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THE GOSPEL OF HEALING

The Gospel of Healing

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The Gospel of Healing

PREFACE

The first half of this little volume has been issued in many successive editions as a series of tracts on the Gospel of Healing. The testimony of many persons in various directions that they have been greatly blessed of God, and the desire often expressed to have them in permanent form, has induced the author to reissue them in book form, with the addition of several fresh chapters. It is hoped this simple volume may now be found to be a compact and more useful channel of Scriptural instruction upon this important subject. The views expressed have been carefully weighed in the balance of the Divine Word, and confirmed by much careful experience and observation.

The importance of this subject, and the emphatic way in which God's Holy Spirit is pressing it upon the attention of His people, demands for it the most careful and thoroughly Scriptural study. Effectual faith can only come through thorough conviction.

In spite of the cold and conservative, and sometimes scornful, unbelief of many, this doctrine is becoming one of the touchstones of character and spiritual life in all the churches, and revolutionizing, by a deep, quiet, and Divine movement, the whole Christian life of thousands. It has a profound bearing upon the spiritual life. No one can truly receive it without being a holier and more useful Christian. We believe it is to be one of the most mighty forces in the next missionary movement. We should not be surprised if it should have an important place in the greatest spiritual awakening that is yet to visit the churches; and we cannot question that it is intimately connected with the hope and nearness of our Lord's second coming. It is most important that it should be ever held in its true place in

relation to the other parts of the Gospel. It is not the whole Gospel, nor the chief part of it, but it is a part, and in its due subordination to the whole, it will prove, like the Gospel itself, the power of God unto everyone that believeth.

Chapter 1: THE SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATION

Man has a two-fold nature. He is both a material and a spiritual being. And both natures have been equally affected by the fall. His body is exposed to disease; his soul is corrupted by sin. We would therefore expect that any complete scheme of redemption would include both natures, and provide for the restoration of his physical as well as the renovation of his spiritual life. Nor are we disappointed. The Redeemer appears among men with both hands stretched out to our misery and need. In the one He holds salvation; in the other, healing. He offers Himself to us as a complete Savior; His indwelling Spirit the life of our spirit; His resurrection body the life of our mortal flesh. He begins His ministry by healing all that had need of healing. He closes it by making on the Cross a full atonement for our sin; and then on the other side of the open tomb He passes into Heaven, leaving the double commission for “all the world,” and “all the days even unto the end of. the world;"—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe. In My name they shall cast out devils . . . . they shall lay hands upon the sick and they shall recover.”

This was “the faith once delivered unto the saints.” What has become of it? Why is it not still universally taught and realized? Did it disappear with the Apostolic age? Was it withdrawn when Peter, Paul, and John were removed? By no means. It remained in the Church for centuries and only disappeared gradually in the growing worldliness, corruption, formalism and unbelief of the early Christian

centuries. With a reviving faith, with a deepening spiritual life, with a more marked and Scriptural recognition of the Holy Spirit and the Living Christ, and with the nearer approach of the returning Master Himself, this blessed Gospel of physical redemption is beginning to be restored to its ancient place, and the Church is slowly learning to reclaim what she never should have lost. But along with this there is also manifested such a spirit of conservative unbelief and cold, traditional, theological rationalism as to make it necessary that we should "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints." First of all we must be sure of our Scriptural foundations. Faith must ever rest on the Divine Word; and the most important element in the "prayer of faith" is a full and firm persuasion that the healing of disease by simple faith in God is, beyond question, a part of the Gospel and a doctrine of the Scriptures.

The earliest promise of healing is in Exodus xv. 25, 26: "There He made for them a statute and ordinance, and there he proved them, and said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord thy God which healeth thee." The place of this promise is most marked. It is at the very outset of their journey, like Christ's healing of disease at the opening of His ministry. It comes immediately after the passage of the Red Sea. And we know that this event was distinctly typical of our redemption, and their journey of our pilgrimage. "These things happened unto them for ensamples, and are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Cor. 10: 11. This promise, therefore, becomes ours, as the redeemed people of God. And God meets us at the very threshold of our pilgrimage with the covenant of healing, declaring that as we walk in holy and loving obedience we shall be kept from sickness, which belongs to the old life of bondage we have left behind us forever. Sickness belongs to the Egyptians, not to the people of God. And only as we return spiritually to Egypt do we return to its maladies and perils. Nay, this is not only a promise, it is "a statute and an

ordinance." And so the Lord Jesus has left for us a distinct ordinance of healing in His name as sacred and binding as any of the ordinances of the Gospel.

Ps. 105. 37: "He brought them forth also with silver and gold, and there was not one feeble person among their tribes." This shows us the actual fulfillment of that promise. Although they did not fulfill their part in the covenant, yet God kept His Word. And so, although our faith and obedience are often defective, yet, if Christ is our surety, and if our faith will claim His merits and His name, we too shall see the promise fulfilled.

Job 1-2: The story of Job is one of the oldest records of history. It gives us an unmistakable view of the source from which sickness comes—Satan; and the course which brings healing, taking the place of humble self-judgment of the mercy-seat. If ever a sick chamber was unveiled it was that of Uz. But we see no physician there, no human remedy, but only a looking unto God as his Avenger. And when he renounces his self-righteousness and self-vindication and takes the place where God is seeking to bring him—that of self-renunciation and humility —he is healed.

Ps. 103: 2, 3: "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases." The Psalms of David are a continual record of affliction. But God is always the deliverer, and God alone. We see no human hand. As directly does he look to Heaven for the healing as he does for the pardon, and in the same breath, he cries, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases." And it is a complete healing, ALL his diseases, as universal and lasting as the forgiveness of his sins. And how glorious and entire that was, is evident enough. "As far as the East is from the West, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." But here, as in the case of Job, there is an intimate connection between the sickness and the sin; and both must be healed together.

2 Chron. 14: 12, 13: “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. And Asa slept with his fathers.” Here was a king who had begun his reign by an act of simple implicit trust in God, when human resources utterly failed him; and by that trust (verses 9-12) he won one of the most glorious victories of history. But success corrupted him, and taught him to value too highly the arm of flesh. So that in his next great crisis (2 Chron. 16: 7, 8) he formed an alliance with Syria, and lost the help of God. He refuses to take warning from the prophet, and rushes on to the climax of his earthly confidence. He becomes sick. Here is a greater foe than the Ethiopians, but again he turns to man. “He sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians.” And the vivid picture of the outcome could not be more sad or sarcastic: “And Asa slept with his fathers.”

Isaiah 53: 4, 5. “Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows . . . and with His stripes we are healed.”

This the great Evangelical vision, the Gospel in the Old Testament, the very mirror of the coming Redeemer. And here in the front of it, prefaced by a great AMEN—the only “surely” in the chapter is the promise of healing; the very strongest possible statement of complete redemption from pain and sickness by his life and death, and the very words which the Evangelist afterwards quotes, under the inspired guidance of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 8: 17) as the explanation of His universal works of healing. The translation in our English version does very imperfect justice to the force of the original. The translation in Matthew 8: 17 is much better: “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” The literal translation would be, “surely He hath borne away our sicknesses and carried away our pains.”

Any person who will refer to such a familiar commentary as that of Albert Barnes on Isaiah, or any other Hebrew authority, will see that the two words here used denote respectively "'sickness" and "pain," and that the words for "bear" and "carry," denote not mere sympathy, but an actual substitution and the removal utterly of the thing borne. Therefore, in the same full sense as He has borne our sins, Jesus Christ has SURELY BORNE AWAY and CARRIED OFF our sicknesses; yes, and even our PAINS, so that abiding in Him, we may be fully delivered from both sickness and pain. Thus "by His stripes we are healed." Blessed and glorious Gospel! Blessed and glorious Burden Bearer.

Thus the ancient prophet beholds in vision the Redeemer coming first as a Great Physician, and then hanging on the Cross as a Great Sacrifice. And thus the Evangelists have also described him; for three years the Great Healer, and then for six hours of shame and agony, the Dying Lamb.

Matthew 8: 17. "He healed all that were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." This is quoted as the reason why He healed all that were sick. It was not that He might give his enemies a vindication of His Divinity, but that He might fulfill the character presented of Him in ancient prophecy. Had he not done so, He would not have been true to His own character, and if He did not still do so, He would not be—"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever." These healings were not occasional, but continual; not exceptional, but universal. He never turned any away. "He healed all that were sick." "As many as touched Him were made perfectly whole." He is still the same.

Now, this was the work of His life. We have been too ready to sum up all the Redeemer's work in the one act at the close; and in our zeal for the value of His blood, we have forgotten the preciousness of His earthly life. But God would not have us forget that He spent more than three years in deeds of power and love

before He went up to that Cross to die. And we need that Living Christ quite as much as Christ Crucified. The Levitical types included the meat offering quite as much as the sin offering; and suffering human hearts need to feed upon the Great Loving Heart of Galilee and Bethany, as much as on the Lamb of Calvary.

It would take entirely too long to examine in detail the countless records of His healing power and grace, or tell how He cured the leper, the lame, the blind, the palsied, the impotent, the fever stricken, "all that had need of healing;" how He linked sickness so often with sin, and forgave before he spake the restoring word; how He required their own personal touch of appropriating faith, and bade them take the healing by rising up and carrying their bed; how His healing went far beyond His own immediate presence, and reached and saved the centurion's servant and the nobleman' s son; and how sharply He reproved the least question of His willingness to help, and threw the responsibility of man's suffering on his own unbelief. These and many more such lessons crowd every page of the Master's life, and still reveal to us the secret of claiming His healing power. And what right anyone can claim to explain away these miracles, as mere types of spiritual healing and blessing, and not as specimens of what He still is ready to do for all who trust Him, is as inexplicable as the Mythical Theory. Such was Jesus of Nazareth. But was this blessed power to die with Him?

John 16: 12: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works shall he do, because I go to my Father." Here is another "VERILY," nay a "VERILY, VERILY." Then it must be something emphatic, and something man was sure to doubt. Now, it is no use to tell us that this meant that the Church after Pentecost was to have greater spiritual power, and do greater spiritual works by the Holy Ghost than Jesus Himself did, inasmuch as the conversion of the soul is a greater work than the healing of the body; because Jesus says, "The works that I do, shall he do also," as well as the "greater works than these:" that is, he is to do the same works Christ did, and greater also. And so we know they did the same works that he

did. Even during His life He sent out the twelve Apostles, and then He sent out the seventy as forerunners of the whole host of the Christian Eldership (for the seventy were just the first Elders of the Christian Age, corresponding to the seventy Elders of Moses), with full power to heal. And when He was about to leave the world, He left on record both these Commissions in the most unmistakable terms.

Mark 16: 15-18: “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In My name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them, they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” Here is the Commission given to them, the twofold Gospel, and assuring them of His presence and unchanging power.

What right have we to preach the one without the other? What right have we to hold back any part from the perishing world? What right have we to go to the unbelieving world and demand their acceptance of our message without these signs following? What right have we to explain their absence from our ministry by trying to eliminate them from God’s Word, or consign them to an obsolete past? Nay, Christ did give them, and they did follow as long as Christians continued to “believe” and expect them. And by such “mighty signs and wonders” the Church was established in Jerusalem, Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

The unbelief of the world needs them today as much as in the Apostolic times. During the Apostolic age these manifestations of healing power were by no means confined to the Apostles. Philip and Stephen were as gloriously used as Peter and John. In 1. Cor. 12: 9-30, “the gifts of healing” are spoken of as widely

diffused and universally understood among the endowments of the Church. But now, the Apostolic age is closing; is this to be continued, and if so, by whom?

By what limitation is it to be preserved from fanaticism and presumption? By what commission is it to be perpetuated to the end of time, and placed within the reach of all God's suffering saints? We turn with deep interest to James 5: 14. "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."

Now, let us notice first who gives this commission. It is James, the President of the Apostolic Board; the presiding officer of the Mother Church at Jerusalem; the one who had authority to say, in summing up the decrees of the Council at Jerusalem (Acts 15: 19), "My sentence is;" the man who is named first by Paul himself among the Pillars of the Church (Gal. 2: 9); he it is who rightly transmits the Apostolic gifts to the ordinary and permanent officers who are to succeed them in the oversight of the flock of Christ.

Again, observe to whom this power is committed. Not the Apostles, who are now passing away, not men and women of rare gifts and difficult of access, but the elders, the ordinary officers of every single church, the men who are within reach of every sufferer, the men who are to continue till the end of the age.

Again, notice the time at which this commission is given. Not at the beginning, but at the close of the Apostolic age; nor for that generation, but for the one that was just rising, and all the succeeding ages. For, indeed, these New Testament epistles were not widely circulated in their own age, but were mainly designed "for our admonition on whom the ends of the world are come."

Again, observe the nature of the ordinance enjoined—the prayer of faith, and the anointing with oil in the name of the Lord. Now, this was manifestly not a medical anointing, for it was not to be applied by a physician, but by an elder, and must, naturally, be the same anointing of which we read, Mark 6: 13, and elsewhere, in connection with the healing of disease by the Apostles themselves. Any other interpretation would be strained and contrary to the obvious meaning of the custom, as our Lord and His Apostles observed it. In the absence of any explanation here to the contrary, we are bound to believe that it was the same—a symbolical religious ordinance expressive of the power of the Holy Ghost, whose peculiar emblem is oil. The Greek Church still retains the ordinance. The Romish apostasy has changed it into a mournful preparation for death. It is a beautiful symbol of the Divine Spirit of life taking possession of the human body, and breathing into it His vital energy.

Again, observe that this is a command. It ceases to be a mere privilege. It is the Divine prescription for disease; and no obedient Christian can safely dispense with it. Any other method of dealing with sickness is unauthorized. This is God's plan. This makes faith so simple and easy. We have but to obey in childlike confidence; He will fulfill.

And once more, we must not overlook the connection of sickness with sin, the suggestion that the trial has been a Divine chastening, and requires self-judgment, penitence and pardon, and the blessed assurance that both pardon and healing may be claimed together in His name.

3 John 2: "Beloved, I wish (pray) above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." If more were needed than the testimony of James, the last of the Apostles, and the one who best knew the Master's heart, has left this tender prayer, by which we may know our Father's gentle care for our health as well as for our souls. And when God breathes such a

prayer for us, we need not fear to claim it for ourselves. But, as we do, we must not forget that our health will be even as our soul prospers.

Eph. 5: 30: “We are members of His body, His flesh, and His bones.” These words recognize a union between our body and the risen body of the Lord Jesus Christ, which gives us the right to claim for our mortal frame all the vital energy of His perfect life. His body is ours. His life is ours, and it is all sufficient.

Rom.8: 11. “If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” This cannot refer to the future resurrection. That will be by the “Voice of the Son of God,” not the Holy Spirit. This is a present dwelling and a quickening by the Spirit. And it is a quickening of the “mortal body,” not the soul. What can this be but physical restoration, which is the direct work of the Holy Ghost, and which only they can receive who know the indwelling of the Divine Spirit? It was the Spirit of God that wrought all the miracles of Jesus Christ on earth. Matt.7: 28. And if we have the same Spirit dwelling in us we shall experience the same works.

2 Cor. 4: 10, 11: “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in our mortal flesh. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal body. “This is Paul’s physical experience, constant peril, infirmity, and physical suffering, probably by persecution and even violence; in order that the healing, restoring and sustaining power, and life of Jesus might be the more constantly manifest in his very body for the encouragement of suffering saints, “for your sakes.” His life was a constant miracle; that it might be to all men a pledge and monument of the promise made to him, for all who might hereafter suffer. “My grace is sufficient for thee.” This life, he tells us, v. 16, “was renewed day by day.” The healing power of Christ is

dependent on our continual abiding in Him, and, like all his gifts, is renewed day by day.

Finally, as a voice that has been speaking for eighteen centuries, let us hear the sweet words, Heb. 13: 8: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever.” And this is but an echo of that voice that spoke these parting words a generation before :"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” He did not say I will be; that would have suggested a break; but I AM, an unchanging NOW, a presence never withdrawn, a love, a nearness, a power to heal and save as constant and as free as ever, even unto the end of the world; “JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME, YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER.”

Thus have we traced the teachings of the Holy Scriptures from Exodus to Patmos: we have seen God giving His people the ordinance of healing in the very outset of their pilgrimage; we have seen it illustrated in the ancient dispensation in the sufferings of Job, the songs of David, and the sad death of Asa; we have seen Isaiah’s prophetic vision of the coming Healer; we have seen the Son of Man coming to fulfill that picture to the letter; we have heard Him tell His weeping disciples of His unchanging presence with them; we have seen Him transmit His healing power to their hands; and we have seen them hand it down to us and to the permanent officers of the Church of God, until the last ages of time. And now what more evidence can we ask? What else can we do but believe, rejoice, receive, and proclaim this great salvation to a sick and sinking world?

Chapter 2: PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS

We have already considered the Scriptural grounds of the doctrine of healing by faith in God. The practical question next arises: How can one who fully believes in the doctrine receive the blessing and appropriate the healing?

Be fully persuaded of THE WORD OF GOD in this matter.

This is the only sure foundation of rational and Scriptural faith. Your faith must rest on the great principles and promises of the Bible, or it never can stand the testing of oppositions and trials which are sure to come. You must be sure that this is part of the Gospel and the redemption of Christ that all the teachings and reasonings of the best of men could not shake you. Most of the practical failures of faith in this matter result from defective or doubtful convictions of the Divine Word.

The writer may be permitted to mention the case of a lady who had fully embraced this truth and accepted Christ as her Healer. She was immediately strengthened very much both in spirit and body, and her overflowing heart was only too glad to tell the good news to all her friends. Among others, she met her pastor and told him of her faith and blessing. To her surprise, he immediately objected to any such views, warned her against this new fanaticism, and told her that these promises on which she was resting were not for us; but only for the Apostles and the Apostolic age. She listened, questioned, yielded, and abandoned her confidence. In less than one month, when the writer saw her again, she had sunk to such depression that she scarcely knew whether she even believed the Bible or not. If those promises were for the Apostles, she argued,

why might not all the other promises of the Bible also be for them only? She was invited to spend a season in examining the teaching of the Word of God. The promises of healing from Exodus to James were carefully compared and every question calmly weighed, until the truth became so manifest, and its evidence so overwhelming, that she could only say, “I know it is here, and I know it is true, if all the world should deny it.” Then she knelt and asked the Lord’s forgiveness for her weakness and unbelief, renewed her solemn profession of faith and consecration, and claimed anew the promise of healing and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. From that day she has been restored and blessed with all spiritual blessings; until the very pastor who caused her to stumble has been forced to own that this is the finger of God. But the starting-point of all her blessing was the moment when she fully accepted and rested in the Word of God.

