

# The Promises of God

## God the Healer

### Lesson 5

**Key Passage: James 5:13-18;** Supporting Scripture: Genesis 20:17-18; Exodus 23:25; Psalm 106:13-15; 107:20; Isaiah 53:4-5; Jeremiah 30:17; Matthew 8:14-15; 13:58; 14:34-36; Mark 2:1-5, 11; 10:47-52; Luke 18:35-43; Acts 3:2, 6-7; 5:15; 10:38; 28:7-8; 1 Corinthians 1:14-17; 12:9; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; 2 Timothy 4:19-20

#### Scripture: James 5:13-18

**Introduction:** Of all the promises in the Bible, those concerning healing are the most difficult for us to understand. Our confusion and doubt stem from the disappointment we feel when God hasn't healed someone, our unbelief that He will, our ignorance of biblical teaching on the subject, and people's false claims of healing. Perhaps that's why we immediately respond to sickness by seeking medical help instead of turning to God first. This doesn't mean going to the doctor isn't essential, but the Great Physician should never be our last resort when all else fails.

**I.** By examining Old Testament teachings, Jesus' ministry, and the apostles' role in healing, we can come to a greater understanding of God's willingness to intervene in our struggles.

**A.** \_\_\_\_\_ **in the Old Testament.** The first mention of the Lord's healing power is found in Genesis 20:17-18 when He answered Abraham's prayer and healed Abimelech's household. Many years later when Abraham's descendants became a nation, God promised to remove sickness from their midst if they served Him (Ex. 23:25). From that point on, their health as a nation depended upon their \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord.

In Isaiah 53:5, God told His people about the healing that would come through the Messiah's \_\_\_\_\_ for sin. Even though this promise is given to us as a result of Christ's sacrifice, it doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ that the Lord will restore our health every time we ask. All the benefits of the atonement don't come to us in this life—some are reserved for us in heaven. The biggest accomplishment of the cross was the healing of our separation from the Lord, which was caused by sin.

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**B. Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ of Healing.** Even though Jesus came to earth primarily to die for our sins, a major part of His ministry was healing the sick. Wherever He went, crowds of sick people formed around Him, and He healed many (Matt. 14:34-36). **To understand this promise, we must recognize:**

**1. His \_\_\_\_\_.** Although Christ's love for mankind was a powerful motivation, the primary reason for His healing miracles was to demonstrate that He was the Son of God.

**2. His \_\_\_\_\_.** Jesus' main focus was always on the heart. When a paralytic was lowered through the roof, instead of immediately healing him, Christ said, "Your sins are forgiven" (Mark 2:5). The Lord dealt with his soul before restoring his body.

**3. His \_\_\_\_\_ activity.** Although Christ has ascended to the Father, He's still healing people from heaven. Today, there are miraculous recoveries doctors can't explain.

**4. His \_\_\_\_\_.** Despite His power, Jesus didn't heal every sick person in Israel. When He visited His hometown, He couldn't perform many miracles because of the people's unbelief (Matt. 13:58). We also live in a society that doubts Jesus' ability to heal. Instead, we should expect God to act on our behalf.

**C. The Apostles' Role in Healing.** After the ascension, the apostles carried on Christ's work, and curing people was major part of their witness. It was God's way of grabbing the world's attention and focusing it on Jesus. For example, when Peter and John met a lame beggar, they encouraged him to believe that Christ could do the impossible, and He did (Acts 3:6-7). **The apostle Paul also teaches us a great deal about healing:**

**1. Paul's \_\_\_\_\_ with Healing.** Since Paul was such a prominent apostle, we'd expect him to play a major role in restoring the sick, but there is only one account of him doing so (Acts 28:8). This is because Paul was called by God primarily to proclaim the gospel.

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**2. Paul's \_\_\_\_\_ about Healing.** Because he was appointed to teach and explain divine truth, Paul's writings are our guide to understanding what God has to say about \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord has gifted some believers with faith to pray for the healing of others (1 Cor. 12:9). The \_\_\_\_\_ cannot heal anyone – only God can do that – but because of their great faith, the Lord answers their prayers and heals those who are sick.

**3. Paul's \_\_\_\_\_ with Illness.** Being an apostle didn't guarantee Paul's prayers for healing were always answered. He struggled with his own health issues. In 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, he described a trial that he called "a thorn in the flesh." Despite his prayers, God didn't heal him, but He did explain the reason for his illness. Its purpose was to keep Paul from exalting himself. Furthermore, God promised that His \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_.

**III. Take Away:** *Whenever you experience sickness, your first step should be to ask the Lord how He wants you to respond. He may tell you to trust Him for healing, or He may want you to seek medical help. Paul did both. He sought healing from the Lord, trusted God's choice for his life, and relied on Luke's help in times of suffering. The goal is to be God-conscious and realize that the One who saved you is walking with you through every illness. He will direct your steps if you set your mind on Him.*