just “believe on Him” to receive salvation. When a young rich man asked Him what he must do to have “eternal life”—receive salvation—Christ told him, “If you will enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.”

Hearing this, the disciples were shocked. They did not understand how this was possible, and asked, “Who then can be saved?” Christ answered, “With men this is impossible; but *with God all things are possible*” (Matt. 19:17, 25-26). *You* cannot keep God’s Law, but CHRIST IN YOU CAN—if you have true, living faith!

God gives His Spirit only to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32). Obedience to God is preceded by repentance and baptism, with the Holy Spirit being given at this point, upon one’s repentance of having broken God’s Law (Acts 2:38).

Christ said, “Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For *laying aside the commandment of God*, you hold the tradition of men” (Mark 7:7-8). Did you realize that it is possible to worship Christ in vain—that it is possible to think about Him, talk about Him and even use His name often and still do all of this IN VAIN!

Notice: “Not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven [*of*,” not *in*,” heaven]; but He that DOES the will of My Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21). Remember, it is the DOERS of the law that will be justified.

The “Fight of Faith”

Paul told Timothy, “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life” (I Tim. 6:12). Faith is more than a battle. It is a war that all Christians wage *throughout their lives!* And it is not an easy war, won by victory in a single battle. It involves many battles.

The apostle Jude tells all Christians, “You should earnestly *contend for the faith* which was once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). The next verse warns of “certain men” who had “crept in unawares” into the early New Testament Church, diluting it with false teachings, which destroys the Church’s foundation—that of holding to the true doctrines of the Bible. The meaning of real faith also became corrupted in the minds of many at that time. Sadly, history shows that people have always been willing to let deceivers reduce Christianity to little more than “just believing.” Do not fall for this.

We have discussed how Christians must keep God’s Law, while they are at the same time justified by the faith *OF* Christ. The Book of Revelation records, “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS of God, and the FAITH *of* JESUS” (14:12).

There is a reason why this verse joins patience, commandment keeping and the faith of Christ. They are inseparable. Christians are able to *keep the commandments*, but only through the *faith of Jesus*. It takes *patience* to do this throughout a lifetime. Yet this is exactly what true Christians—*saints*—must continually do.

“Living by Faith”

There is an Old Testament verse that is so important that it is repeated twice in the New Testament. Habakkuk 2:4 says, “the just shall *live by his faith*.” This is a powerful statement about faith as a *WAY OF LIFE!* It is the faith of *each person* (notice the singular word “his”) that guides individuals through life. This verse is cited to show that God has always taught that His true servants must have *real* faith. Faith has never been merely a *New Testament* requirement for salvation. Some of the greatest examples of faith are found throughout the *Old Testament*. Actually, every one of the examples found in the “faith chapter” (Heb. 11) lived in *Old Testament* times. This did not keep them from being “witnesses” (12:1) to the awesome power of properly understood faith.

Hebrews 10:38 (also Rom. 1:17) repeats Habakkuk almost verbatim: “Now the just shall *live by faith*.” Take note that the definition of faith follows immediately on the heels of this verse, in Hebrews 11:1. Again, God could not require people to live by faith and then not tell them *what it is!* Then, in the very same verse 38, God continues, “but if any man *draw back*, My soul shall have *no pleasure* in him.”

Where faith is lacking, God is not pleased!

Faith is not merely something you only exercise during life's moments of crisis. It is not just something to consider when "things aren't going well." In other words, faith is not just for the "bad times"—it is *full-time*! Grasp this vital point. Faith is completely inseparable from the *entire* spiritual understanding through which you are to confront *all* the issues you face in the Christian "walk" (II Cor. 5:7).

All people on Earth will be sorely tested in the years that lie just ahead. Make no mistake! Without real faith *no one* will survive the terrible calamities prophesied to occur just prior to Christ's soon-coming Return. Operating on *human* steam or ingenuity will not be sufficient to survive the great crisis coming at the close of this age! Complete faith in *all* of God's promises will be required—and necessary.

A Personal Example

It will not be easy to follow and practice God's truths and believe His promises. Thirty-eight-plus years have taught me this lesson—deeply! God will test your faith—and the devil will tempt you to abandon it. Have no doubt of this. I have also learned that God will always deliver, no matter how dark circumstances seem.

I grew up in a comfortable home. Then God called me at age 17 and the real trials began. By age 23, I was married and had an infant son of less than four months old. My wife had nearly died in childbirth and had lost her milk because of it. She could not nurse our son. During this brief period, I did not have a full-time job in the ministry. I had lost my salary. I was unemployed and we were struggling with significant debt from our college years. We were living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Even the heater in our car had ceased to function and it was late November. Space does not permit me to describe all of the trials we were facing at just that one time. Our faith was being *sorely tested!*

I will never forget one particular moment my wife and I shared. We were, quite literally, down to our last dime. There was almost no gas in the car or food in the house. Our baby was crying and we had nothing to feed him. I had a single dime in my pocket. I pulled it out and held it up to the light over our kitchen table. My wife and I determined that we would trust God to provide for us.

He did!

That evening (I remember it was a Thursday night), my wife was able to teach two flute lessons and was paid a total of seven dollars. She immediately bought milk for the baby. I received a job the next morning (Friday), and my boss offered to advance me a paycheck *the first day I arrived*. God had answered our prayers and left us with a faith-building experience that we have never forgotten. We have recalled it often, when times were difficult. We still draw strength from God's intervention when we needed it—and numerous other similar interventions in our life!

Every day of our lives has not been “sunny.” I have had to face many obstacles in my nearly thirty-five years in the ministry. This very Work is a work of faith. God never fails to provide for our needs. The hindrance of accusers, slanderers, liars and outright enemies has, at times, been an almost daily way of life for us. God has never failed us.

In the end, He always defeats evil people who seek to overthrow His purpose. He has always protected and delivered my wife and me through “thick and thin.” I am *confidently assured*—I have FAITH—that He will continue to do this. *You* can also develop confident assurance—faith—that God will always deliver you.

Typically, people think of faith as something they work up or express toward God *so that He will do something for them*. Actually, the real case is often exactly the opposite! Many times, faith is something that God gives to a person *so that he will have the strength to do something for God*—usually to fulfill His overall purpose. I have seen this occur in my life over and over again.

If you ask God, He will do the same for you. Sometimes you must exercise the *fruit* of faith, and sometimes you may need to ask for the *gift* of faith, in order to face the most severe trials or most difficult decisions in your life.

The Bible lists nine separate *fruits* of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) and nine different *gifts* of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:1, 7-10). Faith is the only quality of spiritual character that is mentioned in both lists. It is both a *fruit* and a *gift* of the Spirit. God often chooses to grant an extra amount of faith to certain people—*as a gift*—because in some way it is necessary in the fulfillment of His purpose.

Remember, even the very Spirit of God is *given* to us (Acts 2:38). The opportunity to learn to exercise the fruit of faith also starts with a gift—the faith-containing Holy Spirit. God will give you the very same faith that was once in Jesus Christ.

