

The Benefits of Divine Healing

Preached By Rev. Norman R. Allen

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THE Psalmist gives us a good example of praising the Lord for His goodness to the children of men. We hear testimonies in the meeting of appreciation for blessings which He showers on His people, and it is good to give praise to Him. We should do it all the time, even when we are going through hard places. It will give us courage to trust the Lord as we remember what He has done in times past.

"Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy nail*.

"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

"Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies;

"Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's" (Psalm 103:1-5).

Think of the benefits the Lord bestows: He saves us from our sins, sanctifies the redeemed ones, and baptizes the pure in heart. He makes marvelous changes in our lives. He heals our sick and afflicted bodies. He is able to undertake in our household expenses. He is a great God, and these are the benefits He has for those who believe Him.

Open your heart. Open your ears. Let your faith reach out to take hold of these blessings the Psalmist speaks about. In another Psalm we read: "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits" (Psalm 68:19).

When I was a young man, I drove a dump truck, and my boss would send me to a sand and gravel company where they had a big bunker with all kinds of gravel — different sizes and shapes — and he would tell me to get a load. I would back this truck in under the bunker, pull a lever, and the gravel would flow down and quickly fill my truck. I would then haul it down to the waterfront to a paving plant where it was used to make asphalt.

As I read this Psalm, I thought of that dump truck. We can just back up under the Lord's "bunker" and pull a lever and let Him load us up. That is what the Word tells us He can do. So when we may feel a little discouraged, and things are not going quite like we would want them to go, let us remember that God does load us with benefits. But we have to go where the benefits are.

I didn't load my truck at my house. I loaded it at the gravel pit. If you want God's blessings, a good place to get them is at the house of God. If you can't get to God's house, get down on your knees in your home or wherever you are, and make your plea to the Lord. He will listen as you yield to Him.

Brother Allen Crabtree used to testify of kneeling by an old stump in the woods when he called upon the Lord for forgiveness of his sins. The Lord heard him there, and gave him a whole new life which thrilled him until the day of his death. When in a dying condition, he could say, "There's a green light ahead." He could see his way safe into Glory.

We read that when Jacob was fleeing from his brother Esau, and he came to Bethel, he knelt by a stone and said: "Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not" (Genesis 28:16). What blessings he enjoyed that night when he saw the angels of God descending and ascending to Heaven, and God blessed him there.

We sing, "Calvary Covers It All," which means that the Blood Jesus shed for us can wash away all our sins. What a benefit that is for us! He died for our sins and rose for our justification. And the Scripture tells us that "Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12). So justification and sanctification are both imputed to us through Calvary. Also, through that Blood Jesus shed, we can have healing for our bodies. "With his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

You say, "I have alternative routes that I can take." Where do you take your watch to get it fixed? To the blacksmith? Where do you take your car to get it fixed? To the watchmaker? There is a policy among automobile dealers that you take your car back where you bought it for repairs. They know the most about that car. All right, let's ponder a question for a moment. Who made you? Where are you? Are you in God's hands today? Are you under God's care? Are you enjoying the benefits that Jesus bought on Calvary when He bared His back to those stripes so that we could be healed?

The efficacy of the Blood of Jesus has not diminished one iota! Can you say Amen to that? Then if you believe it, you can act upon it. It takes faith in your heart to believe the Word of God, and the Bible says that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). In these camp meeting teachings, when we hear God's Word it generates faith in our lives if we will take it in and let it work. We need to make it a part of our lives.

So if God has made our bodies, we can go back to Him for healing. I'm sure most of you who are here this morning can say that the Lord has healed you. Multitudes of people have felt the healing virtue in the Blood of Jesus.

When I was a boy, my little brother was stricken with spinal meningitis. I saw him have convulsions when only his heels and the back of his head would touch the bed, and his little body would be arched rigid and shaking. Sometimes it took two or three people to hold him down. The doctor wanted to take a spinal tap and check a lot of things, but my mother said, "We will wait." She prayed while she waited, and so did the ministers.

In those days there was a precious sister, a white-haired lady, who would come around and visit the homes where the children were sick. She was a good grandmother and she knew how to care for children. She told my mother, "God will heal him "

The day came when God took away those convulsions, and he never had another. Sometimes the convulsions had come as close as ten minutes apart, just one after another. The doctor said, "He'll never be in his right mind. He has suffered brain damage from the terrible fever." For a while, he did have some problems, but I remember one day when he started walking around the old oak dining room table. He went part way, then stopped and said, "Halfway." He turned around and went the other way. From that day on, things cleared up for him, and he had a normal childhood and growing-up years. Today he sits on this platform a well, strong man because God does heal. I am telling you something I know about. This happened in our own home. I know God answers prayer.

