

THE HEALING JESUS

by Jackson Morro

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Christ's Chapel
PO Box 3182
Fall River, MA 02722

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THE HEALING JESUS

CHAPTER ONE THE HEALING JESUS

In this chapter, we are going to study one of the most important missions of Christian churches everywhere: the healing ministry. In the Gospels, we read that Jesus is a healing Jesus. As one preacher once said, it seems like Jesus was always healing someone, or was on His way to heal someone, or had just come from healing someone. In Mark's Gospel, Chapter 16, Jesus gave His apostles the command to go into all the world. He said that signs and wonders would follow those who believe in Him: "In My name they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." This promise is for all believers of all times. Jesus didn't say it was just for the first 100 years of Christianity. He didn't say it was just for the apostles. He said it was a promise to all who believe. The Christian Church (whatever denomination) is supposed to be a healing Church that brings life and health to a sick and lost world. We do the praying and God does the healing. He is the awesome Almighty God. He created us; and if we get broken, He can fix us.

Turn in your Bible to the great healing chapter, Matthew 8. I love this particular chapter, because it mentions five great healing miracles, and these five miracles cover just about every healing you or I or our lived ones could ever need. I'm excited about Jesus because He's a healing Jesus. I'm excited for you too, because no matter what you may be facing, if you will come to Jesus in simple faith and trust, He has a healing for you. If you have a need, then you are a candidate for a miracle, for the healing love of Jesus. In this chapter, five people came to Jesus, and He said, "*I will*" each time they asked Him for a healing. He'll say "I will" to YOU also. Let's look at the word of God.

We see that Jesus had just finished His great Sermon on the Mount. He had taught the people, but He didn't come just to teach; He also came to heal. As Jesus comes down the mountainside, a leper comes to Him.

This leper came and bowed down before Jesus and cried, "Lord, if you want to, you can make me clean." Jesus touched him and said, "*I WILL*. Be made clean." Not only was the man ill, but his disease had made him a social outcast. Lepers were unclean and had to stay at least 50 feet from healthy members of society, and they were required by law to cry out, "Unclean! Unclean!" when someone approached them.

Jesus, however, wasn't afraid to touch him and heal him. Jesus is available to everyone for healing, even those who are social outcasts. He can heal the disease and the stigma and loneliness that goes with the disease. He's not afraid to touch anyone with His love. We read in Matthew 8:3 that immediately the leper became clean.

Secondly, we see a Roman army captain come up to Jesus, kneel before Him and ask for a healing for his servant. The Romans were the conquerors and the oppressors. Jesus could have turned him away and said, "No, you don't deserve healing." Instead, Jesus said, "*I WILL* come and heal him." The centurion, however, had so much faith in Jesus, he asked Him to just say the word and his servant would be healed. Jesus did, and at that very moment, the centurion's servant, who was at a distance from them, was healed just by the power of Jesus' word. There is no one who is outside the circle of Jesus' love. His power can reach anyone, anywhere, at any time.

The third healing occurs when Jesus went to the house of His apostle Simon Peter for lunch. They found Peter's mother-in-law sick with a fever. He touched her and she was immediately cured. She arose and made them a meal. This shows that Jesus cares about our loved ones and will heal them. Jesus cared about Peter's mother-in-law as much as He cared about His own mother. We also see that later that evening many sick and demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus while He was at Peter's house and Jesus healed them *all*, every one of them! (Matthew 8:16-17)

The fourth healing in Matthew 8 takes place as Jesus and the disciples get into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. Jesus went to sleep in the back of the boat and a great storm arose; it looked like they would sink. His disciples rushed back to Jesus and cried, "Lord, save us, we perish." By His rising, Jesus was saying, "*I WILL*." He spoke to the storm and said, "Peace, be still." And the storm stopped. Not only will Jesus heal us physically, but He will bring healing to the crisis circumstances of our life. In a world filled with violence and terrorism, He will provide our safety.