“Where is Your Faith?”

The books of Matthew and Luke record an important parallel account regarding faith. Christ and His disciples were in a boat when a tremendous storm arose. The disciples became terribly frightened, while Christ was “asleep.” This account reflects the dramatic difference between the faith that Christ had and the FEAR that governs the thinking of most human beings. Notice that the account records that they “awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish” (Matt. 8:25). The disciples actually thought they were about to die. They lacked even basic human confidence that, with Christ in the boat, this could not happen.

Christ’s response is instructive for all alive today. He asked two separate questions—with one found in each gospel account. Let’s connect them. In Matthew, Christ asked the disciples, “Why are you fearful, O you of *little faith*?” (vs. 26). Now let’s review Luke’s account. Here Christ was a little more blunt with His disciples when He asked them, “Where is your faith?” (8:25). Of course, the disciples were not converted at this point. Lacking the Holy

Spirit, they were not able to develop real godly faith. Apparently, however, they did not even have any temporary human faith at the time. However, Christ's towering questions remain for ALL PEOPLE—*Why are you fearful?*—and *where is your faith?*

Just as these same disciples went on to learn and practice great faith in their own lives (their writings record that they also taught its meaning to many others), so must God's true servants today answer these questions in their own lives. This booklet now asks *you*: WHY ARE YOU FEARFUL? And WHERE IS YOUR FAITH?

We began with Hebrews 11:6 stating, “Without faith it is *impossible* to please God.” God wants you to learn to *rely* on Him—to *trust* Him completely in EVERYTHING! You really do not have a choice if you want to please Him. Like any *human* father, God does not want you to fret, worry and agonize over your needs. In numerous places throughout His Word, He promises to provide for you in all circumstances. He will always take care of you. Do not doubt! *Believe* God! *Trust* Him! *Wait* on Him! *Expect* Him to keep all of His promises—and He will! Faith is your evidence! (Our booklet *What Is Real Faith?* covers much more about this crucial topic.)

KNOWING GOD'S WILL

Christ said, “I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which has sent Me” (John 5:30).

Grasp the meaning of this statement. How many people do you know who really concern themselves with God’s will? How often have you stopped to ask yourself if you are seeking your own will—your own purpose—or God’s? Yet Christ, who was God in the flesh, never sought His own will. His entire focus was to be sure that He was in harmony with God’s Plan—His intention—His purpose—His will. Under supreme test, even as He was facing the agony of scourging and crucifixion, He prayed, “let this cup [His coming suffering and death] pass from Me: nevertheless *not as I will, but as You will*” (Matt. 26:39). Christ knew that what He would soon endure would be horrible beyond belief. He was in an agonizing mental battle—a mental war—over it.

His conclusion? Remain focused on God’s overall purpose and will.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught His disciples *how* to pray. The prayer begins, “Our Father which art in heaven...” At a certain point, the well-known phrase “Thy will be done” appears. Even though Christ admonished His disciples, just before citing this model or sample prayer, not to use vain repetition, many people recite this verse verbatim and often. Yet, how many actually pause to reflect on the meaning of “Thy will be done”?

Very few!

Christians are instructed to seek God’s will in all matters. God wants you to know His will. He does not want you to sit in confusion, fear or ignorance of exactly what He intends, in either His Plan for humanity, or for you.

Recall that Romans 12:2 exhorts, “*Prove* what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Does this sound like God wants you to be content not knowing His will? And we saw that Paul also wrote, “Wherefore be you not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:17). How plain. But some seem to wish to *remain* unwise regarding God’s promise to heal.

But why? Why would one want to *disbelieve* God regarding such a wonderful promise? Why would one wish to be unwilling to know God’s will in a matter that could literally involve life and death?

Finally, let’s read exactly how you can learn the will of God. Understanding His will does not come from the five physical senses. It is also not derived through natural instinct. How then does one understand the will of God regarding healing—or any other matter? Here is God’s answer: “*Study* to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing *the word of truth*” (II Tim. 2:15).

There it is! God’s Word will tell you the truth of every matter necessary for salvation. But you must study it! One chapter later, Paul continued his instruction to Timothy: “But continue you in the things which you have learned and have been assured of, knowing of whom you have learned them; And that from a child you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation *through faith* which is in Christ Jesus. *All* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for DOCTRINE, for REPROOF, for CORRECTION, for INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: That the man of God may be *perfect*, thoroughly furnished unto *all good works*” (II Tim. 3:14-17).

After studying God’s Word, one must believe it—one must exhibit faith. By now, you understand in detail what faith is. You also understand that God often states that He is our Healer. We do not have to wonder if it is His will to heal us. Many who do not study God’s Word are forced to remain shamefully *ignorant*. This is sad—and so unnecessary. Yet some will be like Job before he came to more fully understand and know God: “Who is he that hides counsel without knowledge?...*I uttered that I understood not*; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not...I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye sees You. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent...” (42:3, 5-6).

“Hid[ing] counsel without knowledge” is another way of saying “clouding the issue.” Many who do not understand God’s promise of healing—because they will not study His Word to learn it—choose to cloud the issue. They hide God’s counsel from those—or themselves—who need the forgiveness of physical sins—healing. Many view healing as the agnostic views God’s existence. They are just not sure about it. But they are without excuse!

Two More Personal Examples

At this point, I will relate two personal examples of how God dramatically intervened and healed me—in one case, from death, and in the other case, from a crippling foot disease.

In the fall of 1967, when I was 18 years old and attending Ambassador College (where I was in training for the ministry), I was suddenly stricken with a severe bacterial infection in my nose. This was about 16 months after God had begun to call me. I was not yet baptized and converted—but what happened spurred me to seek God as never before.

Almost overnight, a deadly infection developed. Because the pain and inflammation was so intense—and my nose was swollen with infection to three times its normal size—I was advised to seek a doctor's opinion of my condition. The doctor who saw me was immediately alarmed. He told me that I needed massive doses of antibiotics, and that cerebral meningitis was imminent—that the infection was already nearing my brain.

I remember that this occurred on a Wednesday. The doctor urged me to take the drugs and then, when I resisted, stated something that I will never forget. He said, "Young man, this is Wednesday, and if you do not take the drugs I am prescribing—YOU WILL NOT SEE NEXT WEDNESDAY!" This was a shocking statement. I had not yet realized the true seriousness of my condition. But, I remembered God's promise of healing and decided to put my faith in Him.

This time, the doctor was shocked. I recall that he asked two nurses to join us in his office to witness what he had told me. He even refused to let me leave until I signed a prepared statement of release so that he would not be liable when I died. It was not long ago that I came across this signed statement among my papers in storage, dated November 11, 1967.

Almost immediately after I left his office—and was *anointed* according to James 5:14—the infection in my nose began to clear up. Within three days, it was entirely gone. While God did not heal me instantly in this case, He kept His promise—and He *did* heal me!