Be fully assured of the WILL OF GOD TO HEAL YOU.

Most persons are ready enough to admit the power of Christ to heal. The devil himself admits this. True faith implies equal confidence in the willingness of God to answer this prayer of faith. Any doubt on this point will surely paralyze our prayer for definite healing. If there be any question of this, there can be no certainty in our expectation. A mere vague trust in the possible acceptance of our prayer is not strong enough to grapple with the forces of disease and death. The prayer for healing, “if it be His will,” carries with it no claim for which Satan will quit his hold. This is a matter about which we ought to know His will before we ask, and then will and claim it because it is His will. Has He given us any means by which we may know His will? Most assuredly. If the Lord Jesus has purchased it for us in His redemption, it must be God’s will for us to have it, for Christ’s whole redeeming work was simply the executing of the Father’s will. If Jesus has promised it to us; it must be His will that we should receive it for how can we know His will but by His word? Nay, more, if Jesus has bequeathed it to us in the New Testament, which is simply HIS LAST WILL, then it is simply one of the bequests of our Brother’s will, and all questions of will should end.

The Word of God is forevermore the standard of His will, and that word "has declared immutably that it is God's greatest desire and unalterable principle of action and will to render to every man according as he will believe, and especially to save all who will receive Christ by faith, and to heal all who will receive it by similar faith. No one thinks of asking for forgiveness "if the Lord will." Nor should we throw any stronger doubt on His promise of physical redemption. Both are freely offered to every trusting heart that will accept them.

A very striking case recently occurred to the writer's observation. A lady, quite prominent in Christian work, had been prayed with and anointed for healing. She returned in a few weeks saying that she was no better. She was asked if she had believed fully. "Yes," she replied, "I believed that I should be healed if it was His good pleasure, and if not, I am willing to have it otherwise." "But," was the reply, "may we not know God's pleasure in this matter from His own word, and ask with the full expectation of the blessing? Indeed, ought we to ask anything of God until we have reason to believe that it is His will? Is not His word the intimation of His will, and, after He hath so fully promised it, is it not a vexation and a mockery to imply a doubt of His willingness?" She went away, and the very next morning she claimed the promise. She told the Lord that now she not only believed that He could, but would, and did remove the trouble. In less than half an hour it had wholly and visibly disappeared—and it was an external tumor of considerable size, about which there could be no imagination or mistake.

There is much subtle unbelief often in the prayer, "Thy will be done." That blessed petition really expresses the highest measure of Divine love and blessing. No kinder thing can come to us than that will. And yet we often ask it as if it was the iron hand of a cruel despot, and an inexorable destiny.

Be careful that you are yourself RIGHT WITH GOD.

If your sickness has come to you on account of any sinful cause, be sure that you thoroughly repent of and confess your sins, and make full restitution as far as in your power. If it has been a discipline designed to separate you from some evil, at once present yourself to God in frank self-judgment and consecration, and claim from Him the grace to sanctify you and keep you holy. An impure heart is a constant fountain of disease. A sanctified spirit is in itself as wholesome as it is holy. At the same time do not let Satan paralyze your faith by throwing you back on your unworthiness, and telling you that you are not good enough to claim this.

We never can deserve any of God's mercies. The only plea is the name, merits, and righteousness of Christ. But we can renounce known sin, we can walk so as to please God. We can judge in ourselves, and put away all that God shows us as wrong. The moment we do this we are forgiven. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." "If we confess our sins; He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Do not wait to feel forgiveness or joy, but let your will be wholly turned to God, and believe at once that you are accepted, and then draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having your heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and your body washed with pure water.

It is quite vain for us to try to exercise faith for ourselves or others in the face of willful transgression and in defiance of the chastening which God has meant we shall respect and yield to. But, when we receive His correction; and to turn to Him with humble and obedient hearts, He will graciously remove the hand of pain, and make the touch of healing the token of His forgiving love. "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. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."

Often our sickness is but a moral malady contracted by our getting on Satan's territory. We cannot be healed until we get out of the forbidden place, and stand again on holy ground. So that this question of our personal state, while not a condition of healing, is a very important element in it. The great purpose of God in all His dealings with us is our highest welfare, and our spiritual soundness. To the suffering Christian, therefore; there is no better counsel than the old exhortation, "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. The Lord is good to those that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him."

The writer would illustrate this by again referring to an actual incident: A member of his own family was suddenly attacked with violent and dangerous illness. It was a little child, so young as to make it certain that it could not be on account of any fault or sin of its own. Amid violent convulsions all human remedies were quickly dispensed with, and the case presented to God in prayer and anointing. Immediate relief was given, but the trouble was not wholly removed, and again that night a very threatening relapse occurred, and the prayer of faith seemed met by a dreadful cloud of hindrance. At once it became deeply impressed upon his heart that something was seriously wrong on the part of some member of the family. Earnest search was made, and at length it was found to be indeed so. One person had greatly sinned and covered it. But now a deep and thorough confession was made, and the wrong solemnly made right in God's sight, and His forgiveness sought and claimed. Then all the burden rolled away, and the innocent sufferer was instantly healed, and the next morning rose with the most marvelous health and buoyancy, and has not been seriously ill since.

Having become fully persuaded of the Word of God, the Will of God, and your own personal acceptance with God, NOW COMMIT YOUR BODY TO HIM AND CLAIM HIS PROMISE OF HEALING in the name of Jesus by simple faith.

Do not merely ask for it, but humbly and firmly claim it as His covenant pledge as your inheritance, as a purchased redemption right, as something already fully offered you in the Gospel, and waiting only your acceptance to make good your possession. There is a great difference between asking and claiming, between wanting and taking. You must take Christ as your Healer—not as an experiment, not as a future, perhaps, but as a present reality. You must believe that He does now, according to His promise, touch your life with His Almighty Hand, and quicken the fountains of your being with His strength. Do not merely believe that He will do so, but claim and believe that He does touch you now, and begin the work of healing in your body. And go forth counting it done and acknowledging and praising Him for it.

It is a good thing to prepare for this solemn act of committal and appropriating faith. It ought to be a very deliberate and final step, and in the nature of things it cannot be repeated. Like the marriage ceremony, it is the signalizing and sealing of a great transaction, and depends for its value upon the reality of the union which it seals. Before we take this step we ought to weigh every question thoroughly and then regard them as forever settled, and then step out solemnly, definitely, irrevocably on new ground, on God's promise, with the deep conviction that it is for ever. This gives great strength and rest to the heart, and closes the door against a thousand doubts and temptations. From that moment doubt should be regarded as absolutely out of the question, and even the very thought of retreating or resorting to old means inadmissible.

Of course, such a person will at once abandon all remedies and medical treatment. God has become the Physician, and He will not give His glory to another. God has healed, and all human attempts at helping would imply a doubt of the reality of the healing. The more entirely this act of faith can be a complete committal, the more power will it have. If you have any question about your faith for this, make it a special matter of preparation and prayer. Ask God to give you special faith for this act. All our graces must come from Him, and faith

among the rest. We have nothing of our own, and even our very faith is but the grace of Christ Himself within us. We can exercise it, and thus far our responsibility extends; but He must impart it, and we simply put it on and wear it as from Him. And this makes the exercise of strong faith a very simple and blessed possibility.

Jesus does not say to us, Have great faith yourselves. But He does say to us, Have the faith of God. That is better. God's faith is all sufficient, and we can have and use it. We can take Christ for our faith as we took Him for our justification, for our victories over temptation, for our sanctification. We may thus sweetly rest in the assurance that our faith has not failed to meet the demands of the promise, for it has been Christ's own faith. We simply come in His name, and present Him as our perfect offering, our plea, our faith, our advocate, our righteousness, and our all; and we simply and utterly receive for Christ's sake our very faith itself, nothing but simply the taking of His free gift of grace. Thus come and claim His promise; and, having done so, believe according to His word that you have received it.

ACT YOUR FAITH.

"Arise, take up thy bed, and walk." Not to show your faith, or display your courage, but because of your faith, begin to act as one that is healed. Treat Christ as if you trusted Him, by attempting in His name and strength what would be impossible in your own; and he will not fail you if you really trust Him, and continue to act your faith consistently and courageously.

But it is most important that you should be careful that you do not do this on any one else's faith or word. Do not rise from your bed or walk on your lame foot because somebody tells you to do so. That is not faith, but presumption. He will surely tell you to do so, but it must be as HIS LORD; and if you are walking

with Him and trusting Him you shall know His voice. Your prayer, like Peter's must be, "Lord, bid me come unto Thee on the water" and He will surely bid you, if He is to heal you; but in this great and solemn work, each of us must know and see the Lord for himself.

And then, when you do go forth to act your faith, be careful not to begin to watch the result or look at the symptoms, or see if you stand. You must ignore all symptoms, and see only Him there before you, Almighty to sustain you and save you from falling. The man who digs up his seed to see if it is growing will very soon kill it at the root. The true farmer trusts nature and lets it grow in silence. So let us trust God, willing even to see the answer buried like that seed, and dying in the dark soil of discouragement, knowing that "if it die it bringeth forth much fruit."

BE PREPARED FOR TRIALS OF FAITH.

Do not look always for the immediate removal of the symptoms. Do not think of them. Simply ignore them and press forward, claiming the reality, at the back of and below all symptoms. Remember the health you have claimed is not your own natural strength, but the life of Jesus manifested in your mortal flesh, and therefore the old natural life may still be encompassed with many infirmities, but at the back of it, beside it, and over against it, is the all-sufficient life of Christ to sustain your body. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." But "Christ is your life;" and the life you now live in the flesh you live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved you and gave Himself for you. Do not, then, wonder if nature still will often fail you. His healing is not nature, it is grace, it is Christ, it is the bodily life of the risen Lord. It is the vital energy of the body that went up to the right hand of God; and it never faints and it never fails those who trust it.

IT IS CHRIST WHO IS YOUR LIFE; Christ's body for your body as His Spirit was for your spirit. Therefore do not wonder if there should be trials. They come to show your need of Christ and throw you back upon Him. And to know this, and so to put on His strength in our weakness, and live in it moment by moment, is perfect healing. Then, again, trials always test and strengthen faith in proportion as it is real; it must be shown to be genuine, so that God can vindicate His reward of it before the whole universe. It is thus that God increases our faith by laying larger demands upon it, and compelling us to claim and exercise more grace. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest" and tumbles out her young in mid-air to compel them to reach out their little pinions, and train them to fly, so God often pushes us off all our own props and confidences to compel us to reach out the arms and wings of faith. But for the sacrifice of Isaac, Abraham never could have attained, as he did, to the faith of the resurrection.

But, be the symptoms what they may, we must steadily believe that at the back of all symptoms God is working out His own great restoration. "For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

USE YOUR NEW STRENGTH AND HEALTH FOR GOD, and be careful to obey the will of the Master.

This Christ-given strength is a very sacred thing. It is the resurrection Life of Christ in us. And it must be spent as He Himself would spend it. It cannot be wasted on sin and selfishness; it must be given to God, "a living sacrifice." The strength will fail where it is devoted to the world, and sin will always bring bodily chastisement. We may, ordinarily, expect to be in health and prosper even as our soul prospers.

Nor is it enough for us to use it for ourselves; we must testify of it to others. We must tell it to the world. We must be fearless and faithful witnesses to the Gospel of full redemption. Often the testimony will have to be given under the most trying circumstances to persons who will most proudly scorn it. But the Master commands, and the church needs, that the whole counsel of God shall be declared.

And the world needs this Gospel of healing. The pagan nations need it as an evidence of Christianity. Infidelity needs it as an answer to its materialism. The great work of Foreign Missions needs it as an introduction to the Gospel among the heathen. The next great missionary movement will and must incorporate this mighty truth. And this truth will be to the work of spreading the Gospel infinitely more than the work of medical missions has been in the past.

This is not a faith that we can hold for ourselves. It is a great and solemn trust, and we who have received it must unite to use it for the glory of God, for a witness to the truth and for the spread of the Gospel, as the tongues of Pentecost were used in the ancient days of Christianity. These wonderful manifestations of the power of God which we are beginning to see, are significant signals of the end. They are the forerunners of the Great Appearing. As they marked the period of his presence on earth so they attend His return. And, they bid us prepare in solemn earnest for his Advent.

With our eyes no longer on the grave, but on the opening heavens, and our hearts feeling already some of the pulses of that resurrection life, it is ours to watch and work as none others can; not sparing ourselves in anxious self-care, but working in His great might, in season and out of season, and finding it true that “He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for Christ’s sake and the Gospel’s shall keep it unto life eternal.”

Thus let us claim, and keep and consecrate this great gift of the Gospel and the grace of God. And now “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.”

Chapter 3: POPULAR OBJECTIONS

We will now refer to some of the most forcible objections to the glad tidings that "He that forgiveth all our iniquities," as truly and as fully also "healeth all our diseases."

THE AGE OF MIRACLES IS PAST: This is commonly assumed as an axiom, and almost quoted as a Bible text. In reply, let us ask, what age are we in?

There have been, and shall be, various Ages and Dispensations, viz, Paradisiacal, Antediluvian, Patriarchal, Mosaic, Christian, Millennial, Eternal. We are not in the Patriarchal or Mosaic, we are not in the Millennial, we must therefore be in the Christian. But perhaps there are two or three Christian Ages; one for Christ and His Apostles, and one for us. And yet Paul says he lived in "these last days." He speaks of the people of his generation as those on whom "the ends of the world are come." And Peter, in his sermon on the Day of Pentecost, claims for his day a prophesy of Joel for the latter days. We must then be in the Age of Christ and Christianity, and if that was not the Age of Miracles then what is it?

But perhaps there was to be a great gulf between the first and last periods of this Age. Perhaps it was only to begin with special manifestations of Divine Power and then shade down into sober commonplace. Why then should Joel say that the signal outpouring of the Holy Spirit should be "in the latter days," and the special gifts of the Spirit to the handmaids and servants, and the preternatural signs and wonders both in Earth and Heaven should be specially "before the coming of that great and terrible day of the Lord," that is, toward the close of the Christian Age, and prior to the Advent? Why also should Paul so strongly insist,

in 1 Cor. 12, that the Church of Christ is one body, not two, and that the gifts of every part belong to the whole? If there be an essential difference between the Apostolic and later Age, then the Church is not one body but two; then the gifts of those members do not flow into our members; then the glorious figure and powerful reasoning of that chapter are false and delusive. If we are the same body, we have the same life and power.

What made the Apostles more mighty than ordinary men? It was not their companionship with Jesus; it was the gift of the Holy Ghost. Have we not the same? And do we not exalt the men and disparage the Spirit that makes them what they were when we speak of their power as exceptional and transient? Peculiar and exceptional functions they indeed had, as the witnesses of Christ's resurrection, and the organizers of the Church on earth; but to show to men that the miraculous gifts of the Church were not confined to them, these are specially distinguished from the Apostleship in 1 Cor. 12. They were conferred in preeminent degree on Stephen, Philip, and others who were not apostles at all, and they were committed by James to the ordinary and permanent eldership of the Church. Nay, the dear Master never contemplated or proposed any post-apostolic gulf of impotence and failure. Man's unbelief and sin have made it. The Church's own corruption has caused it. But He never desired it nor provided for it. Standing midway between earth and heaven, and looking down to the nineteenth century with a love as tender, and a grace as full and potential, as He exercised to the first, and speaking in the present tense, as though we were all equally near to Him who would never be separated from us, He said, "All power is Given unto Me in HEAVEN AND IN EARTH, and lo, I AM with you ALL THE DAYS, even unto the End of the AGE" (Greek). It was to be one age, not two, and His all power was never withdrawn. He was to be a perpetual AM, and to be as near at the end as at the beginning. In fact; the work we were to do was to be but the complement of His own, nay, His Own work; for Luke says, "He began to do and to teach." He must therefore be finishing His work still. And this is just what He Himself said our work would be, "He that believeth on Me, the

works that I do shall he do also (that is, they shall be Christ's work and ours, in partnership), nor shall they be aught diminished by His seeming absence; for "greater works shall he do because I go to My Father."

And, indeed, so long as the ancient Church retained in even limited measure the faith and holiness of the first days, the same works were uniformly found. In the second, third, and fourth centuries, fathers as famous as Irenaeus and Tertullian, bear testimony to the prevalence of many undoubted miracles of healing, and even the raising of the dead in the name of Jesus. And as late as the fifth century supernatural events, in the case of numerous well-known and living men and women, are attested by authorities as high as Procopius and Justinian, on evidence so strong that the sober editor of Mosheim declares that he who would doubt it must be ready to question all the facts of history.

The Age of Miracles is not past. The Word of God never indicated a hint of such a fact. On the contrary, they are to be among the signs of the last day; and the very adversary himself is to counterfeit them, and send forth at last the spirits of devils working miracles, into the kings of the earth. So that the only defense against the false miracles will be the true. We are in the Age of miracles, the Age of Christ, the Age which lies between two Advents, and underneath the eye of a ceaseless Divine Presence, the Age of Power, the Age which above all other ages of time should be intensely alive.

THE SAME RESULTS AS ARE CLAIMED FOR FAITH IN THE HEALING OF DISEASE ARE ALSO SAID TO FOLLOW THE PRACTICES OF SPIRITUALISM, ANIMAL MAGNETISM, CLAIRVOYANCE, ETC.

We will not deny that while some of the manifestations of Spiritualism are undoubted frauds, there are many that are unquestionably supernatural, and are produced by forces for which Physical Science has no explanation. It is no use to

try to meet this terrific monster of SPIRITUALISM in which, as Joseph Cook says, is, perhaps, the great IF of our immediate future in England and America, with the hasty and shallow denial of the facts, of their explanation as tricks of legerdemain. They are often undoubtedly real and superhuman. They are "the spirits of devils working miracles," gathering men for Armageddon. They are the revived forces of the Egyptian magicians, the Grecian oracles, the Roman haruspices, the Indian medicine-men. They are not divine, they are less than omnipotent, but they are more than human.

