

THE
PLAIN TRUTH
ABOUT
HEALING

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by Herbert W. Armstrong

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Is the day of miracles past? Does the living God heal sickness and disease today upon believing prayer? Or was healing performed only by Christ and the original apostles? Did God raise up medical science for our day? What about modern faith healers and public healing services?

HEALING IN OUR TIME?

You live in a world that relies primarily on medical doctors to treat illness. Most professing Christians today say: "God raised up medical science for our day. Jesus healed to prove He was the Messiah. But the day of miracles is now past." Some, who think God heals through self-professed faith healers, attend public healing shows. Some believe in healing by one of the forms of "mental science"—the power of mind over matter. Others say: "Well, I think God *can* heal—IF it's His will. But how can we know whether it's His will?"

Yes, people say!

But what does GOD say?

Does He reveal whether He still heals, *why* He heals, *how* He heals, *whether* and *when* it is His will? For the answers we go to the Bible.

Christ's Ministry Was Dual

Let's begin at the beginning. Actually, there are *two* beginnings, so far as the subject of healing is concerned—one is in the New Testament, with Christ; the other in the Old Testament, with the people of ancient Israel. We shall begin with the ministry of Jesus. Later, many readers will be surprised to learn how much is recorded on the subject throughout the Old Testament.

More than 1,900 years ago—in A.D. 27-31—Jesus Christ appeared on earth as a messenger bearing history's most

important message from God to mankind. His mission was prophesied in Malachi 3:1.

That message actually was a stupendous NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT. The news was the most transcendent GOOD NEWS! It was the GOSPEL (which means “good news”) of Jesus Christ.

But Jesus’ ministry was a *dual* ministry. And a miraculous ministry.

Jesus came also healing the sick by divine POWER of God. It was not the power of human mind over matter. Few realize the extent to which healing and casting out demons were an integral part of Jesus’ ministry. Later, the apostles proclaimed His same message and healed the sick.

Ministry of Healing Ceases

It comes as an astounding shock to learn that long before the end of the first century, the proclamation of Christ’s gospel to the world and the ministry of physical healing ceased!

But WHY?

Christ’s gospel was the glorious messianic announcement of the coming world-ruling KINGDOM OF GOD. It was the announcement of the wonderful WORLD TOMORROW! It was *not* a message of *doom!*—except for explaining the causes of the doom of this world’s evils, sufferings and unhappiness. It was a joyous announcement of coming world peace, universal happiness and well-being!

But the leaders of the people in Judea misunderstood and resented both that good NEWS and Jesus’ MIRACLES.

Jesus’ miracles were public, but they weren’t healing shows. He simply healed the sick wherever He came to them or they came to Him. But of course the miracles attracted enormous crowds. Many began to believe on Him.

This alarmed the chief priests and the ruling Pharisees. It stirred them to violent persecution. They totally misunderstood Jesus’ *message!* His news announcement was that of the *yet-to-come* Kingdom of God, not—as they supposed—of the overthrow of the Roman government of *their* day.

The Romans, then ruling the Western world, avoided most of the details of government administration in Judea by allowing the Jews to rule themselves at the lower levels.

The Pharisaic rulers loved their position of authority. They viewed Jesus as an anti-Roman agitator proposing to overthrow the Roman rule. They feared being imprisoned as seditious if they sided in any way with Jesus. They plotted to kill Him, and

at God's set time Jesus was crucified, making possible man's reconciliation with God.

Power of the Holy Spirit Given

God miraculously raised Jesus from the dead, making possible eternal life for humanity. On the 50th day (called Pentecost) after His resurrection, the 120 converts of Jesus, including the apostles, received the POWER of the Holy Spirit of God. In that power they proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom of God. In the same divine power from God by which Christ healed, they healed the sick wherever they went.

But, as with Jesus, so now with the apostles: The miracles drew tremendous crowds. Without any pressured solicitations, thousands were converted and baptized. But soon the persecution against them multiplied.

Two years after Jesus' resurrection, A.D. 33, Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8), the Pater (father or Peter) of the Babylonian mystery religion in Samaria, after being rejected by Peter, appropriated the *name* of Christ and applied it to his Babylonian mystery religion, calling it "Christianity." Simon and his followers began systematic opposition and persecution against the true Church of God, founded in A.D. 31 by Jesus Christ. (How the Babylonian mystery religion was moved into Samaria in 718 B.C. is explained in II Kings 17:18-24.)

Gentile and Jewish Opposition

The earliest opposition against Christ's Church was Jewish, opposing the acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah. Judaizers insisted on observing the temporary rituals of Mosaic law. For this reason the early ministry of the apostles put prime emphasis on the replacement of rituals by the Holy Spirit, and on the resurrection, infallible proof of Christ's messiahship.

The apostles were personally with Jesus for 3½ years before His crucifixion and for 40 days after His resurrection—so they were eyewitnesses to the resurrection.

After A.D. 33, as the work of this Simon the Sorcerer spread, the opposition to the true Church became Gentile. The writings of Paul, as well as I and II Peter, of James, of I, II and III John and Jude show the Gentile opposition was primarily aimed against the law of God. Simon appropriated the doctrine of grace from the teaching of the apostles, but it was grace turned into license to disobey (Jude 4).

They preached a false Jesus who, they said, did away with

the basic spiritual law of God. Simon and his followers preached a totally different gospel than the apostles—primarily that of their own Babylonian mystery religion with grace and Christ's name added. Of course they got it to the Galatians.

To the Galatians, Paul wrote: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto *another gospel*" (Galatians 1:6).

To the Corinthians, Paul wrote: "For if he that cometh preacheth *another Jesus . . . or another gospel . . .*" (II Corinthians 11:4). Of these Simon Magus-type preachers, Paul wrote: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if *his ministers* also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness" (verses 13-15).

It was Satan—the former cherub Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-17)—who originally rebelled against the GOVERNMENT OF GOD and caused its removal from the earth. Satan is the god of this world (II Corinthians 4:4). He has his churches and his ministers. *They oppose the law of God.* Therefore they oppose the KINGDOM of God, since it is governed by the laws of God. These apostles of Satan offered the world an easier religion. Obedience was unnecessary.

Dark Age Begins

The opposition of Simon's false church finally snuffed out the proclaiming of the MESSAGE of the KINGDOM OF GOD. Before the end of the first century, the curtain was systematically rung down on *all records* of true Church history.

When the curtain lifts, late in the second century, we behold a "Christianity" utterly unlike that of Christ and His original apostles. Its doctrines, sacraments and customs were those of the Babylonian mystery religion. It persecuted and martyred those true Christians still holding to the teachings and customs of Christ and His apostles. Christ's doctrines and customs were branded as "Jewish." The term "Jewish" became a dirty word—an epithet.

The message God sent to mankind by Jesus Christ—the true gospel Christ preached, *the announcement* of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD—was done away by expediently calling THE CHURCH (Simon's) "the kingdom of God." Some, later, reduced the KINGDOM OF GOD to an ethereal indescribable something "set up in men's hearts."

Thus, through manipulations of “the god of this world,” Satan, by whom ALL NATIONS HAVE BEEN DECEIVED (Revelation 12:9), the true GOSPEL MESSAGE CHRIST BROUGHT was suppressed and not proclaimed to the world after the first century! *And healing the sick as a regular practice had ceased also.*

Thus the DUAL ministry of Christ and the apostles was no part of what the world has accepted as traditional Christianity.

But, persecuted over the centuries, mostly unrecognized by the world, the true and original Church of God has continued through all generations to the present.

In the book of Revelation two churches are described. One, in the 12th chapter, the true and original Church of God, small and persecuted, having to endure hardship, persecution and martyrdom for survival; the other, in the 17th chapter, the great politically popular church, ruling over kings and nations of this world, drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus.

For 18½ centuries Christ’s true gospel—HIS MESSAGE from God of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD—had not been proclaimed to the world. It was only taught to the comparative few—secretly—who kept the Church of God alive through the centuries.

Gospel Restored

The original one and only true Church of God still lives! And still persecuted, maligned, misrepresented, it is restoring the true gospel of Jesus Christ today! *It is sending out that good news worldwide*—as a witness for all nations, in real POWER!

And Christ’s doctrine of healing the sick is also being restored. There have been multiple thousands of miraculous healings. But not, in our time, spectacular public displays of sensational miracles to attract both crowds and added persecutions. The REASONS for this and the truth about the whole subject of healing will be made plain in this booklet.

There have been “gospel” programs—scores of them—all over the world. But, as Paul described, they have each been *another* gospel. Christ’s MESSAGE was suppressed. Christ has been preached to the world—but a *different Jesus*.

But, what about healing the sick today? How is it being restored in God’s Church?

LEARNING TO BELIEVE

We come now to the biblical teaching on the subject of healing. And I can best bring this to the reader by relating my own personal and unusual experience in discovering it.

When I first came among those of the Church of God in 1926 and 1927, they still carried the NAME "Church of God." They knew of the second coming of Christ to reign on earth for a thousand years, though they knew little, or almost nothing, of what would actually take place during that millennial reign.

Back in 1860 the largest number of them had split off, coming to the belief that the millennial reign with Christ would take place in heaven. Leaving the truth they also left the true name.

Although the knowledge of these simple but sincere people regarding the Kingdom of God was very incomplete, they did believe in keeping the commandments of God. They had more biblical truth than any other religious body on earth.

Even though God's Church had endured through the centuries, gradually much of the original truth of the gospel apparently had been lost.

True Knowledge Revealed

Subsequent events have shown that I was being called by the living Christ for a very special end-time commission to raise up the Philadelphia era of God's Church (Revelation 3:7-13), to restore much lost knowledge (Daniel 12:4), to restore the

great commission (Matthew 24:14) and publish (Mark 13:10) His true gospel of the Kingdom of God “in all the world for a witness unto all nations” just before the end of this present world.

We had now reached the final generation of this age—the generation during which Christ will return, setting up the Kingdom of God.

The shock of my life came when I saw *in the Bible*, beginning in the autumn of 1926, that what I had heard as “the gospel” was in most basic respects *the very opposite* of the plain and clear teaching of the real Jesus and of the Bible!

It was an almost unbelievable shock to see in the Bible the prophecy that ALL NATIONS—the world *as a whole*—would be deceived today! It was a tremendous shock to learn the full truth about the Kingdom of God and that God had inspired the apostle Paul to pronounce a double curse on any who would preach any other gospel! (Galatians 1:8-9.)

My eyes were opened to the true gospel described so clearly and unmistakably in the Bible—for those willing to see and believe.

The Calling

And so, as I have written before, I say with the apostle Paul (paraphrasing): “I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which is preached by me is not after *man*. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ But when it pleased God, who . . . called me by His grace, to reveal His Son and His gospel in me, that I might preach it among the descendants of the house of Israel, and the Gentile nations, and kings [Acts 9:15], immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I to any theological seminary or source of religious teaching of this world, but I went to Christ, the living Personal Word of God, who instructed me through the written Word of God, the Holy Bible” (Galatians 1:11-17).

After the first six months’ intensive almost night-and-day study of the Bible, my conversion and baptism occurred in the spring of 1927—but not the cessation of instruction the living Christ was imparting through His written Word. That has continued all through the over 50 years since.

My family and I were living then in Portland, Oregon. As 1927 wore on, intensive Bible study continued. I was rapidly beginning to *grow*, as Peter said Christians must, “in grace,

and in *the knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18). Upon baptism, I had received the Holy Spirit of the living God. My mind had undergone a renewing. I was *thrilled* at this new ability to *understand* God's revealed knowledge. Still I was having to learn a step at a time, a doctrine at a time. The hardest part was having to UNlearn inherited false teachings.

Mrs. Armstrong Stricken

In early August 1927, my wife suddenly was attacked by a series of physical illnesses. First she was bitten on the left leg by a dog. Then immediately she was driven to bed with tonsillitis. She got up too soon and was stricken with a violent relapse. Meanwhile she had contracted blood poisoning from a rose thorn on the index finger of her right hand.

The next two or three days her sister and I took turns night and day soaking her right arm in almost blistering hot Epsom salts water, covering her wrist and forearm with hot towels, holding her right arm constantly high.

The backset from tonsillitis developed into quinsy. Her throat became swollen shut. Her jaws became locked. Of course we had called a doctor.

For three days and three nights she was not only unable to swallow food or water, but worse, she was unable to sleep a single moment. She was nearing exhaustion. The red line of blood poisoning, despite our efforts, was streaking up her right arm. It had reached her shoulder on the way to her heart. The doctor told me privately she could not last another 24 hours.

The third sleepless, foodless and waterless day was a sweltering hot day in early August. Late that morning a neighbor lady stopped in to see my wife.

"Mr. Armstrong," she asked, "would you object if I ask a man and his wife to come and anoint and pray for Mrs. Armstrong's healing?"

That sounded a bit fanatical to me. Too embarrassed to object, however, I said hesitantly, "Well, I suppose not." In two hours she returned, saying they would come at about 7 that evening.

But I began to have misgivings. What if these people were Holy Rollers or wild, shouting fanatics? What would our neighbors say? I went to the neighbor lady and told her I believed we'd better not have them come after all. She was nice. She would start immediately and tell them not to come. I

learned then she would have to walk over a mile each way to contact them. It was now the heat of the day, the hottest day of the year.

“Oh, I’m sorry,” I said. “I didn’t realize you had to walk so far. But I was afraid these people might yell and wail and shout, and cause a neighborhood disturbance.”

“Oh, they are very quiet people,” she assured me. I backed down. “Well, let them come, then,” I concluded.

The Meaning of Faith

They proved to be simple and plain people, not highly educated, yet of good natural intelligence.

“This is all rather new to me,” I began, as soon as they were seated at my wife’s bedside. “Would you mind if I ask a few questions?”

He welcomed the questions. He had a Bible in his hands. One by one he answered every question by reading his answer from the Bible. I recognized every passage he read, but had not put them together this way before. Now I saw them for the first time as teachings, admonitions, explanations and, most important, PROMISES! I began to understand—and *believe!* And I knew well my wife did also.