The second instance I will relate occurred almost 15 years later, in 1982. By this time, I had been in the ministry for almost 11 years and was pastoring approximately 700 brethren.

Over a period of two years, starting with an injury, I developed a severe nerve disease in my feet. The pain was so severe—and there was some loss of use in my left foot—that I had reached a point where I could no longer serve in the ministry. Doctors told me that they thought surgery to "release" certain nerves from a condition of "entrapment" was the last hope to relieve my condition. God had not yet chosen to heal me. Though I had been anointed according to God's Word, the healing had not yet occurred. I determined not to have the surgery and to await God's answer. Unbeknownst to me, the associate pastor in the area privately asked the entire congregation to pray and fast on my behalf. By the time this occurred, I had been functioning from a wheelchair for 3 1/2 months, having used crutches for seven months before that, and a cane for 13 months before that. My left leg had withered to no more than half its size.

After the fast ended (this happened on a Friday), I realized that I had to try to stand up and walk. This was a Saturday morning. I slowly arose without pain, and briefly walked around the house. The pain was gone and my feet functioned

normally. I was apparently healed instantly and, once again, was reminded that God keeps His promise to heal. The pain has never returned!

In one case, God moved swiftly, yet healed me over several days. In the other case, He chose to wait a long time—allowing me to learn many lessons in patience and longsuffering—but then healed me *immediately*, all at once. In both cases, God’s promise was the same.

Some Lack Faith

I had to *learn* that God heals. While it took faith to believe that He would, my faith was also greatly increased, in each case, after the healing. I was inspired and excited about what I saw God would do for me. I certainly have not always had perfect faith, but I did learn that when God plainly says He will do something—HE DOES IT!

I have seen God heal many people in clear, powerful, and sometimes dramatic ways. What I witnessed could not be explained as other than miraculous. I have anointed people who were racked with arthritis throughout their body—and watched them healed instantly. I have seen and anointed others afflicted with cancer—and watched it disappear with all its symptoms. I have anointed women with barren wombs—and often seen them have two or three children in quick succession.

In another case, a man fell 55 feet from a telephone repair truck “cherry picker,” suffering a broken spine and a complete break at the top of his femur (large leg bone). The x-rays clearly showed both. He was placed in a body cast that reached from chin to toes. After his anointing, done shortly after the accident, he literally ripped off the cast. He had it on display in his dining room when I returned several days later to visit him. He left the doctors truly astonished, because, of course, they still had the x-rays to prove that broken bones had been instantly fused back together by the power of God!

Now recall I Corinthians 11:29-30, where Paul explained how some had “not discerned the Lord’s body”—that it was beaten and broken through scourging—*stripes*—in order for Him to pay our penalty for sickness and disease. Because some lacked faith, “many were weak and sickly...and many [died].”

Also recall that Paul taught to follow Christ’s example to take unleavened bread annually at the Passover, as a type of Christ’s broken body for us. This means that we are *accepting* Christ’s suffering in order that we can be healed. We are *accepting* His stripes on our behalf. But how exactly does this work?

I John 3:4 explained that “sin is the transgression of the law.” While some assert that there is no such thing as *physical* law—and therefore *physical* sin—this verse is not specific. The passage does not limit itself to just the Ten Commandments, God’s *spiritual* law. It is obviously referring to *all* laws imposed or instituted by God.

I have explained in detail in other booklets that perhaps the greatest overarching law that governs everything in life is that of CAUSE and EFFECT.

This law applies to all aspects of how a human body functions. When *right* causes are violated, *wrong* effects appear. We call them disease. When people continually overeat, digestive and other problems occur. If people overindulge in alcohol, a variety of bad effects result. If people smoke, a host of problems—lung and throat cancer, foul breath, yellow teeth, shortness of breath, diminished circulation, etc.—appear.

The One who wrote the Bible states that His great Law, the Ten Commandments, is “holy, just, good and spiritual” (Rom. 7:12, 14). Again, consider the basic law of cause and effect. When God’s laws are obeyed, they bring blessings, benefits and good things into the lives of those who obey them. Yet, man has rejected the *Instruction Book* that would reveal to him the *cause* of all his problems and misery.

Space does not permit that this booklet cover every law of God, and how it relates to cause and effect. However, throughout the Bible, God promises blessings, benefits and good results to those who take each particular promise at its word.

God promises to heal all those who keep His laws and exercise faith in His power to perform the healing (Ex. 15:26; I John 3:22; Jms. 5:14-15). He promises to greatly bless all those who obey His Sabbath (Isa. 58:13-14; Mark 2:27-28). He promises good health to all those who obey His many health laws. Each promise involves employing a right CAUSE (obedience) to achieve a right EFFECT (blessing or benefit).

In each of these cases, and in many others, God describes a *cause-and-effect* relationship that PROVES the inspiration behind His instructions. But it will only work for those willing to take Him at His Word—who have FAITH in His promises!

While the determined skeptic will reject this reasoning—and do it to his own great hurt, thinking he can defy the law of CAUSE and EFFECT—the one who is *willing* to take God at face value receives answers. However, this booklet is not written to, and cannot help, the closed-minded skeptic. But it certainly can help *you*, if *you* remain open to God’s wonderful promises.

Billions of people routinely break physical laws—and then wonder why they are sick. Ignorant of God’s promise to heal, through Christ’s stripes, they rush to doctors, seeking cures. The goal is to cover up bad effects without eliminating the cause. Yet, only Christ can completely remove all the bad effects—the *penalty* for broken physical laws.

Some *will not* yield themselves and believe that there are physical laws—and that they must not be broken. They want the freedom—the *license*—to break laws without reaping penalties. Paul speaks bluntly of some who are “unreasonable and wicked men” who “have not faith” (II Thes. 3:2). These people do not want to obey any of the laws of God. Such people will never be healed, and will probably be just as unwilling to believe the evidence when God heals others. Occasionally, these people have found their way into the Church of God. Romans 16:17-18 instructs that they must be disfellowshipped.

We Must Grow

God instructs Christians to “grow in grace and in the knowledge” (II Pet. 3:18). Growing, overcoming and learning take a lifetime. This process does not happen overnight.

The Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19:11-27) explains in detail how the reward of every Christian is determined by how much he develops and grows the talents God has given him. Some will be given ten cities, others five, and so on. This life is a training ground for God’s people to develop His holy, righteous PERFECT CHARACTER—His divine nature (II Pet. 1:4)—so that they can rule in the kingdom of God (Rev. 2:26; 3:21).

When Christ called His servants into account in this parable, He was showing that all people will one day stand and give an account before the judgment seat of Christ. Like the reward of the twelve apostles, who will be put over the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:27-28), some will be given great AUTHORITY to rule over cities with Christ “in the throne of His glory.”

Some do not want the true Christ of the Bible telling them what to do. They *do not* want Him to rule over their lives and conduct. But they *do* want salvation—with no strings attached!

