

What We Believe About Healing and Digging Deeper

Keeping it Real

This paper cannot solve everything to do with healing! an element of mystery is likely to always remain. Jesus saw everyone healed who He prayed for but even the disciples (even after being given authority *cf. Matthew 10:1*) and Paul did not function with a 100% success rate (including Miletus, Epaphroditus, and Timothy with the medicinal wine for his stomach).

No Christian alive sees everyone healed. I am not arguing that we build a doctrine on experience or on what God is not doing BUT we do want to hold Biblical tensions well, so we avoid extreme views that generate either passivity or drivenness and disappointment.

Smith Wigglesworth, known as the 'Apostle of Faith', had a daughter, Alice, who was never healed of her deafness despite praying for her many times. He himself experienced illness and disability.

Wigglesworth said this:

“He who can explain divine healing can explain God”.

Kathryn Kuhlman a strong proponent of the faith model said:

‘20 years ago I believed that absolutely, come hell or high water it was God's will for everybody, without exception, to be healed. But I've watched this thing very carefully. Now I see that we can't demand or command that God do anything. In general, I definitely believe that it is God's will to heal. But I can't say absolutely what is or is not his will in a particular case. There are some things I've learned just not to touch’.

Bill Johnson's son is 80 per cent deaf but his son sees many deaf ears opened!

In reality a paper like this cannot not solve every question that surrounds healing such as:

- If God is healer, why doesn't everyone get healed?

- What is the place of faith in healing?
- How does God's sovereignty and my responsibility interact when it comes to healing?
- What do I make of faith theology and 'name it claim it' and 'blab it grab it'?
- Does sickness ever come from God or is it always from the devil?
- What was Paul's thorn in the flesh?
- How does God's goodness relate to a Christian with cancer?
- Does God send sickness to train us?

However, I do believe the fight is on for a greater and more consistent breakthrough with healing:

'It is a period of 'restoration', of a faith battle, of transition, of theology changing, a period in which we are learning how to line up with God's Word'. John Groves

Compassion Filled Militant Faith

There is a militancy that the church has lost because it has been preoccupied with correctness above taking Kingdom ground. The result is that it has suffered from paralysis that stems from over-analysis and fear has robbed her of courageous faith exploits.

Jesus came teaching, proclaiming and demonstrating the Kingdom is near! I am going after a church community (not just leaders) who do the same. I want to see every believer believing that God can use them for faith exploits in the realm of healing and this is motivated by a love and compassion for people. My prayer is that the Great Commandment will always precede the great commission!

Our western minds think because we know something we are doing it. Fear has come in on the back of people's anxieties about extremism and a genuine concern about how to pastor people through unanswered prayers, disappointment and potential offence with God. My contention is that there is a fight on, we will never answer all the questions or solve the mystery totally BUT this must **not** stop us getting single-minded on the assignment that Jesus has given us [cf. Matthew 10:8, John 14:12](#).

My goal is to hold some tensions but in doing so remove the doublemindedness when it comes to praying for the sick. Clear theology and language coupled with risk-taking faith is important and it comes from actively transforming our minds through repentance [Romans 12:2](#).

To Walk on Water You Have to Get Out of the Boat

When Jesus said to Peter get out of the boat He simply said, “come”. One word from Jesus was enough. There was no detailed explanation of the mystery regarding how the miracle would work, getting everything right before He did it (how do you practise walking on water anyway?) Peter steps out on the basis of what God *has* said. That is always how it has been since Eden, which was about whether our first parents would believe the word of God over Satan’s word. The root of sin is unbelief. The battle is on for transformed thinking that impacts behaviour that shapes a culture *cf. Romans 12:2*. Peter stepped and, in that moment, everything changed and no one could ever go back.

Things can get so sophisticated; we can want to understand everything before we take a step when in reality, we just need to be childlike and obedient. Like Peter had to get out of the boat in order to heal the sick we have to lay our hands on the sick. The more people we pray for the more people will get healed. A strong and robust theology is a helpful foundation, but it must serve to propel us forwards into action. We must keep hearing with faith not hearing with analysis!

It is interesting that in the Charismatic Renewal many did not believe in baptism with the Holy Spirit and early on it was unusual. Now it is something we freely help people through into because we occupied ground by faith and pressed into our inheritance. I think the same journey is happening with healing. The goal is to get a whole church through into this and not believe the lie that healing breakthrough is for the few gifted evangelist or leaders amongst us. We have to start helping people believe that they are GREAT and destined for GREATNESS and GREAT Kingdom breakthroughs.