Our Lord has expressly warned us of them, and told us to test them, not by their power, but by their fruits, their holiness, humility, and homage to the name of Jesus and the Word of God; and their very existence renders it the more imperative that we should be able to present against them—like the rod of Moses which swallowed the magicians, and at last silenced their limited power—the living forces of a holy Christianity in the physical as well as the spiritual world.

THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES WERE DESIGNED TO ESTABLISH THE FACTS AND DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY; WE DO NOT NEED THEIR CONTINUANCE.

Why, then, do the critics call in question the existence of these facts and the credibility of these writings? How are the inhabitants of new countries to know the divinity of these oracles? What access have they, or indeed the great masses of men everywhere, to the archives of learning, or the manuscripts of the Bible? Nay, every generation needs a living Christ, and every new community needs "these signs following," to confirm the word. And we have sometimes seen the plausible and persistent Agnostic, whom no reason could satisfy, silenced and confounded when brought face-to-face with some humble, illiterate woman, as she told him with glowing honesty, which he felt in the depths of his heart, that she had been raised up from lifelong helplessness by the word and name of Jesus

only. Until he comes again the world will never cease to need the touch of His Power and Presence, “God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.”

There is also a current misapprehension about the full design of Christ’s miracles which takes away one-half their beauty and value. They are looked upon solely and mainly as special testimonies to Christ’s power and divinity. But if this had been all, a few special and marked cases would have been sufficient. He would not then have healed the thousands who daily thronged Him. But we are told, on the contrary, that they were not isolated and occasional, but numerous and almost universal. “He healed all that had need of healing, and all that were sick and, not so much as a proof of His power, as to show that which He now wished them to know—His boundless love—to fulfill the ancient prophetic picture of the blessed Christ, and that it might be fulfilled that was spoken by the prophet Esaias, “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.”

But if it was necessary for Him to fulfill that character then, it is as much so still; as necessary yet that He should never cease to be true to the picture God drew of Him, which He drew of Himself. If this be not true still for us, then “Jesus Christ is” NOT “the Same, yesterday, today, and forever.” If this be not still true for us, then, perhaps, the other promises of the Scripture are not also true for us, and He has not borne our sins any more than our sickness and suffering. Nay, “His heart is still the same:

Kinsman, Friend and Elder Brother,

Is His everlasting name;

Thou art All in All to me,

Living One of Bethany."

A common objection is urged in this way: Christ's last promise in Mark embraces much more than healing; but if you claim one, you must claim all. If you expect the healing of the sick, you must also include the gift of tongues and the power to overcome malignant poisons; and if the gift of tongues has ceased, so in the same way has the power over disease. We cheerfully accept the severe logic, we cannot afford to give up one of the promises. We admit our belief in the presence of the Healer in all the charismata of the Pentecostal Church. We see no reason why an humble servant of Christ, engaged in the Master's work, may not claim in simple faith the power to resist malaria and other poisons and malignant dangers; and we believe the gift of tongues was only withdrawn from the early Church as it was abused for vain display, or as it became unnecessary for practical use, through the rapid evangelization of the world; and it will be repeated as soon as the Church will humbly claim it for the universal diffusion of the Gospel. Indeed, instances are not wanting now of its apparent restoration in missionary labors, both in India and Africa.

Perhaps no objection is more strongly urged than the glory that redounds to God from our submission to His will in sickness, and the happy results of sanctified affliction. Well, if those who urge and claim to practice this suggestion would really accept their sickness, and lie passive under it, they would at least be consistent. But do they not send for a doctor, and do their best to get out of this sweet will of God? Is this meekly submitting to the affliction, and does not the submission usually come when the result is known to be inevitable?

We do not deny the happy results of many a case of painful sickness in turning the soul from some forbidden path and leading it into deeper experiences of God; nor do we question the deep and fervent piety, and spiritual advancement of many an invalid who cannot trust God for healing; but we are sure there is an

immense amount of vague and unscriptural misunderstanding with respect to the principles of Christian discipline. We do not believe that God chastens an obedient child simply to make it good.

“FOR THIS CAUSE MANY ARE WEAK AND SICKLY AMONG YOU, AND MANY SLEEP; FOR IF WE WOULD JUDGE OURSELVES WE SHOULD NOT BE JUDGED.”

Here is a definite and unchangeable law of God’s dealings with His dear children. When we are judging ourselves we shall not be judged. While we hearken and obey, He “will put none of these diseases upon us which He brought upon the Egyptians.” His normal state for His faithful children is soundness of body, soul and spirit (1 Thess. 5: 23). His own prayer for them is that they may be in health and prosper even as their souls prospers. His will for them is to act in these things according to His word. It is ever “the good pleasure of His goodness,” and “that good and perfect and acceptable will of God.” “Many,” it is true, “are the afflictions of the righteous;” but it is also true that “the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.”

And between “affliction” and sickness it must be well remembered there is a very clear distinction. At Marah, the children of Israel had to drink of bitter water, and it was only sweetened, not removed; as many a trial is sanctified and blessed. But it was right there that He made a statute and an ordinance of healing, and told them that if they would obey Him, they should not be sick, and He would be their constant Healer, thus showing them that Marah was not sickness. And in exact parallel, James says to us, 5: 13, “is any afflicted? let him pray;” that is, for grace and strength. But, “Is any sick? let him call for the elders of the Church,” and be healed. Affliction is “suffering with Christ;” and He was

not sick. “In the world ye shall have tribulation;” but all the more we need a sound, strong heart, to bear and overcome.

It is objected that it is presumptuous to claim the healing of disease absolutely, and that the model of all true prayer is Christ’s language in the garden: “If it be possible, let this cup pass: nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done.” Yes, but they have forgotten that He knew it was not possible that this cup should pass, that in this case He was asking something which, to say the very least, He had no promise or warrant to, and which He repudiated instantly, saying, “Save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy Name.”

Certainly, in any such circumstances, when prompted by extreme distress to ask for something for which we have no clear warrant, promise or favorable intimation of the Divine will, we ought ever to refer the matter to the arbitration of that unknown will. But when we know from His own word to us that a blessing is in accordance with His will, that it is provided for, purchased and promised, is it not really evasive, uncandid, disingenuous, and really an affectation to come to Him in doubt and uncertainty, or couching our requests in the language of ambiguity? Is it not very much the same as if a son at college should still keep writing and asking your permission for things wherein you had already written the fullest directions in your first letter? Did Christ thus pray, when He asked for things He knew to be consistent with God’s will? Is it not as lawful for us to imitate Him in one prayer as another, at Bethany equally with Gethsemane? And there, what did He say? “Father, I know Thou hearest Me always,” and again, “Father, I will that they be with Me.” In His name may we not pray even as He, where His will is clearly made known? “If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what YE WILL, and it shall be done unto you.” Do we pray in indefiniteness when we ask for forgiveness? We take it and claim it, and being strong in faith, we thus most effectually glorify God.

WE ARE TOLD THAT THERE ARE MANY CASES OF FAILURE; and Paul and his companions are first enumerated. Paul's inevitable thorn is kept as a precious relic to torment doubting Christians; and Trophimus and Epaphroditus are dragged forward on their couches to encourage the willing patient in the hospital of Doubting Castle. With regard to Paul's thorn we must say,

FIRST: It is very uncertain if it was DISEASE; it was a messenger of Satan to BUFFET him, i.e., some humiliation—perhaps stammering.

SECONDLY: It was so far healed and more than healed, whatever it was, that it brought the power of Christ to rest upon him so mightily that he was abundantly enabled for all his labors and duties, and longed for more such provocations of blessing. And he who can see in this a feeble invalid laid aside from work, is afflicted with spiritual cross eyes.

THIRDLY: Before people can claim that their sickness is a heavenly visitation like Paul's to keep them from being exalted above measure, they would need to have been up in the third heaven with him and heard things unlawful for a man to utter! And

FOURTHLY: Paul does give us elsewhere the account of his healing (2. Cor. 1: 10); and it was unmistakably by believing prayer and mighty faith even in God that raises the dead. As to Epaphroditus, he was healed through God's mercy. Trophimus, doubtless, was also, although it must have been delayed. Healing, even by faith, is not always instantaneous. There are "miracles" and "gifts of healing," the one sudden and stupendous, the other simple and probably gradual. That Trophimus should have been himself to blame for his illness or slowness of faith is not wonderful, and that there should be only two such cases in all these inspired personal sketches is most wonderful.

There are still cases of failure, but they may be accounted for, perhaps through defective knowledge or unbelief, disobedience to God in some way, failure to follow consistently the teachings of the Word and the Spirit or for a deeper spiritual discipline. And there are failures in the spiritual life—from the same or similar causes—which in no way disprove the reality of the Divine promises or the sufficiency of Christ's grace.

"LET GOD THEN BE TRUE," EVEN IF "EVERY MAN" BE "A LIAR."

But we are told, if these things be so, people should never die. Why not? Why should faith go farther than the Word? Anything beyond that is presumption. The Word places a limit to human life, and all that Scriptural faith can claim is sufficiency of health and strength for our life-work and within its fair limits. It may be longer or shorter, but it need not, like the wicked, fail to live out half its days. It should be complete, satisfying, and as long as the work of life is yet undone. And then, when the close comes, why need it be with painful and depressing sickness, as the rotten apple falls in June from disease, and with a worm at the root? Why may it not be rather as that ripe apple would drop in September, mature, mellow, and ready to fall without a struggle into the gardener's hand? So Job pictures the close of a good man's life as the full maturity of "the shock of corn that cometh in its season."

RESORT TO THE DOCTORS

We are asked by some, did not God make all these means, and does He not want us to use them? And, indeed, is it not presumption for us to expect Him to do anything unless we do all we can for ourselves? We answer, first: God has nowhere prescribed medical means, and we have no right to infer that drugs are ordinarily His means. They are not, as food, again and again referred to as necessary or enjoined for our use.

It is a most singular and unanswerable fact that in the whole history of the patriarchs no reference is made to the use of such means. In the story of Job, so full of vivid details, everybody else is described but the doctor, and everything in the universe but drugs. There is no physician in attendance, or surely we should have caught a glimpse of him in that chamber and when Job recovers, it is wholly from God's direct hand, and when he himself gets down in his true place of humility to God and love to man. In the still more elaborate prescriptions, prohibitions and enactments of the Book of Leviticus about all the details of human life, even including the disease of leprosy, there is no remote intimation of a doctor or a drug store. And it is not until after the time of Solomon, and the importation, no doubt, of Egypt's godless culture and science, that we find the first definite case of medical treatment; and there the patient dies, and dies under the stigma of unbelief and declension from God.

In the New Testament such "means" are referred to in hardly more complimentary terms, when the woman who touched the hem of His garment is described. If Luke were a physician, he abandoned his practice for evangelistic work, as may be strongly inferred from his itinerant life; for no practice could be maintained in such circumstances. Without going further, this much at least is clear:

FIRST, that God has not prescribed medicine.

SECONDLY, He has prescribed another way in the Name of Jesus, and provided for it in the atonement, appointed an ordinance to signalize it, and actually commanded and enjoined it.

And THIRDLY, all the provisions of grace are by FAITH, not by works. The use of remedies, if successful, usually gives the glory to man, and God will not do

so. If the healing of sickness is one of the purchases of Christ's atonement, and one of His prerogatives as our Redeemer, then He is jealous for it, and we will also be jealous. If it be part of the scheme of salvation, then we know that the whole scheme is framed according to the "law of faith" if the language of James be a command, then it excludes the treatment of disease by human remedies as much as the employment of one physician would exclude the treatment of another at the same time and for the same case. If it be God's way of healing, then other methods must be man's ways, and there must be some risk in deliberately repudiating the former for the latter.

We do not imply by this that the medical profession is sinful, or the use of means always wrong. There may be, there always will be, innumerable cases where faith is not exercised; and if natural means have, as they do have, a limited value, there is ample room for their exercise in these. But for the trusting and obedient child of God there is the more excellent way which His Word has clearly prescribed, and by which His name will be ever glorified afresh, and our spiritual life continually renewed.

The age is one of increasing rationalism, and unbelief is constantly endeavoring to eliminate all traces of direct supernatural working from the universe, and explain everything by second causes and natural development; and God, for this very reason, wants to show his immediate working wherever our faith will afford Him an opportunity. The Higher Criticism is industriously taking the miraculous from our Bibles, and a lower standard of Christian life is busy taking all that is divine out of our life. Let all who believe in a living God be willing to prove to a scoffing generation that "the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary," for "in Him we live and move and have our being," and that still there is "nothing too hard for the Lord."

We will only refer in conclusion to the objection that these views of the truth UNDULY EXALT THE BODILY LIFE, and direct the minds of men from the transcendent interest of the immortal soul, promoting fanaticism, besides leading to other evils. The same objection might be brought against the earlier years of our Lord's ministry, when the healing of the body was made an avenue to reach men's souls, and a testimony of His spiritual teachings.

The doctrine of Christ's healing power is so closely linked with the necessity of holiness, and the deeper truths and experiences of the spiritual life, that it tends, in a preeminent degree, to promote purity and earnestness. The power which heals the body usually imparts a much richer baptism of the Holy Ghost to the heart, and the retaining of this Divine life and health requires such constant fellowship with God, and such consecrated service for the Master, that the spiritual results far outweigh the temporal; and it is one of the most powerful checks and impulses in the lives of those that have truly received it.

The abuses complained of will usually be found connected with false teaching and unscriptural perversions of those things which rash or ambitious persons disseminate for their own ungodly ends. The true doctrine of healing through the Lord Jesus Christ is most humbling, holy, and practical; it exalts no man, it spares no sin, it offers no promises to the disobedient, it gives no strength for selfish indulgence or worldly ends, but it exalts the name of Jesus, glorifies God, inspires the soul with faith and power, summons to a life of self-denial and holy service, and awakens a slumbering Church and an unbelieving world with the solemn signals of a living God and a returning Master.

Extravagances, perversions, and counterfeits, we know there are; unauthorized and self-constituted healers, mercenary impostors, who give out that they are "some great one," rash and indiscriminate anointings of persons who only bring discredit on the truth by their ignorance and inconsistency, and wolves in sheep's

clothing, who claim the name of Jesus for the passes of clairvoyance, the sorcery of spiritualism, and the performances of animal magnetism. But the truth of God is not chargeable with human error, and the counterfeit is often the best testimonial to the genuine. Let the ministers of the Lord Jesus answer and set aside these evils by claiming and exercising, in the power of the Holy Ghost, the gifts and offices once delivered to them, and let the people of God, in these perilous times, “discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.”

Chapter 4: PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE HEALING

There are certain principles underlying all the teachings of the Holy Scriptures with respect to healing; which it is important to understand and classify and which, when rightly understood, are most helpful to intelligent faith.

THE CAUSES OF DISEASE and suffering are distinctly traced to the Fall and sinful state of man. If sickness were part of the natural constitution of things, then we might meet it wholly on natural grounds, and by natural means. But if it be part of the curse of sin, it must have its true remedy in the great Redemption. That sickness is the result of the Fall, and one of the fruits of sin no one can surely question. Death, we are told, hath passed upon all, for that all have sinned, and the greater includes the less. It is named among the curses of Deuteronomy, which God was to send for Israel's sin. Again, it is distinctly connected with Satan's personal agency. He was the direct instrument of Job's suffering, and our Lord definitely attributed the diseases of His time to his direct power. It was Satan who bound the paralyzed woman these eighteen years; and it was demoniacal influence which held and crushed the bodies and souls of those He delivered. If sickness be the result of evil spiritual agency, it is most evident that it must be met and counteracted by higher spiritual force, and not by mere natural treatment.

And again, on the supposition that sickness is a divine discipline and chastening it is still more evident that its removal must come, not through mechanical appliances, but through spiritual causes. It would be both ridiculous and vain for

the arm of man to presume to wrest the chastening-rod from the Father's hand by physical force or skill. The only way to avert His stroke is to submit the spirit in penitence to His will, and seek in humility and faith His forgiveness and relief; so that from whatever side we look at disease, it becomes more and more evident that its remedy must be found alone in God and the Gospel of His Redemption.

If the disease be the result of the fall, we may expect it to be embraced in the provisions of Redemption, and would naturally look for some intimation of a remedy in THE PREPARATORY DISPENSATION which preceded the Gospel. Nor are we disappointed. The great principle that God's care and providence embraces the temporal and physical needs of his people as well as the spiritual, runs all through the Old Testament. Distinct provision for Divine healing is made in all the ordinances of Moses. And the prophetic picture of the Coming Deliverer is that of a great Physician as well as a glorious King and gracious Savior. The healing of Abimelech, Miriam, Job, Naaman and Hezekiah; the case of the Leper and the Brazen Serpent, the statute at Marah, and the blessings and curses at Ebal and Gerizim, the terrible rebuke of Asa, the one hundred and third Psalm, and the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, leave the testimony of the Old Testament clear and distinct that the redemption of the body was the Divine prerogative and plan.

THE PERSONAL MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST is the next great stage in the development of these principles. His own life was a complete summary of Christianity; and from His words and works we may surely gather the great intent of redemption. And what was the testimony of His life to physical healing? He went about their cities healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people. He healed all that had need of healing, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the Prophet, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Now, when we remember that this was not an occasional incident, but a chief part of His ministry; that He began His work with it, that He continued it to the close of His life; that He did it on all possible

occasions and in every variety of cases, that He did it heartily, willingly, and without leaving any doubt or question of His will; that He distinctly said to the doubting leper, “I will,” and was only grieved when men hesitated to fully trust Him and when we realize that in all this He was but unfolding the real purpose of His great redemption, and revealing His own unchanging character and love, and that he has distinctly assured us that He is still “the same yesterday, today, and for ever “ — surely we have a great principle to rest our faith upon, as secure as the Rock of Ages.

But redemption finds its center IN THE CROSS of Jesus Christ, and there we must look for the fundamental principle of Divine healing. It rests on the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. This necessarily follows from the first principle we have stated. If sickness be the result of the Fall, it must be included in the atonement of Christ, which reaches

“Far as the curse is found.”