Ancient Israel had a long history of poor obedience to God’s Law. From the time they left Egypt, all the way until the prophet Samuel’s time, God directly ruled the nation of Israel. He was its King. Eventually they wanted a human king in order to be like the nations around them. They did not want God directly ruling over them.

Here is what God told Samuel, when Israel sought to have a human king: “And the LORD said unto Samuel...they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them” (I Sam. 8:7). The world is still the same. It does not want God to rule over it, even if it means humanity is cut off from His promise of healing—and all His other benefits and blessings.

No one will be given rulership before he has proven that he *can be ruled!* No one can be part of God’s *world-ruling government* unless he has learned to submit to the *government of God* and to be ruled by God and Jesus Christ in this life. This is the message in the Parable of the Pounds!

What About Those “Weak in Faith”?

Galatians 5:22-23 describes the “fruit of the Spirit”: Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and self-control. Christians are told to grow and develop these fruits (John 15:2, 5, 8, 16). Some grow more in *love*, yet lack an abundance of *joy*. Others are the opposite. Some grow in *peace*, yet have not developed much *longsuffering*. Others are the opposite. Some develop great *gentleness*, but have little *self-control*. Others are the opposite. Some may be strong in *several* fruits, while at the same time weak in *several* others.

The point? Some may have well-developed faith, but are weak in other fruits. Others may be strong in several fruits—but weak in faith. These may not have sufficient faith to properly trust God for healing. How should those who may be stronger in faith view them?

Here is what Paul wrote to the Romans: “Him that is weak in the faith *receive you*, but not to doubtful disputations [arguments]” (14:1). The Bible says there are some who are “weak in faith.” Though all should be *growing* in faith, some have not reached spiritual maturity in this area. We are told to “receive” such, not “condemn” them. We must assist, encourage and help those who are weak in faith. The ministry must continually work with all kinds of weaknesses in God’s people. And all brethren must recognize that those who are weak in faith may exceed the fruits of other brethren in several other areas.

God’s Church must never condemn those who are weak in the faith. Some may choose to seek the medical profession to aid in their condition. Brethren must never belittle or denigrate those who “go to doctors.” God is the judge of all, and the best thing we can possibly do is inspire one another toward greater growth in all areas of weakness and spiritual deficiency. I cannot emphasize this principle too strongly!

If some are not fully able to believe that by Christ’s “stripes you are healed,” we must never accuse them, but rather work with them. We should actively encourage them to *grow in faith!* We must be prepared to remind them of basic scriptures about healing, and about God’s promises as Yahweh-Rapha.

We must continually remind ourselves that this is not God’s world! It is cut off from Him (Isa. 59:1-2). He is not the author of its governments, religions, cultures, educational systems, family values, “alternative lifestyles”—or its medical schools and the medical profession. These are all humanly-devised institutions, created and developed by men. While they are not totally evil, they are, at best, a mixture derived from the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” which Adam and Eve chose in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:17; 3:1-6).

God did not raise up the medical profession for the modern age. Men, after rejecting God’s rule 6,000 years ago, developed their own system, apart from God, of “treating” disease. And the medical profession has not only become extremely powerful in the United States, but it also has the most powerful government in the world standing behind it. Together, they have power to enact and enforce laws. Of course, many are for the general good of civil societies.

Consider. People are truly *conditioned* to automatically revere all those in the medical field. Most have far more respect for doctors and hospitals than for God. The medical field has its place and does fill a need. However, many stand in awe of each new medical breakthrough. They place their trust and hope in the false gods of modern medicine and scientific research to deliver them from disease. Again, not all medical breakthroughs and scientific research are bad, but it is a mistake to put hope and trust there in place of God. As we draw closer to God, we come to realize that far better, more perfect and complete results are possible by looking to Him for our healing.

It is important that parents be wise in how they practice their faith in God's healing, particularly when it comes to children. My grandfather's parents (my great-grandparents) made the decision to withhold medical intervention from one of their sons. They supposed that they were trusting in God. Their 14-year-old son (who would have been my great uncle) died. Having lost his favorite brother, my mother's father was driven away from God and "organized religion" until the day of his death. He had watched his parents practice "mind science," and witnessed his brother's death as a result!

God *will* certainly heal children, but remember that it is "according to your faith." Parents need to recognize that God may *not* heal—if there is insufficient faith—and they could face criminal prosecution by the authorities if they neglected to consult a doctor. Parents, and all others, must be extremely careful about going off medications "cold turkey." This can be very dangerous and all ought to be most careful when considering taking such a step.

I urge all to be extremely cautious, because the result can be serious legal difficulties.

God Does Not Change

The Bible was written a long time ago. Nothing has been added to it in nearly 2,000 years. Yet God's Plan and purpose, described throughout its pages, never change. His promises are sure—they are certain. His power to heal in the *twenty-first* century is just as certain as it was in the *first* century.

Here is how you know this.

In Malachi 3:6, God states directly, "For I am the LORD [Eternal], *I change not...*" I Corinthians 10:4 identifies Christ as the God—the "Rock"—of the Old Testament. This is why Hebrews 13:8 states, "Jesus Christ *the same* yesterday, and today, and *forever*." Revelation 1:8 adds this about Jesus Christ: "I am Alpha and Omega, the *beginning* and the *ending*, says the Lord, which *is*, and which *was*, and which *is to come*, the Almighty."

Christ is permanent and unchanging.

The only difference in the way God heals today is that He is not accompanying—as did Christ and His disciples—the preaching of the kingdom of God with *public* healings in large numbers. But we saw that the kingdom of God *is* still being preached by God's Church (Matt. 24:14), and this is why healing still takes place—but now *within* the Church.

This is why James wrote, "Is any sick *among you*?"—this is a reference to the brethren who are part of the Church of God. The instruction is "Let *him* [that member of the Church] call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over *him*, anointing *him* with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he [has] committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (5:14-15).

This is God's promise—HIS WILL!—regarding all those who call upon Him in faith for healing!

GOD STILL HEALS

It is vital to understand that Jesus' ministry was dual: (1) Preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and (2) healing the sick and casting out demons (Luke 4:18; 7:22). The original apostles continued this same pattern.

As stated, in contrast to the first century, healing today occurs primarily within the Church, rather than in dramatic public "healings." Modern pseudo-healers have made a mockery of healing, through circus sideshow fakery. Many, repulsed by this sham, turn to modern medicine. Again, though medical science may help treat the *effects* of disease, only God can heal.

Some brief history is in order.

God began to give His Holy Spirit—the same Spirit by which Jesus and the disciples did miracles—to His Church. On the Day of Pentecost, in AD 31, when the New Testament Church was created, Peter gave a powerful sermon to many. It was so convicting that 3,000 were baptized. Before their baptism, many asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter answered, "Repent, *and be baptized* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy [Spirit]" (vs. 38).