I knelt with them beside her bed. The man anointed my wife from a vial of oil he carried. Then he uttered a quiet but deeply earnest, positive, believing prayer such as I had never heard before. He actually dared to talk directly to God, quoting what God had said in the Bible, quoting God’s conditions *and promises* and applying those promises to my wife, saying in boldness and confidence that he was claiming and holding God to those promises.

Never had we heard a prayer like that! We knew God in His Word had promised. We believed God. Mrs. Armstrong and I both KNEW she was healed—as this man had claimed—from the top of her head to the bottom of her feet.

As they rose to leave, the woman laid a hand on Mrs. Armstrong’s shoulder and said quietly, “You’ll *sleep* tonight.” I thanked them gratefully.

As they left Mrs. Armstrong asked me to bring her a robe. Without a word, she rose, and arm in arm we walked silently out to the sidewalk and back.

My wife went immediately to sleep and didn’t waken until 11 the next morning. She arose and dressed as if nothing had happened. She was *completely healed*—OF EVERYTHING!

We had learned a new lesson in FAITH! And that experience has resulted in countless thousands of others learning that lesson! We had learned that *we can rely on God's Word!* God's FAITHFULNESS is *perfect*.

A New Subject to Study

That awe-inspiring experience brought before me for study a totally new subject—HEALING—and its accompanying subjects of FAITH and PRAYER.

There was one real disappointment in this whole experience with my wife's healing. I felt extremely grateful to the man and wife who had brought this experience to us. I had learned a rather shocking truth in the Bible: The resurrection of Christ was NOT on Sunday, and the crucifixion was not on Friday. I had written in manuscript form an article on the subject. This man's fervent prayer not only saved my wife's life, it also opened my eyes to a new biblical *truth*. Now I wanted to share with him the eye-opening truth about the resurrection.

I took my typed manuscript along and offered it to him to read, asking his opinion about the truth of it. I left it with him. A few nights later, I called again on this man I looked to as a man of God. I asked if he had read my manuscript.

"Well, yes, Brother," he replied. "I took it to our pastor and we went over it together." He avoided giving an opinion as to its truth.

"But did you find any error in what I wrote?" I persisted.

"Well, no, Brother," he admitted. "We couldn't find anything wrong with it. But, Brother, we feel that studying that kind of subject is likely to be *dangerous*. It might get you all mixed up. We feel it would be better for you to just forget all about it. We feel there are more important things for you to study. It's best to just keep your mind on Christ."

God's Knowledge Rejected

I walked back home disillusioned, grieved, tremendously disappointed. He *admitted* I had brought him a new truth. He was unable to find any error in it. It was the pure teaching of the *Bible*, yet he not only *rejected* the admitted Word of God, he advised me, a newly converted man who had confidence in him, also to accept *tradition* and false teaching and reject the Word of the living God!

Arriving home, I happened to turn to Hosea 4:6 where God

says that because people have rejected God's knowledge, He will *reject them!* It weighed heavily on my mind. A week later I walked back down Sandy Boulevard to the old tabernacle formerly used by Billy Sunday where this man and wife were caretakers. I hoped I might even yet rescue this man from the consequences of rejecting truth.

I found him in the big auditorium, looking downcast and dejected. "Brother!" he exclaimed on seeing me. "Brother, something terrible has come over me. God has left me. He doesn't answer my prayers anymore. Before, God used me in a special ministry praying for the sick. He always heard and answered. People were miraculously healed. But not anymore! Not one, anymore. I don't understand it!"

Truth—or Consequences

Poor man! I understood. I tried to explain, but he wouldn't listen. He had been a trusting and deeply sincere, if simple and uneducated man. God had used him as an instrument in performing miracles, helping people.

I quoted to him from I John 3:22: "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." But he could not see that rejecting God's truth and refusing to keep His commandments had any connection with his case.

I had to think of the radio-television show originated by Ralph Edwards, *Truth or Consequences*. God had required him to accept the TRUTH or receive the consequences. I haven't seen or heard from that man since.

But Christ did continue to reveal His truth, as I diligently continued studying His Word. Not only did He open my mind to reveal His truth about healing, but also to understand the truth about His gospel message—the *Kingdom of God*. I saw the *great commission* to His apostles: "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel . . .*" (Mark 16:15).

I saw that it was a *worldwide* ministry, not a local one, nor even national to our own nation. It was now revealed to me how, in the ministry of Jesus and His first-century apostles, miraculous HEALING of the sick and diseased went hand in hand with the preaching of the gospel.

What happened through Simon the Sorcerer to stop the worldwide proclaiming of the true gospel and stop the miraculous healings was not revealed to me until years later. But it was at that time revealed to me how healing is for God's

Church today (James 5:14-15), and also the prophecy revealing HOW the great commission was to be carried out in this present END TIME of the twentieth century.

Pivotal Chapter

That prophecy is in the pivotal prophecy chapter of the New Testament—Matthew 24. Before I cover what the Bible teaches about healing in both Old and New Testaments, it is vital that the reader understand how that gospel message is today, after 19 centuries, going out into ALL THE WORLD for a WITNESS to all nations— not being proclaimed to all the billions of people *in every nation*, but proclaimed *in all the world*—worldwide—so that it becomes a witness to or against every nation.

Jesus had been teaching in the Temple in Jerusalem. Leaving the Temple, His disciples came to Him privately on the Mount of Olives, asking: “Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world [age]?” (Verse 3.)

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I [Jesus] am Christ; and shall deceive many” (verses 4-5). First, Jesus warned them of the great deception, the false “Christianity”—preaching CHRIST to the world, preaching ABOUT the Messenger, but *not proclaiming His message*—His gospel.

He did not give the sign by which we might know when we are at the END of this present world and His coming is near until verse 14: “And *this gospel of the kingdom* shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and *then* shall the end come.”

The very fact He gave the proclaiming of the true gospel of the Kingdom as the sign we are at the end time shows it was not preached to the world these past 19 centuries—otherwise it could not be the sign.

But notice, this prophecy says the great commission will be going out *again* to the world, *yet it says nothing about healing accompanying it*. Elsewhere biblical teaching shows healing is *for the Church*. But it is NOT, today, an integral part of the proclaiming of Christ’s gospel *to the world!*

Why?

WHAT THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS REVEAL

Many believe, today, that Jesus healed and performed miracles only to demonstrate. He was the Christ, but we read of miraculous healings all through the Old Testament.

The Israelites, on their trek out of Egyptian slavery, came to Marah. The water was too bitter to drink. Of course the people griped and blamed Moses. Moses cried out to God, who performed a miracle, making the waters sweet. Then God said: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Eternal 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 Eternal that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26).

The God Who Heals

Those last five words are translated from the Hebrew name *Yahweh-Rapha*, one of God's names, meaning the "healing God" or the "God who heals."

In Exodus 23:25, God is quoted speaking to the children of Israel: "... I will take sickness away from the midst of thee."

Again, in Deuteronomy 7:15: "And the Eternal will take away from thee all sickness. ..." In Deuteronomy 32:39, God is quoted: "... I heal. ..."

David prayed: "O Eternal my God, I cried unto thee, and

thou hast healed me” (Psalms 30:2). Psalm 41:4: “Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul”

In Psalm 6:2, David prayed: “Have mercy upon me, O Eternal; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me. . . .”

Psalm 103:3: “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.” Is it God’s will to heal? some ask. Or others say, “I know He could heal me, IF it’s His will.” Is it His will to forgive? Then, He says, it is also His will to HEAL—all our diseases.

Psalm 107:17-20: “Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat [food]; and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Eternal in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.

“He [sendeth] his word, and [healeth] them, and [delivereth] them from their destructions.” (The original Hebrew signifies the present tense.) This is a case of one who has been very foolish, and brought the sickness upon himself. But, on repentance, God forgives and has mercy and *heals*.

Specific Case History

God had said to ancient Israel, “I am *Yahweh-Rapha*”—that is, “I am the Eternal who heals you,” or, “I am your healing God,” or, “I am your God-healer.” He also said in the Ten Commandments: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

Healing is the forgiveness of physical sin. None but God can forgive sin. None but God heals! God is a jealous God. He is not going to allow anyone else to heal. Medicines and drugs do not, *cannot* HEAL!

Notice, now, the case of King Asa of Judah. He turned to the king of Syria for help and paid him money to become an ally. God had said He would fight Judah’s battles *for* them. This hiring of allies God calls harlotry, in which the harlot pays instead of being paid.

But King Asa forsook God—like a wife forsaking her husband and hiring lovers—and this, *after* having previously relied on God for victories! God sent a prophet to remind Asa of what he was doing. But Asa in hot anger had the prophet imprisoned.

Later Asa was stricken with a serious disease. Notice in II Chronicles 16:12-13: “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 Eternal, but to the physicians.* And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign."

God *wants* His people to *rely* on Him, to TRUST Him. He *wants* to do things for us that we cannot do for ourselves. He wants us to learn the lesson of faith!

Now notice another case history, recorded in II Kings, first chapter. King Ahaziah, king of Israel at Samaria, son of the evil Ahab, "fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease.

"But the angel of the Eternal said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the Eternal, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die" (verses 2-4).

Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, was the patron deity of medicine—the medicine god of Ekron. The manner in which people inquired of this god was through the medical doctors.

Is it because some of us do not know and rely on the true God that we rely instead on medical doctors? God has said, "I am the God who heals you."

But now one other case history from the Old Testament. It's the example of King Hezekiah. It is recorded in II Kings, the 20th chapter, the first seven verses.

"In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Eternal, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.

"Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Eternal, saying, I beseech thee, O Eternal, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore."

He put his heart into his prayer. He OBEYED God. He had a right attitude. He did not now turn to seek human help, but trusted God alone. Continuing the passage in verse 5: "... Thus saith the Eternal, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I

will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Eternal. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years."

New Testament Teaching

Earlier we saw that proclaiming the ANNOUNCEMENT of the Kingdom of God and healing went hand in hand in Jesus' ministry. One passage in Matthew summarizes it:

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matthew 4:23).

Jesus' ministry began in Galilee, *not* in Jerusalem. Matthew's account shows that the so-called "Sermon on the Mount" (actually a teaching to His disciples) followed (chapters 5 through 7).

Beginning in chapter 8: "When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (verses 1-2).

Here again comes the answer to the frequently expressed doubt, "Well, I know God *could* heal me, if it's His will—but how can we know His will?" Here is the answer: "And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, *I will*; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed" (verse 3).

Gentiles Not Excluded

Continuing in verse 5: "And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum [where He *lived* (Matthew 4:13), apparently in His own house], there came unto him a centurion [Gentile captain over 100 Roman soldiers], beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

"And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

"When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. . . . And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy

way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour" (Matthew 8:5-13).

How God Heals

Next we need to UNDERSTAND *how* God heals. And we need to see, further, how both the gospel and healing tie together. Both operate on the same principle—one being spiritual, the other physical.

God is the CREATOR. But also He is the Great Designer, Educator and Lawgiver. Whatever God does He does with *purpose* and with *order*, according to the principles of His law. There can be no law without a *penalty* for its transgression.

And God never compromises with His laws or their penalties. Once a law is transgressed a penalty is incurred. Once a penalty is incurred it *must be paid*. God never suspends the penalty.

The biblical definition of SIN is the transgression of LAW (I John 3:4). In the spiritual sense, in connection with the gospel, the basic law of the Kingdom of God is the *spiritual* law (Romans 7:14) set in inexorable, relentless motion—the law of LOVE, the "GIVE" way of life—the principle of the Ten Commandments. The penalty for transgression is DEATH (Romans 6:23)—*eternal* death, the *absence* of eternal life.

All have sinned. And sin sets up an impassable barrier between the sinner and God. The penalty—death—must be paid! God will not compromise a thousandth of an inch on that!

Then how do we get FREE from that penalty? How may we avoid paying it? By the fact that *Christ* paid it for us. Christ never committed sin. He never brought that penalty on Himself. But, being the actual Maker of all mankind (Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:13-16), His life was greater than the sum total of ALL other human lives. And when He died on the cross, He took our penalty on Himself. He paid the death penalty for all mankind—conditioned on our repentance and faith. He paid the penalty FOR US, *in our stead*.

We may be healed by the same principle.

God made man of the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7). We are composed of matter. He designed our bodies so that they function according to definite physical laws.

In the human body are a number of systems—for example, the digestive system, the respiratory system, the circulatory system, the reproductive system, etc. Each functions separately, yet all work in perfect harmony with each other. They func-

tion according to definite physical LAWS. Those laws, when transgressed, exact a PENALTY.

When a person is sick or has contracted a disease, he is simply paying the PENALTY of transgressed physical law in his body.

One may not *himself* have broken a physical law. It could have been an accident. It could have been from a contagious disease contracted without his knowledge. In the case of Job (Job 2:6-7), Satan was the cause of Job's ailments for a special purpose, by God's permission. Nevertheless, sickness and disease are *the penalty* being paid for broken physical law.

God, the great Lawgiver, demands that *the penalty must be paid!* God never compromises that principle! No HEALING without the penalty having been PAID!

Jesus Paid the Penalty

So now let's continue in the eighth chapter of Matthew: "When the even was come [sunset, ending that Sabbath day], they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils [demons]: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias [Isaiah] the prophet, saying, *Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses*" (Matthew 8:16-17).

Jesus paid the penalty in our stead.

Like the forgiveness of spiritual sin, God has paid the penalty *for us* by sending His Son Jesus to suffer the penalty in our stead. The penalty for physical transgression is physical punishment—sickness or disease, physical impairment, pain and suffering or physical death.

Healing does not mean that God *suspends* the penalty so that no penalty is paid. Instead, Jesus has already paid it for us. Therefore God may *legally* remove the penalty from the human sufferer. But it is nonetheless a MIRACLE!

The scripture above quoted says Jesus Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses—but NOT ON THE CROSS. They scourged Jesus, beat Him, breaking open the flesh of His body, *before* taking Him to Golgotha to be nailed to the cross.