The last healing in Matthew 8 deals with two tormented, demon-possessed men. They were violent, anti-social, and self-destructive. They lived in a graveyard. When people chained them up, they broke loose with superhuman strength. By coming to them, Jesus was saying, "*I will* cast out those demons and deliver and heal you." With just a word, He commanded the demons to come out and the men returned to their right minds. Jesus will heal our emotions, provide deliverance from addictions, and cast out demons that possess and try to destroy us.

The will of Jesus toward everyone is positive when it comes to healing. Jesus always says *I WILL* come and heal you. Jesus has a positive attitude

toward YOU to heal YOU. He wants you to have a positive attitude toward Him and look to Him as the healing Jesus for whatever healing you need.

CHAPTER TWO

ALL PEOPLE, ALL DISEASES

You can't really talk about the ministry of Jesus Christ unless you also talk about healing. God is a healing God; His Son Jesus is the healing Jesus. We read in Acts 10:38 that Jesus went around doing good, healing all who were oppressed by the devil. So, first, we know that Jesus desires to heal *all people*. Then, in Psalm 103:1-3 we read "Bless the Lord, O my soul... who heals all your diseases." We know that God not only wants to heal all people but also *all diseases*.

In New England, where I live and where God has currently called me to minister, we take our sporting events very seriously. We even have specific victory cries to encourage our teams to win. In football, we shout, "Go Patriots!" In the other sports, we'll shout, "Go Red Sox!" or "Go Bruins!" or "Go Celtics!" These victory shouts show a seriousness in the desire to win the game. We can have a similar victory shout, if we really want to, about the healing ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our shout could very well be, "All People, All Diseases! Healed in Jesus' Name!"

The ministry of Jesus was, and is, all about healing. God sending Jesus is all about God saving and healing people. In Exodus 15:26, God spoke to the Israelites, I am the Lord that healeth thee."

How important is the healing ministry to God the Father and Jesus? It's everything! The Word of God calls the Church of Jesus Christ His bride. What husband would want His bride to be sick? No husband would want to see the woman he loved suffering in pain. It doesn't even make sense to say that God wants His Son's Church to be sick or that Jesus doesn't want to heal everyone. Apart from the fact that scripture gives abundant promises of healing to those who come to God in faith will be healed and that the scripture clearly shows that divine healing is still for today - on top of all the spiritual evidence that Jesus still heals today, if we consider the Church as the Bride of Christ, and consider Jesus as a loving husband, then it just doesn't make any sense for any preacher to say that Jesus doesn't heal today, or that Jesus doesn't want to heal everybody. Instead, we shout, "All People,

All Diseases! Healed in Jesus' Name!"

Healing is so important to Jesus, that He went out of His way to heal people on the sabbath, the holy day of rest, of His time. God had issued the Ten Commandments in Old Testament times, and one was to observe the seventh day as a holy day, a day of rest. No work was to be done so man could rest and worship God. Unfortunately, the religious leaders of Jesus' time had lost the true spirit of the sabbath and missed the heart of God by making a long list of burdensome rules about the sabbath - one rule being that it was a sin to heal on the sabbath.

In Luke's Gospel, we see three separate occasions where Jesus specifically healed on the sabbath and incurred the wrath of organized religion of His day. Jesus clearly showed that the healing of people is of utmost importance to the Father and to Jesus Himself.

In Luke 6:6-11 (get a Bible and read this passage for yourself), we see the first incident early in Jesus' ministry where He entered a synagogue or local church of His day, and was teaching there. He called forward a man with a withered right hand and Jesus asked those present, "Is it lawful to do good and heal a man on the sabbath?" When no one answered, Jesus gave His answer by healing the man with a spoken word. He told the man, "Stretch out your hand." When the man, in faith, obeyed Jesus and stretched out his hand, it was instantly healed and made normal. The religious leaders present there were filled with rage at Jesus' act instead of glorifying God and rejoicing that a suffering person had been made whole.