But, again, it is most distinctly stated in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, as we have seen: He is said to have borne our sickness and carried our pains, the word “bear” being the very same used for the atonement of sin; the same used elsewhere to describe the act of the scapegoat in bearing away the people’s guilt and the same used in the same chapter with respect to His “bearing the sins of many.” In the same sense, then, as He has borne away our sins has he also borne our sicknesses. And Peter also states that “He bare our sins in His own body on the tree . . . by whose stripes we are healed.” In His own body He has borne ALL OUR BODILY LIABILITIES for sin, and our bodies are set free. That one cruel “stripe” of His — for the word is singular — summed up in it all the aches and pains of a suffering world; and there is no longer need that we should suffer what He has sufficiently borne. Thus our healing becomes a great redemption right,

which we simply claim as our purchased inheritance through the blood of His Cross.

But there is something higher even than the Cross. It is THE RESURRECTION of our Lord. There the Gospel of Healing finds the fountain of the deepest life. The death of Christ destroys the root of sickness: sin. But it is the life of Jesus which supplies the source of health and life for our redeemed bodies. The body of Christ is the living fountain of all our vital strength. He who came forth from Joseph's tomb, with the new physical life of the resurrection, is the Head of His people for life and immortality.

Not for Himself alone did He receive the power of an endless life, but as our life. He gave Him to be Head over all things for His Church, which is His body. We are members of His body, His flesh, and His bones. The healing which Christ gives us is nothing less than His own new physical life infused into our body from His own very heart, and bringing us into fellowship with His own inmost being. That Risen and Ascended One is the fountain and measure of our strength and life. We eat His flesh and drink His blood, and He dwelleth in us, and we in Him. As He lived in the Father, so he that eateth Him shall live by Him. This is the great, the vital, the most precious principle of physical healing in the name of Jesus. It is the very life of Jesus manifested in our mortal flesh.

It follows from this, that it must be wholly A NEW LIFE. The Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ have made an awful gulf between the present and past of every redeemed life. Henceforth, if any man be in Christ, he is A NEW CREATION. Old things have passed away, ALL THINGS HAVE BECOME NEW. The death of Jesus has slain all our old self.. The life of Jesus is the spring of all new life. This is true of our physical life. It is not the restoration of the old natural strength to life. It is not the building up of our former constitution. It is the letting go of all the old dependencies. It is often the failure and decay of all

our natural strength. It is a strength which “out of weakness is made strong,” which has no resources to start with; which creation-like, is made out of nothing; which resurrection-like, comes out of the dark tomb, and the extinction of all previous help and hope. This principle is of immense importance in the practical experience of healing. So long as we look for it in the old natural life, we shall be disappointed. But when we cease to put confidence in the flesh, and look only to Christ and His supernatural life in us for our strength of body as well as spirit, we shall find that we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us.

It follows from this that the physical redemption which Christ brings, is NOT MERELY HEALING, BUT ALSO LIFE. It is not the readjustment of our life on the old basis, leaving it thenceforward to go like a machine upon the natural plane, but it is the infusion of a new kind of life and strength. Therefore it is as fully within the reach of persons in health as those who are diseased. It is simply a higher kind of life, the turning of life’s water into His heavenly wine.

Therefore, it must also be kept by constantly abiding in Him, and receiving from Him. It is not a permanent deposit, but a daily dependence, a renewing of the inward man day by day, a strength which comes only as we need it, and continues only while we dwell in Him. Such a LIFE is a very sacred thing. It gives a peculiar sanctity to every look, tone, act, organ and movement of the body. We are living on the life of God, and we must live like Him and for Him. A body thus divinely quickened adds tenfold power to the soul, and all the service of the Christian life. Words spoken in this Divine energy, works done through the very life of God, will be clothed with a positive effectiveness which must make men feel that the body as well as the spirit is indeed the very Temple of the Holy Ghost.

The great agent in bringing this new life into our life is THE HOLY GHOST. The redemption work of Jesus cannot be completed without His blessed

ministry. Not as a visible physical presence does this Jesus of Nazareth now meet the sick, and halt, and blind, but through a spiritual manifestation. It has all the old physical power, and produces all the ancient results upon the suffering frame, but the approach is spiritual, not physical.

The presence must be brought to our consciousness; the contact of our need with His life must come through the Holy Spirit. So Mary had to learn in the very first moment of the resurrection. “Touch me not — I ascend.” Thus, henceforth, must she know Him as the Ascended One. So Paul had ceased to know Christ Jesus after the flesh. So He had to guard the disciples at Capernaum, where, speaking of the Living Bread — the Source of healing — He adds: “What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.”

This is the reason why many find it hard to meet the Healer. They do not know the Holy Ghost. They do not know God spiritually. The sun in the heavens would be but a cold and glaring ball of ice were it not for the atmosphere which brings His warmth and light to us and diffuses them through our world. And Christ’s life and love cannot reach us without the intermediate Spirit, the Light, the Atmosphere, the Divine Medium who brings and sheds abroad His life and light, His love and Presence in our being, the taking of the things of Jesus and showing them to us, extracting the very essence of His life and frame, and sweetly diffusing it through every vessel, nerve, organ and function of our being.

Yes, He is the great Quickener. It was through the Holy Ghost that Jesus cast out devils on earth,

and now, if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body through His Spirit that dwelleth in us.

This new life must come, like all the blessings of Christ's redemption, as the FREE GRACE OF GOD, WITHOUT WORKS, AND WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF MERIT OR RESPECT OF PERSONS.

Everything that comes through Christ must come as grace. There can be no works mingled with justifying faith, except those which come after justification, and as its fruits. Any others are dead works, and fatal to our salvation. Even so, our healing must be wholly of God, or not of grace at all.

IF CHRIST HEALS HE MUST DO IT ALONE. This principle ought to settle for ever the question of using means in connection with faith for healing. The natural and the spiritual, the earthly and the heavenly, the works of man and the grace of God, cannot be mixed, any more than you could expect to harness a tortoise with a locomotive, or make a great sea cable part of iron and part of hemp. They cannot work together. The gifts of the Gospel are Sovereign gifts. God can do the most difficult things for us Himself. But HE CANNOT HELP OUR SELF-SUFFICIENCY to do the easiest. A hopeless case is therefore much more hopeful than one where we think we can do something ourselves. We must

"Venture on Him, venture wholly,

Let no other trust intrude."

If healing is to be sought by natural means, let us get all the best results of skill and experience. But if it is to be through the name of Jesus it must be by GRACE ALONE.

It follows also in the same connection that if it be a part of the Gospel and a gift of Christ, it must be an impartial one, limited only by the great “whosoever” of the Gospel. It is not a special gift of discriminating favoritism, but a great and common heritage of faith and obedience. It is “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” It is true all who come must conform to the simple conditions of obedient faith; but these are impartial without respect of persons, and within the reach of all.

The simple condition of this great Blessing, alike the condition of all the blessings of the Gospel is: FAITH WITHOUT SIGHT. Grace without works and faith without sight must always go together as twin principles of Glorious Gospel. The one thing God asks from all who are to receive His grace is that they shall trust His simple word where they have nothing else but His word to trust. But this must be real trust. It must believe and doubt not. If God’s word be true at all it is absolutely and utterly true.

A very small grain of mustard seed will do, and it will split open with its living roots the great rocks and mountains, but it must be an entire grain. The grain must be in its integrity. One little laceration will kill its life. And one doubt will destroy the efficiency of faith; and therefore it must begin in the soul, taking God simply and nakedly at His word. A faith that is going to wait for signs and evidence will never be strong. Plants that begin by leaning will always be fragile and need a trellis. Indeed the faith which rests upon seeing is not faith. Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.

Abraham had to believe God and take the new name of faith and fatherhood before there was any indication of probability and when, indeed, every natural sign contradicted and stultified it. It is beautiful to notice the form of expression in Genesis 17. First he is told, “I will make thee a father of many nations.” Then comes the change of Abraham’s name which was the profession of his faith, and

the acknowledgment before a scorning world that he believed God. Then follows God's next word. But how wonderful! The tense is completely changed. It is no longer a promise, but an accomplished fact; "I HAVE MADE THEE a father of many nations." It is done. Faith has turned the future into the past, and now God calls the things that are not as though they were. So we must believe, and receive the healing life of Jesus and all the blessings of the Gospel.

THE OBLIGATION

Is there any principle involving the obligation of faith in reference to physical healing? Is it an optional matter with us how we shall be healed, and whether we shall trust God or look to man? Is it "an ordinance and a statute" for us, and a matter of simple obedience? Is it His great prerogative to deal with the bodies He has redeemed, and an impertinence for man, and unsanctified man, to tamper with them, and an equal impertinence for us to choose some other way than His? Is the Gospel of salvation a commandment as well as a promise, and is the Gospel of healing of equal authority? Has He chosen to legislate about the way in which the plague which has entered His world shall be dealt with, and have we any business to interfere with His great Health Laws? HAS HE AT ENORMOUS COST, PROVIDED A REMEDY FOR HIS CHILDREN as part of His redemption, and IS HE JEALOUS FOR THE HONOR AND RIGHTS OF HIS DEAR SON'S NAME in this matter? Does He claim to be the owner of His children's bodies, and does He claim the right to care for them? Has He left us one great prescription for disease, and is any other course, unauthorized, disobedient, and at our own risk? Surely these questions answer themselves, and leave but one course open to every simple and obedient child of God.

THE ORDER of God's dealings with our souls and bodies is regulated by certain fixed principles.

A. He works from within outwards, beginning with our spiritual nature and then diffusing his life and power through our physical being. Many persons come to God for healing whose spiritual life is wholly defective and wrong. God does not refuse the healing, but He begins in the depths of the soul, and when it is prepared to receive His life, he can begin to heal the body.

B. There is a constant parallel between the state of the soul and body. John prays that Gaius “may be in health and prosper, EVEN AS his soul prospereth.” A little cloud of sin upon the heart will leave a shadow upon the brain and nerves and a pressure upon the whole frame. A malicious breath of spiritual evil will poison the blood and depress the whole system. And a clear, calm and confident spirit will bring vigor into all the physical life, and open the way for all the full strong pulses of the Lord’s own life in us.

C. Hence, also, healing will often be gradual in its development, as the spiritual life grows and faith takes a firmer hold of Christ. The principle of the Divine life, like the natural, is “first the blade; then the ear; after that the full corn in the ear. There must ever be much preliminary work. The seed must be planted and die.” “The stalk must rise and grow strong enough to bear its heavy fruit. Many persons want the head of wheat while the blade is yet tender. Now it would only overwhelm us by its weight. We must have deep and quiet strength to sustain our higher blessing. Sometimes this preparation is all completed beforehand. Then God can work very rapidly. But in each case He knows the order and process best adapted to the development of the whole man, which is ever His great end in all His workings in us.

THE LIMITATIONS of Healing are also fixed by certain principles.

A. It is not the immortal life. Why should people ever die if Christ will always heal? Because faith can only go as far as God’s promise, and God has nowhere

promised that we shall never die during this Dispensation. The promise is fullness of life and health and strength up to the measure of our natural life, and until our life-work is done. True, it is the life of the resurrection which we have; but it is not the whole of it, but only the first fruits. In speaking of our immortal life in 2 Cor. 5:5, the Apostle says: “Now He that hath wrought us for this self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit” That is, as our earnest was a handful of the very soil of the purchased farm, but only a handful, so God has given us now, by His Spirit, in our new physical life, a handful of the very life of the resurrection. But it is only a handful, and the fullness will not come until His coming. But that handful is worth all the soil of earth and the natural life a hundredfold.

B. The next limitation has reference to the measure and degree in which we can expect this life in our present state. Shall we have strength for all sorts of supernatural exploits and extraordinary exertions? We have the promise of sufficient strength for all the will of God and all the service of Christ. But we shall have no strength for mere display, and certainly none to waste in recklessness, or spend in selfishness and sin. Within the limits of our God-appointed work, and these limits may be very wide — much wider than any mere natural strength — we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us, and may fearlessly undertake all labors, self-denials, and difficulties in the face of exposure, weakness, unhealthy conditions of climate, and the most engrossing demands upon strength and time, where Christ clearly leads and calls us; and we shall have His protecting power and find that “God is able to make all grace abound so that we, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work.” But let us touch the forbidden earth, get out of that sacred circle of His will, or spend our strength on self or sin, and our life will wither — like Jonah’s gourd and Samson’s arm. Yes, it must be true in our life; all true — not one part wanting, “OF Him, and THROUGH Him, and TO HIM - are all things to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

Chapter 5 - Part 1: SCRIPTURE

TESTIMONIES

The value of testimonies upon this subject cannot be questioned. They are entirely Scriptural; and they often bring the Gospel down to the personal level and contact of the sufferer, as mere abstract teaching cannot do. But they should always be simple, modest, as impersonal as possible, and illustrate principles. This is the character of all the Scripture testimonies. We shall glance at a few of these.

THE CASE OF JOB

This is the earliest case fully detailed in the Scriptures.

His sickness came from Satan's touch. His agency in sickness is most distinctly taught by our Lord also, and his power is yet undiminished.

Job's sickness was divinely permitted. It was designed to lead him to search his heart, and see his utter need of sanctification.

His sickness did not sanctify him, but only led to deeper exhibitions of his sin, and self-righteousness. Sickness does not purify anyone, although it may lead us to see our need of holiness and to receive it from God.

His sickness was removed when he saw his sin and acknowledged it before God. This came to him when God revealed Himself. Then he cried: “Now mine eye seeth Thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” Then came his complete justification, and with it a spirit of forgiveness and love for his enemies. And then, as he prayed for them, the Lord turned his own captivity. When we get right with God, we do not need to pray a great deal for ourselves. As we pray for others, our own blessing will often come. Job’s healing made all things new, and all his blessings were doubled. And no doubt the spiritual blessing was the deepest of all.

How instructive to watch this case lying in the hands of God until the soul is ready to learn his spiritual lesson, and then receive from God’s own hand life and restoration!

THE WOUNDED ISRAELITES AND THE BRAZEN SERPENT. (Num. 21.)

This sickness came from sin. They murmured, and God gave them something to murmur for. It is a serious matter to complain, for it is sure to bring the thing we fear, or a worse “I feared a fear, and it came upon me.”

This sickness came from Satan; from the serpent. So, still, he stings our life, and poisons our blood. It was a fiery serpent. The Hebrew words are “The serpents, the seraphim.” All our spiritual adversaries are not groveling worms. Many of them are lofty and transcendently wise.

The remedy was in the likeness of the disease; in short, a figure of the serpent with the poison extracted, and a striking intimation to the suffering camp and a sin-stricken world that Satan is robbed of his sting, and sickness and sin are but mere shadows of their former selves.

There was also in that brazen serpent the thought of Jesus made for us, Jesus assuming the vile and dishonored name of sinful man, and counted by God, and treated by men, as if He were indeed a serpent and a criminal. Thus for us has He taken the sting from Satan, sin, and death, and hung upon the uplifted cross the trophy of victory.

The healing came by looking at the Brazen Serpent. There is unspeakable power in a look. A look of evil chills the soul. A look of purity and love transfigures it. The eye brings into the soul the object of vision. Looking to the sun, it is present in the eye. Looking unto Jesus brings His life into our whole being.

This was physical life. The same life still comes from the cross for both soul and body, WHILE WE LOOK unto Jesus.

NAAMAN. (2. Kings 5.)

This was a typical case of disease. Leprosy was the peculiar type of sin, destroying both soul and body. It was the especial stigma of the physical effects of sin.

The instrument of this cure was, in the first instance, a Hebrew maid; and in her great usefulness we learn how God can use a very humble messenger and an incidental word. Indeed, Naaman’s own servants, a little later, saved his blessing for him by their wise counsel.

The lesson of humble and Obedient Faith must next be learned. The proud self and will of Naaman must die before his body can be healed by the Divine touch. And so Elisha meets his splendid state with quiet independence, and sends him a simple and humbling message to wash seven times in the Jordan and be clean.

The sick are often deeply wounded by our seeming neglect, but God sometimes teaches them thus the lowliness of faith, and takes their thoughts of themselves and others, Naaman, like all other proud sinners, at first refuses the cross, and is about to lose his blessing when a word of honest frankness from his servants brings him to his senses, and sends him to Jordan.

The Faith of Naaman consisted in his doing just what the prophet told him. He took God's way without qualification, and he persevered in it till his blessing came. Perhaps the first or second or sixth time there was no sign of healing; but he pressed on, and at length the wondrous blessing came, the flesh of a little child, and the acknowledgment and sole worship of the great Jehovah he had found.

His request for a gift of earth from the place of his healing was a beautiful foreshadowing of that Earnest of the greater future whom we also receive, the Holy Ghost. The word earnest means a handful of soil. Naaman took home with him a handful of Canaan's soil; and we, in our healing, receive the earnest of the Spirit, a part of Heaven begun on earth.

It is beautiful to see how Elisha sends him away leaning only on God. To his question about bowing in the house of Rimmon, Elisha will give no direct answer, but throws him on God alone, and bids him go in peace. How little man appears in all this! and how simple and glorious is God!

But Satan, too, must have a hand. And he usually shows his hand in some mercenary scheme like Gehazi's. So still, spiritualism and kindred arts of Satan seek to make merchandise of the things of God. But if you look closely, you will see the leper hand and face as white as snow.

HEZEKIAH. (2. Kings 28.)

It was a hopeless case. All men's reasonings about the part that the remedy had in curing him ought to be set at rest by the fact that he was beyond the reach of every remedy, for even God had said that he should die, and not live. Man and means could, therefore, have nothing to do with his cure; it was wholly Divine.

He turned to God in humility. He made no attempt to find help from man. He threw himself helplessly on the mercy of the Lord. His prayer was not a very trustful one; but God heard his helpless cry, and sent deliverance.

The answer to his prayer was definite and clear. Fifteen years more of life from God Himself. It was sent to Isaiah, and communicated to him; and he at once believed it, and began to praise.

It was accompanied by a double sign. First a reversal of the dial 15 degrees, and then a poultice of figs. Both are called signs. The figs were not medicinal, for medicine was of no avail, but symbolical, and therefore administered by a prophet, not a physician.

The sequel of his healing was unworthy of it. Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit, but his heart was lifted up, and long years afterwards the bitter fruits of his sin and folly continued to prove how solemn a thing it is to receive God's great mercies, and how sacredly our redeemed lives must be used for Him. People are always asking, " Did not Hezekiah's case prove the rightness of using remedies?" No. It proved the rightness of doing exactly what God tells us in regard to our healing. God told Naaman to wash in the Jordan. Anything else would have been disobedience. God told Hezekiah to use figs. Anything else would have been disobedience. If God had told us to use figs, anything else would be disobedience. But God has told us to use the anointing oil and the prayer of faith, and is anything else genuine obedience?

