



## Sample Chapter...Christ's Healing Work in Our Past

*“Lord, you alone can heal me, you  
alone can save, and my praises are  
for you alone.”*

*Jeremiah 17:14 LB*

Jesus Christ came to live among us to share our weaknesses, to show us how much His Father loves us and to lead us to abundant living. So it is important that we offer Him whatever is troubling us, for God has made a most remarkable provision for us.

1. What did Isaiah prophesy about the death of Jesus?

**Isaiah 53:4-6** \_\_\_\_\_

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Isaiah's prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah contains two promises: Jesus will release us from the bondage of sin and He will heal us from sickness. We see this two-fold concern about sin and sickness in the earthly ministry of Jesus. He called people to salvation, and He offered them healing. It was part of the reconciling and restoring work of God, which is the work of salvation.

Ever since the Garden of Eden, Satan has been seducing humankind into bondage. We have fallen into sin, sickness and suffering. The power of evil and sin affects us emotionally, physically and spiritually. If we are suffering emotionally, it will affect us physically and spiritually and vice versa. Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are set free from the bondage Satan brings. The apostle John wrote that the reason the Son of God came was to destroy the works of the devil.<sup>1[1]</sup> And Jesus clearly referred to the influence of evil when He healed a crippled woman. He said, "Should not this woman . . . whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free from what bound her?"<sup>2[2]</sup>

Jesus died on the cross in order to bring us freedom and healing. If we do not offer Him our suffering, in some measure He died in vain for us. It is tragic that among Christians there isn't more acceptance that Jesus heals today as He did centuries ago. Part of the problem may be because we lack understanding of His healing work.

The healing miracles of Jesus revealed the will and purpose of God. Jesus said, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."<sup>3[3]</sup> It is God's will and purpose that we be freed from suffering and sickness.

Christ's power to heal was also evidence that He was the promised Messiah. When John the Baptist inquired if Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor."<sup>4[4]</sup> When Jesus healed a paralyzed man, He also demonstrated His authority to forgive sins, which was another sign of the long-awaited Messiah.<sup>5[5]</sup>

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1[1] | John 3:8

2[2] | Luke 13:16

3[3] | John 4:34

4[4] | Matthew 11:4-6

5[5] | Mark 2:4-12

Most importantly, Jesus healed the sick in order to bring people to faith in God. Jesus said, "Do you believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? But if you cannot; then believe me because of what you see me do."<sup>6[6]</sup>

Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah and Healer. The fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy was recorded by Peter.<sup>7[7]</sup> But healing does not come to us automatically because we are Christians. It is when we acknowledge our suffering and give it to Christ that He can help us. Then we have a responsibility to participate actively with Him in the process of our healing.

## **We Are to Acknowledge Our Need**

Most of us pray about the symptoms in our lives. We think that if we are freed from troublesome circumstances that all will be well. But often there is a pattern of harmful behavior which points to a root cause that needs to be healed.

We begin by acknowledging our symptoms and our need for healing of the root of the problem.

- 2.** Read **Mark 10:46-52**. What did Jesus ask from a person who needed healing?

**verse 51** \_\_\_\_\_  
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<sup>6[6]</sup> John 14:11 Phillips

<sup>7[7]</sup> I Peter 2:24

- 3.** Read **John 5:2-9**. Jesus respects our personal freedom. What did He ask when He met someone in need of healing?

verse

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Why was this an important question?

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From the Biblical accounts of the healing miracles, we learn that Jesus usually waited to be asked before He healed someone. I believe there are two reasons for this. First, Jesus does not force healing upon us. There are some of us who really don't want to be healed. Initially, this may not be apparent but, if we are honest with ourselves, a few of us would have to admit that we think there is some advantage to staying the way we are. We may be getting our own way and/or escaping from responsibilities. If this is true, even though we study and pray about our problems, our healing will probably not occur.

***Question for private reflection:***

*Have you been hesitant to seek healing for yourself or for your loved ones because you are afraid you might have to give up something or you might have to change?*

The second reason Jesus waits to be asked before He heals us may be that He wants our healing to be a learning process. If healing was given to us automatically without our asking, we would take it for granted and not learn from it. We are to learn that healing is the will of God for us. He uses the medical profession to help as well as dealing directly with us. It is His desire that we live whole and healthy lives -- physically, emotionally and spiritually. The Hebrew and Greek words for salvation describe wholeness and health. When we know God wants to heal us, we can pray specifically. When healing comes, we will know beyond a shadow of a doubt Who it was that healed us.