In Luke 13:10-17 (again, turn to this passage in your Bible and read it), we see a second incident on another sabbath in another synagogue. Jesus is again teaching. He calls to Himself a woman who has been sick, bent over, and unable to straighten up for 18 years. This particular illness was caused by a demon or spirit of infirmity; it was not an organically caused illness. Jesus said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your illness." Then He went beyond just the spoken word; He laid hands on her. The power of the Holy Spirit went through her and she immediately stood up straight and started glorifying God (as Pentecostals would say, she started having a "glory spell"). Jesus didn't have to lay hands on her. He had always just cast out demons by His word of power. Jesus was "upping the ante" so to speak, by doing something that was more like work. The religious leaders were indignant and told the crowd that there were six other days in the week to heal people; Jesus shouldn't violate the sabbath by healing on that day. Jesus, however, replied that everybody gave their thirsty farm animals water on the sabbath, and that was work. Why should a human being, especially a daughter of Abraham, one who worshipped God, not be set free on the

sabbath? The crowd agreed with Jesus and rejoiced. Almighty God the Father also rejoiced at this moment at what His Son had done.

In Luke 14:1-6 (read this passage), we see a third incident where Jesus is in another location on still another sabbath. This time, the religious leaders invite Jesus home to have dinner with them. Apparently, they've already been to the synagogue. They've already been to church and nothing special has happened. Apparently, Jesus was quiet and had not done anything out of the ordinary. Apparently, things had gone too smoothly, so the religious leaders invite Jesus to dinner, and we read in verse 1, "they were watching Him closely." All of a sudden, there's a man in front of them with dropsy. This man is very ill - dropsy is a condition of being bloated because of fluid retention, possibly because of kidney failure or lymphatic malfunction. It's a serious form of edema. Just as everyone is getting ready to enjoy dinner, Jesus calmly asks, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath or not?"

Partly because they were taken by surprise, partly because they were as cold-hearted as all the other previous religious leaders, they kept silent. Jesus went up to the sick man. He could have spoken a healing word, but He didn't. He could have laid hands on him, but He didn't. The gospel states, "He took hold of him." The actual Greek word is *epilambenein* which has the sense that Jesus lifted the man up with all His might in a bear hug. When Jesus put him down, the man was totally healed of dropsy. This time Jesus had done something that was definitely work. Jesus then stated that if any one of them had an ox or a donkey that fell into a ditch, they'd lift it out right away, sabbath or not. Such a farm animal was a large investment in those days that could not be neglected. Jesus, by His action and His statement, was saying, "I lift people out of the ditch of sin, suffering and sickness, no matter what day it is, because My Father has a large investment in people that can't be neglected." In John's gospel, in an entirely different incident, when Jesus was again accused of breaking the sabbath when He healed the crippled man at the pool of Bethesda, said, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working." (John 5:17)

Notice, Jesus was never against the sabbath. He was the Son of God and a good son is first an obedient son. Where was Jesus when He got into all this trouble? In "church" where He was supposed to be. He always obeyed and kept the sabbath, but He obeyed and kept it the way God wanted it kept, not the way legalistic religious men wanted it kept.

God's heart is for the healing of people. If we truly love God, and God loves people, then, like Jesus, we'll love people and want them healed too.

What about you today? Do you need a healing, or does a loved one need a healing? God has shown through His Son Jesus that He is a God who heals.

If we come to Him in faith believing He will heal, then we shall be healed.
Remember: “All People, All Diseases! Healed in Jesus’ name!”

CHAPTER THREE IT’S ALWAYS THE RIGHT PERSON AND THE RIGHT TIME

As followers and disciples of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to reach out to others with the love of God and the power of God. How can we know when it’s the right person and when it’s the right time? We see the Lord Jesus answer these two questions and give us direction for our own lives through two healings He performed early in His ministry.