THE NOBLEMAN'S SON. (John 4.)

This was Christ's first miracle of healing. It seems to speak peculiarly to our own times.

It teaches us that we do not need the physical and visible presence of Jesus to heal us. He was far from this sick child and simply spake a word of power, which crossed these intervening spaces with Almighty energy, even as it still can reach from Heaven to earth. "Oh, if He were only here!" you say. Nay, His first great miracle was performed from a distance perhaps as great as between earth and Heaven.

It was by simple, naked faith, without sight or signs. The Lord Jesus had to press this farther away from all but His own simple word, "Except ye see signs and wonders," He exclaimed, "ye will not believe." And then He tested his faith by a simple word, "Go thy way; thy son liveth;" and the man accepted the hard lesson, believed the naked word, and the child was made whole. He showed his faith by quietly going back and ceasing any more to clamor for the Lord's going.

This case began at a fixed moment, and developed quietly and gradually, as so many are now healed. "He inquired at what hour he began to amend." And the answer was that at a certain moment the fever broke. He was now convalescent. So still the dear Master works for all who trust Him. Faith has both its instants and its hours. We must learn to accept both; to count the death-blow struck at the moment of our believing, and then to follow on as it works out all its stages of blessing.

THE HEALING OF PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW. (Mark 1.)

This was Christ's second recorded miracle of healing. He had just come from the Synagogue where, amid the astonishment of the people, He had cast out a demon. Peter's wife's mother was lying sick of fever. It was, then, a case of ordinary disease. And yet our Lord distinctly recognizes another agency at the back of the fever. For "He REBUKED the fever," and this implies some personal and evil agent that must have caused it. He would not rebuke a mere natural law. There is no blame where there is no personal will. Nay, the fever was but the blistering touch of a demon hand; and this was what He rebuked.

Next, she must actively take hold of the healing power which He stands over her to administer. He took her by the hand, and lifted her up, and she arose. There was of course, His mighty touch and Almighty help. But there was also her cooperation, her grasping His extended hand, her shaking off the torpor and weariness of disease, her effort to arise, and her rising. Thus we must meet His help and power.

And then there was the use of her new strength in ministering to Him and them. This was the best proof of healing, the best use of it too. So must we ever give our new life to God, and in ministering to others and forgetting ourselves, we shall find our own strength continually renewed. As we give our life we shall save it; and as we serve others He will administer to all our needs. It is a blessed exchange of responsibility and care to find that we have nothing to do but live for Him, and He but one business, to live for us, and supply all our need.

THE HEALING OF THE MULTITUDE. (Matt. 8.)

The next cases of healing we read of in the life of Christ were a large number of promiscuous cases on the evening of the Sabbath on which He healed Peter's mother-in-law. They had been gathering all day long, and waiting until the

Sabbath was past. And as soon the hour of six o'clock had come, they pressed upon Him from every side, in great numbers and variety, and He healed them all. Now the first lesson we learn from these cases is connected with this very fact, that they waited until the Sabbath was past. It shows how exactly their prevalent ideas of healing resembled the godless ideas of our own secular age. They considered the body, and all that pertained to it, to be purely secular. Healing, therefore, was a mere secular calling, and, as such, unfit work for the holy Sabbath day. Is not this just what modern unbelief has taught the churches of Christendom? The cure of the body is a matter for natural laws and remedies, and secular physicians, a profession to be studied and used for secular profit like any other business, but in no sense as sacred and holy as the salvation and culture of the soul. For the present our Lord met them on their own ground; but the day soon came when He deliberately and purposely healed on the Sabbath day, that He might repudiate and trample down this absurd and godless idea, and show to men that the body was as sacred as the soul; that its restoration was as much part of God's redemption; that it in no sense was left to be the subject of mere professional treatment; that it was His own holy prerogative and business to heal it; and that it was as holy and sacred work for the Sabbath day as the worship of the Temple or the salvation of the souls of men. The next lesson taught by these cases is the universality of His healing. He healed all that had need. He wished to show that it was not for favorite cases like the mother-in-law of an Apostle, but for all poor, sinful, suffering lives that could trust Him.

And the highest and most helpful of all the lessons is the way in which these cases are linked with the prophecy in Isaiah, announcing the true character of the Messiah as the Bearer of Sickness and Infirmity. It was no mere incidental fact, therefore, that He was healing these sufferers; it was no special and exceptional display of His power as the Son of God. But it was the real purpose and design of His Messiahship; and so all the ages can come to Him and lay upon Him their burdens and pains.

How deep and full these words, “Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses!” Himself, not Himself and physicians, but Himself alone; Himself, not Himself and us, but He takes the whole burden Himself, and leaves us utterly free; Himself, then the healing cannot be had apart from having Him. It is all wrapped up in Himself. His life in us, His indwelling, His body, His flesh; and His bones. Himself took and bare, not merely once, but for ever, not only lifting, but keeping, and carrying for ever. Blessed Healing! Blessed Healer!

THE LEPER. (Mark 1.)

This occurred soon after, in one of Christ’s tours through Galilee.

The request of this man is a good specimen of the state of mind in which we find the average Christian. He has full confidence in the power of Christ to heal, but is very uncertain about His willingness. Now if a friend is going to doubt me at all, I should much rather he would come to me and say, “I am sure you would help me if you could,” than “I know you have it in your power to aid me, but I have little confidence in your disposition to do it.” When will men see that this easy good-natured talk about God’s will involves the MOST SUBTLE AND OFFENSIVE DISTRUST?

Christ’s answer to him is explicit and emphatic and ought to settle the question of His will to heal the sincere and trusting sufferer,"I will; be thou clean.” There is no evasion or ambiguity, no hesitation or conditioning. It is a great, prompt, kingly answer, and in it all ages may hear His word to us all.

The touch of Christ meant a great deal to a leper. It was a long time since a hand of love had touched him. It was not a cold or mechanical touch. He was moved with compassion. His whole heart of love and his very life were in it. Yes, He helps us, not because His promise compels Him, but with overflowing love and

unbounded condescension. He touches our immortal life with His own, and makes our leper hearts quiver with the fresh warm blood of His being.

He must then go to the priest at Jerusalem, and make a proper acknowledgment and testimony, and hold back all other testimony until he has borne witness before the religious authorities of the nation. And so we must bear witness, too, of His mighty works in us, and we must do it where He wants it, perhaps in the very hardest place for us, and IN THE VERY FACE OF RELIGIOUS PRIDE AND OPPOSITION. It was a long journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, but if our testimony requires as great a sacrifice for Him, is not His love worth it all?

THE PARALYTIC. (Mark 2.)

This is one of the most remarkable of Christ's healing miracles, because He now, for the first time, brought out the doctrine of sin in connection with sickness, and assumed the right on earth to forgive sins. And from this moment He was regarded as a blasphemer. This poor man came for healing, but the Lord saw a deeper need that must first be met. His spiritual life must precede the physical. And so He speaks the word of pardon first. "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." So we must ever begin. And how many have been led to the very thought of salvation by their need of healing!

Then follows his physical healing. But this, too must be taken by himself in the exercise of bold obedient faith. He was not healed prostrate on that mat. He must rise up, put away his bed, and walk. Christ will not heal you in your bed. You must arise and step out upon His strength.

He was not, as is commonly supposed, healed through the faith of the men who brought him to Jesus, but through his own. Their faith laid him at the feet of Jesus, and brought him the word of forgiving mercy. But his own faith must

claim the healing. And it must have been a real faith which could rise up before that throng and carry his bed. The faith of others can do much for us, ADDED to our own, but an unbelieving heart can have nothing from the Lord.

The place of healing, as a token of forgiveness and a sign of Christ's saving power, is very solemn. He did heal this man, that they might know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sin. And Christ is ever wanting to convince the world of the reality of His Gospel by His physical miracles. How can we expect men to believe that His spiritual gifts are real when He does not manifest sufficient power to overcome the physical evils of our life? What right has any man to be sure that any part of his religion is real when his faith has never had enough of vigor to accomplish any really difficult thing in his practical life?

THE LAME MAN AT BETHESDA. (John 5.)

This miracle occurred in Jerusalem about the middle of His ministry. It was His first open and deliberate case of healing on the Sabbath day, and was purposely designed to defy their absurd ideas about the secular nature of disease and healing, and show them that it was sacred enough to be done on the Sabbath day, and to be a part His spiritual ministry. Many people are still afraid of unduly exalting the importance of the body, forgetting that whenever Christ touches it He makes it the channel and the vessel of all holy life and blessing.

The next great lesson of this case has reference to the folly of the things that men depend upon for healing. This man was looking to the fountain of Bethesda to heal him, and had some superstitious idea about its being troubled at times with healing virtues. Now it happens that the verse about the angel stepping in at certain seasons is an interpolation, and that was all a silly lie. So foolish and so false are the hopes of those who look to earthly sources of healing. They disappoint or disappear like Bethesda and its false legend. When the Lord

undertook to heal him, He paid no attention to Bethesda or any other means, but spake a single word of power, and bade him go forth in the strength of God.

There is a lesson, too, for the waiting ones who are just hoping for some day of help to come, and go on hoping down to the grave. When Jesus healed him He dispelled all his dreamy future, and started him on the practical and solid ground of a present act of decision. So still hope is often mistaken for faith. The test of faith is that it is always present, and takes the blessing now.

Another most important lesson also is the folly and helplessness of leaning on others. “Sir, I have no man to put me in,” expresses the languid dependence of hundreds still who are expecting healing through the help of others, and paralyzing all their own strength and power of believing by looking to some one else’s faith and prayers. Others cannot help us until we firmly believe for ourselves. If we cling to them our hands bind and impede them, like the clinging of a drowning man to his rescuer, and both may sink together. But when we have a distinct hold of Christ for ourselves, then He can give our friends a similar grasp for and with us.

Again, “Wilt thou be made whole?” expresses the real element of effectual faith. It acts through a firm and decided will. Faith is not mere will power, but its seat and region is the will. This is the mightiest thing God has given to a man, and no man can receive much from God without a firm and decided choice. We must first see that it is His will to make us whole, and then we must claim it for ourselves with a strength and tenacity which will carry along with it all the power of our being.

Chapter 5 - Part 2: SCRIPTURE

TESTIMONIES

One lesson more this poor sufferer must teach us: “Sin no more lest a worse thing come to thee.” Not always, yet often, such long and terrible disorders are the direct results of some course of sinful indulgence. Many a life today is impotent because of secret and youthful sin. There must, therefore, be a distinct recognition, confession, and repudiation of all sin, and the redeemed life must be pure and vigilant, if it would retain His sacred life. Each heart and conscience must answer for itself, and God’s Spirit will make it very plain to all who desire to know that they may fully obey. But there is no touchstone so searching as this life of Christ, and there is no cord that binds the soul more sacredly on the Altar of holiness than “I am the Lord that healeth thee.” This miracle should not be separated from the discourse which follows on the LIFE which Christ has come to give. It was just an illustration of that blessed life. Christ’s healing is neither more nor less than His own Divine life breathed into us, quickening our impotent souls and bodies, and beginning the eternal life now. This is just what He teaches them here. “The Son quickeneth whom He will.” “The hour is coming, and NOW IS, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live.”

THE MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND. (Matt. 12: 10.)

This miracle was a repetition, in Galilee, of the bold lesson about healing on the Sabbath day, which Jesus had just given in Jerusalem, and healing of the impotent man at Bethesda. They both emphasize the same great principle

respecting the freedom of the Sabbath, the sanctity of the body, and the sacredness of its cure.

They both also teach the same great lesson about the necessity of active and aggressive faith in order to receive Christ's healing power. This man was impotent, too, in his diseased hand. He had no power in himself to lift it. But he must, nonetheless, put forth an effort of will and an act of force; not as an attempt either, but in good faith and really expecting to accomplish it. And as he did so, the Divine power quietly and fully met his obedient cooperation, and carried him through into strength and victory. Thus faith must do the things we have no strength to do, and as it goes forward the new strength will come. The feet must step forward into the deep, and even touch the cold waters as they advance, but He will not fail. In passive waiting there can come no life or power from God. We must put our feet on the soil of Canaan, we must stretch forth our hands and take of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. The spider taketh hold with her hands, and therefore is in kings' palaces. So many Christians have no hands. They have no grip in their fingers, no stamina in their will, no hold in their faith. Hear His voice, ye listless ones. "STRETCH FORTH THINE HAND."

In his arguments with the Pharisees about this case, Jesus leaves no room to doubt the light in which He regards healing as connected with the will of God. He ridicules their prejudices against His healing a sufferer on the Sabbath, and claims the healing of this man, first on the grounds of simple humanity, as no more than any man would do for an ox or a sheep who had fallen into a pit, and secondly, on the ground of right; to do it is "to do good," "to save life;" not to do it is "to do evil," "to destroy" life. This does not look much like treating sickness as a great boon. And yet such gentle and merciful teachings only exasperated these wicked men; and, when they even see God's power vindicate His teachings, and the man stand forth healed before their eyes, they are filled with madness, and consult how they may destroy Him.

So prejudice still blinds men to the truth and love of God, and as much as ever, today, opposes Christ's healing ministry for the sake of doctrinal consistency.

THE WOMAN WITH THE SPIRIT OF INFIRMITY. (Luke 13: 10-20.)

This beautiful incident occurred a good deal later, but as it was one of Christ's Sabbath miracles, and comes in the same general class with those just referred to, supplementing and enforcing the same principles, we will introduce it here.

The nature of her disease. It was a case of helpless paralysis and deformity. She was bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up. It was also of long standing. She had been eighteen years in this condition. It was, therefore, about as difficult a chronic case as could well be brought to the great Healer.

The cause of her disease. Here a ray of marvelously clear and keen light is thrown in not only upon her case, but upon the whole question of disease. The Lord distinctly declares that her troubles had come, not through natural causes, but direct personal agency, the agency of an evil spirit, that her very body is bound by A SPIRIT OF INFIRMITY. And He afterwards declares that SATAN HAS BOUND HER, lo, these eighteen years. He does not recognize it as a case of Providential discipline, but the direct hand of the devil upon her frame. This is incapable of evasion or ambiguity. And it may well make one shudder who has been nursing and petting some foul demon, as if it were an angel.

The question of God's will is also made marvelously clear. There is no greater word in Christian ethics than "OUGHT." It is the word of conscience, of law, of Everlasting Right. It is a cable that binds both God and man. When God says ought, there is no appeal, no compromise, no alternative, nothing but absolutely

to obey. It does not mean that a thing is possible, or permissible, or perhaps to be done, but it means that it is necessary to be done and that not to do it would be WRONG. And Christ says to these evil men who would put these petty prejudices before God's beneficent will and His creatures' happiness, "OUGHT NOT THIS WOMAN TO BE LOOSED FROM THIS BOND?" That ought to settle the question of how God regards our healing.

But there is one more principle, the greatest of all, and it conditions and limits this "ought" and everything else in her case; and that is the woman s faith. The Lord expressly calls her a child of faith. That is just the meaning of the expression "a daughter of Abraham." And it is this which makes it a matter of "ought," that she should be healed. "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, to be loosed from this bond?" Is it the will of God to heal all? It is the will of God to heal all who believe. More is meant by the expression, "a daughter of Abraham," than mere faith. It expresses a very strong faith, a faith which, like Abraham's, believed without sight, and in the face of seeming impossibilities. Have we any evidence of such faith on her part? We have. We are told that Jesus called her to Him and said, "Woman, thou art loose from thine infirmity." In the Revised version it is, "He called her." It implies that He required her to come to Him first. This would require supernatural exertion and faith and so she must have made the attempt to come before He touched her. Then, as she came, He declared the work done, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity;" and He laid his hands upon her and completed the work. But her faith had to take the initiative, and, like Abraham, step out, not knowing whither, on the naked call and strength of God. Then the work could be counted done. "Thou art loosed." And then the full results began to follow.

THE CENTURION'S SERVANT. (Matt. 8: 5.)

The first thing that is remarkable about this case is the high commendation which Christ here gives to the faith of a Gentile and heathen, who possessed so little opportunity of knowing God and enjoying light. The most solemn lesson in all the Bible about faith is that it was most strongly developed in those who had but little light, and the greatest advantages were usually met by the most unreasonable unbelief. They who do not promptly use the light they have are not likely to make a good use of more. This man had very little more light than he had learned from his own profession, and the smattering of Jewish teaching he may have gathered, but he had been a true man as far as he knew his duty, and he had shown his love to God's people and his kindness to the Jewish congregation, whose Synagogue he had built at his own expense.

His strong faith showed itself first in his recognizing Christ's absolute control over all the forces of the universe, even as he controlled his disciplined soldiers; and secondly, in his recognizing the sufficiency of Christ's bare word to stop the disease in a moment. He asked no more than one word from the Lord of Heaven and earth. And that one word he took as a decree as final as the decree of the Caesars. He recognized the authority of Christ's word. It passes over this universe like a great and resistless mandate, and even in the hands of a little child it is as mighty as His own Omnipotence. How tremendous the force of law! Let a single human voice speak the sentence of that Court, and all the power of wealth and influence is helpless to hold back that man from a prison cell. The word which Christ has spoken to us is a word of law, and when faith claims it, all the powers of hell and earth dare not resist it. This is the province of faith, to take that imperial word and use its authority against the forces of disease and sin.

The humility of this man is a beautiful accompaniment of his faith. He deeply felt his unworthiness of Christ's visit. It was not often that a proud Roman acknowledged himself unworthy of a visit, but this Centurion felt that he was standing before One greater than his Emperor, and his spirit bowed in lowly

reverence and worship. We can come nearer. Not only will He enter our roof but He will make our heart his home for ever.

THE GADARENE DEMONIACS. (Matt. 8: 28.)