The Scourging

Matthew 27:24-26: "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude. . . . Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified."

Mark 15:15: "And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified."

John 19:1: "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him." This was prior to turning Jesus over to be crucified, which is not recorded until verse 16 of the same chapter: "Then delivered he [Pilate] him [Jesus] therefore unto them to be crucified."

I think it vitally important that we realize, at this point, two things:

1) What a TREMENDOUS price God Himself, through Christ, paid in order that He might perform for us this MIRACLE OF HEALING. This shows God's *will*. He is *so willing*, indeed *so anxious*, to relieve us from the pain, suffering or affliction that He *gave* His only begotten Son—the One who is our very Maker—to be beaten, to suffer in our stead, so that, without violating any principle of HIS LAW, we may be healed.

"The Eternal is merciful and gracious. . . . For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. . . . Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Eternal pitieth them that fear him" (Psalm 103:8-13).

We need to realize God's LOVE and compassion. Healing must not be taken for granted or treated cheaply. THINK of Him who is the Maker of all mankind—One so GREAT—submitting Himself to be beaten as no man ever was so that He might perform this MIRACLE for us!

2) How IMPORTANT it is to God NEVER to compromise His law. We might reason that it would be *easier for God*, in each case of healing, to simply prevent the penalty from taking effect. But that would VIOLATE HIS LAW! That is what Satan is trying to do—make God's laws inoperable; *abolish* the penalty; deal with the EFFECT, ignoring the CAUSE.

Medical "science" operates primarily on that method—trying, with medicines, to prevent God's law from exacting its penalty.

That theory says, in effect, we can transgress God's law and then prevent God's law from exacting its penalty. The theory is: The sufferer has in his body one poison, so we add another poison in the form of medicine. And one poison plus one more poison equals NO poison!

God has gone to great lengths a) to bestow upon us His love and mercy, and b) to be consistent with His law. God's arithmetic is: One poison *minus* that one poison equals NO poison.

Now notice just *how* severely Jesus was beaten.

In Isaiah 52 and 53 it was foretold. Speaking of Christ in Isaiah 52: "As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle [margin, "startle"] many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider" (verses 14-15).

In the Revised Standard Version this passage reads: "As many were astonished at him—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men—so shall he startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they shall see, and that which they have not heard they shall understand." Notice the tenses. Many *were* (when He was beaten with stripes) astonished—His body beaten and marred more than any man. So *shall* (at His coming in supreme POWER and GLORY) many nations be startled at Him.

Then, in Isaiah 53 (RSV): "He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. . . . Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities [transgressions of the law]; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray [HOW?]; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Eternal has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (verses 3-6).

This is affirmed in the New Testament: "Who did no sin. . . by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:22, 24).

At the Passover Service

There is a very clear teaching in regard to Christ having paid the physical penalty, as well as the spiritual penalty of death, in connection with Passover service instruction.

It is in the apostle Paul's instruction to the Corinthians: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is [represents] my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me [a memorial].

"After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this

do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come [the annual memorial of His death, on the actual anniversary of His crucifixion].

"Wherefore," the instruction continues, "whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily [that is, in an unworthy *manner*], shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep [that is, are dead]" (I Corinthians 11:23-30).

The Revised Standard Version translates that last sentence: "That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died"—not realizing Jesus Himself paid the penalty for physical transgressions of the laws of the human body, by allowing His body to be broken open by many stripes, and not relying on the living Christ for their HEALING!

Is it HIS WILL to heal us? This passage, especially as emphasized in the RSV, says we shall be judged if we NEGLECT (see Hebrews 2:3) so great a price paid so that we might be kept WELL!

Forgiveness of Physical Sin

Now back to Matthew's account of Jesus' ministry. We had last covered the eighth chapter and 17th verse. We come now to the ninth chapter.

Jesus came again to His own city, where He then resided—Capernaum. "And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed. . . ."

Notice Mark's account of the same incident: "And again he entered into Capernaum, after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house" (Mark 2:1).

I pause here for a slight digression. Today many represent Jesus as a vagabond—a hippie with long hair and no place to live, having to sleep outdoors. In I Corinthians 11:14, it is plainly stated it is *a shame for a man to have long hair*. Jesus was no hippie.

And the evidence is clear that *Jesus had a home*. In Matthew 4 we have seen that Jesus, leaving Nazareth, came and *dwelt in Capernaum*. That assuredly implies a "dwelling place." He dwelt in a house. In Matthew 9:1, Capernaum is

called "his own city," a term certainly implying His place of *residence*.

In Mark 2:1, quoted above, Jesus returned to Capernaum, *His own city, where He dwelt*, and it was noised around that He was "in the house," certainly implying *His own house*. If He had entered the house of any other person, it would have named the person into whose house He came.

Now to continue, this time in Luke's account of this same incident, because Luke gives more details: "And . . . as he was teaching . . . men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him [Jesus]. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

"And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

"But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.

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

This incident, reported in all three books of Matthew, Mark and Luke, confirms, in the words of Jesus Christ Himself, that *physical healing is indeed "the forgiveness of sin."* Sin is defined (I John 3:4) as "the transgression of *LAW*," as correctly translated. Physical sin is the transgression of *physical law* operating in the human body. To pay this penalty in our stead, Jesus was scourged, chastised, beaten with stripes.

On the other hand, spiritual sin, which imposes the penalty of the second death—eternal death—is the transgression of the *spiritual law* (Romans 7:13-14), the law summed up by the Ten Commandments. Jesus paid the penalty for both. Doctors, medicines, and drugs can no more forgive physical sins than spiritual sins. They *cannot heal!*

WHAT IS FAITH?

You can be healed! Jesus said so! But also He said, "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29).

First, are you sure you know *what faith is*? Very few know. Yet without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6): "... For he that cometh to God must *believe* that he is, and that he is *a rewarder* of them that diligently seek him."

Looking down into our latter half of the twentieth century, Jesus said, "... When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8.) Yet *you must have faith for salvation!*

How, then, may you have it? You can't work it up. Yet if you can't have the faith to be healed, how can you have the faith to be *saved*? God said, "For by grace are ye saved *through faith* . . ." (Ephesians 2:8).

Jesus foresaw the near total absence of faith in our time. Few today know what faith *is* or why they do not have it!

Certainly the world has almost lost sight of real FAITH. No wonder so few have any—no wonder so many say, "My faith isn't very strong," or "I just can't seem to work up the faith." People today do not know what faith *is* or *why* they do not possess it. Yet without FAITH none can ever be saved!

Jesus Had Faith

When Jesus walked the earth in human flesh, He possessed faith!

Yet He said plainly, "I can of mine own self DO NOTHING" (John 5:30).

Few realize that what He did—the miracles He performed—He did not do by any supernatural power of His own. Everything He did, every miracle He performed, was done literally through FAITH, setting us a beautiful example.

But how, then, did He perform His miracles, accomplish His mighty works?

"... The FATHER that dwelleth in me," explained Jesus, "he doeth the works" (John 14:10).

Yes, even as you and I may be, Jesus was filled with God's Holy Spirit—God's dynamic supernatural POWER! This power of God Almighty, the Creator, was literally *in* Jesus; *and the same identical power of the same identical living God may be within you today!*

All the apostles and evangelists of the first century true Church of God *did* perform miracles, and even *greater* miracles than Jesus had performed, until even Peter's *shadow* passing over the sick and afflicted caused them to be healed!

Peter, Stephen, Philip, Paul—common, humble, ordinary men themselves—*all had that power*, the SAME identical power Jesus had, *because they lived and walked CLOSE TO GOD* and were *filled with the Holy Spirit!*

And we seem to LACK that power today, NOT because God denies us that power, but *because we are so close to a modern, materialistic world*—our minds are so filled with the *material* interests of *this* life; our minds and our hearts are *so far from God*; we are so out of touch with Him through lack of enough *time* spent in the study of His Word and lack of enough of the *right* kind of surrendered, submissive, earnest and heartrending PRAYER—and, consequently, we are *not filled* with the Holy Spirit which affords us the power of God!

So now let's ask *two questions*:

First, what *is* faith?

And, second, *how* may we have it, and how may it *be increased*?

What Faith Is

Now notice, faith is the *substance*—the marginal rendering says ASSURANCE—of things *hoped for* (Hebrews 11:1). So FAITH comes *before* possession.

Once you have *received* the *possession*, you no longer *hope*

for it. But even before you receive it, you have it in SUBSTANCE; and that ASSURANCE that you *shall* possess it is faith.

Then again, faith is an EVIDENCE—the “evidence of things *not seen.*” Faith *precedes* the actual receiving of what you ask for. And faith is the EVIDENCE you *shall* have it *before* you even SEE it. It is the EVIDENCE of things *not yet seen.* You do not *have* it. You do not *see* it or *feel* it—yet faith is your EVIDENCE that you have, or shall have, it. Faith is the *assurance* of receiving that which you still HOPE for.

Proof of Healing

So I want you to notice that when you *hope* for things or *ask* God for things, there is an EVIDENCE—a *proof*, because where God is involved, His evidence *is* proof—that you shall receive what you have asked. And what is that proof, that evidence? Is it the actual *receiving* of the answer, so you see or feel or hear that you have it? No!

Suppose, for instance, you were ill—taken with a disease. Now Jesus healed the sick continually. And He said the works that He did—and this was one of them—we should do also. Now suppose you ask God to *heal* you. Naturally, you want some *evidence* that you are going to be healed.

So what *is* that evidence, that proof? Is it the evidence of the pain ceasing—or the swelling going down—something you can *feel* and *see*? I know a man who said, “When I can *see* anyone healed by direct prayer, then I’ll believe in it.” This man said he *wanted* to BELIEVE in it—he *wanted* to have FAITH in it! He was looking for an EVIDENCE that he could SEE, and he died without ever seeing it!

Because what we SEE—what we FEEL—is not the true EVIDENCE. Having the thing—SEEING it—is not faith. Faith *precedes* possession because FAITH is *confidence*, ASSURANCE, you *shall* possess it.

The human mind, naturally, can receive KNOWLEDGE only through five senses. These are five sole channels capable of transmitting knowledge, by natural processes, to the human brain: the senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling.

Faith Is Spiritual

But *that* is not FAITH! Faith is a *spiritual* matter, and it has *nothing to do* with the five senses, which are *physical*.

Prayer is a *spiritual* matter. God is a SPIRIT! And when we ask, for instance, for healing, we *do* have an evidence—proof

positive—that the healing *will be done*. But that evidence is not something seen or felt or heard—it is *not* a physical evidence of FAITH. FAITH is our evidence.

Let's understand plainly where your human nature has clouded the issue and *deceived* you. God has told you in Exodus 15 that He is your healer—your *God-healer*—that is one of His *names*, and God is named *what He is*. God sent His Son into the world to be beaten with stripes, to *suffer* the penalty of your transgressions of nature's laws (which *God* set in motion) *in your stead*. His body was broken for you, and by His stripes you are *healed!* God gave you His word that it is *His will* to heal you. He commanded you to call the elders of the Church, which you did. He *promised* to *heal* you. But God has also made it a part of this contract, *in His Word*, that "*according to your faith* be it unto you"—in the very words of Christ!

Now FAITH is your *evidence* that God *will* do what He promised. You can't *see* faith—you can't *feel* it. What you see or feel has nothing to do with faith. But the point your human nature—under the influence of Satan—wants you to overlook is that *God did not promise* WHEN or HOW *He would heal you!*

Learning Patience

God's purpose in your life is to transform you from what you've been into the very *image of His Son*—into the very *character* of God Himself. Part of this character is the learning of PATIENCE! And God instructs you in James 1:3 that the *trying* of your faith works PATIENCE into your character. God has revealed to you in this and other scriptures that He will sometimes *delay* healing you *in order to TRY your faith* and to teach you to be *patient!* Your healing, God has promised, shall be *according to your faith*.

Faith is trusting God to do that which He *has not yet done*. After the healing is completed *you no longer need to exercise faith*. Faith is the ingredient *you* must exercise *until* God heals you—*until* you can see and feel that you are healed. It's the same with spiritual salvation. You are not yet in the Kingdom of God, but those of you *in Christ* have the ASSURANCE—the faith—that you shall be. *After* God has healed you then you won't need FAITH in it any longer. But your *faith* must remain firm and steadfast and patient, *regardless of what you see or feel, until* God actually heals you *as He has promised to do*.

Your human nature—swayed by Satan—wants you to believe that *faith* is something you exercise in about 30 seconds, while you are still praying, and then if God has not done what He promised as soon as *you* expect, you are to find God guilty of *lying*. The instant you yield to the *devil's* influence over your human nature and render a verdict that God *will not* do what He promised just because He has not done it *yet*, that moment you make God out a liar—you lose all FAITH in God. You thereupon break *your part* of the agreement, which is to *have faith* and *keep on having faith* and *trusting God* and *relying upon Him* UNTIL He performs what He promised.

Simple Reliance on God

Faith is simple *reliance* upon God's Word. It is the evidence of what you *do not see* or *feel*. Therefore Christ calls upon you to *have patience*—to *keep on TRUSTING* God *until* He heals you, and then He *will* heal you!

You must render your verdict based upon the *evidence*.

Which, now, is the evidence you believe? That which you see and feel—the physical evidences that often are deceptive—or your *faith* that God's Word is true, that His promises are *sure*, that it is impossible for God to lie?

If you BELIEVE this latter *spiritual* evidence and reject the physical evidences of sight and of feeling, you pronounce sentence that *His Word has been VINDICATED by your verdict*. You shall be RELEASED from the disease and what He promised *shall* be carried out.

But, if you decide that the physical evidences of sight or feeling are to be trusted over and above the Word of ALMIGHTY God, and you *reject* His Word and His promise and refuse to believe in it—refuse, in other words, to accept and trust in the evidence of FAITH *until* God completes it, then you yourself must render your verdict, "NOT HEALED," and you will not be healed!