‘There will always be great individuals through history, but I dream of a day when an entire generation of people are referred to as “a great generation that believed and conquered the impossible”. For this to take place, a shift in our thinking needs to take place. We all need to carry the idea of personal ownership and responsibility. It begins when people embrace the idea that God designed them for greatness, and that He has given them gifts, talents and skills. It is up to each of us to determine what part we play in the grand scheme of things, but first, we need to give ourselves and each other permission to be great’

Eric Johnson

Essential Truths About God & Healing

Healing is all the way through the Bible. Andrew Whitman, a pastor being treated for cancer as I write this paper, says this helpful comment:

‘...after all, one of God’s names is Jehovah Rapha, ‘the God who heals’; Jesus demonstrated the Kingdom by healing; and the Holy Spirit gives gifts of healing too. You’d be forgiven for thinking I’m a Trinitarian Christian!!!’.

Doing the ‘stuff’ is mainstream Biblical Christianity and is based on the truth of who God is!

Healing and the Old Testament

1. God is revealed as healer

It is who He is: His identity is healer!

Exodus 15:26

²⁶ He said, “If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.”

And what he does:

Exodus 23:25

²⁵ Worship the LORD your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you,

Psalm 103:1–4

- ¹ Praise the LORD, O my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
- ² Praise the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits—
- ³ who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,
- ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion,

These texts are conditional in the context of Old Covenant blessings & curses. Nonetheless, they do highlight His essential character (“name”) that never changes! God is reminding them about who He is. Not them reminding God. This is how the Old Testament people were to know God and it points us to the goodness of God. He is not a reluctant God. He takes initiative and moves towards us.

2. God Heals Because of Covenant not Performance

God responds to requests. Abraham has a bad day and gives his wife Sarah away! God is not impressed but when Abimelech gets sick God tells him that Abraham will pray for him. That is an example of grace and shows healing is coming from God’s nature and covenant with us not our performance. It also demonstrates God’s desire to heal the outsider Abimelech being a pagan Philistine King! Great evangelistic application!

4. God Answers Specific Prayers for Healing

Elijah with the widow and healing the dead child. Elijah says, “give him to me”. Elijah takes responsibility for the situation, and he lays the dead boy on his bed. When you put the problem on your own bed you know it will not go away and you are not sleeping until it does! Sustained prayer and then breakthrough. God will not let sickness win the day. God authenticates His servant by standing alongside them and healing the sick. NB Parallel with Elisha: [2 Kings 4:32-37](#)

5. Mass Healing in the Old Testament

The Golden serpent and *all* who looked at it were healed. It is healing en masse and indiscriminate in that respect. There is healing that is available for the crowds and Jesus referred to this in [John 3](#). Our God is a healing God and ultimately, He will heal us all. We will all be raised up in power out of our weakness. Jesus was buried in weakness but was raised in power. He will recreate everything, there will be a new Heavens and New Earth. It's in in His nature to put things right.

Healing and the New Testament

1. Everything Flows from the Victory of the Cross

It is so important that we start from a place of victory. Christians are on the offensive and that is because Christ defeated the enemies of Satan, sin and death [Colossians 2:15](#). 'Christus Victor' or 'Christ the winner' is ringing in our ears! The Gospel is not simply one of personal forgiveness for our sin. It is not just a law-court victory but a battlefield victory! There is compassion and conquest (Wilson). Bringing healing is akin to a D-Day landing moment. Of course, there are other facets and angles to the atonement such as substitutionary atonement, but it is good to hold this victory emphasis alongside that.

We are right to be confidently militant in our approach to sickness because of Jesus' total victory.

Terry Virgo helpfully says:

'I am much more comfortable to regard healing (among other things) as a demonstration of the presence of the advancing Kingdom of Christ, which includes some degree of mystery, since the Kingdom is 'now' and 'not yet''

My only caveat is that 'violent militancy' must never be the experience of the person being prayed for. We want people to experience the love of the Father above anything else. Jesus modelled a perfect blend of compassion and militant Kingdom advance for us to follow.

2. Jesus Represents the Father

Jesus is the radiant outshining of the Father *cf. Hebrews 1*. He is the highest revelation of the heart of God *John 10:30*. Jesus is perfect theology. If we want to know what the Father is like, then look at Jesus. Jesus is exactly what God is like; Jesus is God on display. He is the revelation of God and that is true of healing. Jesus brings a lot of healing to people and reveals the very nature of God in doing so and so should we!