First, in the Gospel of Mark, Chapter 1, we see how Jesus has just spent a day and an evening at the house of Simon Peter’s mother-in-law and ministered the word of God to a crowd that gathered there. He also healed all who were sick and demon-possessed. When the crowds wanted Him to stay, Jesus told Peter He had to move on to other cities and towns so everyone could hear Him. Suddenly, we see something special happen. (In your Bible, read Mark 1:35-42.) A leper came up to Jesus and asked for healing. Lepers were a very special type of sick person because they were outcasts. They suffered from a very highly contagious, and at that time incurable, disease. They often had to congregate in leper colonies and stay outside city limits. They depended upon the mercy of people for food and necessities. If anyone approached them, lepers were required by law to shout, “Unclean!” before the other person got within 50 feet of them. Their painful and disfiguring disease took its course with their limbs and skin decaying and eventually bringing on death. Not only were they physically ill, they were also considered religiously and socially unclean. The leper often carried deep emotional scars of rejection and inferiority.

One such leper, however, approached Jesus and fell at His feet, crying out in desperation, “I know You can make me clean, if You want to!” In effect, he said, “Jesus, I know You have the power to make me not only physically well, but You can also restore me socially, religiously, and emotionally. But do you want to? Everyone else rejects me and looks down at me. What about You, Jesus?” The Gospel tells us Jesus was *moved with compassion*, and He reached out and did the unthinkable. He *touch*ed the leper and said, “I WANT TO. Be made clean.” The leper’s faith and Jesus’ compassion made

connection and we read in v. 42 that *immediately* the leprosy left him and he was made clean. Jesus answers our first question, who is the right person to help? He answered, *IT'S ALWAYS THE RIGHT PERSON.*

When Jesus of Nazareth healed this leper and made him clean, He singled out and chose someone who was not only terminally ill, but also socially rejected and outcast. Jesus was saying in effect, that everyone, even the most downcast, was within the circle of His healing and redemptive love and that as such, we as His disciples and His body on earth, are to shine His light through us on *everyone. EVERYONE!*

The second question arises - when is it the right time to minister God's love? In the same Gospel of Mark, a few chapters later, we see a second healing (read Mark 3:1-6). We see Jesus enter a synagogue, or local church of His day. It was a sabbath, a holy day. Unfortunately, at this time, the established religion of that day had grown cold and legalistic. Although they prided themselves in outward observances of religious rules and regulations, their hearts had grown cold and they missed the whole Spirit and heart of God in what they did. They had taken one of God's good commandments, to keep the sabbath holy, in other words, *set apart*, one day a week and dedicate it to God for worship and rest, and turned it into a day of observing burdensome rules and regulations. God had meant the sabbath to be a good, worshipful, restful day, a benefit for man. One of the religious leaders' regulations was that it was wrong to heal someone on the sabbath. In the synagogue, Jesus saw a man with a withered hand. In Luke's Gospel, we get more details - it was a withered *right* hand - the hand that for most people is the hand of power and efficiency. So, not only was this man crippled, but his power and efficiency in everyday life were also limited by his illness.

Jesus stands in the middle of the gathering and calls the man forward. He asks, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, or to do harm, to save a life, or to destroy it?" (Luke 6:9) Sadly, no one said anything. The tragedy is that they were so wrapped up in outward religion that they could not see God's heart of compassion for the man who needed healing. The tragedy of outward religion without the heart and Spirit of God is that it's always silent in the face of human suffering. It offers no answer to human need. This was true not just in Jesus' day, but in all generations. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus condemns these people for their cold-hearted hypocrisy: "What man shall there be among you, who shall have one sheep, and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep! So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." (Matthew 12:11-12)

Jesus was telling them that although they didn't want to permit healing on

the religious day of rest, if one of their farm animals, which represented a significant financial investment, fell into a ditch or pit, they would rescue it right away and not wait until the next day. And if a religious leader happened to be going by, they'd ask him to look the other way five minutes while they did their work, and he would willingly do so. Jesus said that a hurting human being is infinitely more valuable as a candidate for healing. Jesus told the man, "Stretch out your hand." As he stretched out his hand, the man's faith and Jesus' compassion made connection and we read the hand was immediately restored to normal, just like the other one. Jesus answered our second question: When is it the right time to help? *IT'S ALWAYS THE RIGHT TIME!*

Remember - Jesus tells us *IT'S ALWAYS THE RIGHT PERSON AND IT'S ALWAYS THE RIGHT TIME.*

What about YOU today? Are you hurting or in need in some area of your life today? The Risen Jesus is looking at you and saying, *You're the right person* for His love and compassion, and *This is the right time!* Let your faith and Jesus' compassion make connection.