We have a second responsibility in the process of our healing:

## **We Are to Have Faith**

When Jesus spoke with people in need of healing, it was clear that faith was necessary.

**4.** What did Jesus ask those who wanted healing? What did He tell them as He healed them?

**Matthew 9:27-29** \_\_\_\_\_

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If faith is our responsibility, then it is important for us to know how to have faith.

**5.** What is faith? **Hebrews 11:1**

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How do we have faith? **Romans 10:17**

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**Personal  
Application**

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What happened to Jesus when faith was not present?

**Matthew 13:57-58** \_\_\_\_\_

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What did Jesus say about the kind of faith that is necessary?

**Matthew 17:20** \_\_\_\_\_

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***Question for private reflection:***

*Do you have a strong desire to grow in your faith or do you take it for granted that your faith will grow?*

**6.** How does Jesus teach us to pray for ourselves and for others?

**Mark 11:22-24** \_\_\_\_\_

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**7.** What are some of the promises regarding healing found in the Scriptures?

**Psalm 107:19-20** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Psalm 147:3** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Isaiah 57:18** \_\_\_\_\_

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God's promises become real to us through praying in faith. Because we know what is available to us, we can take the initiative in asking Him to meet our needs and we can

pray with confidence. God may not help us in the way we expect, but we can count on His faithfulness to bless us.

Faith in Jesus Christ is also necessary to enjoy close fellowship with God. Many people have only an intellectual acceptance of Jesus as the Son of God. The Scriptures teach that we are to know Him personally as our Lord and Savior.

- 8.** How does Jesus invite us to have this kind of a relationship with Him?

**Revelation 3:20** \_\_\_\_\_

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Jesus stands knocking on the door of our hearts. He wants us to invite Him in. This is the most important decision we are to make for our life here on earth and our life thereafter.

When we invite Jesus in, He comes with all His healing love. In His promise to come in and eat with us, He is telling us that He will share even the most common activities of our lives. Jesus waits to be invited. We can imagine that the door to our heart has a knob only on our side, for He would never force Himself upon us. He waits for us to open the door. When we do, He comes and dwells with us forever.

- 9.** What else are we to do to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

**Acts 2:38** \_\_\_\_\_

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What gift do we receive? \_\_\_\_\_

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There is only one God, yet there are three persons of the Godhead -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each person of the Holy Trinity plays a special part in the working out of God's divine purpose. God the Father is primarily known as our Creator. God the Son is primarily responsible for our salvation. God the Holy Spirit dwells within to make real to us the blessings of the Father and the Son. All who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are born of the Spirit and the Spirit lives within them. The growth of our new life in Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit.

It is God's purpose that we enjoy abundant life. Our Lord came to provide it. The Holy Spirit enables us to live it. He does this by producing in us the kind of character God wants us to have. And God has promised that He will continue to perform this work in us until it is complete.<sup>8[8]</sup>

We are to invite the work of the Holy Spirit. He may be resident within us, yet we may not be experiencing the fullness of His work. We are to invite His inspiration, counsel and empowerment in order to live above our human limitations. The Holy Spirit helps us in our ignorance and weakness so we will understand and act upon the truth of God and the reality of Jesus Christ.

The following is a suggested prayer for faith and healing:

*Lord Jesus, come into my heart and into my life. I invite you to be my Lord and Savior and, as I confess my past mistakes to you, I thank you that you forgive me for all I have done wrong. I receive the gift of your Holy Spirit to help me live my life. Thank you for taking all of my hurts and sorrows and, by faith in you, I will be healed.*

*I acknowledge my need before you, \_\_\_\_\_*

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*I believe that you will heal me from everything that is harming me and my relationships. I ask that you will give me the faith to remain steadfast in believing in your saving and healing power. I accept your presence in my life with gratitude and praise. I pray in your name, Lord Jesus. Amen*

For those who have previously invited Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior, I suggest the following prayer of commitment.