3. Jesus Views Sickness as an Enemy

Peter's summary of Jesus life.

Acts 10:38

³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

Matthew 8:16

¹⁶ When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.

Sickness is **always** seen as an enemy by Jesus and He attacks it like one. Jesus is powerfully endowed with the Holy Spirit; He did good and healed the sick. This is what stood out. In the Gospels Jesus is constantly going to heal someone or returning from healing someone! Jesus' manifesto in *Luke 4:16* is lived out and reported in places like *Matt 4:24* where all conditions are healed including the demonised. There is a lot of healing in the Gospels:

"90% of Jesus' miracles are healings or exorcism for wholeness"

John Groves

Jesus' teaching is always interweaved with demonstrations where the Kingdom comes! NB: There is no record of Jesus ever counselling a sick person that his sickness is redemptive or helpful or that it was sent from God. He is seen to be waging war on sickness.

1 John 3:8b

⁸ ...The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

Son of man was sent to destroy the works of the devil.

Please see Appendices for notes by Andrew Whitman that gives some more notes on this important conclusion.

4. Jesus Fights

If sickness is the enemy, then no wonder Jesus' life was marked out by warfare and so is ours to be! [Acts 10:38](#) 'oppressed of the devil', it is clear where the problem sits. I know there are complexities such as those who are falling asleep in Corinth due to sin and [James 5](#) which seems like judgement from God for sin. However, I believe it is accurate to say that sickness is both the general result of the curse and also specifically linked to direct attacks by the devil and needs combating. See below on the difficult questions section for more detail on this.

Jesus in [Luke 4/Is 61](#) makes this point clear when He reads [Isaiah 61](#) as His manifesto. It is conflict, warfare, confrontation and battle language. Jesus is coming to set the captives free and deliver the oppressed. Jesus's kingdom takes what is upside down and turns it the right way up. So where, for example, there are blind eyes which are a product of the curse and fractured creation or the direct and targeted attack of the devil then Jesus' reversal of this is an attack on the enemy.

The women in [Luke 13:16](#) Jesus says the devil has kept her in prison for 18 years—she needs liberating!

Jesus' ministry is a full-on battle and we are sent as Jesus was sent [cf John 20:21](#). Jesus was sent to destroy the works of the devil so are we and sickness is a part of that. [Matthew 10:8](#) makes it clear what we are sent to do.

The importance of our thinking:

The Power of a Transformed Mind

1. God is Good
2. Nothing is impossible with God
3. Victory of the Cross

4. I am significant

The foundation of transformed thinking changes my capacity to wage war! I cannot hold these beliefs without them influencing my behaviour and so I have to be authentic about where I am on the journey.

Key points so far:

- God is healer
- Jesus demonstrated the nature of God by going around doing good and healing which waged war on the devil.
- Sickness is from the devil and our role is to wage war on it.
- We have been commissioned to do so.

5. Jesus is Always Willing to Heal

Healing in the New Testament is not automatic not even for Jesus [Matthew 13:58; Mark 6:5-6](#). It is also true, however, that there is not one account where Jesus turned a sick person away refusing to heal them. He healed 1:1 e.g., sick mother-in-law, and He healed crowds. He never ever showed reluctance, even when the people around tried to silence the sick such as blind Bartimaeus. Jesus reached out! Even when He was on his way to another healing and the women with the issue of blood reached out and touched him, Jesus is available. Jesus is willing and able to heal even when there is unbelief [cf. Mark 9](#). ***Jesus healed everyone who approached him for themselves or on behalf of someone else when faith was in the mix.***

People followed Jesus up the mountain, and it says he healed them all! Circa 7000 people go up the hill for three days at the end there is ***not one sick person*** and then he decides to feed them all miraculously. Remember that this is a third world situation where poverty, need and sickness was rife! [Matthew 15:30](#). Incredible!

6. Jesus was Motivated by Compassion

Our aim is not to get as many healing 'scalps' as we can and shout about it. The goal is to demonstrate the love of the Father and the infinite goodness of God and bring people to Him. [Matthew 9:35](#)

Jesus felt compassion and it is this that brought Him to planet earth in the first place [John 3:16](#). He is the good shepherd [Matthew 10](#). This is the heart of the Father. The love of God is central. [1 Cor 13](#); [Matthew 14:14](#); [Mark 1:41](#). Jesus touched the leper, the lowest of the low, the one everyone else recoiled from. Jesus' response was to weep over Lazarus' death. Reflecting the agony of the human race and the pain He feels at how far creation has fallen and become so distorted.