CHAPTER FOUR THE GIFTS OF HEALING

Any discussion of divine healing must include a study of one of the nine supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit that Jesus gave to His Church after His resurrection and ascension into heaven. We are referring to what is called "The Gifts of Healing." (1 Corinthians 12:9) To have a proper understanding of the gifts of healing, we must focus on three specific areas.

1) THE HEALING MINISTRY OF JESUS - The most noticeable aspect of Jesus' earthly ministry was the fact that He was constantly praying for people and healing them of their diseases. One preacher has said that Jesus was always healing someone, or He had just come from healing someone, or He was on His way to heal someone. The Apostle Peter, in Acts 10:38 stated that Jesus went around doing good, healing all who were oppressed by the devil. Dennis Bennett, an Episcopal priest who received the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, studied the Gospels and stated that 90% of Jesus' miracles

or “acts of power,” were healings. Another bible scholar studied Jesus’ ministry and stated that Jesus spent 58% of His time teaching and 42% of His time healing. In Matthew 14:14, Jesus saw a crowd and was *moved with compassion* and this made Him pray for the sick and heal them. Jesus was always moved to go *toward* sick people, never away from them as is so often the case in our society today. Our world tries to hide the sick, or ignore them, or put them away somewhere. Christianity that is true to the heart of Jesus, and churches that are true to their Lord, are moved with compassion toward the sick, just as Jesus was. The result of this compassion is to bring God’s power into the life of the sick so they will be made well, they will be made whole. Christianity is and should be a continuation of the compassionate ministry of Jesus Christ to save the lost and heal the sick.

2) HEALING IN GENERAL AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOUR CHRISTIAN LIFE - Divine healing is most noticeable in the earthly ministry of Jesus in the New Testament. But even in the Old Testament we see God the Father reveal Himself as the God who desires to heal His people. Exodus 15:26 states that He is the Lord, our healer. Psalm 103:2 reveals Him as the God who heals all our diseases. Throughout the whole Bible, the whole of Christian revelation, we see the basic truth that God is a God who is against sickness and disease and who is FOR healing. As Christians, we must never stray from this basic truth. All too often, we hear the false teaching that God strikes people with sickness to punish them. This is contrary to God’s nature; God is Love (1 John 4:16). Not *once* did Jesus Christ ever strike anyone down with sickness. Instead, He came to remove sickness.

Where does sickness come from? Why do we have sickness in this world? The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 5:12 that because Adam, the first man, sinned and walked out of God’s protective blessings, a force of corruption known as the law of sin and death began operating in this world. Not only did the world begin experiencing the results of sin through crime and violence, but the law of sin and death also brought a disharmony in the elements of nature, bringing about sickness and suffering that God never intended. We can have sickness in our body because we abuse it through sin, or we can be attacked by sickness simply because the law of sin and death operates in this world. Jesus never saw sickness as a positive good, but always as an oppressive force from the devil and his forces of evil. The Bible always speaks of God’s positive will to heal. The Greek biblical word for “salvation,” *sozo*, is also the same word for “healing” and actually means

“wholeness.” God’s will is positive to bring completeness to humans in their body, mind and spirit. Often, Jesus said, “Be made whole” when He healed someone. In Revelation 21:4, we read there is no pain or sickness in heaven. We also know that Jesus prayed in the Lord’s Prayer, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” As Christians, we can be assured it is God’s will 100% of the time to heal people and set them free from all manner of physical, emotional and spiritual sickness. Our healing prayers should never say, “If it be Thy will...” It *is* God’s will to heal.