You see, God does not *promise* healing or anything else unless we BELIEVE. "According to your FAITH be it unto you," said Jesus. And remember the FAITH must *precede* and, therefore, is a *condition* to the possession.

One man expressed it very well: "Faith is the *assurance* that the things which God said in His Word are *true* and that God *will act* according to what He has said *in His Word*. This assurance, this *reliance* on God's Word, *this confidence*, is

FAITH!" And it is a true Bible definition. This Work of God has been built by putting it into actual practice.

Learning God's Will

God says, "... Be ye not unwise, but UNDERSTANDING what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17). Remember, *whatever* your need, the first thing to do to be sure of receiving an *answer* to your prayer is to *search the Scriptures to learn* whether it is God's WILL (Ephesians 5:17; II Timothy 3:14-17).

The Bible *reveals* God's will. We need *never* say, "Well, I know God *could* heal me IF IT IS HIS WILL." You can *know* His will. And so far as healing is concerned, I can tell you definitely that His Word says plainly and emphatically that it *is* His will. The Bible is full of *promises*—literally FULL of them. If you *need* anything, study to see whether God *promised* it, and if He has, HE CAN'T BREAK A PROMISE!

Claiming a Promise

I remember one time a number of years ago when my two sons came to me and asked me to do something for them—I don't now remember what. They were then around 7 and 9 years old. I do remember I didn't want to do it.

"But, Daddy, you PROMISED," they said, "and you've GOT TO KEEP YOUR PROMISE."

And then I remembered I *had* promised. Well, what do *you* think? Do you think I could break a *promise* when my two sons came to me and put it like *that*? No, and if you'll *just as boldly tell God He has promised* and then CLAIM that promise as applied to *your* case and TRUST God to keep it and quit *worrying* about it—quit trying to *work up* faith—just RELAX and *let God* take over from there—leave it with Him—let Him do it—*He'll* do it, every time!

I know whereof I speak, because I've put what I'm now telling you to the test not once, but literally hundreds and thousands of times, and *God has never failed to keep His promise* once. I've seen the answers come so often and so frequently that I expect the answer when I ask!

God promised to supply every need—that if we'll seek *first* the Kingdom of God and His RIGHTEOUSNESS, which is right *doing*, He will provide every *material* need (Matthew 6:33).

Work a Living Example

Why, this very Work we conduct is a direct answer to prayer. This Work of the Worldwide Church of God—*The*

World Tomorrow broadcast, *The Plain Truth* magazine and AMBASSADOR COLLEGE, which now has grown to national and international scope and influence—started as small as any work could start—literally from NOTHING.

It has been from the start 100 percent a *work of FAITH*, and we had to really *learn* this lesson of faith before it had even started.

Why People Lack Faith

And now, very briefly, WHY don't we *have FAITH*, *how* may we get it, and *how* may it be *increased*? So many say, "Well, I have no impression—I have no *feeling*, *no conviction*—that I shall get the answer."

They want to wait until they get a certain CONVICTION, a certain FEELING, a sort of ASSURANCE they can FEEL, before they really believe they shall have the answer.

But THAT *is not faith!*

That is FEELING!

Your feeling, your convictions, your impressions, have absolutely not *one thing or the other* to do with FAITH.

FAITH HAS ONLY TO DO WITH GOD'S WORD! The one question is, *Has God promised it in the Bible?* If He has, then probabilities, possibilities, feelings, convictions, impressions, *have nothing whatsoever to do with it*. God has a thousand ways we know nothing of, of answering and providing whatever He has promised. We don't need to see HOW *He is going to do it* or even WHEN!

And that's *another* thing: He almost *never* will do it the WAY we expect. So don't *try* to figure out *how* it is possible for God to do it. You are trusting SUPERNATURAL POWER! God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. What He promised He will perform; but He will do it His way and in HIS TIME. Leave all that to Him and just TRUST HIM. Rely upon His Word.

God's Gift

And let us remember FAITH is the GIFT OF GOD.

So many think that everything else that comes from God is His *gift*, but the FAITH REQUIRED *to receive* these things is something we ourselves must somehow work up or strain and strive for. But we have to just relax and TRUST God, even for the FAITH by which we receive everything else! (Ephesians 2:8.)

In Revelation 14:12 is a description of the *true* Church of THIS DAY. Those in this Church have the FAITH OF JESUS. No-

tice, the FAITH OF JESUS! It is not just *our* faith in HIM, but *His* faith—the very faith with which He performed His miracles—placed *in us* and *acting* in us.

How can you get it? Draw closer to God. Get to *know God*. Surrender *all the way* to Him and *do* His will. And then PRAY. You get to *know* Him in PRAYER. We are too close to the *material* things. Through PRAYER, *much* more prayer, you can come closer to God and the *spiritual* things. And what a *happy, joyous* experience it is, once you have really done it!

Faith Required for Salvation

No subject pertaining to Christian salvation is more generally misunderstood than that of *saving* FAITH.

Just “BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” is the popular teaching today. And that statement is absolutely true—if you understand what kind of BELIEVING is required.

Unfortunately millions are being deceived—led to trust in a faith that will never save one single soul—by a very popular and very false teaching.

It is customary to quote only a PART of the scriptures on this subject—reading a false meaning into them—and thus by subtle *half-truths*, popular teachings, shackle most of Christendom to spiritual blindness and deceptions.

Do These Scriptures Contradict?

God does not usually reveal *all* the truth respecting a particular subject in any one passage alone. “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? . . . precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” (Isaiah 28:9-10). To understand any general subject in the Bible, it is necessary to view *all* the scriptural evidence touching that particular subject. And we cannot read *our* inherited or desired meaning into any particular passage, for “no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation” (II Peter 1:20), but each passage is interpreted by, and in light of, *other texts*.

For example, it is quite popular to quote Romans 3:20: “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight . . .” and from this passage alone assume that salvation comes by faith, in *disobedience to God’s law!* Those who thus interpret this passage never tell you that in Romans

2:13 the same apostle Paul was inspired to write: “. . . Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the *DOERS of the law shall be justified.*”

Is there a contradiction here? If the one scripture is intended to reveal that we do not have to make an effort to obey God's law to be justified and then saved—but that we are *saved* by faith *without obedience to God's law*—then, indeed, God contradicts Himself in His Word! And if you wish to make Romans 3:20 say that, you must consistently acknowledge there is contradiction in the Scriptures, and if this be true, you have no basis for your faith!

No Contradictions Here

Again, Ephesians 2:8-9: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: *Not of works*, lest any man should boast.” But those who quote this text so freely to teach the doctrine of no works never tell you that the same inspired Scripture says also: “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (verse 10).

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man *say* he hath faith, *and have not works*? can faith save him? . . . Even so FAITH, *if it hath not works*, IS DEAD, being alone. . . . I will shew thee *my faith* BY my works. Thou BELIEVEST that there is one God; thou doest well: *the devils also believe*, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith *without works* IS DEAD?” (James 2:14-20.)

There is no contradiction here!

Rather, by putting all the scriptures on the subject of saving faith together, we learn that there are TWO KINDS of faith. And the kind so blindly trusted in by the majority of this day is nothing but a DEAD faith—and a DEAD faith *never will save one soul!* Notice! James 2:20: “. . . Faith *without works* IS DEAD”—just a DEAD *faith*.

James continues: “Was not Abraham our father JUSTIFIED *by works*, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how FAITH wrought *with his works*, and BY WORKS WAS FAITH MADE PERFECT? . . . Ye see then how that BY WORKS A MAN IS JUSTIFIED, and not by faith only” (James 2:21-24). Then are we saved by works *instead of* faith? No, NEVER! We are saved by FAITH! But faith functions *with our works* and BY WORKS OUR FAITH IS MADE PERFECT! That is LIVING FAITH!

Why Salvation Is Needed

Why do we even *need* salvation? Because we have SINNED, and the penalty of sin is DEATH!

But *how* have we sinned? What is sin, anyhow? Sin is the transgression of LAW—that is God's answer (I John 3:4).

"Yes," answers the victim of modern fables, "but we are not under the law today, but UNDER GRACE!" Why certainly! "What then?" asks the inspired Paul. "Shall we SIN [transgress the law] because we are not under the law, but under grace?" And Paul's answer is, "GOD FORBID" (Romans 6:15). And again, "... Shall we continue in SIN [transgressing the law], that grace may abound? GOD FORBID. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1-2.)

The law has a penalty—DEATH. It claims the life of the one who transgresses it. The law has power to take the life of the transgressor. It therefore is more powerful than the sinner—and is OVER the sinner, holding a claim on his life. It is the SINNER who is UNDER the law. But when the sinner REPENTS of his transgression and accepts the sacrifice of Christ as payment for the *penalty* of the law, then he is PARDONED—UNDER GRACE—the law no longer stands OVER him, claiming his life. Those who are still sinning are still UNDER the law! And those who, through repentance, obedience and FAITH, have turned from disobedience and are, through faith, KEEPING the law are the *only* ones who are UNDER GRACE!

God's Spiritual Mirror

Let us understand it! "... By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. ..." No, certainly not! That scripture is 100 percent true, and there is no contradiction! You cannot be justified BY the deeds of the law—not at all!

Why? The last half of this same verse gives the answer. Why do most preachers never quote it? "... For by the law is the KNOWLEDGE of sin" (Romans 3:20). THAT'S WHY!

The purpose of the law is not to forgive, to justify, to wash away, to cleanse. Only THE BLOOD OF CHRIST can do that! The purpose of the law is to tell us what sin is—to define it, to REVEAL it—so we can quit it. Sin is the transgression of the law—that's what sin is.

All women ought to understand this. In every woman's handbag is a little mirror. She knows what it is for. Every little while she takes out this mirror and steals a glance at her face. Sometimes it reveals a speck of dirt. And we might truthfully

say, "By the use of these mirrors are no dirty faces washed clean." You women understand what we mean! But do you throw your mirrors away because *by them* your faces are not washed? Of course not—what a silly question it seems when applied to a MATERIAL case! And if we ask you WHY your faces are not washed clean by your mirrors, you answer: "Because by the mirror comes the KNOWLEDGE OF THE DIRT."

God's law is His spiritual mirror. We look into it and see the dirt on our hearts! But by looking at the law or keeping it no dirt is WASHED from our hearts—only Christ's BLOOD can do that. By the law comes the KNOWLEDGE OF SIN!

Listen to James explain it! "But be ye DOERS of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect LAW of liberty, *and continueth therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a DOER of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:22-25).

Faith Establishes Law

"But," argues the no-law deceiver, "no man can keep the commandments. It is not humanly possible. Since FAITH has come, we keep no law—faith has made it VOID."

Thus even "... Satan himself is transformed into an angel of LIGHT. Therefore it is no great thing if HIS MINISTERS also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness. . . . For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ" (II Corinthians 11:14-15, 13).

"Do we then make void the law through faith?" comes the question in inspired Scripture—and the answer: "God FORBID: yea, we ESTABLISH THE LAW" (Romans 3:31).

Yes, faith *establishes* the law! By keeping it is faith made PERFECT!

Yet, *can* we keep the commandments? Is it possible? Satan's no-law deceivers say NO! What is the PLAIN TRUTH?

A man came to Jesus and asked how to be saved. The Savior Himself replied, "... If thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS" (Matthew 19:17). "When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but *with God all things are possible*" (verses 25-26).

There is Christ's own answer! With men it is impossible—utterly impossible to really KEEP His commandments. But—here's the blessed truth—WITH GOD it is possible even to keep His commandments. Do you begin to see? IT TAKES FAITH—faith in the power of God! And, just as your own diligent effort coupled with faith makes faith perfect, so faith coupled with your effort makes PERFECT OBEDIENCE! The two go hand in hand. And you cannot have the one without the other.

A LIVING FAITH, the only kind that will SAVE, is an *active* faith—one that trusts God to make it possible to OBEY Him, to live the true Christian life, to KEEP His blessed commandments!

Think! Could a just God command men to do what is IMPOSSIBLE to do? Or can we conceive of Jesus as a smart-aleck young man who knew more than His Father and who did away with His Father's COMMANDMENTS? How absurd! Yet this is the popular conception today.

The Law Is Eternal

God's law is not a horrible monster! Just and right laws are a terror only to the criminal—they are made to PROTECT the good! God's law is PERFECT (Psalm 19:7). It is a SPIRITUAL law (Romans 7:14), HOLY and just and good (Romans 7:12). ALL His commandments are SURE and stand fast FOREVER AND EVER (Psalm 111:7-8). Don't you believe it when men tell you differently!

God's law is, simply, LOVE! It is the perfect way of life. Every particle of human suffering, unhappiness, misery and death has come solely from its transgression. It was given to make man HAPPY and is the *only* philosophy of life that can do so. It came from a God of LOVE, and LOVE is the *fulfilling of the law* (Romans 13:10).

But not YOUR own natural love! It requires “. . . the love of God . . . shed abroad in our hearts BY THE HOLY [SPIRIT] . . .” (Romans 5:5). God has and will give you the love that will fulfill His law. And so it *is* possible through FAITH and the GIFT of God's Holy Spirit for man to keep His commandments! And whoever claims differently God calls a plain LIAR (I John 2:4).

Faith Necessary for Obedience

The true commandment-keeper is forced to trust God to make obedience possible. And thus faith does not void, but *establishes*, the law! And to keep the law requires FAITH!

A thrilling example of this eternal truth is recorded in the book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, erected a great golden image.

“Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the [band] . . . ye fall down and worship the golden image . . .” (Daniel 3:4-5). “And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace” (verse 6).

Set over the affairs of the province of Babylon were Daniel’s three young Jewish friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. One of the commandments of God’s eternal spiritual law forbids such worship of images.