This incident introduces to us a class of cases of great importance, the insane and the disease of the mind. There seems no reason to doubt that they are still the same in character and cause as the instances of demoniacal possession in the days of Christ. The causes of these disorders are distinctly attributed by our Lord to Satanic agency. The power that held this man was sufficient to destroy three thousand swine. What fearful forces one human heart can hold! The power which the evil spirit exerted upon his body, enabling him to break any chain which the hand of man could place upon him, may give us some idea of how spiritual agencies may affect the body either for good or evil. All physical strength is spiritual in its cause. This wretched man seems to have been conscious of two principles within him: one his own will feebly struggling for freedom, the other the evil spirits controlling him, and crushing his will under them. The difference between such a case and one willingly yielded to Satan is very great. The Lord met this case with deep compassion. He regarded him as the victim of a power he could not resist, and by a word of command He set him free. Immediately his whole appearance was changed. The wild and dreaded maniac is sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. The awful power that had possessed him was soon apparent in the destruction of the swine. He himself clung to his Deliverer, and desired to go with Him. But Jesus knew that he needed to be pushed out into the discipline of confession and service, and sent him at once to stand alone and spread the tidings in his home. Every new advance would give him new assurance and strength, and before long the whole region of Decapolis was so stirred by his testimonies, that the way was prepared for the Master’s visit and the mighty work which closed with the feeding of the four thousand. So must we often trust the young disciple with the most bold and difficult service and self-reliance.

The treatment of the insane is one of the most important questions connected with the subject of faith. The true remedy is the power of Christ. No doubt it is a subject of much difficulty; and in many cases there are long and severe trials of faith and need for quiet homes where they can be separated, guarded and brought under the influence of Christian teaching and faith. The result of the little that has been attempted has shown how much may be done with holy wisdom and courageous faith.

THE WOMAN WHO TOUCHED HIS GARMENT. (Luke 8: 48.)

The most beautiful thing about this miracle is the way it is embosomed in the heart of a greater, the raising of Jairus' daughter. It would seem as though in these twin miracles the Lord would write, in one striking lesson, the two principles so finely illustrated respectively, in each of God's absolute power on the one hand, even to work where there is nothing but death, and faith's absolute power on the other to take everything from God. They emphasize the two wonderful omnipotences that Christ has linked together: "All things are possible with God," and "all things are possible to him that believeth."

The helpless nature of her disease and the failure of human physicians is brought out with a good deal of plainness of speech. There is no attempt to apologize for the medical profession but we are frankly told that all that had been done for her had only made her worse. It wilt be noticed that it is a physician himself, Luke, who gives us the most vivid picture of all this.

The process of the faith and healing is very striking. There were three stages. First, she believed that she would be healed. She said, "If I may touch his garment, I. shall be whole. Then, secondly, she came and touched. She did something. The personal and living element in faith is here brought out very

vividly. Faith is more than believing, it is a living contact with a living Savior. It is the outreaching of a conscious need in us, feeling after and finding its supply in Him. It is not a mere outward approach, not even a mere mental approach. Hundreds thronged Him, but only one TOUCHED Him. Then, thirdly, there is the conscious receiving after the naked believing and the actual coming. Immediately her blood was stanched; she felt in her body that she was whole of her plague. She did not feel first and then believe, but she believed and then she felt.

But her blessing must be confessed. Christ will not allow us to hold his gifts without acknowledgment. Nor can we enjoy and retain them long in secret. Like plants, they need the light of day. And so her womanly sensitiveness must all be laid aside, and her shrinking heart must tell its blessings at His feet, in the hearing of all men. How much we lose by sensitiveness and silence!

And how much she gained by that confession! “Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. Go in peace.” A daughter, comforted, healed and now sent forth into peace, that deep, Divine rest that comes with the touch of God, and is the richest part of the inheritance which faith brings. It is not merely that the peace comes into her. She goes into peace, a land so wide and fruitful, that she never can miss its boundaries or exhaust its precious things. And could one little act of faith for her body bring all this deep spiritual blessing? Yes, the most precious part of the blessing His healing gives is that it heals the whole being, and brings us into union with God, with a fullness we never would have known without this living and human touch.

Indeed, it will be found that most of the great spiritual blessings, experiences, and revelations of God to his people in the Scriptures began with what we would call temporal blessings. Abraham became the father of faith by believing in God for a son. Jacob became the Prince of Israel by claiming a temporal deliverance.

Daniel saw the coming to Jesus while asking for the Restoration of the Captivity. The Syrophenician woman won her transcendent victory for a suffering child. And so still the things we call little and commonplace, like the little jeweled axles in the wheels of our watches, are the very pivots on which the greatest spiritual experiences turn; and trusting God for a headache or a dollar may teach us to trust Him for all the fullness of His grace and holiness.

THE TWO BLIND MEN. (Matt. 9: 27.)

This little story illustrates several important principles.

Mere prayer will not heal the sick. These blind men followed Him from the house of Jairus crying, “Have mercy on us.” And yet it brought no reply. “I have been praying for my healing for forty years,” people sometimes say to us, “and I am no better.” Well, little wonder, for if you had prayed in faith you would not have prayed so long.

Mere coming into the presence of Christ will not heal us. They came to Him into the house, but still they were not healed. So persons go to meetings, try to get under spiritual influences, and seem to think that those things will bring their blessings. Perhaps they even present themselves definitely to Him for His help and healing, and yet they are no better.

The reason is given in the last step brought out here. All this is of no avail unless we definitely believe that He does do for us what we claim. “Believe ye?” He asks and then utters the great law of faith which determines for every one of us the measure of our blessings, “According to your faith be it unto you.” Then His touch brings sight and healing, and they go forth into the glorious light of day.

There is a secret in everything; there is a secret spring or number by which the safe can be unlocked. There is a secret way by which that paper can be brought before the Government. There is a secret by which nature's mighty forces can be harnessed and used. And there is a secret which opens heaven and commands all the forces and resources of the throne. It is not agonizing prayer; it is not much labor; it is simply this: "ACCORDING TO YOUR FAITH BE IT UNTO YOU."

THE SYROPHENICIAN WOMAN. (Matt. 15: 21.)

This was another example of faith where there was little light or opportunity. It is doubtful if this woman had ever heard a promise or a passage of Scripture, or seen an inspired teacher in all her life. She belonged to an alien and accursed race, and everything was against her.

And when she came to Jesus, He seemed against her, too. To her pitiful cry tor help He answered her not a word. To his disciples' appeal to send her away, that is to grant her request and dismiss her, He replies in language which seemed imperatively to exclude her from any right to His mercy. And when at last she came to His very feet and implored His help, He answered in language so harsh and repelling that it seemed like courting insult to approach Him again. He had even called her a dog, the type in the East of that which is unclean and unfit for fellowship and yet in the face of all this her faith only grew the stronger, until at last she drew out of His very refusal the argument for her blessing. Difficulties cannot injure true faith. They are the very stimulus of its growth.

We see the Lord's design in dealing with us, and sometimes seeming to refuse us. All through that struggle He knew and loved her, and saw the trust that would not be denied. And He was but waiting for its full manifestation. Nay, He only tried it because He knew it would stand the trial, and would come forth as gold at last. So He keeps us at His feet, and even seems to refuse our cry, to call forth all

the depths of our trust and earnestness. Another object, too, He had with her. He was bringing her to the death of self and the sense of sin. And when at last she was willing to accept His judgment of her, and take her place as a poor worthless sinner, unworthy of any of His blessings, then she could receive all. Faith is a coming down as well as an ascent, a death as well as a life.

Chapter 5 - Part 3: SCRIPTURE

TESTIMONIES

Her great faith consisted not only in her persistency, in holding on until the last in importunate pleading, but in its ingenuity in finding some ground on which to plead and claim the blessing. Faith is a process of logic, an arguing our case with God, and it is always looking for something to rest upon. Her heart seemed to lean at first upon His grace and love as she somehow felt it instinctively. Something told her that calm, gentle face could not refuse her. But still she had no word from Him. One little word only, one whisper, one faint concession would do her. But he had spoken nothing but hard, inevitable words of exclusion, exclusion based upon the great principles and limitations of His coming, principles that seemed to make it wrong for Him to help her. At last He speaks a word that seems to close the door for ever. Not only a Gentile, but a dog. It is NOT MEET. How can she surmount that? Wonderful! That becomes the very bridge on which she crosses the Jordan. A dog — that gives her a place. A dog — well, even a dog has some rights. She will claim hers. Only a crumb. This thing she asks is but a crumb to Him, so great that mighty deeds of power and love drop from His fingers like morsels, but oh, so much to her! Lord, I accept it. I lie down at Thy feet, at Thy children's feet; I ask not their fare, but this which is but their leaving; this which will not diminish aught for them; this which even now they in yonder Galilee have had to the surfeit, until they have refused to take more — this I humbly claim for myself and child, and Thou canst not say me nay.

No. He could not. Filled with love and wonder, He answers: “Oh woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.” And the mighty deed was done. “As thou wilt.” Here, again, we have the same element of decision, of fixed and concentrated will which is essential to all strong faith and action. It was the same will, in the negative form, as “I will not” which overcame at Peniel sixteen centuries before; and these two cases, both for a temporal deliverance, are companion pictures of overcoming faith.

THE DEMONIAC CHILD. (Matt. 17: 14.)

Immediately after the Transfiguration, Jesus was brought face to face with the power of Satan in the form of a case of demoniacal possession that resisted all the Disciples. The cause of their failure was their lack of faith, and the reason of their unbelief was their strife about personal ambition.

When Jesus comes to the multitude He rebukes the unbelief which He perceives on every side, and then calls the father and child into his presence. The moment the father begins to speak of the difficulties of the case, he falls into a paroxysm of discouragement and cries, “If Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us.” But the Lord’s answer quickly brings him to see that it is not a matter of Christ’s power but of his own faith. “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” He at once recognizes the tremendous responsibility which this places upon him, and meets it. “Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.” These two words together — the Lord’s great word to him, and his word to the Lord — are among the most wonderful teachings of the Bible about faith.

The first tells us the POSSIBILITIES of faith — all things; equal to God’s own omnipotence, for the only one else to whom all things are possible is God. Faith does, indeed, take and use His own Omnipotence.

The second defines the POSSIBILITY of faith — that is, how far can we believe? Now, many spend their lives wondering if they can believe. Others, more wisely, like this man, put forth the effort and stretch forth the hand first, and then throw themselves on God to sustain and carry them in it. Had he said, “Lord, help my unbelief,” without first saying “Lord, I believe,” it would have been vain. Had he said, “Lord, I believe;” and stopped there, it would have been equally vain, for it would only have been his own will power. He put forth his will, and then he depended upon Christ for the strength. This is faith. It all comes from Christ, and is, indeed, His own faith in us, but it must be taken by us and used with a firm and resolute hand.

The healing power now comes, but it seems at first only to make matters worse, and develops such a desperate resistance from Satan, that in the conflict the child is thought by the spectators to be really dead. So, often, when God begins to heal us, we really seem to get worse, and the world tells us that we have destroyed ourselves. But the death must precede the life, the demolition the renovation. Let us not fear but trust Him who knows, and all will be well. He takes the child by the hand, and lifts him up, and the demon has left him for ever.

THE BLIND MAN AT BETHSAIDA. (Mark 8: 22.)

The first thing Christ did with this man was to take him by the hand and lead him out of the town, separating him thus from the crowd, giving him time to think, and teaching him to walk. hand in hand with Jesus, and trust Him in the dark. So He first takes us all, and leads us out alone with Himself, long before we look in His face, or know that He is leading us.

Next He begins the work of healing him by a simple anointing, as a sign, and putting His hands upon his eyes. The result is a partial healing, but distorted and

unsatisfactory. Thus would He teach us that sometimes our progress will be partial and by successive stages. Many never get beyond this first stage.

There is a third stage — perfect sight; and it comes from one cause: a look at Jesus. “I see men,” he said the first time; and while he only saw men, he saw nothing clearly. But the second time the Lord made Him “look up,” and now he saw clearly. That one look at Jesus, even through the dimness, made all things clear and whole.

THE BLIND MAN AT JERUSALEM. (John 9.)

The question of sin in connection with sickness receives a very important limitation in this incident. Christ teaches His disciples that there are cases of infirmity where there has been no special iniquity beyond the common guilt of all men, and the trouble has been permitted to afford an opportunity for God to show His love and power in restoring.

In the healing of this man, the Lord again used a simple sign. He anointed his eyes with spittle and clay. None will say that this could have any medicinal effect to cure eyes blind from birth. It was simply a sign of His touch. He then sent him to wash in the pool of Siloam, and he came, seeing. If it be said that there was any virtue in the clay, it may be added, with equal force, that he did not receive his sight until the clay had been washed away in the pool of Siloam.

This pool was the type of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, Siloam, was the same as Shiloh, and it meant the Sent One. The water meant the Holy Spirit, also the Sent of the Father and Son.

The testimony of this man, subsequently, was most glorious. With a keen sarcasm, he exposed the inconsistencies of the Scribes and Pharisees who came to see him about it, and to draw out of him some evidence against Christ, who had again broken the Sabbath by this act of healing. But the humble peasant was more than a match for them, and the controversy which follows is intensely sharp and interesting. At last they resort to coarse force, and excommunicate him from the Synagogue. But he is a true martyr; and soon after Jesus appears to him again and reveals His true character and glory, and the man becomes a loving Disciple.

BLIND BARTIMEUS AND HIS COMPANION. (Luke 18.)

There was a deep insight in the cry of Bartimaeus, “Thou Son of David.” Jesus was now coming to claim His throne, and the title by which He was to be known was “The Son of David.” It was strange that His own people should be blind to His claim, and that a poor old blind man should be the first to see it. So still the wise are the blind — so the blind see still.

We see persistent faith. He cried aloud; he cried so much the more when they rebuked him: he cried and threw away his garments, teaching us that we must put all hindrances out of the way. He had but one request: his earnest faith summed up all its intensity in one word, “Lord, that my eyes may be opened.” There can be no strong faith without strong desire. The languid prayer has not motive power enough in it to ascend to God.

His healing was simple and glorious. There was a pause, a call, a question, an earnest reply; the word is spoken, the work is done: he gazes on the beautiful scene, the men around him, and the face of the Lord. And then he looks no further, but sends up his shouts of praise, and follows Jesus in the way.

THE WITHERING OF THE FIG TREE. (Mark 11: 20.)

This is Christ's one miracle of judgment, and it would seem to be a poor source of faith and comfort. But Christ made it the occasion of His highest teaching about faith, and it is indeed, a symbol of the deepest and tenderest operation of His Grace. The greatest principle of Scripture is SALVATION BY DESTRUCTION, Life by Death. The life of the world is the destruction of Satan, Sin and Death. The Sanctification of the Soul is the withering up of the natural life. The healing of the body is the death stroke at the root of an evil growth of disease. There are things that need God's Fire and God's Holiness. There are times when we want more than mercy and gentleness, and the whole spirit longs for the touch of the keen sword which slays utterly the foul thing that is crushing out our life and purity.

Oh, how glorious at such a time is the Consuming Holiness of the Living God? This is the meaning of the withered fig tree. "Ye shall do this which is done to the fig tree," He says to His Disciples. Yes, we can speak that mighty word of faith, and lo, the flesh withers and dies. We can speak it again, and lo, the poison tree of sickness is withered, and begins to dry up from the root. And although leaves and branches may for a while retain their form and color, we know that the death-blow has been struck at the root, and the real work is done.

The secret of all is this: "Have the Faith of God."

The marginal reading is as much higher than the text as heaven is above the earth. The faith of God is as different from faith in God as Christ's faith is from that of the Disciples who were laboring with the demoniac boy. Jesus does mean to teach us that no less than such a faith as His own will do these things, and that we can have it, and must take it.

THE LAME MAN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE. (Acts 3: 10.)

The first miracle of the Holy Ghost after Christ's ascension is marked by the most emphatic recognition of THE NAME OF JESUS only as the source of power in its performance, and the most DISTINCT REPUDIATION OF ALL HUMAN POWER OR GLORY IN IT. The Apostles distinctly use that Name as their first word to the man, and when the people come crowding around them, and the rulers summon them before them, they again and again disavow any part in it, further than merely to represent the Mighty Name and power of Him who had been crucified by the men before them. It is not now a present, but an absent Lord, represented by His ministers and His Name.

Again the very faith through which the miracle had been performed and received was as distinctly disavowed, as in any sense their own will-power, or the man's, for they distinctly say, "Yea, THE FAITH WHICH IS BY HIM hath made this man stand before you whole." So that both the faith and the power are SIMPLY JESUS HIMSELF WORKING AND BELIEVING IN US.

Again THE MIRACLE ITSELF IS ONLY VALUED AS A TESTIMONY FOR JESUS, and AN OCCASION FOR MORE WIDELY AND EFFECTUALLY SPREADING HIS WORD. They do not wait to wonder over it. They do not let it monopolize their attention, but they quietly press on with their greater work, the preaching of the Gospel. The healing of the sick is simply accessory to the great and the whole work of the Gospel, and ought always to be associated with it. But the lame man was an unanswerable argument for the Gospel, a very buttress in the walls of the young Church. "Seeing the lame man with Peter and John, they could say nothing against it." That is fine. We need such testimonies still. The world, the infidel, and the devil cannot answer them. We have seen the proudest infidel put to shame by a poor woman coming up before the people who knew her, and telling him how God had made her whole.

ENEAS AT LYDDA. (Acts 9: 34.)

The miracle, by the hands of Peter, has the same features. First, Peter is most careful to recognize only the Master's Power and Name. "Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." Peter is wholly out of sight, and ever must be.

Next, the effect of it is to bring men to God; not to set them wondering, but to set them repenting. All Lydda and Saron saw it, and turned to the Lord. The true effect of a full Gospel of supernatural power and might is always spiritual results, and the salvation of men. And through these mighty signs and wonders will come, Joel tells us, the last great outpouring of the Spirit upon the world, and the awakening of men before the second coming of the Lord.

THE LAME MAN AT LYSTRA. (Acts 14: 10.)

This is one of the most instructive cases of healing in the Bible.

This was a purely heathen community and audience. They had no preconceived prejudices.

Paul preached to them "the Gospel." No doubt he told them of the healing and redeeming work of Jesus.

As he preached he perceived the light of faith and life irradiating the face of one of his most helpless hearers. We can see these things in men. God gives the spiritual mind instincts of discernment.

Paul evidently would not have gone farther unless he had “perceived” that this man had “faith to be healed.” It is no use trying to push men on Christ who have not hands to touch Him. It was not Paul’s faith that healed the man, BUT HIS OWN.

But he must be helped to act it out.

“STAND ON THY FEET,” cries Paul; and as he rises and attempts in a hobbling, halting way, to stand, he cries “UPRIGHT,” for this is the force of the word (see Young’s translation). There must be no halting and half-believing. A bold step like this must be carried through audaciously. And lo! the man responds to the brave words, and now not only stands up, but begins to leap and walk. By works his faith is made perfect.