This verse is God's plain command to "be baptized"! The Bible also says baptism must be preceded by repentance or one will not receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. But God must first *call* all who are brought into the Church: "No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me *draw him*: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). People do not choose God. God chooses them—and then Christ puts them into the Church (Acts 2:47).

The early New Testament Church initially grew by leaps and bounds. God was calling great numbers into His Church. The apostles performed signs and

wonders from the outset. They fulfilled Christ's promise to them on the night before His crucifixion: "I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me, *He does the works...* He that believes 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 14:10, 12).

As a result, many devout Jews were converted in the beginning months of the Church. Also, the Church was in unity of doctrine and fellowship. The only opposition directed at it at this early stage was in the form of threats from the religious establishment. They felt threatened by such powerful signs and wonders by the apostles, and called Peter and John before their council, asking them by what power they had done a particular miracle of healing a lame man (Acts 4:7).

With great boldness, Peter told them that the miracle was done in the name of Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified and God had resurrected. The council then held a private conference, and acknowledged the miracle, saying, "What shall we do to these men? For that indeed a *notable miracle* has been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; *and we cannot deny it*" (vs. 16). The apostles were threatened before being released, and continued to boldly preach and heal in the name of Christ.

This is an incredible account. The resistance and deceit of those who felt personally threatened by God's power at work through His true servants expose human nature for what it is (Rom. 8:7; Jer. 17:9). Today is no different.

The Two Conditions to Healing

We have seen that Christians must obey God's Law. This is absolutely prerequisite to God answering any prayer. Read again: "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we *keep His commandments*, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (I John 3:22).

I have known many who wanted to be healed but refused to keep God's commandments. They were not, and never could be, healed. Here is why God does not even hear their prayers: "He that turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Prov. 28:9). Strong words from God!

God is eager to heal those who obey and please Him. It is one of the *benefits* He is anxious to give. Recall that just before David wrote that God "forgives all your iniquities" and "heals all your diseases" (Psa. 103:3), he said, "and forget not all His *benefits*" (vs. 2). Yes, serving God *is* beneficial—VERY beneficial—to all who do it!

We have already discussed the second condition, but now it is mentioned again. James wrote, "*the prayer of faith* shall save the sick." Exhibiting faith is also absolutely vital to receiving anything of God (1:6-8). God is determined that His servants will rely on *Him!*

So then, the two conditions for healing are *obedience* and *faith!*

But Some Die

No one wants to die. Yet, in reality, we all, quite literally, have an *appointment* with death: “It is *appointed* unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27).

If one has faithfully served God all of his life, then death, and facing God’s judgment, is not something to fear. It is not somehow the worst thing that can happen. Actually, God mercifully allows some to die—He does not heal them in this life. Notice: “The *righteous* perish, and no man lays it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, *none considering* that the righteous is *taken away from the evil to come*” (Isa. 57:1). But we will see that the promise of healing still remains intact.

Here is how. God has made promises to His faithful servants. Notice: “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the *promises* made unto the fathers” (Rom. 15:8). The “fathers” are primarily Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Acts 3:13).

All of these men died—and God had not yet fulfilled His promise to them. But they died believing what God promised: “These all *DIED in faith*, not having received the *promises*...” (Heb. 11:13).

A few verses later, God explains why they have to wait in the grave for the promise of the resurrection: “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the *promise*: God having provided some better thing *for us*, that they *without us* [all those called later] should not be made perfect” (vs. 39-40). They must await the rest of “us” to come later.

The fathers are waiting in the grave along with all the others who are asleep in Christ. God is faithful. They will receive His promise of the resurrection and salvation. This means that sometimes a long period of time will pass before God fulfills a promise—but He *always* fulfills it.

Every one of God’s greatest servants eventually died of something, even if it was old age. In the end, when the purpose of their lives had been completed, God did not choose to extend their lives—as He did with Hezekiah for fifteen years. God allowed all of them, even Hezekiah, to die.

Once again, everyone eventually dies of something—but God could have continually intervened to stop it. Yet when they come up in the resurrection—at the very next instant of their consciousness—they will be completely healed. Do you see this? Do you understand that healing comes then in an instant, exactly as God promised?

God does not always heal in this life. For His own purpose and timing, He allows some to “die in faith,” and has eventually allowed this with all of His greatest servants. Apparently, He even delivered Enoch through death. Others He takes “from the evil to come”—and there *is* certainly great evil and calamity just ahead for all peoples and nations.

But all this has no effect on God’s promise!

Does Satan Have the Power to Heal?

Some have wondered if Satan has the power to heal. Witnessing loud, chaotic, outlandish displays of what *appear* to be healings, and knowing that such cannot be of God, some have questioned whether these healings could still be authentic.

In Psalm 103:3, we saw that it is God “Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases.” In Exodus 15:26, God states, “...I am the LORD that heals you.” And Paul wrote, in I Corinthians 12:28, “And God has set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then *gifts of healings*, helps, governments, diversities of tongues” (also verse 9). God has the power to heal, and He exercises that power mainly through human instruments in His true Church. He gives some ministers this gift.

Speaking of false ministers who preach “another Jesus” and “another *spirit*,” recall that Paul wrote, “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (II Cor. 11:4, 13-15).

One of the ways that Satan makes his ministers appear as true ministers of God is by demonstrating certain “miracles,” including acts of *apparent* healings. (Also notice Revelation 13:11-14.)

In the book of Exodus, beginning in chapter 5, Pharaoh’s court magicians were able to perform certain acts similar to the miracles that God performed through His servant Moses. These were things God allowed Satan to do, through Satan’s servants, as part of the process of hardening Pharaoh’s heart (Ex. 4:21; 7:3; 14:4), so that Pharaoh would witness God’s power in delivering Israel from Egypt.

The dramatic public “healings” promoted by many of this world’s ministers are similar displays, in which individuals who suffer from various crippling diseases are really bound by a demon. An example is found in Luke 13:11-13: “And, behold, there was a woman which had a *spirit of infirmity* eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him, and said unto her, Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity. And He laid His hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.”

This is an account of an individual who did not have a physical handicap, but whose body was in the grip of a demon. Christ cast the demon from her, and she was restored to a normal condition. Satan can easily—probably temporarily—“pull back” one of his demons for dramatic effect.

Also consider that often, at the climax of many such “healings,” the individuals involved will seemingly lose self-control, falling *backward*. But notice the following scriptures: “And Abram *fell on his face*: and God talked with him...Then Abraham *fell upon his face*...” (Gen. 17:3, 17); “And Jehoshaphat *bowed his head with his*

face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD” (II Chron. 20:18). “And He [Christ] went a little farther, and *fell on His face*, and prayed...” (Matt. 26:39). “...and so *falling down on his face* he will worship God...” (I Cor. 14:25).

The above scriptures show that those who come before God’s presence to worship Him generally bow forward. *Other* scriptures show that those acting under the influence of a demon tend to fall on their backs. Notice: “As soon as He [Christ] had said unto them, I am He, *they went backward, and fell to the ground*” (John 18:6). Why? Read Mark 1:23-24: “And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with You, You Jesus of Nazareth? Are You come to destroy us? I know who You are, the Holy One of God.”