Healing is not only about getting the verses lined up in an intellectual way - although this is important. It is also an issue of compassion and love. Do we care enough to step out and bring the love of God to people? The devastation that sickness causes has got to move us towards intentional action!

I would encourage us to keep the Great Commandment ahead of the Great Commission! Let love for God and our neighbour be the driving force.

7. Jesus Loves Faith

In [Matthew 9:22](#) Jesus affirms, loves, celebrates, faith. Jesus marvelled at that Centurion's faith! He had not seen such great faith in all Israel! Jesus throws out rocks of offence such as the occasion with the gentile women when he says this is not for the dogs and the woman says but Lord even the dogs get the crumbs. It is her faith that He congratulated and said daughter be healed at once. [Matthew 15:21-28](#).

Jesus reprimands unbelief in his disciples. Unbelief was worthy of reprimand. You of little faith, unbelieving generation. Jesus is perfectly good and if Jesus is correcting us, it must be for our good. Jesus marvelled and was amazed at the unbelief that He experienced in His hometown. NB: We will never tell someone that it is their lack of faith if they are not healed – even if it was true it is toxic!

Faith is always present when healing takes place, but the faith might be operating in various people involved.

1. The Sick Person

- [Acts 14:9](#) – Paul identified that the crippled man had faith to be healed
- The women with the issue of blood

2. Friends or Relatives

- [Luke 5:20](#) – His friends carrying him had the faith
- [Luke 8:41](#) – Father with the faith

3. The Person Praying

- [James 5:15](#) – The prayer of faith

4. General Faith in the Church

- Sometimes following some teaching on the subject, or some specific words of knowledge, faith can rise.
- Faith is often simply the determination to keep stepping out, pressing on and believing.

Healing can be released through the **gift** of faith.

[1 Corinthians 12:7–9](#)

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,

- The gift of faith allows us to believe for things that we otherwise would not on our own.
- Sometimes God gives a gift of faith and there is a powerful confidence that the impossible will bow. It's a moment almost like a surge of confident faith.
- Jesus wants us to operate in this more, so we see creative miracles and the greater things.
- As we step out in faith, what can happen in practice is that our faith grows aligned to how God has worked through us and what we have seen Him do. Something akin to our 'muscle' of faith growing as we exercise it.

- We might start with a headache being healed. Enjoy telling that story again and again because stories cultivate faith, and we can grow from there.
- I have faith and authority for certain things I know that He will heal because I have seen God do it before.

Listen:

- Jesus was not worried about returning and finding an excessive or presumptuous people.
- Jesus was concerned whether He will find faith on the earth [Luke 18:8](#).

8. Kingdom Healing is the Whole Package

Jesus said, “Your faith has healed you,” and this word for healed, ‘sozo’, means saved, healed and delivered. Healing is comprehensive. Jesus heals the paralytic but He saves him first!

9. Healing and the Gospel of Good News

It is not good news to tell someone that healing is available and not lead them into an experience of it. We live in a ‘show and tell world’ and we need to show people the goodness of a King and a Kingdom that changes everything.

In the Gospel of John, the miracles are called signs because they confirm and point to something and someone. They authenticated Jesus’ identity. Jesus said if you don’t believe the words believe the works. The signs confirm and authenticate the message. It’s the proof!

[Hebrews 2:4](#)

Paul’s message relied on power not on intellectual arguments alone. This was so that their faith may not rest on human wisdom but on a demonstration of the Spirit and Power. [1 Corinthians 2:4](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:5](#).

10. Jesus handed the Baton to the Church

Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and ministered from that place. I believe that Jesus was the first Charismatic and stands as a model to us of what normal Spirit-filled Christianity looks like [Acts 10:38](#). Whilst being fully God, I would argue that Jesus is choosing not to heal from his divinity *cf.* [Luke 5:17](#).

There is a tension here which we must hold of Jesus' humanity and His divinity. If we emphasise one at the expense of the other, we will get into BIG trouble. Please see Appendix One for a great summary from Andrew Whitman on this, which was a product of discussing this paper.

In summary my view would be that we can look to Jesus as a model of Spirit-filled Christianity, so we have continuity with Jesus in His humanity and our humanity, but in doing that we must not lose sight of Jesus' unique divinity. Once again, we have a tension to hold in our communication, understanding and practice.

A similar issue applies to the disciples. They are unique and unrepeatable at one level in terms of who they are and what they did, but we have a commission continuous with theirs expressed in places like [Matthew 28](#), [John 14:12](#), sending of the 72, [Acts 8](#) (evangelist bringing the Kingdom) etc.

