

God's Will Is Healing (Article I)

God is a healing God, One whose perfect will is for His people to live in health. He has always made provision for healing and health among His people. This is true under both the New and Old Covenants. Under the Old Covenant, God promised to remove all sickness from the children of Israel, if they would remain faithful to Him.

God placed before them a choice: life or death, blessing or cursing. The choice was theirs, but God made His will perfectly clear. He said, "*Choose life!*" No matter what they chose, God's desire remained the same; He wanted the children of Israel to have healing and life instead of sickness and death.

God's will is healing. It is as much His will to heal sick bodies, as it is to save the lost. Healing of men's bodies is as much a part of God's redemptive action as the saving of men's souls. It is never God's perfect will for His people to experience sickness. Sometimes, men's sin and disobedience will bring judgment in the form of sickness. But, this doesn't change the fact that God's perfect will is still healing and deliverance. God's promise is that if a person will repent and turn, He will extend His healing power, as He had always wanted to, and bring deliverance.

Jesus is in every way a reflection of the Father God. Everything Jesus did while conducting His earthly ministry, He did at the impulse and example of the Father. The Bible says that **Jesus exactly represents God (Hebrews 1:3)** because He is God. Thus, whatever Jesus did during His earthly ministry was an express manifestation of God's will. **Jesus was the will of God in action on the earth!**

Jesus' earthly ministry is a profound statement about the will of God in healing. The apostle Peter summed up Jesus entire ministry by saying, "*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***" **Acts 10:38** Wherever Jesus went, He healed the sick. This was a major part of His ministry. Through Jesus, God was letting it be known that He wanted people free from the oppression of disease. Jesus treated disease as an enemy, because that is how God views it. All the miracles and healing wonder which Jesus performed by the power of the Holy Spirit, He did at the impulse of the heavenly Father.

Jesus' motivation for healing the sick was more than just confirmation of His ministry. His ministry was indeed substantiated by the mighty works done at His hands, but a few spectacular miracles in key towns would have sufficed for that purpose. But **Jesus healed the sick wherever He went**. And repeatedly, the Gospel writers record that Jesus healed all that came to Him in need of deliverance.

Matthew 9:35 "*Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.*"

Matthew 14:35,36 "*And when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him 36 and*

begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed."

If verification of His ministry were the only motivation behind the healings which Jesus accomplished, then He would not have needed to heal all in the vast multitudes that came to Him. But **Jesus healed the sick because He had compassion on them, a compassion which flowed from the heart of God toward the sick and suffering.** *"And when He went ashore, He saw a great multitude, and felt compassion for them, and healed their sick."* **Matthew 14:14**

It was His compassion for the sick that moved Jesus to heal. It was His compassion for the oppressed multitude which prompted Him to send out His disciples equipped to preach and heal every kind of disease.

Jesus described His mission on the earth in one of the first sermons that He ever preached. He quoted the prophet Isaiah, saying of Himself, *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord"* **Luke 4:18,19**

Both spiritually and temporally, Jesus came to free me from oppression and bondage. That is why God sent Him. Throughout the Gospels, we see that Jesus fulfilled that call. Everywhere He went, Jesus was willing to heal all those that came to Him. He simply carried out the will of the One who had sent Him. *"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."* **John 6:38** Jesus affirmed that He only did those things which He saw the Father doing

Watching Jesus in action is watching God in action. Jesus' willingness to heal all who came to Him **is an unmistakable expression of God's will for the sick. God wants the sick to be healed!** He commissioned Jesus to release those who were bound and oppressed. This ministry Jesus began while on the earth and consummated on the cross. Jesus' atoning death made the way for all men to be free from the oppression of the devil, brought on by sin. Through His Son (who was God manifest in the flesh), the Father declared to the world His divine will. Jesus went about *"doing good, and healing all who were oppressed of the devil,"* because **it is God's will that all men be free from the Satanic oppression of sickness.**

Jesus' ministry sheds light on another fact that greatly needs clarification: **Sickness is a curse from the devil — an enemy of God and man.** This fact is not seen clearly in the Old Testament, because the concept of the enemy (the devil, Satan) was not yet fully revealed to the people of God.

References to Satan in the Old Testament are few. But in the New Testament, the fight against wicked spiritual forces is vividly portrayed. This is nowhere more evident than in Jesus' dealings with demons and with sickness. Jesus viewed sickness as oppression, from which He, in His compassion, desired to set men free. All during His earthly ministry, Jesus came against and destroyed the works which Satan had brought about in people's lives.

Once, in a synagogue, Jesus encountered a woman who was bent double with a condition caused by an evil spirit. After He had healed her, He said to those standing by, *"And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"* **Luke 13:16** Jesus labeled sickness as **bondage**, caused by Satan. He emphatically

asserted that this covenant woman of Israel had the right to be free from the enemy's bond. This was Jesus' attitude to all who came to Him in need of healing; they were satanically oppressed and needed to be released by the power of God. Thus, Peter summed up Jesus' ministry by saying that He did good and healed all that were **oppressed by the devil (Acts 10:38)**.

And so it is today that anyone who is laboring under the bondage of sickness is being oppressed by the evil one, Satan. Sickness is not of God, nor has it ever been. It has never been God's will for His people to be sick. If sickness were from God and disease the will of the Father, then Jesus' entire ministry on the earth was counterproductive and contradictory. The Gospels would then be nothing more than an account of Jesus daily thwarting the will and purpose of the Father. The truth is, however, that Jesus only did the will of the Father. Jesus healed the sick, because **God** sent Him to heal.

Jesus said, "*The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly*" **John 10:10**. He draws a clear line of demarcation (separation). God's will is healing and blessing, and everything else that goes along with "*abundant life*." If anything kills, steals, or destroys, then it has been labeled by Jesus as being from the enemy.

The ministry of the New Testament Church differs little from that of Jesus Himself. The record of the Church's beginning, the Acts of the Apostles, shows that Jesus' followers continued the same ministry of preaching and healing that the Lord had begun. The healing power of God and God's willingness to heal didn't ascend into heaven with Jesus. Jesus said before He left, "*These signs will accompany those who have believed: . . . they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover*" **Mark 16:17,18**

The Gospel which the early church preached was the same one that Jesus had preached. It proclaimed **release** from bondage and oppression and announced healing to those who were afflicted. Healing was an integral part of the Gospel of the early apostles, as the book of Acts shows.

God hasn't withdrawn the physical benefits which He made available to the children of Israel. The New Covenant is a better covenant than the Old, more sure and steadfast. It is, therefore, absurd to think that God would withdraw this divine blessing when instituting a New Covenant with man. He hasn't changed since the days of Moses when He promised to "*remove all sickness*" from us, so that we could walk in perfect health.