

The Great Physician

Introduction. The Lord manifested wisdom by revealing the plan of salvation from so many viewpoints. He adapted Himself to so many different situations. He spoke of the farmer in the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:3-8), the vinegrower in the parable of the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16), and the fisherman in the parable of the fish net (Matthew 13:47).

In Matthew 9:9-13, Jesus makes a wonderful statement in the house of Matthew after He was asked by the Pharisees why He eats in the houses of sinners. He said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick" (Matthew 9:12). The Pharisees were very strict in avoiding sinners, but Jesus came to save them (1 Timothy 1:15). Jesus had just proven that He could heal physical infirmities; we'll now examine four facets of His ability to heal spiritual infirmities as well.

I. The Disease: Sin

- A. This disease is universal.
 - 1. Satan is known as the tempter (Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5).
 - a) He's our adversary (1 Timothy 5:14; 1 Peter 5:8).
 - b) He's the accuser of brethren (Revelation 12:10).
 - c) With sin, we face the power of Satan's influence over the spiritual world (Ephesians 6:12).
 - (1) Satan has tremendous power to tempt us with various sins to transgress the will of God (1 John 3:4).
 - (2) However, Satan also discourages by getting us to fixate on the past (which produces depression) or fixate on the future (which produces anxiety).
 - 2. Sin itself originated with Adam (Romans 5:18-19).
 - 3. All men have sinned and will sin (Romans 3:23; 5:12; 1 John 1:8).
 - 4. But we gain in Christ what we lost in Adam (1 Corinthians 15:21).
- B. This disease is incurable by human skill.
 - 1. Man has conquered multitudes of bodily diseases, but there was no cure for the soul's disease until Christ came (Hebrews 9:22; 10:3-4).
 - 2. This disease won't cure itself; instead, it'll progressively get worse (Proverbs 16:29; 2 Timothy 2:16; 3:13).
- C. This disease is fatal if not stopped.
 - 1. Some diseases may last a lifetime and not kill, but this isn't the case with sin (James 1:14-15; Romans 6:23).
 - 2. Sin can be deceptive in that we believe we're getting better while in fact we're getting worse (Revelation 3:17).

II. The Patient: The Sinner

- A. The patient needs the physician when he's sick.
 - 1. Jesus emphatically stated that the healthy didn't need a physician.
 - 2. Sin makes us spiritually sick (Isaiah 1:5-6; 1 Corinthians 11:30).

- B. The patient may offer many excuses.
 - 1. Even Jesus had to deal with excuses (Luke 9:57-62).
 - 2. Maybe you've heard some of these:
 - a) "I can't understand the Bible."
 - b) "I need to get better before I become a Christian."
 - c) "I'm afraid I can't be faithful, so I'll wait until I'm stronger."
- C. The patient must have faith in the physician.
 - 1. Belief in Jesus is essential (John 6:28-29; 8:24; 1 John 5:13).
 - 2. Confession of Jesus as God's Son is essential (Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:8-10).

III. The Physician: Jesus

- A. The physician must be prepared.
 - 1. From eternity, Jesus had prepared to become the Savior of the world (Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 1 Peter 1:18-20).
 - 2. Prophecy extends back to the beginning to foretell of the Messiah who remove the sins of the world (Genesis 3:15; Hebrews 10:5; John 1:29).
 - 3. Jesus is ready and willing to save (Revelation 3:20).
- B. The physician must be acquainted with the human system.
 - 1. Jesus Christ knows the heart of all men (John 2:23-25).
 - 2. Jesus Christ was tempted just like mankind (Matthew 4:1-11; cp. 1 John 2:15-17).
 - a) Stones into bread: The lust of the flesh. This is the craving for physical pleasure, comfort, or gratification right now, even if it means transgressing God's revealed will.
 - b) Throw yourself off the temple: The pride of life. This is the craving to be admired, to prove one's greatness, and to make a name for oneself.
 - c) Receive the kingdoms of the world: The lust of the eyes. This is the desire for possessions, power, position, and the glittering things of this world.
- C. The physician must be a good judge of remedies.
 - 1. Jesus couldn't come down and offer any remedy. He was constrained to speak only those things which pleased the Father (John 8:26-29).
 - 2. Jesus' remedy was easy and light compared to the Pharisaic regulations (Matthew 11:28-30).

IV. The Remedy: The Gospel

- A. The remedy must be effectual.
 - 1. Jesus was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection (Romans 1:1-4; 1 Corinthians 15:21).
 - 2. Therefore, the gospel of Jesus has the power to save (Romans 1:16). It has the power to allow us to rise in newness of life (Romans 6:3-5).
 - 3. The gospel also has an incredible power to change our hearts that feel defeated by Satan.
 - a) Last week, Rebecca McLaughlin wrote a piece for Crossway titled, "One of the Best Defenses Against Depression That Never Gets Mentioned."

She notes that 37 percent of women and 20 percent of men now report being diagnosed with depression at some point in their lives.

- b) Furthermore, between 2009 and 2021, the share of American high school students who said they had “persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness” rose from 26 percent to 44 percent.
 - c) Psychologists quickly tell us how exercise, good sleep, and eating healthy foods can boost our mental health and happiness. Additionally, therapy and medication can help in a lot of cases. But a lot of healthcare professionals don’t like to talk about the role of church membership.
 - (1) Many in our culture think prioritizing self-love and rejecting the uncomfortable beliefs that come with the New Testament will lead to happiness. But the evidence is actually the opposite.
 - (2) Going to church assemblies weekly is one of the best protections against depression, sadness, and formative thoughts of suicide that anyone has found. The evidence indicates that attending each week is like a life rope — even if it takes lots of effort to grab and hold on.
- B. The remedy must be taken.
- 1. The Word must be believed and we must remain faithful (1 Corinthians 15:1-2; Revelation 2:10).
 - 2. The Bible on a shelf or a table or in an unopened app won’t save. It only has power when it works on the heart (Hebrews 4:12).
- C. The directions must be specifically followed.
- 1. In both testaments, God never allowed man the liberty to alter His Word (Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Revelation 22:18-19).
 - 2. The remedy can only cure in its entirety. If we delete portions of it, we can’t be saved (cp. Jeremiah 36:20-23).

Conclusion. If a hungry man refuses to eat and starves to death, who’s responsible? Likewise, if a sick man refuses a remedy and dies, who’s responsible? Is God unjust to punish the disobedient who refuse to obey?

We have the perfect and complete remedy in the gospel and the perfect and complete physician in Jesus Christ. Jeremiah 8:20-22 says, “‘The harvest is past, The summer is ended, And we are not saved!’ For the hurt of the daughter of my people I am hurt. I am mourning; Astonishment has taken hold of me. Is there no balm in Gilead, Is there no physician there? Why then is there no recovery For the health of the daughter of my people?” Come to the remedy today!