*Lord Jesus, I thank you that you are my Lord and Savior. I commit my life again to you and thank you for all the blessings you have given me. I surrender to you the things in my life that are harmful.*

*I ask you to heal me of \_\_\_\_\_*

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*I know that you are faithful to your promises, so I praise you now by faith that I will be healed of the harm from my past. All honor and glory are yours forever, Lord Jesus. I pray in your holy name. Amen.*

## ***Personal Reflections***

Much of the earthly ministry of Jesus was spent in healing those in need. He did not seem concerned that it would divert people from His primary message of salvation. He did not tell those He healed that they needed to know there was something more important. He always responded as if healing was an important part of His ministry. Not only was healing important to Jesus but He commissioned His followers to heal.<sup>9[9]</sup> He said to His disciples, “Heal the sick . . . and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God is near you’.”<sup>10[10]</sup> Jesus is eager to heal us so that we will experience the kingdom of God. Remember His words, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”<sup>11[11]</sup>

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9[9] Luke 9:2

10[10] Luke 10:9

11[11] Luke 12:32 RSV

The kingdom of God and the reign of Jesus Christ are outside of time. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ “is the same yesterday, today and forever”.<sup>12[12]</sup> Past, present and future come together in the eternal. For us, our hurtful memories have occurred in the past and we are experiencing physical, emotional and spiritual consequences in the present. But Jesus is not bound by time and His healing will come to our past, our present and our future.

When I was growing up, I enjoyed reading the passages in the Bible recounting the healing miracles of Jesus. But they meant little more to me than being impressed with His power to heal. Now I am confident that His healing is available to us today just as it was in the days of the early church. I am experiencing it in my life and seeing it in countless others.

James wrote that the requirements for healing are the same as when Christ ministered on earth. We are to acknowledge our need and we are to pray in faith. He wrote, “the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well.” We are to take the initiative to pray and to ask that others pray for us.

But many of us don't go to others to tell them we need healing. We don't want to appear weak or needy. Some Christians think they should appear as close to perfect as possible. They think they are letting God and others down if they admit their weaknesses. And most of us want to do things ourselves. We were brought up to be self-reliant. We think if we ask God for healing we are going to have to give up our own ways and depend upon Him. We think this will result in a loss of control. But the opposite is true. Being truly dependent on God will bring feelings of control because God gives us peace, confidence and strength.

Perhaps we are reluctant to seek healing because we think we will miss the advantages of continuing as we are. A friend once asked me about my workaholicism, “What is the payoff for you, Marilyn? There must be one or you wouldn't continue in it.” I sought the Lord's wisdom and realized I was looking for affirmation through my work. I wanted to be needed and to work hard for God. Even though I had been a Christian for many years, deep inside I apparently did not believe that God accepted me without my having to earn His love. If I was convinced of His love, I would not seek the affirmation of people to help me feel worthy.

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<sup>12[12]</sup> Hebrews 13:8

Some of us are afraid bad things will happen to us if we don't keep control of our lives. But fear works against faith. People who fear believe that what they are afraid of is going to happen. People who have faith believe that what God promises is going to happen.

We are not to live in fear. God asks us to practice caution and wisdom. These are the things that keep us from running in front of a car or from abusing drugs. But caution is not fear. Consider these words of Paul to Timothy, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."13[13]

How can we have faith instead of fear?

Faith is the *assurance* of things hoped for, the *conviction* of things not seen. How do we have this assurance, this conviction? Faith grows when we count on God to be faithful to His promises. This is why a knowledge of the Scriptures is so important.

Jesus made it clear that an expectant faith is important. He said, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."14[14] When He taught about prayer, Jesus said we are to believe our prayer is being answered -- believe that we *have* received it, not *might* receive but *have* received.15[15]

Jesus said we need only have faith as small as a grain of mustard seed for us to be blessed. We need only to have a feeling of certainty about His faithfulness in the most minute form. If our faith is small initially, we can ask God to increase it and help us to pray in faith. Remember the man who said to Jesus, "I believe, help my unbelief."16[16] We can confess our unbelief and ask God to grant us greater faith. All the blessings of God's kingdom are available to us through this wonderful gift of faith!

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13[13] II Timothy 1:7 NKJV

14[14] John 20:29

15[15] Mark 11:24

16[16] Mark 9:24