In my own life and ministry, I’ve visited many patients in hospitals. I’ve seen doctors and health professionals dealing with people. I admire the positive attitude that many have toward healing. I’ve heard doctors say, “We’re going to get you better,” “We’re going to get you back on your feet,” or “We’re going to make you as good as new.” I wish every Christian minister and priest was just as aggressive about the healing ministry.

It is the mission of every Christian to let the compassion of Jesus Christ flow through them and pray for the sick. All Christians, whether they are baptized with the Holy Spirit or not, are commanded by Christ to pray for the sick. In Matthew 10:8 He gave a simple command to His disciples: “Heal the sick.” He didn’t say “Try” or “It would be nice if...” Jesus said, “If you are My disciple, heal the sick.” In Mark 16:18, Jesus stated that one of the signs following those who believed in Him was that they would lay hands on the sick and they would recover. Healing prayer should be a regular part of every Christian church and every Christian life (read James 5:16).

3) THE MINISTRY OF THE GIFTS OF HEALING - In 1 Corinthians 12:9 we read that among the spiritual gifts that God has given to the Church is a ministry known as “the gifts of healing.” As always, the basis for any spiritual gift is for the common good, for building up the body of Christ. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are really the risen Jesus Christ continuing His ministry on earth through the Church, His people. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are used through people who have received the experience of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, the same experience the apostles and disciples had on the Day of Pentecost in Acts, Chapter 2.

The ministry of the gifts of healing occurs when the Holy Spirit selects certain individuals in the Body of Christ to be set apart in a special way to pray for the sick. The Holy Spirit acts through these people in such a way that the supernatural curing of injuries, handicaps, or diseases takes place

without the help of natural means of human skills. We see God acting upon humans in a supernatural way to cure illness. The healing does not come through human diagnosis and medical treatment, but through an act of God.

People with the ministry of the gifts of healing often become quite noticeable. Sometimes, unfortunately, people turn them into heroes or celebrities. We must always remember that any spiritual gift is given to exalt or glorify the individual through whom it works. Jesus Christ is the Giver of all gifts and He alone is to be exalted.

Why is there such a gift as the ministry of the gifts of healing anyway, when all Christians and all churches should already be regularly praying for the sick? Why does this special gift exist?

The answer lies in the great healing compassion of Jesus and God the Father. There may be times in our own Christian life when we are praying for healing and, even though we know we should have enough faith, we may still be overwhelmed by what we face. Although we even bring it to the church for prayer, there may be times when even the church may feel overwhelmed by what might seem to be the seriousness of the illness. At these times, a loving, healing God provides certain people who have been set apart in a special way and provided with a special anointing of the resurrected Jesus' love and healing compassion. These people will come into the seemingly overwhelming situation with special provision from God to help take up beyond where we thought we could go by ourselves. Romans 8:26 states that it's the work of the Holy Spirit always to help us in our weaknesses. The Holy Spirit helps us in our prayer when we don't know how to pray. He also helps us in the moments of weakness when our efforts to receive healing seem just beyond our grasp. So great is God's love, so great is Jesus' compassion, so great is their desire for people to be healed, that the Holy Spirit has established a ministry through people to assist those who for one reason or another have difficulty getting healed.

One final point: Why is this particular gift designated in the plural "gifts" in 1 Corinthians 12? Some teach that because there are different types of illnesses, God gives different gifts to different people to heal different diseases. While I have no problem with that explanation, my own view is that every supernatural healing is an individual gift from God. When God calls someone into the ministry of the gifts of healing, He has, in a sense, given that person a bag of gifts, a bag of individual healings to bring to

people. Every healing is a special, unique gift from God, a gift from the compassionate heart of Jesus Christ who still works in our world today. Every supernatural healing is Jesus Christ looking at an individual and saying, “This healing is just for you, because I love *you*.” Jesus ministered that way in His earthly ministry and He continues the same way today (Hebrews 13:8).