I talked with a sister yesterday who asked me, "Brother Norman, how are you feeling?" She knew I had had a heart attack, and had been quite sick. I answered, "Just fine. I believe God healed me." She said, "Oh, that's wonderful. He healed me, too." She is on this platform, too, well and strong because of God's healing power.

Let us turn to Exodus 15:26, where Moses was speaking to the Israelites after God had healed the bitter waters of Marah:

"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee."

God said it, and we believe it. But you will notice that there were some provisos involved: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God"

We are here this morning to hearken to the voice of the Lord. We want to know what God said, what He meant, and how it works. You can't fault anyone who wants to know for sure where the authority comes from and what is expected of him. God is saying that if the people would give ear to His commandments, do what He said, keep all His statutes, He would put none of the diseases of the Egyptians upon them.

He is saying that to us, too. If we will operate within the sphere of God's Word so that we have no guilt or condemnation, we can have confidence that God hears us when we pray and will do what we ask. We can pray, "Lord, You know how I live. I'm Your child, and I believe what You say."

This was a marvelous time for the Israelites. They had been in Egyptian bondage, and had built aqueducts and buildings, perhaps all kinds of public works, for Pharaoh. They had been forced to make bricks without straw, and had felt the taskmasters' whips on their backs. But in their great trials and afflictions, they had called upon the Lord, and the

Lord heard them. He will hear you, too, if you do what He says in His Word, and call on Him in your time of need.

The Israelites wanted out of Egypt, and God brought many plagues upon the Egyptians to awaken Pharaoh to His power, and to be a witness to the whole world. God had a divine purpose in delivering Israel with a high and mighty hand for the honor and glory of His great Name.

They were a great company of people, 600,000 men of war age, besides the elderly, and the women and children, which is estimated to have added up to about three million people — and there was not a feeble one among them!

Why do we remind you of this? Because God is the same yesterday, today and forever. He tells us that if we keep His commandments, we have a right to call upon Him in our time of need. We can realize His majesty and power, His love and concern for us. If what we want is for the glory of God, He is interested. And divine healing is for His glory. When we stand up and testify: "God healed me, and I thank Him for it," we are telling the world that God is powerful and that He loves His children.

Let us read what Isaiah had to say on this subject:

"Who hath believed our report?"

In the margin, we read that this report meant doctrine. Do you believe in sound doctrine? Healing is a part of sound doctrine. Sound doctrine in the Word of God is what God tells us we should do, so we don't need to wonder or question.

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?"

"For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: *he* hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53: 1-5).

That is positive. There are no doubts, fears, or questions. He just tells us what God is able to do. As we read God's Word, there need be no questions about what God wants His people to do. We want to prove up on His promises.

When you believe God and obey Him and trust Him, your children learn that that is the right way to go. My old dad was a praying man, and when he prayed, things happened. As a child, I was troubled with earaches. I had been hit in the ear accidentally as a five-year-old and I used to have some terrific earaches. When someone tells me about his child's suffering with an ear infection, I know how that little one feels. I've been through it. I would awaken in the night in terrible pain. I would go into Dad's room and say, "Dad, I've got an earache." He would build up the fire in the old wood stove in the living room, and heat a pillow to put on my ear. He would take an Apostolic Faith paper and put it on me, and he would pray. I would go to sleep and awaken in my own bed in the morning, healed.

What do you think that did for my faith in divine healing? I knew it worked for Dad, and I knew it would work for me. How many times I have proved Him! God is no respecter of persons. When you trust God, you are establishing faith in the hearts of the little ones, a standard that will enable them to trust God, to believe God's promises and get His blessings. And God's blessings are more than anything else that we want for our children.

The Bible tells us that Jesus healed all who came unto Him when He walked on earth, and He is the same yesterday, today and forever. Jesus healed the demoniac who was so bound by Satan that he tore himself; he'd break the chains that were used to bind him. No man could tame him. But one word from the Lord and it was all taken care of. The Lord is still able to cast out demons.

Think of the trouble the demon drink brings into lives and families. What a joy it is to hear the testimony of one who has been delivered — absolutely freed from any desire for alcoholic beverages! Some try to say now that alcoholism is a disease, but it is more than that. It is sin. And the Lord came to destroy the works of the devil.