Luke is clear in [Acts 1:1-2](#) that the church is continuing the earthly ministry of Jesus. We are empowered [Acts 1:8](#) to fulfil an apostolic assignment and we have been sent [John 20:21](#); [Matthew 28](#). He is with us, and He has not left us as orphans. [Acts 1](#) is the promise and [Acts 2](#) is the fulfilment and we are never told to wait again after we have been baptised with the Holy Spirit. We see the Holy Spirit break in, and the Kingdom breaks out. Jesus still heals today, still acts and still works. Like in [Acts 3](#) and [Acts 8](#) we can expect God to impact individual lives and whole cities through a Spirit-filled church.

Smith Wigglesworth used to say that he would look to see where God is moving, and if He wasn't moving, he would move God! He knew the heart of the Father and that He would be wanting to do something.

The Kingdom has come and is coming. It is here and it has not yet arrived. We are living paradoxes. I cannot put it any better than Alexander Ventner does in his book, *Doing Healing*:

'The tension and mystery of the kingdom is critical to a proper theology and praxis of healing. We cannot dictate or control healing yet we cannot accept or surrender to sickness. We pray with confident authority and expectation of healing for everyone, yet we are humble and honest, trusting God with the results as only God can heal. We do both at the

same time. We instinctively try to resolve tension by tending to 'either/or' because 'and/both' is messy). Too much 'kingdom now' leads to arrogance and presumption, demanding healing as if on tap. Too much 'kingdom then' leads to pessimism and fatalism, leaving healing to 'if it is God's will'. Balance leads to a neutralizing of the radical edges, loss of risk-taking, a passive middle road and theologically correct approach to healing. We too easily explain lack of healing by kingdom tension when we ought to push through in faith. Embracing both the 'already' and 'not yet' of the kingdom, makes us living paradoxes. It is learning to live and minister in the over lapping of two ages: the power of the kingdom and the resistance of this age. It leads to persevering faith, optimistic realism, dependence on God, discerning the moment, honouring people's dignity, respecting the unknown, and leaving the results with God.'

Steps to Going After and Sustaining a Culture of Miracles

1. Biblical Understanding

- Including mystery, Kingdom now and not yet tensions etc.

2. Identity

- 80% of the time, telling people who they are then they will do what they are designed to do, because they are behaving in line with who they believe they are.
- A miracle culture must be rooted in our identity and royal authority otherwise we will get tired out. We are sons and daughters of the King, which is a huge privilege, but it carries responsibility. As children of God, we carry an apostolic assignment to cultivate the world around us and to make the unseen realities of heaven evident on earth. That includes reversing the effects of illness.
- We have to serve from who we are, and this cannot be another thing on the list. That is why [Proverbs 4:23](#) is so vital. Partnering with God so that our internal worlds are cultivated, then we simply give away what we have. You cannot give away what you do not have!

3. Good News Stories

- We need to understand and proactively work at telling the stories because they are the doorway to more. Stories also help us remember what God has done and we can then say, "Do it again, God".

- Testimonies create an appetite and expectation from people.

4. Thankfulness

- This highlights the Goodness of God and keeps us focussed there. It also centres on what God is doing rather than being distracted by what He is apparently not doing.
- Give thanks for everything possible.
 - Thankfulness without hunger = passivity
 - Hunger without thankfulness = driven
 - Thankfulness with hunger = breakthrough

5. Equipping

- Praying for the sick is for everyone and every believer can do this, but they need to be trained and equipped.

6. Kingdom Of God First

- Most healings will take place outside of the church meeting and therefore a Kingdom perspective is vital.

7. Prioritising His Presence

- When we become aware of God with us, we become solution-focussed rather than problem-focussed and faith is built in that place. It would be so good to have an atmosphere where people are getting spontaneously healed and we can say “we will lay hands on them if we have to”! When we are present, enemy strongholds are displaced!

8. Declarations

- These speak life and truth and cultivate a solution and hope based culture. I believe things are changed in the heavenly realms when we make declarations. Nothing happens without it being spoken – look at creation! (But that is a whole paper in itself!).

9. Risk and Faith

- Core confidence that God is who He says He is and on the basis of that, taking a risk and praying for people.
- Knowing success is obedience not the outcome.

- Make space for God to work and when He does, we celebrate, and it becomes the normal.

10. Celebration

- What a culture celebrates it will replicate!

Four core values of the renewed mind (*Romans 12:2*)

You know when your mind is renewed when you are excited by a problem in the room!