Rather than yielding to Christ, those with demons *recoiled from* His power and authority. And nowhere in scripture are people struck on the forehead and *knocked backwards*! God’s ministers anoint—never *strike, grab or shake*—the sick.

Violent, noisy reactions are typical of those who are plagued by demons. Now notice verse 26: “And when the unclean spirit had *torn* him, and cried with a *loud voice*, he came out of him.” The Greek word translated “torn” is *sparasso*, meaning a spasmodic contraction. Compare this to the outbursts of “Hallelujah!”, “Amen!”, etc., often accompanied by gyrations or other displays of seemingly uncontrolled behavior, which are standard fare at “organized” public “healing revivals.”

Also read Acts 19:15-16, which records the terrible result of unauthorized individuals carelessly—or recklessly—invoking Christ’s name to cast out demons. The seven brothers in this account presumptuously took action, without Christ’s authority. They were, no doubt, desperately sorry later.

While Scripture shows that Satan does not cast out his demons (Mark 3:23-26), it would certainly work to his advantage (as the god of this world – II Cor. 4:4) to make his ministers *appear* to have healing power. Keep in mind that Satan can only do whatever God allows him to do. (See Job 1:12; 2:6.) And, as Matthew 12:43-45 shows, if a person possessed by a demon is freed from it, and the person’s mind is not receptive to the truth from God’s Word, then that demon will return, bringing with him “seven other spirits more wicked than himself.”

Also recognize that Satan does not have our welfare at heart (I Pet. 5:8). He knows that “he has but a short time” (Rev. 12:12) before Christ returns. He recognizes that our ultimate potential, as those made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26), is to rule with Christ in the kingdom of God. Not only does he not desire to *physically* heal anyone of anything (even if he had that power), he also seeks to deceive all people and blind them to God’s Purpose—that of *spiritually* healing the entire world.

Finally, remember that healing involves—and requires!—the forgiveness of sin. Obviously, Satan has no such power. (You may read our booklets *Who Is the Devil?* and *A World in Captivity* to learn more about Satan.)

Do Doctors Have a Role?

I do not want any to misunderstand about the help of physicians. There are a variety of useful things that they can do. They *can* deliver babies, fix broken bones, suture wounds—and a growing number can offer helpful advice about various conditions. They can also be somewhat helpful in diagnosing problems, so that people can make changes in diet, exercise, or other areas of health. These are all good and positive things that doctors can do. But they cannot heal—because they cannot forgive sin!

God's role as Healer is to do for people what they cannot do for themselves. God *could* always instantly mend bones, heal all cuts and wounds or cause babies to be born without assistance, as is the case with animals. But He allows for lesson learning, and growth in patience and longsuffering. Sometimes He wants people to research and find out *why* they are having health problems. Doctors, like others, can be of assistance. If God healed everything—and *instantly*—no one would ever learn from mistakes (Psa. 119:67, 71).

Understand once again! The Church, its ministry and its brethren must not, and do not, belittle or pressure people not to see doctors or utilize medical care. Though the world is cut off from God, it has devised the medical profession and, over thousands of years, men have developed certain knowledge and skills—"expertise"—that some people will choose to pursue.

Though under the overall sway of Satan, this world and its "medical science"—the *practice* (and that is what it is) of medicine—has refined certain treatments. Even though early physicians were more primitive in knowledge and practice than today, Christ was still willing to compare Himself to a physician when He called "sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:10-13). He also chose to quote, without comment, a common saying about physicians (see Luke 4:23), when explaining why many lepers were not healed in the time of Elisha. Also, Paul traveled with "Luke the...physician" (Col. 4:14), and this physician was used to record one of the gospels. There are also certain references to physicians and medicines in the Old Testament that are not found in a negative context (Jer. 8:22; Gen. 50:2-3; Job 13:4; Prov. 17:22; Jer. 30:12-13; 46:11; Ezek. 47:12).

But in no case do these verses hint, suggest or imply that doctors can heal ANYTHING. They cannot! Remember, God can heal because He can forgive sin.

Going to doctors seems easy and natural for people who have grown up in a world disconnected from God. Trusting God seems *unnatural*—and it must be learned. And, apparently, Christ doubted that much *real faith*—like that of the original apostles—would exist at His Return (Luke 18:8). No doubt, He understood that the reality of His being scourged with stripes—lashed with a "cat of nine tails," tearing the flesh to pieces—would seem remote to those of the modern age, so accustomed to what "medical science" can do. Most

would fail to make any connection to *Christ's* suffering THEN and *their* very real suffering NOW.

At the moment of conversion, one is still almost 100 percent carnal—perhaps led 99.9 percent by human nature. The enormous influence of the devil's spirit, at work in the mind, is still present—and is only subdued over time. It also takes time to fully believe that God will do what He promises—whether to bless, deliver, guide, provide, answer prayers or heal. If a member of God's Church lacks faith and confidence in God's promise to heal, either himself or his child, then utilizing medical treatment may be better than doing nothing. Again—such must never be condemned!

But for those who obey God and are willing to trust Him completely, there is this promise: “Commit your way unto the LORD; TRUST also in Him; *and He shall bring it to pass*” (Psa. 37:5).

Why? Because Christ promised that “...whatsoever you shall ask in My Name, that will I do...” (John 14:13).

HEALING IN THE WORLD TOMORROW

This world has rebelled against *every* law, and rejected *every* promise, of God. It has literally “gone away backward” (Isa. 1:4). It has sought to replace God with human institutions and solutions. They have not worked. The nations of earth have rejected crucial knowledge (Hos. 4:6) that would have spared billions of people untold misery and suffering, if they had known of it!

Man has made extraordinary “advancements” in medical knowledge. He has learned things about the human body and mind of which the ancients could not dream. In addition, just the modern technology and machinery of medical science leaves the world aghast. Astonishing new “breakthroughs,” entirely because of the abilities and capacity that *God* instilled into the human mind, are almost routinely announced. Truly, man can learn and do amazing things!

But how often do you hear researchers and “experts” acknowledge God by crediting Him for having created such potential within the human mind? Instead, lifted with pride in his own achievements, man has trusted in and credited *himself*. Even at best, his efforts have resulted in certain useful medical knowledge that has benefited a God-rejecting mankind only *a little*.

Incredible advancements of the last century and a half have left man drunken in the belief that he can solve all his problems. But can he really do this? Can today’s confused, divided, poverty-stricken, war-torn, disease-laden world really be changed into the utopia humanity longs for?

A wonderful new disease-free world *is* in the offing—but it will *not* come because of the efforts of men!

