

YOUR HEALING DOOR



Chapter 3 **It's Your Move**

The will of God concerning healing is no more automatic than it is concerning salvation or forgiveness of sins. This is a very important principle I have learned over the years in ministering healing to people. Many people I have met who need healing have put all of the “healing initiative” in God’s court. In other words, whether conscious or unconscious, their thoughts are something like this: If God wants me well, then I’ll get well. That is His business, and there is nothing I can do about it. That type of thought pattern places all of the responsibility on God and none on the recipient. That was not typical of Jesus’ healing ministry. More often than not, Jesus required the recipient’s participation and involvement in some way. The following are some examples of His instructions to those who received healing from Him:

To the leper -“See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” (Matthew 8:4, NKJV)

To the man with the withered hand -“Stretch out your hand.” (Matthew 12:13, NKJV)

To the paralyzed man – “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” (Matthew 9:6, NKJV)

Then there were others, like the woman with the issue of blood, the centurion, and Jairus, who initiated steps of faith toward Jesus without His instruction that released healing to them or their loved ones.

Real faith involves action. When I had cancer, the Lord instructed me to have three men pray for me. When I obeyed His instruction, healing was manifested. When our son was sick, the Lord instructed us to spend time meditating and confessing the Word. We did that and after a period of time Michael’s condition totally changed for the better. When either ministering healing to others or receiving healing for yourself, it is important to listen to the Spirit for any specific steps of action He is leading

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you or others to take that will release faith and healing. John Osteen describes this vital aspect of faith in his book, *The ABC’s of Faith*:

If it is a physical need, and you cannot do much physically, start doing a little bit. If you say, ‘I can’t run the one hundred yard dash,’ well then run a hundred inch dash. Begin where you can. Start with a foot, two feet, then a yard, two yards, then three.¹¹

That is great advice to get us moving in faith. Start doing a little bit of what you cannot do all of on your own and God’s healing and miracle power will manifest in your life.

It is important that we take some step, however small, toward our healing to release our faith. Everything we receive from God is by grace (God’s provision) through faith (our re-

11 John Osteen. *The ABC’s of Faith*. (Houston, Tx.: John Osteen Publications, 1978), 27

sponse to God's grace). Faith cannot receive what God's grace has not provided. You can only have faith for healing when you know God's grace has provided it for you. Likewise, grace is not received where faith is not activated by the recipient. You can know that God's grace has provided healing and yet take no steps of faith toward receiving it because you are expecting God to do everything for you. Let me tell you that you and I will go without healing

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if we believe like that – and many do! The truth is that healing does not happen automatically, even though it is the will of God. An individual's will and belief system affect what part of God's will and Jesus' atonement he or she receives. Scripture teaches that God is not willing that any man should perish, but men do perish every day without knowing and receiving Christ Jesus as Lord (2 Peter 3:9). This is proof positive that an individual's will does affect the proportion of healing or forgiveness he or she can receive. Nathaniel Van Cleave explains this principle in his notes on "The Ministry of Divine Healing":

That the words "borne" and "carried" (Isaiah 53:4) refer to Jesus' atoning work on the Cross is made clear by the fact that they are the same words used to describe Christ's bearing our sins in Isaiah 53:11 and 1 Peter 2:24. These texts unequivocally link the grounds of provision for both our salvation and our healing to the atoning work of Calvary. Neither is automatically appropriated, however; for each provision—a soul's eternal salvation or a person's temporal, physical healing—must be received by faith. Christ's

work on the Cross makes each possible: simple faith receives each as we choose.¹²

What people believe depends on how much or little they are grounded in the Word. And that knowledge drastically affects what they receive from God. When I was a teenager, our family attended a denominational church that taught us to add the phrase “if it be Thy will” on the end of every prayer we prayed. I am sure they meant well, but all that did was give us an “out” if we didn’t receive an answer to our prayers. That way we could blame God if things didn’t work out as we prayed. I had a nephew who was born in 1974 with complications and died three months later. Our prayers in his behalf were ineffective because all we knew at the time to pray was “if it be Thy will” prayers. This personal loss taught me a costly lesson. What we don’t know can hurt us. Instead of becoming angry with God, I became passionate to understand the truth about healing. In my quest for truth from the Word, I discovered there are situations in which it is appropriate to pray “If it be Thy will,” such as praying for direction about a move, a career decision, or a major financial investment. I also discovered whenever the Bible is clear about God’s will it is inappropriate to pray that way.

For example, in 1 Timothy 2:3-4, the apostle Paul said: “God... who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” This Scripture tells us absolutely that God’s will is for the salvation and discipleship of men and women. We don’t have to question God’s will about this fact. He already expressed His will in His Word. The same thing is true about everything provided for us by the atonement of Jesus, including healing. I don’t have to wonder whether it is God’s will for my life or to add “if it be Thy will” to my prayer for one of the ben-

12 Nathaniel Van Cleave. The Spirit Filled Life Bible. “The Ministry of Divine Healing”. (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 1032

efits of the atonement in order to sound humble. Whatever has been provided for us in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus is without question the will of God for us.

We must help those who need healing to see that they have a part to play in the healing process. It is not all up to God. When I am ministering to someone who is sick, I normally give them the following analogy. Though it is certainly the will of God for each of us to walk in forgiveness and freedom from sin, we can still hold onto habitual sin if we want to. That does not make a lifestyle of sin the will of God. In the same way, healing is the will of God for us, but we can keep and nurse sickness in our bodies if we want to. That does not change God's mind and will about His desire for us to be well. The will of God is not just going to fall on us like ripe cherries falling off a tree. Our participation in the process is vital. First John 5:14-15, NKJV, confirms this truth:

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us, and if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

The question the passage presents to us is this: "If the will of God is automatic, why would we have to pray about it?" The apostle John instructs us here to ask for those things we know to be in accordance with God's will. Why? Because he knows that the will of God is not just going to happen automatically.

Whatever has been provided for us in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus is without question the will of God for us.

He knows that God's will for all men to be saved doesn't cause universal salvation apart from the faith response of each individual. Each of us has a part to play in cooperating with and inviting His will to be done in the earth. God has given us authority on the earth through His Son Jesus in a co-laboring partnership-relationship.

No promise from the Word of God—salvation, forgiveness of sins, healing, provision, peace, etc.—is automatic, even though each one is the will of God for our lives. We must respond in faith to His promise of health to us. We must take some faith action toward our goal of healing. Begin by asking for it and receiving assurance that it is the will of God for you. Spend time meditating on and confessing His promises relating to healing. Listen for the Spirit's promptings in taking some step of action that you would normally take if healing were already manifested in your body. We cannot wait for God to do something else for us before we begin to believe we are healed. The sacrifice of His Son that provided healing for us is done. It is finished. We're not waiting on God. God is waiting for us to believe and take action on our faith. It's our move now!