Had *you* been in their place, what would *YOU* have done? Would you not have said: “Well, I *have* to bow down to this image. I have to do it or be killed!” And perhaps you would have excused yourself by reasoning thus: “I don’t think God would be fair if He punished me for this, when He knows I am FORCED to do it. Anyway, He tells us to be subject to the power of state!” Yes, it is easy to use reason to excuse disobedience to God. But God is not looking for chances to punish us—but rather for opportunities to SAVE US THROUGH FAITH—TO SAVE US FROM THE FOLLY OF SIN and the sad consequence our own acts impose!

God’s law is intended to *protect* us from suffering. Whatever we sow we shall reap. It is not God who punishes us when we do wrong; it is merely our own acts rebounding like a boomerang!

But these three young Jews knew the truth—that we should OBEY God rather than men; that through FAITH God makes it possible. When they firmly REFUSED to bow down to worship the king’s image, Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded they be brought before him (verse 13).

Listen to the quiet, trusting, unafraid answer of these lads. “. . . O Nebuchadnezzar. . . our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace . . .” (verses 16-17).

A Test of Faith

Sometimes God *tries* our faith. He tried theirs. You might think He failed them, but He only permitted their faith to be tested.

“Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of

his visage was changed . . . therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated . . . Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments”—surely the God whom they trusted would have them released *now*? But no, there was no physical evidence whatever that God so much as heard!—“and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace” (verses 19-21).

The furnace was so hot the flames leaped out and “. . . slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.” And they fell down “. . . bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace” (verses 22-23).

God permitted them actually to be thrown in! Was He unmindful of those who trusted in Him to make possible the keeping of His commandments? Not God!

The king looked into the furnace and said, “. . . Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God” (verse 25). So Nebuchadnezzar came near the mouth of the furnace and called to them. “. . . Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth of the midst of the fire . . . these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and DELIVERED his servants that TRUSTED IN HIM . . .” (verses 26-28).

There was an example of *living* FAITH—a faith that TRUSTED God to make it possible to live the way of His law! Yes, WITH God it *is* possible to keep all His commandments. Don't let any man deceive you to the contrary.

Worshiping in Vain

When God's Word says, “. . . BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved . . .” (Acts 16:31), it does not mean the DEAD faith now popularly taught. The common teachings of this day distort this to mean a mere belief in the FACTS of Christ's existence, His sacrifice and His saving work. Just accept these FACTS and accept HIM—without any obedience to God's laws! But the demons believe these things—and they TREMBLE—but they are *not* thereby *saved*!

Christ was the Messenger of the new covenant—a Messenger sent from God. You cannot BELIEVE on such a divine Messenger unless you believe and obey the MESSAGE that He brought. “. . . If thou wilt enter into LIFE,” was His teaching, “KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS” (Matthew 19:17).

“REPENT,” said the inspired Peter, and “. . . ye SHALL RECEIVE the gift of the Holy [Spirit]” (Acts 2:38). God gives His Holy Spirit only to them that OBEY HIM (Acts 5:32). And His Holy Spirit is the LOVE that God gives us to fulfill and to keep His commandments. And it all comes BY FAITH!

Christ came to save us FROM, not in, our sins. TO FREE us from the enslavement of sin and unhappiness and wretchedness it brings—not to make us free to commit sin.

Is it possible to BELIEVE in Christ—to worship Him in the customary manner of the day—and yet be lost? Christ Himself says YES! “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that DOETH the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Hear Him again! “Howbeit IN VAIN do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men . . .” (Mark 7:7-8).

There it is! From Jesus’ own lips! Such a dead faith—such worship—is IN VAIN. Those who trust in it, and in the men and denominations who teach it, ARE LOST! And the quicker we come to realize it, the better.

God’s True Purpose

God’s PURPOSE in salvation is to rescue men from SIN and its resulting unhappiness, misery and death. TO REPENT of sin is the first step. Then the BLOOD OF CHRIST, upon acceptance and faith, cleanses all past sins. And by FAITH we are kept from sin in the future. Thus the resulting righteousness is of FAITH—the righteousness *imparted from God*.

We are not justified BY THE LAW—we are justified by the blood of Jesus Christ. But this justification will be given only on the condition that we REPENT of our transgressions of God’s law. And so it is, after all, only the DOERS of the law that shall be JUSTIFIED (Romans 2:13).

How plain and how beautiful is God’s TRUTH!

Taken from the booklet What is Faith?

IS HEALING ALWAYS GOD'S WILL?

Some, it was explained in chapter one, say God raised up the medical profession for our time. Some say they believe God *could* heal, but they don't know whether it's His will. *But what does GOD say?* To answer, we turned to the BIBLE.

Jesus came in person with a dual ministry. He went about the cities and villages in Judea and Galilee preaching the good news of the coming Kingdom of God. But also He healed the sick among the public as He encountered them.

He trained His original apostles, and after His resurrection they continued in the same dual ministry. The Church of God was founded on the Day of Pentecost, A.D. 31.

But soon a fierce, violent and organized persecution set in. Immediately after A.D. 33 the Babylonian mystery religion appropriated the name *Christianity*, proclaimed a false Christ, and by A.D. 59 the proclaiming of Christ's gospel was *SUPPRESSED!* Another and counterfeit gospel was being accepted (Galatians 1:6-7).

Neither the KINGDOM message nor healing of the sick had any part in what from then became traditional Christianity. For 1,900 years the world has not heard Christ's gospel message. It has been *deceived* by false gospels about a false Jesus.

But both Christ's true gospel message and miraculous healing have today been restored in God's true Church. Only today healing is within the Church—not public healing of the sick as encountered by God's apostles in the first century A.D.

In chapter two, I stated that I could best bring this truth to

the reader by relating my own personal EXPERIENCE in discovering this truth about healing.

It was very shortly after my conversion, baptism, and receiving God's Holy Spirit. This had occurred in the spring of 1927. In August of that same year I *experienced* a most miraculous healing of my wife from four fatal simultaneous diseases. I then KNEW God heals the sick, and thereupon I let the living Christ teach me from His *written Word* the full scriptural UNDERSTANDING of this vital subject. Hundreds have since been healed from my prayers.

Chapter three covered that biblical revelation of God's truth from both Old and New Testaments. Chapter four covered FAITH.

What About Medicine?

But now, what about medicine?

Let's review briefly the teaching of the apostle Paul in his instruction regarding the Passover to the Church at Corinth.

In regard to taking the bread—symbol of Christ's body beaten with stripes to pay for us the penalty for broken laws governing physical health—the inspired teaching is: "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily [the RSV translates it "in an unworthy manner"], eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body"—that is, His body was broken or beaten with stripes, paying the penalty we suffer in sickness or disease. "That is why [RSV] many of you are weak and ill, and some have died" (I Corinthians 11:29-30).

Some in the Church lacked the FAITH to BELIEVE Christ paid for us the physical penalty of sickness, disease—or even the first death.

This is important; UNDERSTAND the meaning of what was written here! Taking the broken unleavened bread means we ACCEPT Christ's beaten and broken body (prior to being taken to the cross) that WE MAY BE HEALED. How does His broken body make our healing possible?

It is IMPORTANT that you UNDERSTAND the answer to this—because some have been falsely teaching there is no such thing as physical sin. I John 3:4, properly translated from the Greek, says, "Sin is the transgression of LAW." It does not refer to—or say—the spiritual law of the Ten Commandments. Yet it is referring to LAWS INSTITUTED BY GOD—not to transgressing man-made codes.

As made clear in chapter 3, GOD formed the human body

out of matter (Genesis 2:7). God so designed our physical bodies that they function according to definite **PHYSICAL LAWS**. The digestive system, the eliminative system and the circulatory system, for example, were designed to function together—and this functioning is a **LAW OF NATURE—physical LAW**. Eating improper food, neglecting elimination or polluting the lungs with tobacco smoke prevents those laws from perfect functioning—definitely transgresses laws that God set in motion and that operate in the human body. This definitely is **TRANSGRESSED PHYSICAL LAW!** It is a law **GOD** designed and set in motion. This **TRANSGRESSION OF LAW**, according to God's definition (I John 3:4), is **physical SIN!** Its penalty is sickness, disease or debility.

The RSV translates I John 3:4, “. . . sin is lawlessness”—without regard to **WHAT LAW GOD** instituted.

Now back to our important question—although it was made clear in chapter 3: **HOW** does Christ's broken body make our healing possible? I answer with another question: How does Christ's shed blood—His **DEATH**—make possible the forgiveness of spiritual sin—transgression of the spiritual law—the Ten Commandments? Simply by having **PAID THE PENALTY IN OUR STEAD—THAT'S HOW!** His beaten body paid in our stead the **PENALTY** we are suffering when the physical laws in the human body have been transgressed and have brought on the **PENALTY** of the sickness, disease or whatever—sometimes the first death!

To say there is no such thing as physical sin, as has been said by self-professing intellectuals, is **NOT** intellectual—it is rank **STUPIDITY, IGNORANCE** or **WILLFUL PERVERSION OF PLAIN SIMPLE TRUTH!**

Some Lack the Faith

The important point here, however, is that some in the Church of God at Corinth *did* lack the faith to be healed—or else carelessly took the broken bread at Passover in an unworthy manner.

And **WHAT WAS THE RESULT?** They were physically weak or sick or had died. **THAT WAS THE PENALTY.** They did not in faith accept Christ's broken body as payment of the penalty, which, if they had, would have by a God-given miracle been removed from them, and they would have been **HEALED!**

But now it is **IMPORTANT** that we note carefully that the **RESULT** of this lack of sufficient faith **DID NOT DISFELLOWSHIP**

them from the Church! Disfellowshipping is the penalty for causing divisions and offenses (Romans 16:17-18). That is important!

If one in the Church of God today lacks the FAITH *that he should have*, the penalty is NOT disfellowshipping. The penalty is that he still PAYS THE PENALTY in the form of sickness, disease or even death. He himself pays it! Too bad—when Christ already had paid it FOR HIM. But he should be *helped* to receive faith—not be disfellowshipped.

The Crackers-and-Cheese Diet

Back in 1927 or 1928, when I had only recently at the time learned God's truth about healing, I heard a most apt example of this.

We did not yet cross the Atlantic in airplanes in those days. A man was sailing to Europe in a transatlantic steamship. He felt the meals aboard ship would be too expensive. So he packed in a suitcase a full supply of crackers and cheese. After three days' sailing, he was becoming truly fed up on crackers and cheese. A steward had noticed that this passenger never went into the ship's dining room and asked him about it.

"Oh, I can't afford to eat in there," replied the passenger. Then he learned that MEALS WERE INCLUDED—no extra charge!

How many in God's Church today are on a crackers-and-cheese ration, when *HEALING IS INCLUDED*? JESUS CHRIST PAID FOR YOUR HEALING!

Why do *YOU* go on PAYING THE PENALTY or else paying the DOCTOR BILLS or probably BOTH, when Jesus Christ paid it all FOR YOU?

The Weak in Faith Helped, Not Condemned

Now notice the important teaching in Romans 14.

"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye"—do not condemn or disfellowship—"but not to doubtful disputations." Or, "not for disputes over opinions" (RSV).

Verse 2 (Romans 14): Although one believes (has faith) to eat meats, another, weak in faith, eats only vegetables. But the very fact he has *not yet* received FULL FAITH from God does not bar him from God's Church. Rather this chapter in Romans teaches "RECEIVE HIM"—HELP the weak in faith. The ministers should teach him more about the WAY to achieve more faith.

And so with the member of God's Church who has not as

yet achieved full FAITH to BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISES for the physical healing. He *should have* that faith! He may pay himself the penalty of the sickness or disease if he lacks faith to believe Christ paid the penalty for him—to rely on GOD'S PROMISE to heal.

So therefore, if a member has not yet grown in the FAITH OF CHRIST to absolutely KNOW he can rely on God's PROMISE of healing—and if this member does call in the doctor or go to the medical profession for help, God's Church does not condemn him—but rather, God's ministers should encourage such a one to GROW IN FAITH until he can rely on God instead of relying on MAN.

Once more to the question, Did God raise up the medical profession for our day?

EMPHATICALLY *NO!*

Remember, God sentenced Adam's world to being CUT OFF from Him for the 6,000 years now almost ended. God said, in effect: "You, Adam, have made the choice for your human family. You have REJECTED me. *GO*, therefore, and form your own governments, your own religions, your own human concepts of the gods you will serve and worship—develop your own fund of knowledge." God, however, reserved the prerogative of calling to HIS service such comparative few as He should choose to carry out his special commission.

To those whom God *has called*, He has revealed IN HIS WORD to them that HE is *Yahweh-Rapha*—their HEALING God—the God who HEALS those who believe.

What Is the Medical Profession?

What, then, is the medical profession? Remember, it is only one of several of the so-called healing arts DEVELOPED BY MAN. My parents, when I was a young boy, used a homeopathic doctor. There are osteopaths—although they now also practice medicine and are accepted by the medical profession. There are chiropractors—and I personally knew the founder of chiropractic, B.J. Palmer of Davenport, Iowa.

But the medical fraternity is by far the largest in number. They have allotted a very huge sum of money to operate a LOBBY in Washington, D.C., to influence government legislation. The medical profession has become so powerful that an M.D. could quarantine even the President of the United States and enforce his virtual imprisonment in the White House. In such an instance, the medical profession has even MORE POWER than the President of the United States!

It is well to UNDERSTAND this! The medical profession has the GOVERNMENT on their side!

A well-meaning, Bible-believing man and wife (*not* members of the Worldwide Church of God) had an 11-year-old son with diabetes. They had been administering insulin as prescribed by medical doctors. Then a "divine healer" came along. I know nothing of the credibility of this healer except what I read in the newspapers—he certainly was not a minister of the Worldwide Church of God.

This "divine healer" anointed and prayed for the lad, and the parents took him off the insulin. The parents, according to news dispatches, were staunch in faith—but after removing the insulin the boy died. The parents were arrested and taken to jail, charged with manslaughter. I did not learn of the final legal disposition of this case in the courts.

I cite this, however, as a PRECAUTION! I might mention, too, that insulin is not a drug or medicine, but a substance or hormone that the human body should normally generate. Medical doctors prescribe insulin in cases where the body is not of itself generating the substance.