The effect of the miracle and the humble spirit of Paul need no additional word. God was glorified, and Paul gave Him all the glory.

PAUL’S OWN EXPERIENCE OF HEALING. (Acts 15: 19; 2 Cor. 1, 4.)

It was not long till the great Apostle had occasion to prove his own faith. The excited people first worshiped and then stoned him and, dragged out of the city by a mob infuriated by Jewish agitators, he was left for dead in the midst of the little band of disciples. But did he die? No. “As the disciples stood round him he rose up in their midst, and the next day he departed for Derbe, and there he preached the Gospel.” Could there be anything more simply sublime or sublimely simple? Not a word of explanation, no utterance even of surprise, but a quiet defiance of pain, weakness and death itself, and going on about his work in the strength of the Lord.

In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians and the Fourth Chapter, he gives us the secret of his strength: “We which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake;"—that was what happened at Lystra-“ that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” That was the secret of the wondrous restoration at Lystra. In a later verse he gives it to us again, “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.”

In the First Chapter of Second Corinthians he gives us another instance of his healing.

It was a great trouble that came to him in Asia, and pressed him out of measure above strength, so that he despaired even of life. And, indeed; when he looked at himself, his condition and his feelings, the only answer he could get was death.

But even in that dark hour he had one confidence, the life of Christ, and “God who raises the dead.” And this trust was not in vain. He did deliver from death, and had since been constantly delivering the Apostles, and he was sure would yet deliver him to the end. And he simply adds his thanks to them for the prayers which had so helped and comforted him, and which gave occasion for such wider thanksgiving on his behalf, to the glory and grace of God.

OUR SAVIOR’S EXPERIENCE OF PHYSICAL LIFE IN GOD. (Matt. 3.)

Jesus Himself had to learn, and leave to us, the great lesson of living physically not on natural strength and support, but on the life of God. This was the very meaning of His first temptation in the wilderness. It was addressed directly to His body. Weakened and worn by abstinence, the tempter came to Him and suggested that He should resort to the usual means of sustenance and strength, and make some earthly bread. The Lord answers him that the very reason of His

trial and abstinence is to show that man's life can be sustained without earthly bread, by the life and word of God Himself. The words have a deep significance when we remember that they are quoted from Deuteronomy, and are first used of God's ancient people, to whom, He says, He tried to teach this same lesson, that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." So it is not only the Son of Man who was thus to live as a special evidence of His Divine power, but the lesson is for man, and we must all learn with Him to receive our life for the body as well as the soul, not by the exclusion of bread, but "not by bread ALONE," but also by God's word. This is exactly what our Savior meant when, two years later, he said in the Synagogue at Capernaum, "As the Living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so that he that eateth Me even he shall live by Me."

So our Lord learned His physical lesson, refused the Devil's bread, and overcame in His body for us. The next two temptations were addressed to His soul and His spirit, and were, in like manner, overcome. And so He became for us the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Such are some of the witnesses. "Seeing, then, that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, LOOKING UNTO JESUS THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH."

Chapter 6: PERSONAL TESTIMONY

After six years' grateful experience of the Lord's healing in my own life, family and ministry, it may not, be inappropriate to close this little volume with a brief personal testimony.

All that I know of Divine Healing and all that I have written in the preceding pages, the Lord had to teach me Himself in my own life, and I was not permitted to read anything but His own Word on this subject until long after I had learned to trust Him for myself and, indeed, had written much that is in this little book.

For more than twenty years I was a sufferer from many physical infirmities and disabilities. Beginning a life of hard intellectual labor at the age of fourteen I broke hopelessly down with nervous prostration while preparing for college and for many months was not permitted by my physician even to look at a book. During this time I came very near death, and on the verge of eternity gave myself at last to God.

After my college studies were completed I became the ambitious pastor of a large city church at twenty-one, and plunging headlong into my work I again broke down in one year with heart trouble and had to go away for months of rest, returning at length, as it seemed to me at the time, to die. Rallying, however, and slowly recovering in part, I labored on for years with the aid of constant remedies and preventives. I carried a bottle of ammonia in my pocket for years, and would have taken a nervous spasm if I had ventured without it. Again and again, while climbing a slight elevation or going up a stair did the awful and

suffocating agony come over me, and the thought of that bottle as a last resort quieted me.

Well do I remember the day in Europe when I ventured to the top of the Righi in Switzerland by rail, and again when I tried to climb the high Campanile stairs in Florence, and as the paroxysm of imminent suffocation swept over me how I resolved that I should never venture into such peril again. God knows how many hundred times in my earlier ministry when preaching in my pulpit or ministering by a grave it seemed that I must fall in the midst of the service or drop into that open grave.

Several years later two other collapses came in my health, of long duration, and again and again during these terrible seasons did it seem that the last drops of life were ebbing out, and a frail thread held the vital chain from snapping forever.

I struggled through my work most of the time and often was considered a hard and successful worker, but my good people always thought me so “delicate,” and I grew so weary of being sympathized with every time they met me. Many a neglected visit was apologized for by these good people because I was “not strong.” When at last I took the Lord for my Healer I remember I was so tired of this constant pity that I just asked the Lord to make me so well that my people would never sympathize with me again, but that I should be to them a continual wonder through the strength and support of God.

I think He has fulfilled this prayer, for they have often wondered these past six or seven years at the work I have been permitted to do in His name.

It usually took me till Wednesday to get over the effects of the Sabbath sermon, and about Thursday I was ready to begin to get ready for the next Sabbath. Thanks be to God, the first three years after I was healed I preached more than a

thousand sermons, and held sometimes more than twenty meetings in one week, and do not remember once feeling exhausted with a single service all the time.

A few months before I took Christ as my Healer, a prominent physician in New York insisted on speaking to me on the subject of my health, and told me that I had not constitutional strength enough left to last more than a few months. He required my taking immediate measures for the preservation of my life and usefulness. During the summer that followed I went for a time to Saratoga Springs, and while there, one Sabbath afternoon, I wandered out to the Indian camp ground, where the jubilee singers were leading the music in an evangelistic service. I was deeply depressed, and all things in life looked dark and withered. Suddenly, I heard the chorus:

“My Jesus is the Lord of Lords;

No man can work like Him.”

Again and again, in the deep bass notes and the higher tones, that seemed to soar to heaven, they sang it over and over again:

“No man can work like Him,

No man can work like Him.”

It fell upon me like a spell. It fascinated me. It seemed like a voice from heaven. It possessed my whole being. I took him also to be my Lord of Lords, and to work for me. I knew not how much it all meant; but I took him in the dark, and went forth from that rude, old-fashioned service, remembering nothing else, but strangely lifted up forevermore.

A few weeks later I went with my family to Old Orchard Beach, Ma. I went chiefly to enjoy the delightful air of that loveliest of all ocean beaches. I lived on the very seashore while there, and went occasionally to the meetings on the camp ground, but only once or twice took part in them, and had not, up to that time, committed myself in any full sense to the truth or experience of Divine Healing.

At the same time I had been much interested in it for years. Several years before this I had given myself to the Lord in full consecration, and taken Him for my indwelling righteousness. At that time I had been very much impressed by a remarkable case of healing in my own congregation. I was called to see a dying man given up by all the physicians. I was told that he had not spoken or eaten for days. It was a most aggravated case of paralysis and softening of the brain and so remarkable was his recovery afterwards considered, that it was published in the medical journals as one of the marked cases of medical science.

His mother was a devoted Christian, and he had been converted in his childhood. But now, for many years he had been an actor, and, she feared, a stranger to the Lord. She begged me to pray for him, and as I prayed I was led to ask, not for his healing but that he might recover long enough to let her know that he was saved. I rose from my knees, and was about to leave, and leave my prayer where we too often do, in oblivion, when some of my people called, and I was detained a few minutes introducing them to the mother.

Just then I stepped up to the bed mechanically, and suddenly the young man opened his eyes and began to talk to me. I was astonished and still more so was the dear old mother. And when, as I asked him further, he gave satisfactory evidence of his simple trust in Jesus, I am ashamed to say we were all overwhelmed with astonishment and joy. From that hour he rapidly recovered, and lived for years. He afterwards called to see me, and told me that he regarded

his healing as a miracle of Divine power. The impression produced by this incident never left my heart.

Soon afterwards I attempted to take the Lord as my Healer, and for awhile, as long as I trusted Him, He sustained me wonderfully, but afterwards, being entirely without instruction and advised by a devout Christian physician that it was presumption, I abandoned my position of simple dependence upon God alone, and so floundered and stumbled for years. But as I heard of isolated cases I never dared to doubt them, or question that God did sometimes so heal. For myself, however, the truth had no really practical or effectual power, for I never could feel that I had any clear authority in a given case of need to trust myself to Him.

But the summer I speak of I heard a great number of people testify that they had been healed by simply trusting the Word of Christ, just as they would for their salvation. It drove me to my Bible. I determined that I must settle this matter one way or the other. I am so glad I did not go to man. At His feet, alone, with my Bible open, and with no one to help or guide me, I became convinced that this was part of Christ's glorious Gospel for a sinful and suffering world, and the purchase of His blessed Cross, for all who would believe and receive His Word. That was enough.

I could not believe this and then refuse to take it for myself, for I felt that I dare not hold any truth in God's Word as a mere theory or teach to others what I had not personally proved. And so one Friday afternoon at the hour of three o'clock, I went out into the silent pine woods, I remember the very spot, and there I raised my right hand to Heaven and in view of the Judgment Day, I made to God, as if I had seen Him there before me face to face, these three great and eternal pledges:

As I shall meet Thee in that day, I solemnly accept this truth as part of thy Word, and of the Gospel of Christ and, God helping me, I shall never question it until I meet Thee there.

As I shall meet Thee in that day I take the Lord Jesus as my physical life, for all the needs of my body until all my life-work is done; and God helping me, I shall never doubt that He does so become my life and strength from this moment, and will keep me under all circumstances until His blessed coming, and until all His will for me is perfectly fulfilled.

As I shall meet Thee in that day I solemnly agree to use this blessing for the glory of God, and the good of others and to speak of it or minister in connection with it in any way in which God may call me or others may need me in the future.

I arose. It had only been a few moments, but I knew that something was done. Every fibre of my soul was tingling with a sense of God's presence. I do not know whether my body felt better or not — I know I did not care or want to feel it — it was so glorious to believe it simply, and to know that henceforth He had it in hand.

Then came the test of faith. The first struck me before I had left the spot. A subtle voice whispered: "Now you have decided to take God as your healer, it would help if you should just go down to Dr. Cullis' cottage and get him to pray with you." I listened to it for a moment without really thinking. The next, a blow seemed to strike my brain, which made me reel for a moment as a man stunned. I staggered and cried: "Lord, what have I done?" I felt I was in some great peril. In a moment the thought came very quickly, "That would have been all right before this, but you have just settled this matter forever, and told God you will never doubt that it is done."

I saw it like a flash of lightning, and in that moment I understood what faith meant, and what a solemn and awful thing it was inexorably and exactly to keep faith with God. I have often thanked God for that blow. I saw that when a thing was settled with God, it was never to be unsettled. When it was done, it was never to be undone or done over again in any sense that could involve a doubt of the finality of the committal already made. I think in the early days of the work of faith to which God afterwards called me, I was as much helped by A HOLY FEAR OF DOUBTING GOD as by any of the joys and raptures of His presence or promises. This little word often shone like a living fire in my Bible: “IF ANY MAN DRAW BACK, MY SOUL SHALL HAVE NO PLEASURE IN HIM.” What the enemy desired was to get some element of doubt about the certainty and completeness of the transaction just closed, and God mercifully held me back from it.

The next day I started to the mountains of New Hampshire. The next test came on the following Sabbath, just two days after I had claimed my healing. I was invited to preach in the Congregational Church. I felt the Holy Spirit pressing me to give a special testimony. But I tried to preach a good sermon of my own choosing. It was about the Holy Ghost, and had often been blessed, but it was not His word for that hour, I am sure.

He wanted me to tell the people what He had been showing me. But I tried to be conventional and respectable, and I had an awful time. My jaws seemed like lumps of lead, and my lips would scarcely move. I got through as soon as I could, and fled into an adjoining field, where I lay before the Lord and asked Him to show me what my burden meant and to forgive me. He did most graciously, and let me have one more chance to testify for Him and glorify Him.

That night we had a service in our hotel, and I was permitted to speak again. This time I did tell what God had been doing. Not very much did I say, but I tried to be faithful in a stammering way, and told the people how I had lately seen the Lord Jesus and His blessed Gospel in a deeper fullness, as the Healer of the body, and had taken him for myself, and knew that He would be faithful and sufficient. God did not ask me to testify of my feelings or experiences, but of Jesus and His faithfulness. And I am sure He calls all who trust Him to testify before they experience His full blessing. I believe I should have lost my healing if I had waited until I felt it.

I have since known hundreds to fail just at this point. God made me commit myself to Him and His healing covenant, before He would fully bless me. I know a dear brother in the ministry, now much used in the Gospel and in the Gospel of Healing, who received a wonderful manifestation of God's power in his body and then went home to his church but said nothing about it, and waited to see how it all held out. In a few weeks he was worse than ever, and when I met him next time he wore the most dejected face you could imagine. I told him his error, and it all flashed upon him immediately. He went home and GAVE GOD THE GLORY for what He had done, and in a little while his church was the center of a blessed work of grace and healing that reached far and wide and he himself was rejoicing in the fullness of Jesus.

I am very sure that Sabbath evening testimony did me more good than anybody else, and I believe that if I had withheld it I should not now be writing the pages of the Gospel of Healing. Well, the next day the third test came.

Nearby was a mountain 3,000 feet high — I was asked to join a little party that were to ascend it. I shrank back at once. Did I not remember the dread of heights that had always overshadowed me, and the terror with which I had resolved in

Switzerland and Florence never to attempt it again? Did I not know how an ordinary stair exhausted me and distressed my poor heart?

Then came the solemn searching thought, “If you fear or refuse to go, it is because you do not believe that God has healed you. If you have taken Him for your strength, need you fear to do anything to which He calls you?”

I felt it was God’s thought. I felt my fear would be, in this case, pure unbelief, and I told God that in His strength I would go.

Just here I would say that I do not wish to imply that we should ever do things just to show how strong we are, or without any real necessity for them. I do not believe that God wants His children needlessly to climb mountains or walk miles just because they are asked to. But in this case, and there are such cases in every experience, I needed to step out and claim my victory sometime, and this was God’s time and way. He will call and show each one for themselves. And whenever we are shrinking through fear He will be very likely to call us to the very thing that is necessary for us to do to overcome the fear.

And so I ascended that mountain. At first it seemed as if it would almost take my last breath. I felt all the old weakness and physical dread; I found I had in myself no more strength than ever. But over against my weakness and suffering I became conscious that there was another Presence. There was a Divine strength reached out to me if I would have it, take it, claim it, hold it, and persevere in it. On one side there seemed to press upon me a weight of Death, on the other an Infinite Life. And I became overwhelmed with the one, or uplifted with the other, just as I shrank or pressed forward, just as I feared or trusted; I seemed to walk between them and the one that I touched possessed me. The wolf and the Shepherd walked on either side, but the Blessed Shepherd did not let me turn away. I pressed closer, closer, closer, to His bosom and every step seemed

stronger until when I reached that mountain top, I seemed to be at the gate of Heaven, and the world of weakness and fear was lying at my feet. Thank God, from that time I have had a new heart in this breast, literally as well as spiritually, and Christ has been its glorious life.

A few weeks later I returned to my work in this city, and with deep gratitude to God I can truly say, hundreds being my witnesses, that for nearly seven years I have been permitted to labor for the dear Lord in summer's heat or winter's cold without interruption, without a single season of protracted rest, and with increasing comfort, strength and delight. Life has had for me a zest, and labor an exhilaration that I never knew in the freshest days of my childhood.

The Lord has permitted the test to be a very severe one. A few months after my healing He called me into the special pastoral, evangelistic and literary work which has since engaged my time and energy, and which I may truthfully say has involved fourfold more labor than any previous period of my life. Besides the evangelistic and pastoral work of my church, involving most of this time, several sermons every week, there have been the following additional labors: the entire editorial charge and much of the writing of a monthly magazine; the preparation of several tracts and volumes; the personal supervision of the entire publishing work and the responsibility for a large correspondence; the oversight of Berachah Home, with the reception every week of many callers and inquirers, and several meetings there; one or two lectures daily during seven months in the year at the Missionary Training College, requiring the most elaborate and careful thought; and many meetings and conventions in various places with God's dear children. Much of this work has had to be done at night, and through long protracted exertion covering often from twelve to sixteen or even eighteen hours of labor in the twenty-four. And yet I desire to record my testimony to the honor and glory of Christ, that it has been a continual delight and seldom any burden or fatigue, and much, very much easier in every way than the far lighter tasks of former years.

I have been conscious, however, all the time that I was not using my own natural strength. Physically I do not think I am any more robust than ever. I would not dare to attempt for a single week what I am now doing on my own constitutional resources. I am intensely conscious with every breath, that I am drawing my vitality from a directly supernatural source, and that it keeps pace with the calls and necessities of my work. Hence, on a day of double labor I will often be conscious at the close of double vigor, and feel just like beginning over again, and indeed almost reluctant to have even sleep place its gentle arrest on the delightful privilege of service. Nor is this a paroxysm of excitement to be followed by a reaction, for the next day comes with equal freshness, and all this has gone on for nearly seven years, and they following close on a worn out constitution, and twenty years of suffering.

I have noticed this, that my work is easier and seems to draw less upon my vital energy than before. I do not seem to be using up my own life in the work now, but working on a surplusage of vitality supplied by another source. I believe and am sure that is nothing else than “the life of Christ manifested in my mortal flesh.” Once or twice since I took the Lord for my strength I have felt so wondrously well that I think I began to rejoice and trust in the God-given strength. In a moment I felt it was about to fail me, and the Lord instantly compelled me to look to HIM, as my continual strength, and not even depend upon the strength He had already given.