The Threat of Diseases and Epidemics

Science once believed that it could control and conquer disease. But new diseases are emerging and older ones, like tuberculosis, are rapidly mutating out of control. Modern medicine is falling behind in the war to eradicate disease. New disease outbreaks occur routinely around the world. The danger is greatest in underdeveloped nations, where poor sanitation, war, overcrowding, and poverty spawn epidemics—and man and his governments have lost control.

Cholera, dysentery, typhoid and malaria are still rampant. Add to this the more recent arrivals of such threats as the Ebola virus, Hantivirus, E.coli bacteria, Salmonella bacteria, West Nile virus, and Mad Cow disease. Then add to this list the dangerous bacteria spread by biological warfare and terrorism. While the strains most worrisome may be Anthrax and Smallpox, these are far from the only possible disease epidemics on the horizon. Tens of millions in Africa alone are HIV positive—and similar numbers are *dying*!

Just the threat of devastating epidemics keeps man reeling, constantly trying to put his “finger in the dike.” Every form of illness, sickness and pestilence stalks the earth. New diseases—and threats of epidemics—loom over large areas of earth. Anticipated epidemics—even *pandemics*—are now probably more than civilization can withstand. (The world’s resources—including clean air, water and food—are also being stretched to the limit. At the end of 6,000 years of man’s rule, civilization—and earth itself—is nearing complete breakdown. Truly, the entire planet needs healing.)

Terrible disease has been—and remains—inseparable from man’s history! (Our booklet *The Pale Horse – “There Shall Be Pestilences...”* reveals why disease is rapidly growing worse.)

But remember, God never intended this (III John 2). Recall that, after creating Adam and Eve, He said that all of His creation was “very good” (Gen. 1:31). This leaves no room for God having placed hidden, inactive viruses and bacteria within their bodies, waiting for the right moment to afflict them with horrible sickness and disease of every kind. Man did this to himself.

Yet man feverishly continues seeking to conquer disease—while he seems to fall further and further behind. As he *appears* to control one disease, two more appear.

This will all soon change!

All man’s efforts to cure diabetes, arthritis, cancer, heart disease, blindness, deafness, Alzheimer’s (and other diseases of the mind), strokes, AIDS, and a host of infant and childhood diseases will soon be unnecessary. All of the on-going searches for new wonder drugs, treatments, specialized diagnoses, surgeries and procedures, breakthroughs in technology—and every other kind of medical advancement—will soon be called off.

The entire world will soon learn that God has always been the only One who can truly cure or heal all forms of sickness and disease (Ex. 15:26; Psa. 103:3). Mankind will learn that God alone has the ability to forgive sin, which is directly related to why people get sick (Matt. 9:1-6; Psa. 41:3-4).

Man is now under the death penalty for sin (Rom. 6:23). Often, death comes long before the end of a full lifetime, because men have not understood that God is Supreme Healer. They have not understood that “by [Christ’s] stripes you are healed” (I Pet. 2:24)—that He “took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses” (Matt. 8:16-17). When physical or spiritual laws have been broken, they have been ignorant of the fact that only God has the power to forgive.

Earlier, we discussed the great law of *cause and effect*. Ignorance of this law has everything to do with why people get sick. Proper diet, sufficient water, sleep, fresh air and exercise, healthy thoughts and other important principles and laws form the CAUSES that people violate enroute to the bad EFFECTS, which we call disease. Modern medical schools acknowledge that they spend almost no time discussing the *prevention* of disease, but rather its *treatment* after it is present. Soon mankind will be taught that an ounce of prevention really does equal a pound of cure—both individually, and for mankind collectively. Teaching mankind about good health is one of the basic laws to success—and all *seven* of these laws will be taught.

Mass Global Healing

In TOMORROW’S WORLD, after Christ has returned and established His government, people will be universally taught that “sin is the transgression of the law” (I John 3:4). We have discussed in detail both God’s great spiritual laws, and that He has instituted many *physical* laws. Most have spent lifetimes specializing in how to break virtually every one. Humanity is surrounded, therefore, by every kind of bad physical effect. Rampant disease and illness are among the greatest.

Drink in God’s promise regarding disease and sickness in TOMORROW’S WORLD: “But there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the LORD is our Judge, the LORD is our Lawgiver, the LORD is our King; He will save us. . . . And the inhabitant shall NOT say, *I am sick*: the people that dwell therein shall be *forgiven their iniquity*” (Isa. 33:21-22, 24). This is one more verse—actually a prophecy—proving that the removal of sickness requires the forgiveness of sins (“iniquity” or lawlessness).

Next is an even more explicit promise from God, carrying more details of the enormous scope of mass healings to occur worldwide: “Strengthen you the *weak* hands, and confirm the *feeble* knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the *blind*

shall be opened, and the ears of the *deaf* shall be unstopped. Then shall the *lame* man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the *dumb* sing..." (Isa. 35:3-6).

The Bible prophesies a mass worldwide "healing revival." Only this one will be genuine, not one of fraud, mixed with pageantry and designed for television in order to "take in" many hopeful sufferers. A utopian world with perfect health for all *is* coming. It will bring universal happiness, contentment, peace and prosperity. Mass healing would certainly be necessary if this is to happen—and many prophecies say it will.

How exciting to picture millions of blind people seeing sunsets that they had only heard described before—and the deaf able to hear beautiful music, birds singing, and the sound of their children's voices. The joyful exuberance will be so great that the dumb will not just talk—they will *sing*! And the lame will not just walk—they will *leap*!

No universal healing would be complete without God also healing all of the diseased minds now clouded with every conceivable kind of mental illness and insanity. This scourge has plagued individuals, families and nations for millennia. Perfect mental health will be enjoyed by everyone—and all psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists, psychoanalysts and modern "shrinks" will be out of business.

Cities and Farmlands Also Healed

Why should it be that men do not understand that God wants to bless them? God is the Mastergiver of all perfect gifts (Jms. 1:17). He explained this to Israel and told them what obedience would bring them: "And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God, to observe and to do all His commandments which I command you this day, that the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth: And all these *blessings* shall come on you, and overtake you, if you shall hearken unto the voice of the LORD your God. *Blessed* shall you be in the city, and *blessed* shall you be in the field. *Blessed* shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your kine, and the flocks of your sheep. *Blessed* shall be your basket and your store" (Deut. 28:1-5).

This promise will soon apply to the whole world. Again, without radiant health, who could be truly happy? *This* is what God desires. Here is His promise, foretold over 2,500 years ago by Jeremiah: "For I will *restore health* unto you, and I will *heal* you of your wounds" (30:17). And further, "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul [lives] shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and My people shall be satisfied with My

goodness, says the LORD” (31:12-14). (To learn more about this subject, read our book *Tomorrow’s Wonderful World – An Inside View!*)

We Must Be Consistent!

By now, some basic facts about healing must be acknowledged. And it must also be admitted that they form a consistent *pattern*.

Let’s grasp it! First, God told ancient Israel that *He* was their Healer—their God Healer (Yahweh-Rapha). He even instructed this, knowing that He was not working with them spiritually—they were merely a carnal-minded, physical people. He still promised them deliverance from all disease if they would trust and obey Him.