In the case of the illness of a child, God does heal—but remember Jesus said, "According to your FAITH be it unto you." If faith is lacking—or if in any case the child dies—the parents certainly run the risk of criminal prosecution if they have failed to call in a doctor.

In the case history described above, I do not know all the facts. Press reports indicated the parents had "supreme faith." But was the healer a fake or a self-appointed healer uncalled and unused by God?

Again, God says, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, *because* we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (I John 3:22). The press stories on this case would indicate that the parents were not "commandment-keepers." But, on the other hand, God says, "Therefore to him that *knoweth* to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). If the parents had not *known* the command to keep God's commandments, God would not have held this ignorance against them. Also it is a question, in the case of administering insulin, as to whether it was possibly not right in God's sight that it be supplied—since instead of being a drug, it was a substance supplying what the body itself normally should generate and supply.

I do not judge in such a case as I have mentioned—because

I do not know all the facts. I MERELY CAUTION THE READER: If a sick child dies, and a doctor has not been called, the parents *may* find themselves in trouble with the law!

What Is God's Will?

God's Church does not judge or condemn those who, through lack of faith, utilize the services of the medical profession. God's Church merely says to you, HEALING IS INCLUDED—Christ already has PAID for it—it is a PROMISE of God (with conditions of obedience and faith), and it is one of God's BENEFITS which is INCLUDED in the gift of His grace!

Speaking of God's BENEFITS reminds me of a case in point. I had been called to the bedside of an elderly lady for anointing and prayer for healing.

"If I anoint you and pray for God to heal you, will you believe—will you *be sure* that you will be healed?" I merely wanted assurance that she BELIEVED GOD.

"Well," she replied, "I know God *can* heal me—if it's His will—but I can't be sure of His will."

"Well," I responded, "it's too bad that you don't know whether it is God's will to forgive all your sins so you might be saved."

"Oh, I know it's His will to forgive my sins and give me salvation," she hastened to reply.

"Oh yes," I continued, "you know you can rely on God's *promise* in Psalms 103—which I will read: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his *benefits*: Who forgiveth *all* thine iniquities. . . .' You really KNOW He will from that scripture, do you?"

"Yes, I can rely on *that* promise with no doubts whatever!"

"Well," I pursued, "will you read, with your own eyes, the rest of that SAME SENTENCE?" I handed to her my Bible, opened to Psalm 103, verse 3, and she read aloud, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; *who healeth all thy diseases.*"

"How does it come," I asked with a smile, "that you really believe the first half of that verse, but not the last half?"

"Well, I guess," she said, "I just never noticed that God's promise to HEAL is given right alongside His promise of forgiving sin."

The woman then believed. She was healed.

One of God's Benefits

Notice, HEALING is one of the BENEFITS God gives us along with salvation. Like the meals on the steamship, IT IS INCLUDED—no extra charge. Jesus already PAID FOR IT!

And God wants His people to learn to *rely on Him!*

One intellectual writing on healing said, "It is quite evident that God is not healing today in the same manner or to the same degree that He did in early New Testament times."

That intellectual is simply IGNORANT of the Word of God, the promises of God, the power and the will of God! He had had no *experience* in healing. He was studying the subject carnally and rationally, as a scholar—as one, like Job, who said, "... Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. . . . I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear"—but Job had not *yet* come to really KNOW God (Job 42:3, 5). But when God revealed Himself to Job, he said, "... I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6).

This same scholarly and erroneous teaching continued, "It is equally evident that the physiological and medical expertise of the end of the 20th century is far advanced over that of the middle of the first century."

The above was sent out to our ministers, UNAUTHORIZED, in an attempt, craftily influenced and inspired by Satan, to DO AWAY WITH THE BASIC TRUTHS JESUS CHRIST HAD PLACED IN GOD'S CHURCH! It was sent out with the *UNauthorized* statement that this erroneous teaching MUST BE PREACHED—and that it *superseded* past teachings and earlier understandings which Jesus Christ, the LIVING HEAD of God's Church, had, through His apostle, made the very FOUNDATIONAL TEACHINGS of Christ in God's CHURCH!

It is part of a whole new, erroneous and corrupt teaching encouraging faith in MEN and doubt in God (Romans 14:23)—subtly prepared and distributed to ministers without the knowledge of Christ's apostle—though it was falsely represented to have had his approval. The one responsible for this entire comprehensive effort to replace CHRIST'S and GOD'S TRUTH with carnal pedantic scholarship and FALSE TEACHING has been excommunicated—and this entire UNauthorized teaching made null and void BY JESUS CHRIST through His apostle!

GOD is still on His throne and Jesus Christ is there with Him—and THEY will not leave nor forsake the true CHURCH OF GOD!

AS SHOWN BY THE QUOTE ABOVE, THE ENTIRE APPROACH TO

this false teaching was the secular, carnal concept that perhaps God, like the professor emeritus, may have once done splendid things, but now has grown old, senile and lost His power. Poor God!

God Is the Same!

But God tells me He is THE SAME, yesterday, today and forever! He is today the SAME GOD, with the *same power* He had in the first century—and has had eternally.

Today Christ does not lead His apostle or any in God's Church to heal indiscriminately the sick encountered among the general public—as Jesus did, and the first apostles did until SUPPRESSED by worldly powers.

The great commission and ministry for God's Church today is in Jesus' prophecy concerning it in Matthew 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end [of this age] come." The proclamation worldwide of Christ's KINGDOM message was the sign Jesus gave by which we might know when the end of the present world was imminent. But He said nothing about healing going out to the general public!

Rather, what we do find in the New Testament is in James 5:14-15: "Is any sick among you?" That is, among you brethren in God's Church. "Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of"—meaning BY AUTHORITY 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."

God's Will Expressed

This carnal scholarly Systematic Theology Project mentioned above attempts to refute this plain Word-of-God PROMISE of healing in God's Church. With the very cunning inspired by Satan, this comment is made to cause DOUBT in the definite WORD OF GOD: "Although this one statement appears to be written without qualification, the condition 'if it be God's will' was no doubt tacitly understood."

On reading that, I was absolutely flabbergasted! NOWHERE IN THE BIBLE DOES GOD SAY, "IF it be God's will"! This very verse, along with many others I have given you, EXPRESSES God's will!

Notice that sly, subtle *IF*. That is satanic! When Satan was trying to overthrow Jesus Christ in his greatest temptation at-

tempt—after Jesus had fasted 40 days and 40 nights—Satan said twice to Jesus, TEMPTING Him, “*IF* thou be the Son of God.” That little two-letter word *IF* is just about the biggest little word in the English language! It is intended to cause DOUBT in GOD’S WORD. It was used by Satan in trying to overthrow Christ. Satan inspired it in this Theology Project to try to overthrow faith within God’s ministers—and within God’s Church!

With all my being, I CONDEMN that kind of teaching—and the one responsible for handing it out to God’s ministers (though undoubtedly he himself did not write it) has been disfellowshipped and is NO LONGER A MEMBER of God’s Church. And that Satan-inspired teaching is going out of God’s Church as well!

God’s Promise

Now that diabolical teaching about the passage in James 5:14-15 requires a complete refutation—to make the true GOD-intended meaning clear beyond DOUBT.

As a result of this insidious attempt to cause DOUBT in the Word of God, many have said, “This Theology Project teaches that James 5:14-15 *IS NOT A PROMISE!*”

But it *is* a definite, plain, clear PROMISE from GOD! I pray for God’s mercy on those who allowed Satan to inspire them to cast DOUBT on the holy, sacred WORD OF GOD!

Look at those words again. “And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins [undoubtedly referring to physical sin], they shall be forgiven him.”

If THAT IS NOT A *PROMISE* then we have NO PROMISE of the forgiveness of sins or of salvation and the gift of eternal life!

Faith Is a Condition

The point is made in this now null-and-void teaching that there are conditions. That is true—but WHAT conditions? Within the very statement in James 5:15, it plainly says “. . . the prayer of FAITH. . .” Yes, FAITH is a condition.

In some instances where Jesus healed, the FAITH for healing was supplied by the one healed—like the woman who had spent all she had on physicians and had grown worse. Jesus said to her, “Daughter, THY FAITH hath made thee whole.” Again Jesus said elsewhere, “According to your faith be it unto you.”

But, in other cases the one healed did not supply the faith—Jesus Himself did! So what does this teach us? Definitely healing is conditioned on FAITH—either on the part of the one need-

ing healing or on the part of the minister of God who prays and anoints.

I have prayed for and anointed hundreds. There have been a great many miraculous healings. Some with cancer in an advanced stage were HEALED—while others at this stage were relieved of the intense pain, though they died and will have their healing IN THE RESURRECTION. More on this a little later. One woman with leukemia in the hospital with apparently less than 24 hours to live, and with tubes in her ankles for blood transfusions, tubes in her nostrils—a horrible sight—was healed instantly when I anointed and prayed for her (after putting all nurses out of the room). She left the hospital the next day.

On the other hand I have prayed for others where I myself had the same faith, yet they were not healed—because *they* lacked the faith.

In James 5:14-15, the very scripture here gives *a condition*: “the prayer of faith.”

Keep His Commandments

Also, I John 3:22, mentioned before: “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”

I personally know of a case of a man who wanted healing, but stubbornly refused to keep God's commandments. He was NOT healed.

Oh yes, there are conditions—but God tells those conditions. But NEVER does the Bible say, “IF it's God's will.” NEVER! Rather, God's Word says, “Be ye not unwise, but UNDERSTANDING what the will of the Lord is” (Ephesians 5:17). The Bible is His Word, where He tells us what is His will!

Now as to GOD'S PROMISES. The Bible is full of God's PROMISES—and God expects us to BELIEVE them.

Perhaps the outstanding example is the *promises* on which YOUR very salvation and mine depend.

Notice: “Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, *to confirm the promises* made unto the fathers” (Romans 15:8).

And who were the fathers to whom the promises were made? “The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers . . .” (Acts 3:13).

YOUR SALVATION depends on those PROMISES made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! Yet notice: “These all died *in faith, not having* received the promises . . .” (Hebrews 11:13).

God's Promises Are Sure

WHAT, THEN? Does not God KEEP HIS PROMISES? Here in this very FAITH CHAPTER of the Bible, all the way through, it shows Abraham's FAITH, Noah's FAITH, Moses' faith, even the harlot Rahab's faith. Then, "And these all, having obtained a good report through FAITH, *received not the promise*: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us [born long since] should not be made perfect" (verses 39-40).

In other words, GOD IS FAITHFUL! God's PROMISES are FIRM—they *do* mean what they say. The fathers will receive the PROMISES IN THE RESURRECTION—along with many of us born millennia later!

GOD'S PROMISES ARE SURE!

Although I have written this before, let me recount here how I learned this lesson of FAITH.

My conversion and baptism had occurred in the spring of 1927. By 1933 I had come to have strong faith—there had been many miraculous answers to prayer! Then my father was stricken, early summer 1933, with a stroke. I prayed for his healing. I anointed him. I BELIEVED! HE BELIEVED! I prayed all night—yet at 9:40 the next morning he died.

That was a terrible SHOCK to my faith—but it most certainly did not destroy my faith. But I had to UNDERSTAND! I had claimed GOD'S PROMISE in James 5:14-15 and OTHER PROMISES for his healing. To UNDERSTAND, I did not try to use human reason, as exemplified in this Theology Project. I went to the faith chapter of the Bible for UNDERSTANDING.

And there I found it, in what I have written immediately above. GOD DID NOT BREAK HIS PROMISE! His promise was SURE—unbreakable. As sure as the rising and setting of tomorrow's sun. In Hebrews 11 God showed me that HIS PROMISE FOR MY FATHER'S HEALING REMAINS SURE! He, like Abraham and the fathers, died BEFORE receiving it. It is still SURE—not "IF it is God's will."

But there is LIFE AFTER this life.

And, in human consciousness, a fraction of a second after losing consciousness in death, we shall wake up IN THE RESURRECTION. God has planned that there be an interval of UNCONSCIOUSNESS—just as if it did not even exist—until we LIVE in the resurrection! I am still having patience—and FAITH. My father's healing is SURE! He shall receive the healing God PROMISED!

Rely on God

God *has not* promised that, by continual healing, we shall never die. As in Adam *all die*—"it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

God has positively PROMISED to heal. And He names the conditions—OBEDIENCE and FAITH. But God has not told us how soon or when He will heal. HE EXPECTS US TO TRUST HIM WITH THAT!

That most certainly should not weaken or destroy our faith—
IT SHOULD MAKE OUR FAITH MORE SURE!

I know, in this deceived and evil world of Satan's, it seems that the worst thing that can happen is death. Humans not knowing God get to thinking that death ENDS ALL. That's why some commit suicide—supposing that the suicide PUTS AN END to their troubles. But virtually in the same instant that they lose consciousness in death, they wake up IN THE JUDGMENT—their problems not ended—but with a MURDER of self-destruction now facing them!

Our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, all died IN FAITH. My own human father died IN FAITH. God's PROMISES to them are yet SURE.

Instead of causing us to lose faith, this wonderful knowledge should STRENGTHEN our faith—we know we may place ourselves in GOD'S HANDS and RELY on Him for healing. The most remarkable and supposedly impossible healings I have experienced, as a result of my own prayers, have occurred after my father's death. God did not let that experience weaken FAITH IN GOD AND HIS PROMISES!

God Alone Heals

I have been frankly aroused to indignation to learn of this false, faith-shattering teaching in this supposedly scholarly theological manual, wherein ministers were literally instructed to encourage God's people to TRUST IN MAN—in the "advanced expertise" of the medical profession—and to discourage them from having faith in God. I realize that Satan is the real culprit—that those who prepared this manual did not intend harm—and were misled and deceived into supposing they were teaching truth.

Jesus Christ, through His apostle, teaches ministers to ENCOURAGE RELIANCE ON THE LIVING CHRIST, rather than on man.