I have found many other dear friends compelled to learn this lesson and suffering until they fully learned it. It is a life of constant dependence on Christ physically as well as spiritually. One night, especially, I remember returning from a distant city and finding at a late hour several hours of night work on my desk that it seemed necessary to do before morning. In myself I felt at the moment physically unable to do it, and heart and brain both seemed to tremble at the sight. But I looked to God and became fully assured that it was His Work and

His Will that I should do it then. I took up my pen, and in a few hours it was joyfully finished, and when it was done, instead of being exhausted I was fresher than when I rose in the morning and ready to lie down with tranquil nerves and sleep as peacefully as a child.

I know not how to account for this, unless it be the imparted life of the dear Lord Jesus in my body. I am surely most unworthy of such an honor and privilege, but I believe He is pleased in His great condescension to unite Himself with our bodies, and I am persuaded that His body, which is perfectly human and real, can somehow share its vital elements with our organic life, and quicken us from His Living Heart and indwelling Spirit.

I have learned much from the fact that Samson's physical strength was through "the Spirit of the Lord," and that Paul declares that although daily delivered to death for Jesus' sake, yet the very life of Christ is made manifest in his body. I find that "the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body," that "our bodies are members of Christ," and that "we are members of His body, His flesh and His bones. I do not desire to provoke argument, but I give my simple, humble testimony and to me it is very real and very wonderful. I know "it is the Lord." I know many of my brethren who have entered into the same blessed experience. I only want to consecrate and use it more and more for Him. I feel what a sacred and holy trust it is. And I so wish that my weary, broken-down and overladen brethren could but taste its exquisite joy and its all-sufficient strength.

I would like to add, for my brethren in the ministry, that I have found the same Divine help for my mind and brain as for my body. Having much writing and speaking to do, I have given my pen and my tongue to Christ to possess and use, and He has so helped me that my literary work has never been a labor. He has enabled me to think much more rapidly and to accomplish much more work, and with greater facility than ever before. It is very simple and humble work, but

such as it is it is all through Him, and I trust for Him only. And I believe, with all its simplicity, it has been more used to help His children and glorify His name than all the elaborate preparation and toil of the weary years that went before. TO HIM BE ALL THE PRAISE.

Chapter 7: TESTIMONY OF THE WORK

I desire to add a few words about the origin of the work in connection with Divine Healing in this city, and some of the cases that I have known.

As I have already stated in the former chapter, one of the pledges I made to the Lord in connection with my own healing was that I would use this truth and my experience of it for the good of others, as He should require and lead me.

This meant a good deal for me, for I had a great deal of conservative respectability and regard for my ecclesiastical reputation to die to. I knew intuitively what it might cost to be wholly true in this matter, and at the same time I shrank unutterably from the thought of having to pray with any one else for healing. I feared so much that I should involve God's name in dishonor by claiming what might not come to pass, and I almost hoped that I might not have to minister personally in this matter, and was intensely glad that there were other brethren whom God had already raised up for this work and I should gladly strengthen their hands.

My first public testimony to the truth in this city, made in the course of a sermon to my own people, then a Presbyterian Church in New York, awakened little or no opposition. A few weeks later I was asked to speak at the Anniversary of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting, the day of President Garfield's funeral. The Lord led me to speak frankly, and refer to the true scriptural method of prayer for the healing of the sick directly in the name of the Lord Jesus. At the close of my address there was but one to give me a word of response, and that was a good old

Presiding Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who has since gone to his rest. He thanked me very cordially and said he believed every word I had said.

Soon after the test came in my own family. My little girl became suddenly very ill with diphtheria. Her mother, not then believing at all as I did insisted upon having a physician, and was much distressed when I simply took the little one to God and claimed her healing in the name of the Lord Jesus. That night, with a throat as white as snow and a raging fever the little sufferer lay beside me alone. I knew that if the sickness lasted to the following day there would be crisis in my family, and I should be held responsible. The dear Lord knew it, too. With trembling hand I anointed the brow, it was the first or second person I ever anointed and claimed the power of Jesus' name. About midnight my heart was deeply burdened. I cried to God for speedy deliverance. In the morning her throat was well, and the mother, as she came to see the sick one, gave me one look, when she saw the ulcers gone and the child ready to get up and go about her play, which I shall never forget. From that hour I was never again asked to get a physician in my home. And God has wondrously cared for the little ones. They have hardly known sickness, and as often as it has come, the Lord has Himself removed it, except where some lesson was to be learned, and then the place of the true penitence has always brought restoration and deliverance.

About this time, the Lord led me to commence the special work of faith which has since engaged my life. This was not by any means to teach Divine healing, but to preach the Gospel to the neglected masses by public evangelistic and free services. For several years no single word about bodily healing was spoken in these meetings, our supreme object being to lead men to Christ, and not prejudice them by any side issues. But the facts about my own healing and the healing of my child got abroad quietly about my little flock, and one and another came to me to ask about it, and whether they could not be healed also. I told them they could if they would believe, as I had done, and I sent them to their homes to read God's Word for themselves and ponder and pray.

The first of them was a dear sister, then widely known in Christian work, who afterwards became a deaconess in our home. She had been for twenty years a sufferer from heart disease. She took about a month to weigh the matter, and then in her calm, decided way came to have her case presented to God. She was instantly healed, and for several years worked untiringly, and hardly knew what weariness even meant. At length she finished her work and fell asleep, amid great peace and blessing.

One and another now began to come and ask about it, and, at length, the Friday meeting grew up as a place and time where all who were interested in this special theme could come together and be instructed and strengthen each other by mutual testimony. This meeting has since grown to be a gathering of several hundred people from all the evangelical churches and many different homes.

The cases of healing that have come under my notice in these years would fill many volumes. They have represented all social extremes, all religious opinions, all professions and callings, and all classes of disease. I have had spiritualists come, broken down at length by the service of Satan and seeking deliverance from their sufferings — but I have never felt free even to pray with such cases without a complete renunciation of this terrific snare. I have had some sad and shameful disclosures of its evils. I have had Roman Catholics also come as if they were consulting some superstitious rite. And sometimes when they have been patiently instructed and led to the true Savior, I have seen them healed. I have had men come and offer large sums if they or their dear ones could be prayed well, but I have never dared to touch such cases except to send them directly to Christ, and tell them that at His feet only, in true penitence and trust could they expect deliverance.

I have had poor sinners come seeking healing, and go having found salvation. Many persons have been led to Christ through their desire to escape disease. I have never felt that I could claim the healing of any one until they first accepted Jesus as a Savior. But I have several times seen the soul saved and the body healed in the same hour. I have never allowed any one to look to me as a healer, and have had no liberty to pray for anyone while they placed the least trust in either me or my prayers, or aught but the merits, promises and intercessions of Christ alone.

My most important work has usually been to get myself and my shadow out of people's way, and set Jesus fully in their view. I have seen very humble and illiterate Christians suddenly and gloriously healed and baptized with the most wonderful faith, and I have seen brilliant intellects and Christians who had great reputations unable to touch even the border of His garment. Usually they could not get low down enough to do this. I saw a brilliant physician once rise in the meeting and make a learned speech about it, and I saw a humble girl who when I first met her did not seem to have capacity enough to grasp the idea, healed by his side of the worst stage of consumption, and her shortened limb lengthened two inches in a moment. I have seen this blessed gift of Christ bring relief and unspeakable blessing to the homes of many of the poor, and take from worn and weary working women a bondage like Egypt's iron furnace. And I have also seen it enter the homes of many of the refined, the cultivated, and the wealthy who have not been ashamed to witness a good confession and bear a noble testimony to Christ as a complete Savior. I have seen the theologian often answered after his most logical assaults upon it, by the healing of some of his own people in a way he could not answer or explain. Sometimes I have taken one of these simple cases to a boasting infidel and asked her to tell him her simple story, and he has been overwhelmed, silenced and sometimes departed deeply impressed. One of the most brilliant lawyers in this city told me that he was fully convinced of the truth of Christianity quite recently by the healing of our good friend, John Elsey, and the consecrated life that has followed it. Often

have I had women of the world broken down under deep conviction of sin, and brought to seek a deep and true religious life by the real and simple testimonies of the Friday meeting. I have seen many beloved ministers accept the Lord Jesus in His fullness for soul and body, and some of the most devoted and distinguished servants of Christ in this city are proud to own Him as their Healer.

But I have also noticed that the ecclesiastical strait-jacket is the hardest fetter of all, and the fear of conservative and ecclesiastical opinion the most inexorable of all bondage. Not a few beloved physicians of the highest standing have taken Jesus as their Healer and when their patients are prepared for it, love to lead them to His care. Several of these can be seen at our Friday meeting, and many of them are to be met within other cities. Many of the most consecrated Christian workers and city missionaries have found this precious truth, and some have had a bitter ordeal of prejudice and opposition to face in their churches and societies, but where they have been wise, true and faithful God has vindicated them in the end.

I have found that the most spiritually minded men and women in the various churches are usually led to see and receive this truth. WHEN CHRIST BECOMES AN INDWELLING AND PERSONAL REALITY IN THE SOUL, IT IS HARD TO KEEP HIM OUT OF THE BODY. I have not found any serious practical difficulty in dealing with the question of remedies. Where one sets any value upon them or is not himself clearly led of the Lord to abandon them, I never have advised him to do so. There is no use in giving up remedies without a real faith in Christ. And where one really commits his case to Christ and believes that he has undertaken it, he does not want, as a rule, to have any other hand touch it, or indeed see that anything else is necessary. Where persons have real faith in Christ’s supernatural help they will not want remedies. And where they have not this faith, I have never dared to hinder them from having the best help they can obtain.

I have never felt called to urge any one to accept Divine Healing. I have found it better to present the truth and let God lead them. Often when urging them most strongly not to attempt it unless they were fully persuaded, the effect has been to impel them to it more strongly and to show that they had real faith. I have never felt that Divine Healing should be regarded as the Gospel. It is part of it, but we labor much more assiduously for the salvation and sanctification of the souls of men. The secular press, with its love of the sensational, has tried to present this doctrine as a special hobby on the part of some of us, but in reality we have but one public service in the week for this, and seven for spiritual instruction and blessing.

The cases of healing have been very various. One of the most remarkable in the early days was a woman who had not bent her joints for eight years, and used to stand in our meetings on her crutches, unable to sit down during the whole service. She had not sat for eight years. She was healed in a moment, as if by the touch of a feather, and all in the house were filled with wonder. Another was cured of spinal curvature. A great many have been delivered from fibroid tumors; and a few cases from malignant and incurable cancers. We have had two cases of broken bones restored without surgical aid. Many cases of the worst forms of heart disease, several of consumption, and some desperate cases of hernia, when it would have been death to walk forth as they did if Christ had not sustained. Paralysis and softening of the brain, epilepsy and St. Vitus' dance, have all been markedly cured, and a few cases of dangerous insanity have also been restored through believing prayer. The numbers of such cases will reach to thousands. To give even a few in detail would be impossible.

That which has been our chief joy is that the fruits are so blessed and glorious in the consecrated lives that have thus been redeemed from destruction and given to the work of God and the needs of men. One of the dear ones is in charge of a mission where hundreds are led to Christ. Another, refused by her Board on account of illness, was healed by the Lord and is now again in India with her

husband, preaching Christ to the heathen. Some are in Japan, some in Africa, some in South America, some in England, and many in the streets and lanes of the city, and in the most earnest work of the land. God be thanked for the blessings they have received, and the blessings they have become.

During these years God has opened our Berachah home and allowed us to meet hundreds of His dear children within its walls, and see them go forth in strength and blessing. Other homes are scattered over this and other lands, and already a great multitude in this and other lands are joining hands and singing together as they journey home.

“Bless the Lord, 0 my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Bless the Lord, 0 my soul, and all that is within me bless His Holy name, who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagles.”

Appendix: CHRISTIAN SCIENCE, SO-CALLED.

Many persons strangely confound this strange anti-Christian error with Divine Healing, and many who ought to know better are insiduously drawn into its snare by the numerous superficial tracts and publications which it circulates, making no reference to its real teachings and infidel philosophy and containing only a few simple and seemingly harmless directions about ignoring symptoms, etc. We therefore add from our own and other volumes a few careful statements of its real character, with direct quotations from its own standard authorities This philosophy denies that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. It denies the reality of Christ's body; therefore, it is anti-Christian in its teaching. This is not divine healing. There is no fellowship between the two. It is one of the delusions of science, falsely so called. It would undermine Christianity. It is the most fatal infidelity. It does away entirely with the atonement, for as there is no sin there can be no redemption. I would rather be sick all my life with every form of physical torment, than be healed by such a lie.

Much of it is vague and confusing, but wherever doctrines and principles are clearly stated, they are utterly antagonistic to the Scriptures. It is a little like Buddhism, as has been said by some one before but much like English Deism and Idealism, combined with German Pantheism. It denies explicitly the existence of matter, the creation of the material universe by God, the atonement of Jesus Christ, and the distinctive doctrines of -the Christian system. It propounds a series of principles, some of which we quote from Mrs. Edey's standard book:

PLATFORM OF CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS.

1. That there is neither a personal Deity, a personal Devil, nor a personal man.

2. That God is Principle and not person, Mind and not Matter : that this principle is what the Scripture declares it, namely, Life, Truth and Love.

3. That God, which is the perfect Mind or Principle, including the perfect idea, is all that is real or eternal.

5. That Spirit is the only substance, even “the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.” The spiritual and eternal are substance, whereas the material and temporal are not substance.

10. That man was and is the idea of God, the conception of Mind; that this idea was co-existent and co-eternal with Mind; hence, that man was forever In Mind, but Mind was never in man. There was never a material idea or personal man. All is mind, there is no matter; all is harmony, there is no discord; all is Life, there is no death; all is good, there is no evil; all is God and His idea.

11. That Science decides matter or the mortal body to be nothing but a belief and an illusion. If you besiege sickness, sin or death with this scientific understanding of being, you will learn that our statement of God and man is true, and the opposite statement of them is the error and discord that Truth casts out. . . . As the mythology of Pagan Rome has yielded to a more spiritual idea of Deity, so shall our material theology or doctrinal religions yield to a more spiritual idea of God than a material man presents, until all materiality shall disappear in thought, and the finite give place to the infinite, and the impersonal,

unlimited and unerring idea, and the impersonal, limitless or infinite Principle of this idea shall appear, and “Thy kingdom have been on earth as it is in Heaven.”

13. There is but one Spirit or God, hence there are no spirits or gods, and no evil spirit, because Spirit is God. A personal God, a personal man, a personal devil, and evil and good spirits, are theological mythoplasm, mere beliefs that must finally yield to the opposite science of God and man.

18. That Life; Truth and Love are the Trinity, or Triune Principle, the three in one, the same in action and entity, and these are the one God. That the Holy Ghost is divine science, revealing and explaining this triune principle, and leading into all Truth; that Christ is but another term for God, and Jesus was the name of a man. The conception of Jesus was spiritual. The spirituality of Mary was the transparency through which immortal Mind was reflected in that better likeness of Truth and Love, the good and pure Jesus. Into Mary’s idea of God and conception of man, the male, or sensual element of thought entered not to taint the idea; thus it was that Jesus became the mediating or intervening idea between Truth and error, of soul and sense, which opposed not God, that healed the sick, dispelled the illusions of sense, or the belief of Life and Intelligence in matter, and revealed the impersonal Truth, namely, that soul and God are one, and the “I” or the Father.

19. That our church is built on Christ, not a person, but the Principle that Christ said “is the Way, the Truth, and the Life;” that Christian Science is the Way, and its foundations are eternal.’”

Dr. Gordon, of Boston, thus sums up its teachings: Christian Science calls itself “the understanding of God,” which is simply the translation of the Greek word “theosophy.” One of the fundamental axioms of theosophy is set forth in the following sentence: “There is no personal devil. That which is mystically called

the devil is the negative and opposite of God. And whereas God is I AM, or positive Being, the devil is not." Its platform opens with the astounding declaration "that there is neither a personal Deity, a personal devil, nor a personal man."

Beyond its palpable contradictions of the Word of God, we must confess also the shock which it gives to our reverence to hear Jesus constantly spoken of as a metaphysician and demonstrator of Christian Science—"the most scientific Man that ever trod the globe;" to be told that the cause of His agony in the garden was that He was touched with "the utter error of a belief of life in matter;" that on the cross He was giving this world "an example and proof of Divine science;" that His Christianity "destroyed sin, sickness and death, because it was metaphysics and personal sense, bore the cross and reached the right hand of a perfect Principle."

It will hardly be necessary, after what has been said, to distinguish "Christian Science" from the "prayer of faith," which is said in the Scripture to "save the sick." No one who believes this promise or makes use of it, has ever, so far as we know, considered that its fulfillment depends on the action of mind upon mind. All who credit "faith cures," as they are sometimes called, hold that they are the result of God's direct and supernatural action upon the body of the sufferer. "Christian Science" pointedly denies the efficacy of prayer for the recovery of the sick. It says:

"Asking God to heal the sick has no effect to gain the ear of love, beyond its ever presence. The only beneficial effect it has is mind acting on the body through a stronger faith to heal it; but this is one belief casting out another-a belief in a personal God casting out a belief in sickness, and not giving the understanding of the principle that heals"- Science and Health, It., 171.

Here the antagonism between two things that differ is so marked that we only aced call attention to it.

Rev. Green Wood, of Chicago, adds these forcible words: “The chief cornerstone of science is the following postulate: That the immortal basis of Life is soul, not body, Life, not death,” i.e. the immortal basis of Life is Life, or Life is its own basis. But enough. This seems very like a mouse racing around in a peck measure in pursuit of his own tail. Is not this the baseless fabric of a vision?

Is not this the necromancy for resort to which Saul, King of Israel, lost his Kingdom and his life, and the penalty for which, under the Theocracy, was death? Is not this the Gnostic mysticism of the first century which claimed that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was a myth, or as now set forth, an idea? To meet this Gnostic mysticism, John wrote his first epistle, wherein he sets forth, by Divine authority, that the man Jesus was not a myth, not an “idea,” but a veritable person-a real man. See I. John iv., 2, 3: Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God. And this is that spirit of Antichrist whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is in the world. Chap. v., 1: Jesus is the Son of God. “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” At the last, false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall show signs and wonders to seduce if possible even the elect. But take ye heed. Behold I have foretold you all things. Let all beware, lest following after this ignis fatuus they thereby prove themselves to be not of the elect, but the dupes of Buddhism and Gnostic mysticism insidiously palmed off upon Christian America in this nineteenth century under the guise of “Christian Science “!

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