Next, we saw that Christ and the apostles healed—Christ, during His ministry, and the apostles during the first stages of the New Testament Church. The gospels and book of Acts reveal that miracles and healings were common in the Church at that time.

Then, we just read that God plans to heal all sickness and disease upon Christ’s Return, and during His millennial rule. All need for doctors, nurses and those in the medical profession will soon disappear. God plans to dramatically re-establish Himself as the One who heals.

There is no denying all the scriptures in this booklet supporting and proving these three phases of God’s role as Healer. Why then do people want to believe that God works through “the doctor’s hands” and medical science today? This has never been His Plan. Prophecy shows that “medical science” is about to be scrapped forever—and *replaced* with knowledge of and obedience to God’s health laws and God as Healer!

God declares, “I heal”—and that “I change not.” Take Him at His Word—and EXPECT His healing!

Accepting God’s Promises

In the middle of the twentieth century, God used Herbert W. Armstrong to restore the inspiring biblical truth about healing—and the simultaneous restoration of the true gospel and its commission to be preached (Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10)—to the Philadelphian era of His Church (Dan. 12:4; Rev. 3:7-13; Matt. 17:11). These doctrines still work together.

At the conclusion of his booklet *The Plain Truth About Healing*, Mr. Armstrong wrote this exhortation and summary under the subhead “Believer Relies on God’s Promises”:

“The doubter denies God’s PROMISES. The BELIEVER relies on them—UNTIL God performs them.

“God has given us MANY PROMISES. God *promises* (Romans 5:10) ‘... we shall be saved by his [Jesus’] LIFE.’ God *promised* salvation and eternal life through Abraham. ‘Now to Abraham and his seed were the PROMISES

[of eternal life] made' (Galatians 3:16). They were repromised to Isaac and Jacob. Jesus Christ came to CONFIRM the PROMISES made unto the fathers (Romans 15:8). And Abraham, '...being not weak in faith [as so many are today]...staggered not at the PROMISE of God through unbelief [as do many today]; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being FULLY PERSUADED that, what he [God] had PROMISED, he was able also to perform' (Romans 4:19-21).

"Yet Abraham, Isaac and Jacob '...all died *in faith*, not having received the promises...' (Hebrews 11:13).

"A minister, apparently lacking either in faith or in UNDERSTANDING, writes, 'Case histories in the Bible, and especially thousands of case histories in the present Church, show that faith was present in the lives of people, and God did not heal.'

"I could not vouch for the fact that FAITH was present in all such cases—I cannot judge others; only God can. The same letter gives the following, striking home to me, in contending against God's PROMISES to heal on faith: 'What about the many of our dead we have buried—Mrs. Loma Armstrong [the wife of my youth who died at age 75 1/2], your son Dick...' and four others.

"My answer, in simple FAITH, is that they, like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, all died IN FAITH, not having received the PROMISES—*YET!* But in the next fraction of a second from their loss of consciousness in death, THEY SHALL WAKE UP *HEALED*—in the resurrection, and in GOD'S KINGDOM! I have *faith* that in the not-too-distant future I shall SEE my father, my...wife, my son Dick and others this minister named FULLY *HEALED* in the Kingdom of God.

Proclaiming the World's Only and Sure Hope!

"God says through Paul, 'If in this life ONLY we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable' (I Corinthians 15:19).

"UNDERSTAND! God *HAS PROMISED TO HEAL*—on faith and obedience!

"But neither you nor I can dictate to God *how* or *when* He shall do WHAT HE HAS PROMISED.

"Nowhere has God promised that we shall be healed so repeatedly that we shall never die. My wife and my son had been REPEATEDLY HEALED! God says, 'For as in Adam ALL DIE...' (I Corinthians 15:22). But He also promises '...so in Christ shall all be made alive.'

"You who misunderstand or lack faith, but trust in medical doctors, DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE MILLIONS WHO DIE *DIE UNDER THE MEDICAL DOCTORS' CARE?* Yet you who disbelieve *still have faith in M.D.s.*

"Frankly, it makes me a little indignant, as I fully believe it does the living CHRIST, to find people exalting the advances and 'expertise' of medical doctors, while at the same time denying that God's PROMISES *are* promises—

discrediting faith in God, excusing their lack of trusting GOD while they argue for trusting MAN!

“God has PROMISED salvation and eternal life *on the SAME conditions He PROMISED healing*—obedience and faith. Jesus paid our penalty, making possible eternal life by His shed blood on the cross. He paid the penalty for physical broken law, making possible our HEALING by His stripes (Isaiah 53:5, I Peter 2:24).

“‘Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases’ (Psalm 103:3). If you can’t believe the one, *how can you* believe the other?”

“The Eternal God called me and committed to me Christ’s GREAT COMMISSION—to go into the whole world proclaiming the world’s ONLY and SURE HOPE—the soon-coming KINGDOM OF GOD!

“All whom God has called to come into His Church today—coming out from among those of the world—have been CALLED to stand back of this WORLDWIDE proclamation of the soon-coming KINGDOM—the *time of LIFE after this life!*”

Look to the Glories Ahead

“God wants our minds to be looking FORWARD to HIS KINGDOM and the glories ahead! That’s what is meant by Colossians 3:1.

“WHY, then, should any of us be saying to God, ‘Do it RIGHT NOW, Lord—RIGHT NOW’ or else we’ll drop faith in God and trust in MAN?”

“God’s PROMISE to those who died in faith, *not YET* having received the PROMISES, *STANDS SURE AND INVIOLETE!* If we can’t believe that, we simply do not believe GOD!

“I have made it plain that God’s Church does not condemn medical or other doctors—nor sit in judgment of those who are weak in faith and rely on MAN. There is much doctors *can* do for us today.

“I have given the BASIC PRINCIPLE: God does for us what we humans cannot do. One could get into endless arguments and controversy on technical specific issues of what we may go to man for and what to rely on GOD to do. I have given the broad guidelines. The Church will encourage God’s people to BELIEVE GOD—RELY ON GOD—to say, with the apostles, ‘...Lord, INCREASE OUR FAITH’ (Luke 17:5).

“After writing the above lines, intending them to be the conclusion, I turned on television for a moment’s relaxation. A medical drama was on. In a heated argument between two doctors—actors taking the part of doctors—one said to the other, angrily, ‘You’re not a miracle worker—you’re a doctor!’

“God does not expect His ministers to make your decisions for you—and God’s Church will not sit in judgment of you if you go to a doctor. But GOD says one of His BENEFITS, for which He makes no charge, is that He offers you the loving services of a MIRACLE WORKER—the living JESUS CHRIST!”

The following literature expands on topics discussed in this booklet:

- How Often Should the Lord's Supper Be Taken?
- The Laws to Success
- God's Principles of Healthful Living
- *Where* Is God's Church?
- *You* Can Live the Abundant Life!

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