Medical practice may be the best thing that carnal MAN, *cut*

off from God and His revealed truth, has in 6,000 years come up with.

Do we ever need doctors? Yes we do—but the true people of God do not need them to compete with God as our GOD-HEALER (God's name is also *Yahweh-Rapha*—our GOD-HEALER)! God is a jealous God and does not allow any other to do what He alone can do—HEAL!

We do, in this modern degenerated day, need doctors for child delivery. A doctor can render real help in the case of a broken arm or leg—but even then it is GOD who heals, though the doctor may properly bind it up so that it may heal.

What about the ramifications of sickness and disease? As stated, medical practice may be the best thing MAN without God has been able to produce. If a Church member simply lacks the faith to be healed by the living Christ—if he has more faith in medical “expertise” than in God and God's promises—God's Church will not judge or condemn him if he puts himself or his child under medical treatment. If that is the best he has faith in, better let him have what help MAN can give, RATHER THAN NO HELP AT ALL!

Healing Is a Miracle

God's ministers should NOT high-pressure any against medical care—but definitely they *should* encourage Christians to build and receive FAITH in the living CHRIST.

But God's people should be taught that healing is a MIRACLE and not to be considered lightly. The definition of a miracle is: “An event beyond the power of any known physical laws to produce; a supernatural occurrence produced by the power of God.”

Healing definitely is a MIRACLE. But we must never forget our God is a MIRACLE-WORKING GOD! He is the supernatural GOD—not man. Yet He intended man to have a direct and intimate *contact* with Him through Christ. Those called are called to become His begotten children, and by growing in grace and Christ's knowledge in spiritual character, to be BORN, by a resurrection, INTO THE VERY GOD FAMILY. The human potential is that WE SHALL BECOME VERY GOD—even as Christ—firstborn of many brethren—already IS!

And His people, whom He has called, must remember that “without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that HE IS, and that he is *a rewarder* of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). And He is the GIVER OF FAITH.

CLAIMING GOD'S BLESSINGS

Let's see if we can pick up the loose ends and put them together. We need clearly to understand HEALING as Christ put it in His Church for us today.

Today the medical profession is a much greater factor than when Jesus taught and healed. Correct UNDERSTANDING, as Christ intends for God's Church today, necessitates open-mindedly seeing it *in the light* of God's revealed teaching for TODAY.

To clear the air we need to understand WHY *this is not God's world*. We need to understand how this world has developed and changed and WHY God has called His Church to come out of this world and to be a separate and peculiar people—GOD'S PEOPLE!

The Pre-Adamic World

We need to clear our minds of today's concepts and confusion—to UNDERSTAND the beginning of human life, the world into which Jesus came, and the changed world out from which God calls us today. We need to begin by refreshing our minds on what led up to MAN'S creation.

God created angels before the existence of the physical universe—immortal spirit beings, each individually and separately created. Then God created the heavens—the vast material universe—and the earth.

But understand this basic truism. God's creating is a DUAL process. In the physical universe, what God created was perfect

as far as the first stage of creation which had been produced. But God placed angels on the earth to be used by Him in the *finishing* stage—to utilize the material already created—working with its elements to beautify and finish earth's creation in physical splendor and glory.

This was merely the testing ground to qualify the angels to finish the creation of the entire limitless universe—all other planets.

As God's principle of creating is a dual process, so was the creation of angels—and so is it with man.

The *finishing* stage of angelic creation, as it is with MAN, was creation of holy and righteous CHARACTER, which must emanate from GOD. That is something which cannot be created instantaneously by fiat. It requires a process of development in which the created beings must MAKE THE CHOICE, acquiesce in and seek this righteousness from God.

Angels, as was man afterward, were created in their initial stage with MINDS with which to think, acquire knowledge, reason, make choices and decisions. God first instructed them.

God's own holy and righteous CHARACTER is the WAY OF LIFE of HIS SPIRITUAL LAW. It is the way, the principle and attitude of LOVE—outgoing toward God first of all, in reliance, faith and obedience; and, secondly, outgoing concern for the welfare and good of one's fellows. This LAW was made the basis of THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD, which He first set over the angels that they might proceed in what God purposed for them in harmony, unity, cooperation and peace—in united effort.

On the throne of the earth God set a cherub—a superarchangel named Lucifer—to administer God's GOVERNMENT.

But Lucifer defected. He led his angels into rebellion against God and God's WAY OF LOVE, into the way of GET—vanity, lust and greed, jealousy and envy, competition and strife, rebellion against authority.

Instead of CONSTRUCTION—finishing earth's creation—Lucifer's way led to DESTRUCTION. Chaos and confusion and decay were the results.

Lucifer was DISQUALIFIED to rule God's GOVERNMENT. In his state of perversion Lucifer's name was changed by God to Satan the devil, and *his* angels became demons (that is, the third part of all angels who had been under Lucifer).

Now (Psalm 104:30) in six days God RENEWED the face of the earth for MAN.

God now had set out on the supreme act of creation—REPRO-

CLUDING HIMSELF through mortal and physical MAN. Though composed of matter from the earth, man was formed in God's own likeness—form and shape.

The MAN and woman He created were the *first stage* in the DUALITY of *man's* creation. This was the PHYSICAL state—the material with which to form and create the SPIRITUAL phase.

Man—and God

As the *physical* stage of man's creation began with Adam, so the *spiritual* phase began with Christ.

Adam was given an opportunity to qualify to succeed Satan on earth's throne. But to qualify it was necessary that he *reject* Satan's way of rebellion and GET, and accept God's way of GIVE and obedience.

As God had first thoroughly instructed Lucifer and his angels before placing them on the earth, so God first instructed Adam and Eve—in His LOVE, His righteousness, His WAY, and His government.

In the Garden of Eden where God placed the man and woman were two symbolic trees. One symbolized God's Holy Spirit and the gift of eternal life upon obedience. The other, the tree of the "knowledge of good and evil," represented—IF they partook of its forbidden fruit—taking *to themselves* GOD's prerogative of determining the knowledge of good and of evil—of deciding *for themselves* the WAY of righteousness or of sin—the way of determining CHARACTER. And this, of course, meant REBELLION against God's REVEALED knowledge.

Satan was not allowed to contact Adam until his Maker first instructed him in THE WAY of righteous character. Then the wily Satan got to Adam by deceiving his wife. But Adam was not deceived and willfully REJECTED GOD AS THE SOURCE OF REVEALED BASIC KNOWLEDGE as well as his God and Ruler.

Holy and righteous CHARACTER can come only by the free choice of its recipient. Adam had made the decision for his HUMAN FAMILY—except those God should specially call to make their own decision.

When God "drove out the man" from the Garden of Eden and barred reentrance, ". . . LEST he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Genesis 3:22-24), God said, in effect: "You have made the decision. You were instructed personally by your Maker. You did not believe what He said—you rebelled against Him as Ruler and Revealer of basic KNOWLEDGE. You have decided for the whole world that

shall spring from you, except such as I shall choose to specially call in preparation for MY KINGDOM, which shall follow the day of MAN.

“Therefore I SENTENCE YOU and your world, which you shall sire, to 6,000 years of being CUT OFF from me. Go, produce YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE, form your OWN RELIGIONS, your own GOVERNMENTS, your own CIVILIZATION. And after the 6,000 years I have allotted to you for YOUR civilization, I shall by my divine POWER restore my GOVERNMENT and establish MY KINGDOM—my BORN FAMILY ruling the earth.”

The World Cut Off

And so THIS WORLD'S CIVILIZATION was developed by MAN, cut off from God and the revelation of God's KNOWLEDGE, yet craftily and invisibly swayed and led by Satan in Satan's WAY.

Man has NOT BEEN FREE TO VOLUNTARILY SEEK AND GAIN CONTACT with GOD. So said Jesus!

Look at the historic FACTS! Noah did not seek God—God called Noah for a definite project. Abraham did not seek God. God called Abraham, and Abraham responded and obeyed without argument.

Moses did not seek God. And when God called him to lead the Israelites out of Egyptian slavery, Moses protested: “I can't do it. I have a speech impediment—I stutter.” Jonah did not seek God—and when God called him to a special assignment, he tried to run away in a ship.

Isaiah did not seek God or the office of prophet—he protested he was a man of unclean lips, until God cleansed them. The same with Jeremiah, who gave the excuse that he was too young. Did King David seek God or the kingship? No, David was interested only in herding sheep.

Jesus came saying, “NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him” (John 6:44). And His 3½-year public ministry proved it. Of the many thousands who heard the Master Himself, only 120 believed Him after 3½ years.

Peter and his brother Andrew wanted to be fishermen—and also John and James. And Matthew wanted to be a tax collector. Jesus said to His twelve, “You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.”

The apostle Paul did not seek Christ—he was on a hate campaign to imprison Christians until Christ struck him down blind and revealed to him the GREAT COMMISSION he was to carry to the Gentiles.

Last and least, the very *last* thing I wanted to do was to become a minister of Christ's gospel. I wanted to be an advertising man in the business world—until God CONQUERED me and after real conversion committed to me the GREAT COMMISSION for our time.

It is important that we KEEP IN MIND that this is NOT God's world—it is MAN'S world, cut off from God and God's ways, yet deceived and led by SATAN.

The people of China, India, Southeast Asia, Indonesia and many populous areas of the world have been so completely cut off from God, few in those countries know anything about Him.

God called ancient Israel out of Egypt to be His separate and peculiar people—under HIS REVEALED LAWS. Yet He offered only their prophets His Holy Spirit. They were carnal-minded. They said to Samuel they wanted to be like the people of this world and have a king—rejecting God as King (I Samuel 8:7).

Healing Arts in Jesus' Day

Into such a world Jesus came—a world that did not accept Him or His teachings.

Now the medical profession antedates the time of Christ by many generations. However, man's development in the healing arts and medicine was then quite elementary compared to its status today.

Let's UNDERSTAND and fix firmly in mind this TRUTH: The medical profession is one of THIS WORLD'S humanly devised phases of a man-made civilization—CUT OFF from God, but swayed and deceived by Satan!

Jesus had nothing to do with it. But I repeat, medical practice (and I use the word *practice* significantly) was then crude and undeveloped compared to the medical profession of the late 1970s. Jesus had compassion on the sick, the diseased, the blind and crippled. MAN'S civilization had not as yet developed a healing art that gave him much, if any, help. In His compassion and mercy for the people of Judah—God's chosen—He healed people of the general public as He came across them or they came to Him.

Jesus' ministry, as emphasized in the first chapter, was a DUAL ministry. He proclaimed the good news of the future KINGDOM OF GOD, and He healed the sick. Preaching and healing went hand in hand as a DUAL ministry. So with the first apostles.

Jesus did not come on a soul-saving crusade, but He *did* make forgiveness of spiritual sin possible by His SHED BLOOD on-the

CROSS OF DEATH—and He did also PAY THE PENALTY IN OUR STEAD for the broken laws that function in our physical bodies BY HIS STRIPES. I devoted some considerable space to that fact in an earlier chapter.

For emphasis I repeat: Jesus PAID THE PENALTY FOR US *of both physical and spiritual transgression*. He reconciled us to God by His shed blood and death (Romans 5:8-10), and by His stripes we are HEALED (Isaiah 53:5, I Peter 2:24). “Stripes” biblically means lashes given by a scourge or rod.

But now, when we come to the prophecy of the GREAT COMMISSION *in our day*, Jesus gave the proclamation of the KINGDOM OF GOD as the ONLY SIGN by which we might know when the end of this world—this DAY OF MAN—would come and His KINGDOM be set up to rule the earth. BUT, SIGNIFICANTLY, JESUS MENTIONED NOTHING ABOUT HEALING BEING PART OF THE GOSPEL PROCLAMATION TO ALL THE WORLD. Why?

Perhaps it is because we of Christ’s ministry do not have the faith of Peter, Paul, James and the early first-century apostles. And of *our* time Jesus said, “. . . when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8.) Or could it be because man’s world has developed a medical profession, which Jesus foreknew, so that the people uncalled of God would be far better cared for than those of the first century?

Our Day, Now

But what we do find is that healing today is FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD’S CHURCH, as per James 5:14-15.

I repeat, there are two conditions to healing: commandment keeping (I John 3:22) and faith (James 5:15). Commandment keeping has been restored to God’s Church today. And we *should* have faith, which is a gift of God, but we are almost out of faith today, and when we’re out of faith we’re out from GOD!

It seems so much easier today to just go to a doctor and TRUST IN MAN—MAN CUT OFF FROM GOD—than to RELY ON CHRIST and His PROMISES!

Especially when we are so well aware of the progress made by the medical profession in our day.

Forty-five years ago I spoke of the use of medicines and drugs as poisons. Written 32 years ago, the only booklet the Church had, until now, published on healing spoke of it as prescribing an opposite poison to counteract the poison of the body. Unlike all our other booklets it was transcribed from the recording of an ad-libbed broadcast. I said that the medical arithmetic was that one

poison plus one more poison equals NO poison, and I remarked that a student of second-grade arithmetic ought to know that one plus one does not equal zero!

In the early days of Ambassador College in the late '40s, our Dr. Ralph E. Merrill, M.D., and a pioneer member of the Church at Pasadena, said, "We doctors have been kept so busy treating those already sick that we haven't gotten around to much research into diet and other *causes* of illnesses." But for the past 15 or 20 years the medical people have made considerable progress in this area.

Further, it is true that today most doctors prescribe medicines *that are NOT poisons but rather are designed to help nature do its own healing.*

However NO MEDICINE—NO DOCTOR—can *HEAL!* I have never heard a medical doctor deny that statement. They do not claim to heal.

I am not saying that God's people should trust in doctors instead of relying on God and His PROMISES. I shall have more to say about those promises a little later before closing this booklet.

Understanding for Our Day

At this point we need to clear our UNDERSTANDING on two vital points:

1. God created MAN in His own image—after His own likeness. Man is wholly material flesh—yet there is a spirit essence in each human. Man was made to have a *special relationship with God*. Man's potential is to be BORN INTO the GOD FAMILY—changed from material to spirit composition.