Turn to Matthew 8:16,17:

"When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:

"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

Here Jesus healed all who were sick, which brings real comfort to you and to me when we realize it is a fulfillment of God's Word. Aren't you glad that the prophecies of the Old Testament, given some 700 years before Christ, were fulfilled in Christ right to the letter! It's the same today. You can trust God. You can believe Him. The Scripture says:

"We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

In Matthew 8:1-3, we read:

"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.

"And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed."

For what purpose are these examples in God's Word? To encourage our faith, to help us to get a handle on the promises of God and say, "Lord, I'll accept that. I'll claim that promise and by Your grace I'll believe it and receive it."

In the fourth chapter of Matthew, verses 23 and 24 it says,

"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.

"And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them."

In a Bible teaching given by Sister Florence Crawford, I read: "We know of five lepers who have been healed." And that was a long time ago. I'm sure many more have been healed since then. Are there any hard cases with God? He can heal a cancer as easily as He can heal a cold — with just one touch of the Master's hand.

Do you remember the story about the woman who pressed her way through the crowd and touched the Lord? When she was made every whit whole, the Lord said, "I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." The Lord has virtue to dispense today to those who will believe Him. The Lord spoke to the man who had lain by the Pool of Bethesda for many years, and said, "Take up thy bed and walk." And he picked it up and walked. He was healed.

Another man who was sick had four friends who believed on Jesus, who picked him up in his bed and carried him to where Jesus was. Because of the crowd, there was no chance of getting in, so they went up on the roof and removed some of the tiles, and let the man down right in front of Jesus. And the Bible says, "When Jesus saw their faith," He healed the man I believe we can all pray for one another, as the Lord said for us to do, and He will give us some definite answers to prayer.

We read in James 5:13: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray."

What do you do when you hurt? Automatically, you say, "God help me." Our prayers are very short sometimes in emergencies. That is one of the reasons we need to be prayed up at all times. For instance, if your car is sliding on ice, you don't have time to pray through a lot of things. You just cry out, "Lord, help me!" And He does.

Here James was telling us that if we are afflicted we should pray.

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

"And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

There is a double promise. Most of our ministers carry their "medical kit" with them all the time — a little

bottle of olive oil that has been prayed over and dedicated to the Lord for use in praying for the sick. There is nothing magic about the oil — obedience to God and faith in His promises are what bring the healing.

We do not have big banners out front announcing healing meetings, but we will pray for the sick after any service. After the altar service has progressed a little while, someone may come up and ask to be anointed and prayed for, and two of our ministers will do it according to God's Word, putting a little oil on the forehead, then laying hands on them and praying. "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" (James 5:15).

There was a precious elderly lady who came to our services some years back, and at the close of a meeting she asked me, "Do you believe that promise in the fifth chapter of James?" I said, "I surely do. That's a double promise." She said, "Do you believe that part about if we have committed sins they shall be forgiven?" She had once been saved but didn't know just where she now stood in the sight of God, and she wanted that cleared up. I answered her, "Of course I believe it. That is God's Word." Then she said, "Will you pray that prayer for me?"

She was having trouble with her knees and had a little trouble getting around, but her son helped her onto the platform. Another minister and I anointed and prayed for her, and she believed, and the Lord did the work. She got up and walked off the platform without any help. When her son offered his arm, she said, "I don't need that. The Lord has healed me." And she looked at me and said, "I know I'm saved." That was the answer to both promises. It works. We've experienced it, and we want to share this with you.

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

We have the arrangement God has made whereby we may be healed. This is not denominational doctrine. This is right out of the Bible. When God's Word says it, we believe it. We can trust Him, and God does marvelous things.

When people ask, "Do Christians get sick because they have committed sin?" we can say, "No, no." The Bible itself says: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19). Some people think that when you get sanctified you will never get sick again. Jesus said: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). That is what God provides in His Word.

This is what the Bible tells us in Acts 19:11,12:

**"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:
"So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."**

We also believe in the anointed handkerchiefs. We use plain, simple handkerchiefs or squares of cloth, and then they are anointed with oil and laid on the Word of God, and ministers pray over them by proxy for the person who is afflicted. Many people write to our office asking for the anointed handkerchiefs, and God answers prayer and their faith, and they are healed. Sometimes they are healed before the handkerchief arrives. Faith works. Many of us have proved that, from the time we were children and our mothers would pin the anointed handkerchief to our night clothes and pray for us. God healed us.

That is what the Word of God says about healing. There is nothing negative about it. His promises are Yea and Amen to those who believe. We can trust Him. We want to point you to the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world and who can heal the whole world. He can heal your body and can heal your soul. He does both. God's promises are sure and certain. Divine healing is one of God's doctrines. So let us say, "Amen. Lord, I believe." God will honor your faith.