CHAPTER FIVE SOMEBODY HAS TO WANT IT

One of the greatest provisions we have in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the provision for the healing of physical illnesses through prayer and faith in the atoning work of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In Acts 10:38, the apostle Peter stated, “You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.” Later in his life, this same Apostle Peter wrote about the rock-solid truth of God’s provision for physical healing in 1 Peter 2:24 that by His stripes we were healed. Jesus paid for the healing of all our diseases by the scourging and the whipping He received at the hands of the Roman soldiers. We *were* healed - there is a provision for each of our healings on deposit in heaven - and we can reach in by faith and take it as our own. In this chapter, we’re going to look at the reality of God’s physical healing for us. He has already provided it - *but somebody has to want it*.

As we study the earthly ministry of Jesus, we see the Son of God, filled with love and power, going about doing good. Blind eyes and deaf ears were opened, the crippled walked again, broken hearts were mended. The oppressed, the addicted, the captives were set free. After Jesus’ resurrection, we see this same ministry continue down until today. One of the primary goals of Jesus’ redemptive mission was, and is, healing.

How do healings happen? How can we get our healing? God’s word gives us the answer: somebody has to want it. For a healing to happen, somebody has to want it. That “wanting it” is called “faith.”

During His earthly ministry, time and time again we see the Lord Jesus Christ ask people, “*What do you want Me to do for you?*” (Mark 10:36; 10:51; John 1:38) There’s another question hidden and implied in this first

question: “Do you really want what I can do for you, and are you willing to do in obedience what’s necessary so you can obtain what I have for you?” Jesus also looks at each one of us and asks us these same questions as far as *all* of God’s promises are concerned, but He especially asks us these questions in relation to HEALING.

How do you and I lay hold of or grab on to the blessing of God, especially this wonderful promise of divine healing for our bodies? I believe with all my heart that just as God has provided the forgiveness of sins and eternal life for us by the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus, God has also provided a physical healing for every sick person on this planet through that same redemptive sacrifice. These healings are available to all of us - if we want it.

We receive divine physical healing the same way we receive all the blessings of God - by faith. The Greek biblical word for faith is *PISTIS* - the God-given ability to reach into the invisible spiritual world, lay hold of a promise or benefit provided for us by the work of Jesus Christ, and then bring that promise back into the visible material world.

God gives us three basic steps to perform in our exercise of faith, or *pistis*:

1) THERE HAS TO BE A PROMISE FROM GOD IN HIS WORD - If we are going to lay hold of a promise of God, there must be a promise to lay hold of. There must be a benefit that has been provided for us through the atoning life, suffering, death and resurrection. There must *be* a promise and we must *know* there is a promise and that the promise is *for us*. God’s provision of divine healing and ongoing divine health is one of His foremost promises for us. God’s top priority is the forgiveness of our sins and the obtaining of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Then God desires we grow in fellowship and intimacy with Him and His Son Jesus. As this is set in motion, God then desires for us to be healthy and prosperous in proportion to our closeness to Him. 3 John 2 states, “Beloved, I wish above all things that you prosper and be in health even as your soul prospers.” That’s God’s desire for us. We read consistently throughout scripture that Almighty God is the God who heals His people and that Jesus is the Redeemer who paid for our healing:

“I am the Lord that heals you.” (Exodus 15:26)

“By His stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5)

“By His stripes you were healed.” (1 Peter 2:24)

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” (Luke 4:18-19, KJV)

“Jesus of Nazareth...went around doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.” (Acts 10:38)

Sickness is not good - it is a work of the evil one, the devil. 1 John 3:8 states that Jesus came to destroy all the works of the devil, including sickness. Is this promise for you and me? 2 Corinthians 1:20 tells us that all of God's promises are “yea and amen” in Christ if we want them. My friend, we have a promise to reach in and lay hold of. When you or I need healing, we have a certain promise to lay hold of.