Consequently, when God made MAN after His own kind—not after the dumb animal kind—God endowed man with near-creative powers. In the *sense* of designing and making out of already existing materials, man does have creative powers.

At the tower of Babel God said, ". . . and this they *begin* to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Genesis 11:6). Therefore, to put the brakes on man's misguided civilization development, God confounded their language.

Thereafter there was little progress in man's complicated educational and industrial development until after the invention of printing. Even then it took time for dissemination of knowledge by the printed word until man began to narrow the language gap. For a while French seemed to be making progress as the world's universal language, but today English has overtaken it.

Most civilization development has occurred only in the last 125 years—and technical knowledge and industrial development have more than doubled in the last two or three decades.

This is especially true in the practice of medicine and knowledge in that profession. The *fact* of man's ability and capacity for development reflects, not the glory of MAN, *but the creative might of our Maker* in creating man to have such abilities and capacities.

Yet we must remember this development is not always progress forward. Too often, under Satan's unrealized sway, with man CUT OFF FROM God and His *revealed* knowledge, it has been progress in reverse. As Isaiah 1:4 says of ancient Israel, "... they are gone away backward."

Satan has had access to deceive and sway man into Satan's CHARACTER IMAGE, whereas we must acquire and develop GOD'S CHARACTER IMAGE to be born into His Kingdom! It is vital that we REMEMBER THAT, in considering healing vs. medical reliance TODAY!

2. God reveals knowledge—to those called and having His Spirit—which man could not discover for himself.

God left it for Copernicus to make first discoveries about astronomy, for Newton to discover the law of gravity, Galileo to discover that the earth is round. Yet for UNDERSTANDING, bear in mind that what was accepted as science yesterday is sometimes the laughingstock of today—especially in the speculative and philosophical sciences. Revelation from GOD is the basis of real TRUTH.

The same principle pertains to what man *can DO*. The great advances in the medical field enable man to do for his human family many things he could not do 50 years ago, short of actual *healing*. God does for us (often by miracle) that which we are unable to do. God gave man talents, mind-power (physical) and abilities that He intended us to use and develop *under His guidance*, and always for His glory and toward our development in the holy, righteous CHARACTER of God.

To this end, God intends man to excel and improve—but never in a way to inflate vanity or detract from reliance on and trust in God. We must rely on GOD for guidance even in what we are made able to do for ourselves.

Righteous Character Must Be Developed

But the very PURPOSE of human life (God reproducing Himself) is this holy and righteous character development. AND IT IS

ACQUIRED, DEVELOPED and INCREASED primarily through OBE-
DIENCE AND FAITH.

I said earlier that God creates by the principle of DUALITY. UNDERSTAND THIS! I explained that the first stage of human crea-
tion was the physical creation, starting from Adam. The second
stage is the SPIRITUAL CREATION, beginning with Christ.

But even in the conversion of one called of God in the present
age, that conversion is brought about by the DUALITY principle.
First, upon being called of God, granted real repentance and
being CONQUERED by Him, and having faith in Christ, with
baptism we are PROMISED the gift of the Holy Spirit. That is the
first stage. There is a definite time when one receives God's Holy
Spirit. But only Jesus (John 3:34) was not given the Spirit by
measure.

All other humans do receive initially only a certain measure of
God's Spirit. Then we must GROW in grace and the knowledge of
Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:18). That is the second phase of the spiri-
tual creation.

The natural-born human has only the human spirit—impart-
ing the power of intellect. Yet all such human minds are confined
to knowledge of the physical and material. And by the fact that
Satan is prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2), he broad-
casts—surcharges the air with his ATTITUDE of SELF—vanity and
love only toward self. We call this attitude Satan instills human
nature. We acquire it from earliest childhood gradually.

Repentance is change *from* that attitude. Through God's
Holy Spirit joining with our spirit, we *acquire—become partak-
ers of* (II Peter 1:4)—*the divine nature*.

But this initial stage of conversion does not eradicate human
nature. Real repentance is a change of WILLFUL INTENTION to
turn from the attitude Satan had injected.

I don't know (for God does not reveal) what percentage of
human nature is driven out and the divine nature GIVEN through
the initial measure of the Holy Spirit at conversion.

But to illustrate, let us suppose one receives one percent of
complete full measure of the Holy Spirit. Such a one might be,
shall we suppose, 99 percent actuated by the selfish nature. Possi-
bly that may vary in different individuals.

Principle Illustrated by Parables

Jesus illustrated this principle by the parables of the pounds
and of the talents. In Luke 19:11-27, Jesus is pictured as giving
His ten servants one pound each. This unit of British money

symbolized a measure of the Holy Spirit. For sake of clarity let us suppose it represents one percent of the full measure of God's Spirit. When Christ returns from heaven as KING of kings and LORD of lords, each of the ten is called to give account. The first had GROWN in grace and Christ's knowledge ten times from where he started. In the Kingdom of God—in the next life—He is given rule over ten cities.

The second servant had increased his original spiritual stock-in-trade five times. He was not saved by his works but rewarded according to his works. He was given rule over five cities.

But the third had gained NOTHING. He thought his original conversion would get him into God's Kingdom without any spiritual growth. He had the one pound taken away from him. He lost out totally. He did not make it into God's Kingdom! In other words, if we do not GROW in God's spiritual character, we LOSE the salvation we thought we were starting with.

We GROW in God's Spirit—receiving increased measure—by whatever extent we overcome the SELF and Satan-injected attitude, and *increase* in God's LOVE, FAITH, OBEDIENCE—and in PRAYER and BIBLE STUDY.

The means God has given His Church for this development is primarily our part in loyally standing behind Christ's apostle in supporting the GREAT COMMISSION. In fact that is the primary PURPOSE of calling some to conversion NOW instead of after Christ comes to rule and Satan is bound.

Means of Spiritual Growth

But another important means God gave His people of our time for spiritual growth is RELYING ON HIM AND HIS PROMISES FOR HEALING.

Let me help you UNDERSTAND. True, God does for us that which we *cannot* do for ourselves. HEALING is something we *cannot* do for ourselves—something doctors, medicines or knives CANNOT do.

Do not misunderstand. Doctors may be a real HELP—because they have specialized in learning many things humans *can* do. Again I refer, IN PRINCIPLE, to child delivery and binding and setting a broken arm or leg. Today doctors can do for us *many other things* possible for a human to do short of actual healing.

But the VERY FACT that two *conditions* to miraculous healing by God are obedience and faith *requires* the *exercise* of, and therefore GROWTH in, obedience and faith.

Jesus said, “. . . whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, *that will*

I do [a PROMISE], that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13).

But My Father Died

Finally, a most important matter to UNDERSTAND!

What if one relies on God for healing and DIES? I've heard so many refer to this old bromide to justify lack of faith that I want now finally to answer that DOUBT with God's TRUTH!

My conversion occurred in the spring of 1927. I first learned about HEALING in August of 1927—through the miraculous healing of my wife. I was learning rapidly in those days to TRUST GOD.

In the spring of 1933 I was visiting my father on his farm near Oregon City, Oregon. That evening around sundown my father told me he had repented and wanted Christ's salvation. I was to baptize him next morning.

My father had been a solid church member all his life in a respected Protestant denomination. He was what everyone called a good man. He never used profanity, tobacco or strong drink. I knew of no bad habits. He owed no man any money.

He had a deep bass voice—had sung for years in a male quartet. He could fill an auditorium with no amplification clear down on lower C. I know of none who can do that today. When later I came into possession of a personally autographed record by Caruso, I was astonished to recognize the same voice color or tonal *quality*, except in the higher range, that my father had—although he had but little voice training.

That night he sang out, with gleaming eye and joyous voice, the old hymn "Praise Him, Praise Him." Then suddenly, a STROKE!

I had been ordained in 1931, about 3½ years after conversion. I anointed and prayed for my father. I BELIEVED! *He* believed! I continued praying for him through the night in FAITH! Yet at 9:40 the next morning, he died!

That was my first experience in seeing one anointed and prayed over for healing die. Several astonishing healings had resulted from my anointing and praying.

I cannot say I was not shaken—and I can understand how others may be in such a case. But it *did not destroy my faith!* I prayed, asking God to give me HIS UNDERSTANDING!

He led me to the faith chapter in the Bible—Hebrews 11—and I prayerfully studied. There I found the answer. Faith is the ASSURANCE—the EVIDENCE—of what is NOT SEEN! Faith *pre-*

cedes the requested result. And faith is the ASSURANCE God gives us *until* the petition is answered. Faith is BELIEVING WHAT GOD SAYS!

Adam did not believe what God told him face to face. Faith is relying on the veracity of God—trusting that what God has PROMISED He will perform.

A promise I have often relied on is in Psalms 37:5, Moffatt translation: “Leave all to him, rely on him, and he will see to it.”

Believer Relies on God’s Promises

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

God has given us MANY PROMISES. God *promises* (Romans 5:10) “. . . we shall be saved by his [Jesus’] LIFE.” God *promised* salvation and eternal life through Abraham. “Now to Abraham and his seed were the PROMISES [of eternal life] made” (Galatians 3:16). They were repromised to Isaac and Jacob. Jesus Christ came to CONFIRM the PROMISES made unto the fathers (Romans 15:8). And Abraham, “. . . being not weak in faith [as so many are today] . . . staggered not at the PROMISE of God through unbelief [as do many today]; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being FULLY PERSUADED that, what he [God] had PROMISED, he was able also to perform” (Romans 4:19-21).

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

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

I could not vouch for the fact that FAITH was present in all such cases—I cannot judge others; only God can. The same letter gives the following, striking home to me, in contending against God’s PROMISES to heal on faith: “What about the many of our dead we have buried—Mrs. Loma Armstrong [the wife of my youth who died at age 75½], your son Dick . . .” and four others.

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

Proclaiming the World's Only and Sure Hope!

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

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

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

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

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

Frankly, it makes me a little indignant, as I fully believe it does the living **CHRIST**, to find people exalting the advances and "expertise" of medical doctors, while at the same time denying that God's **PROMISES** *are* promises—discrediting faith in God, excusing their lack of trusting **GOD** while they argue for trusting **MAN!**

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

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

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

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

Look to the Glories Ahead

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

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

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

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

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

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

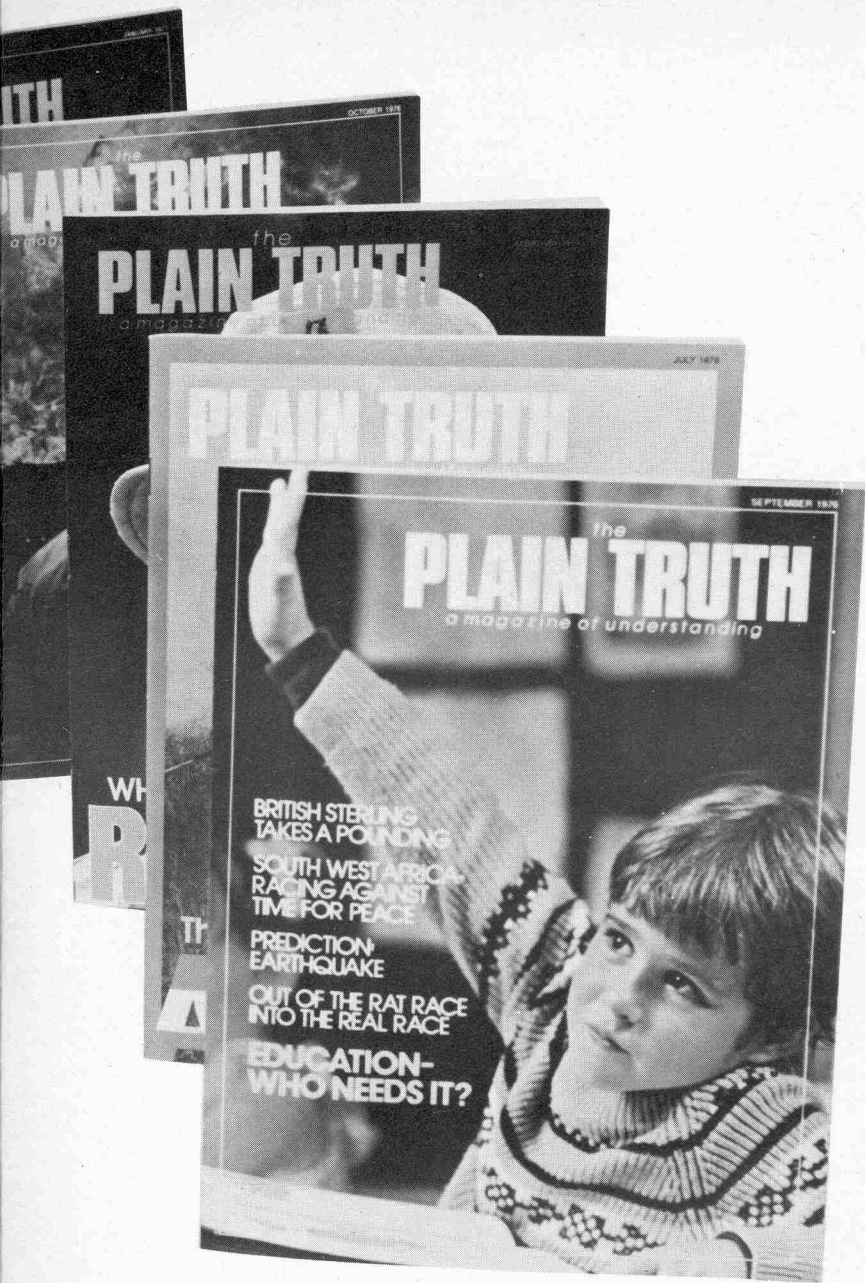
God does not expect His ministers to make your decisions for you—and God’s Church will not sit in judgment of you if you go to a doctor. But GOD says one of His BENEFITS, for which He makes no charge, is that He offers you the loving services of a MIRACLE WORKER—the *living* JESUS CHRIST!



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