

SICKNESS AND SAINTHOOD – WHY AREN'T YOU HEALED YET?

January 21, 2017 from Pastor Tim White to the congregation of Tri-County Christian Center:

Let me add a note here: These times - of sickness - can produce a "tension" among us who believe in a God who heals. We can begin to feel like a failure as Spirit-filled believers because we are not instantly healed - or because we even got sick at all! (I would add that this "tension", or thinking is completely absent in the teachings of the N.T.)! There are plenty of teachers today who declare that because of their great revelation of faith they haven't been sick in many years! - However, when these teachers have had an honest examination of their actual health history, it is really quite different. (I could give examples).

The Bible never promises a life free from all sickness and disease - in the same way that it also does not promise us freedom from any trials, hardships or having to "walk through the valley of the shadow of death". Nor does the Bible even use one's "health record" as a mark of true spirituality! (*See my note at the end for additional remarks on this point*). So, why do we do so?

What the Bible DOES promise us is that None of these will defeat us, conquer us, or separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Rom 8)! We are "MORE THAN Conquerors" through Christ! Our Heavenly Father ALSO promises that, regardless the sickness or trial, He will lead us through them all! We live in a world that has been corrupted from its original perfect state by sin (Rom 8:19-22), and therefore we cannot completely escape being impacted by this corruption. The Good News is that Jesus IS our healer, deliverer and Lord over all things!

We also hear some Christians blaming the devil for their sickness in one way or another. That may be true (Job 1 & 2), but it may be just the corruption (viruses, diseases, etc) in the world. So those who are quick to blame the devil, begin to go about rebuking the devil, when what they may really need is to get rest and plenty of liquids - and prayer! The devil's bigger and more consistent role in these times is to confuse us with lies and false guilt that get us engaged in things that just lead us down "spiritual dead ends", chasing demons under rocks, and bringing confusion (like, "Why wasn't he/she healed, now? Who sinned, he or is parents?").

Consider these scriptures: The great prophet Elisha died of an illness (2 Kings 13:14); The Apostle of miracle, signs and wonders, the Apostle Paul experienced serious sickness himself (Gal 4:13-15) - and note that he commends the Galatian believers for not scorning him for his illness; Paul's fellow faithful worker, Epaphroditus became ill and almost died (Php 2:27); and even more "challenging" for us is to read in 2 Tim 4:20 that Paul, who had even raised the dead, left another fellow worker, Trophimus, behind - still sick - in Miletus!

I realize some may take issue with me as if I am somehow dampening the faith of others to believe for miracles and healing. If you know me, then you know that is not true. My desire

to help us all to "rightly handle the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15) so that we may become "mature" and "grow up" together as one body in Christ and "all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God" (Eph 4:13).

Love to you all for your prayers and concern!

Pastor Tim

P.S. - Making healthier choices in our diets and exercise is equally important in our health and strength in resisting sicknesses! Maybe some of us need to examine what we are eating and how it is impacting our overall health!

Additional note: There was a mentality in that day that sickness, deformity, etc. was a direct evidence of God's displeasure with, or even punishment of an individual for sin of some kind. It was found among the Pharisees – the religious leaders of the day. In John 9 the disciples see a man whom they discover to have been blind since birth, and so they ask Jesus: vs. 2 "*Who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?*" Their words reflect this religious belief in that day regarding the source and reason for sickness, disease, and such. Jesus, of course, corrects their false belief system and says: vs. 3 "*Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.*" In other words, ALL forms of sickness, disease, deformity, handicap, etc. become potential opportunities for God to be glorified by the demonstration of his mighty power. The particulars of when, where and how are not known. This man had to live well into adulthood with his blindness before he was healed – and God was glorified.

Read through the rest of the chapter – it is quite enjoyable to see how this man who is healed puts the hypocritical religious leaders in their place – and pay attention to the final rebuke from these leaders to this man. This is what they said: vs. 34 *To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.* Did you see that? – These leaders knew nothing about him except that he was blind at birth, and for them that was all they needed to know to accuse him of being "steeped in sin at birth" (which is hard to imagine how an infant could be so guilty of so much sin – even while being formed in the womb so that he eyes never developed properly!)

Faith in God and trust in His promises is always central to any healing (Matt 9:22), and doubt and unbelief will also be barriers to healing (Matt 21:21). But since we cannot fully know what is in a person's heart we need to be careful to not act like the Pharisees and rush to judge someone's spirituality based on their poor health conditions that linger longer than we think they should.