2) THE SECOND STEP OF FAITH, OF “PISTIS,” IS TO REACH IN AND LAY HOLD OF THE PROMISE OF HEALING - We've established there is a promise for healing. So, we can reach into the realm of the spirit and grab or lay hold of our healing. How? *When we decide we want it.* When you decide in your heart *permanently*, “*I want my physical healing,*” you have laid hold of it. Jesus asked people over and over again, “*What do you want Me to do for you?*” A blind beggar named Bartimaeus called out for Jesus to have mercy on him. Jesus asked, “What do you want Me to do?” Bartimaeus said, “Lord, I want to regain my sight.” In Mark, Chapter 5, a woman had suffered 12 years with an incurable issue of blood, but she heard about Jesus and said, “If I can only touch the hem of His garment, I'll be healed.” She decided she wanted a healing. In John 1:38, two of John the Baptist's disciples came to Jesus and He asked, “What do you want?” They replied they wanted to see where He was staying. He invited them to follow Him. When we *really, really, really* decided in our heart that we want a healing, or any promise of God, it's the same as grabbing hold of it with our spiritual hand.

3) ONCE WE'VE LAID HOLD OF A PROMISE THAT HAS BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO US, WE HAVE ONE MORE STEP OF FAITH - WE BRING IT BACK TO THE VISIBLE MATERIAL WORLD - We do that when we do whatever it takes to get the promise, specifically whatever the *Word of God* says it takes, *we do it.* James 2:17 tells us that faith without works is dead - or, faith without corresponding action is dead or ineffective.

Here's the key to receiving our promised healing: In just about every healing Jesus performed, the person *healed wanted* the healing and was willing to do whatever it took to get the healing. In Mark 5, once the woman with the issue of blood decided she wanted her healing, she went, found Jesus, and pressed through the crowd to touch Him. Blind Bartimaeus shouted to Jesus and when the crowd told him to be quiet, he only shouted louder and threw aside his beggar's robe when he was brought to Jesus. In Mark 2, four men brought their paralyzed friend to be healed by Jesus. When they couldn't get in the house because of the crowd, they climbed on the roof, tore part of it off, and lowered the man on his pallet in front of Jesus. In Acts 14:8-10, the Apostle Paul was preaching in Lystra and he saw a crippled man who had the faith to be healed. He commanded the man to rise up in the name of Jesus, and the man walked.

We have to take a corresponding action of faith to show we really want our healing. God will reveal a specific act to us in our heart or through His Word that we must take as an *act of obedience* to Him. It may be that we must *forgive* an enemy. We may have to *speak a positive confession* of faith that we are healed in spite of what circumstances may seem to say. We may have to *forsake* a certain sin in our lives or *change a harmful physical habit or behavior*. God will show us what's necessary.

You remember how I've written "somebody" has to want it when we talk about healing. The wonderful thing about healing and the promises of God is that we can want them on behalf of someone else - this is what is known as intercession or intercessory prayer. In Matthew 15:21-28, a Canaanite woman came to Jesus and pestered Him, not for herself, but on behalf of her sick little daughter. Three times Jesus tested her faith and seemed to say "No." But she would not give up - she decided to do whatever it took to get the healing. Jesus rewarded her by healing her daughter and telling the woman she had great faith. We can want healing for ourselves or we can want it for someone else, but someone has to want it. God will honor faith, wherever He finds it.

Remember, my friend, if you need a healing, Jesus has a healing for you. When I need a healing, Jesus has a healing for me. When a loved one needs a healing, Jesus has a healing for the loved one.

In closing this book, I want to encourage you to have faith for the healing that you need and the healing that is yours, because God wants you to have it. If you want to communicate with me personally about a healing you need, I invite you to write and I will answer and stand with you in prayer and in

faith for your healing.

Pastor Jackson Morro
Christ's Chapel
PO Box 3182
Fall River, MA 02722