GOD IS GOOD – This is the cornerstone of our theology. God’s goodness cannot be exaggerated, and He is ready and willing to act. This completely shapes how we handle disappointment and equips us to live unoffended with God.

How many times in the Bible did Jesus bless a storm? None. How many times did Jesus tell people that their sickness was a judgment from God? None. Jesus Christ is perfect theology.

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE – *Luke 1:37* – “*It has been written into our DNA to hunger for the impossibilities around us to bow at the name of Jesus*” (Bill Johnson). Nothing in the Christian faith is possible *without* God! So, we **stop** being impressed with the size of the problem and get more impressed with who God is. Being encouraged when there is a problem in the room is a good indication of this culture growing because people see the opportunity for a miracle more than the problem. The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead is in us.

VICTORY OF THE CROSS - We fight from the victory of the cross – “*I am not sure how much of the Kingdom we are supposed to see, but it must be more than we are seeing now*” (Simon Holley). The challenge is to combine this with the fact that we wage war on anything that is contrary to the Kingdom of God, including sickness, from the victory of Jesus. *Mark 16:15* Jesus said, “*Go into all the world and preach good news to all creation*” – Jesus is our victorious King. Jesus won an **Absolute Victory**: We do not fight to win, but we fight from absolute victory. We cannot afford to be impressed with the devil.

EVERYONE IS SIGNIFICANT – This belief means that every one of us is a royal son or daughter of the King and are powerful and significant and carry a purpose and a destiny. EMPOWERMENT is the result and builds a culture where people believe that they are alive to change the world! We are royal sons and daughters who are raised up to protect and create a realm where people can prosper. As citizens of heaven, we are commissioned to bring Heaven to earth.

BEHAVIOURS are naturally born from this Renewed Thinking:

1. **Dream Big**
2. **Risk** - redefine success as “obedience”.
3. **Trust** – we know the end of the story (victory in the cross and resurrection).
4. **Serving** – [John 13](#) we serve because we are secure in our IDENTITY and our DESTINY.

TOUGH QUESTIONS SECTION

Is sickness always from the Devil and never from God?

Sickness and death were never part of God's plan of creation. They entered as invaders when humanity gave over authority to Satan [Genesis 3](#) and so they are unwelcome occupiers. I would therefore argue that Sickness is ALWAYS from the Devil in two ways:

- **Generally:**
 - the perfection of God’s creation was fractured at the point of the fall and creation was subject to the curse which is when sickness and death was introduced [Genesis 3](#). Death entered the world through Adam's sin [Romans 5:12](#).
 - We therefore live in a broken world which impacts every one of us. So even creation groans, and we can 'naturally' become sick because of viruses and bacteria etc.
- **Specifically:**

- Illness can be a specific targeted attack of the enemy e.g. [Job 2:7-8](#). For example, someone might be ill with a virus but who sent the virus?
- Satan is often the agent of sickness ("this woman whom Satan has bound").

What this does is clarifies that sickness is an enemy from hell to be confronted and it is **never** sent by God to train us. However, we still have to wrestle with verses like:

[Exodus 4:11 \(NIV84\)](#)

¹¹ The LORD said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD?"

I would underline the different wills of God including the difference between God actively sending a sickness verses God allowing it. Perhaps this is the difference between God being sovereign versus controlling everything. This means that when sickness comes, we can agree it has ultimately been allowed by God (sovereign), but we can confidently stand against it, praying for healing, knowing this is not his active will for us especially in light of what Jesus' ministry modelled to us regarding healing as discussed above.

Overall, I think there is a tension of emphasis, and I would rather lean into [James 1:17](#) whilst holding onto pastoral wisdom that knows there is mystery. Being totally categorical is therefore not possible, and [Romans 8:28](#) teaches me that God can turn everything around for good!! In fact, He is so good at turning things around for good it can look like He sent it in the first place!

I would argue that the wisdom that James is referring to in [James 1:5](#) is wisdom that allows me to see trials through the lens of God's goodness and therefore believe that God is good despite the circumstances.

Position Summary:

I think we can argue that sickness, even though it was never meant to be part of things, has entered through the fall, can come directly from the enemy, but is always under the sovereign will of God (His permissive will). It all then becomes a matter of emphasis. Jesus modelled a lifestyle and ministry of compassion-filled militant warfare against sickness. The

bottom line is that we are commissioned to confront sickness and go after healing, not analyse every situation before we act.

Does a good God send sickness to train us?

Understanding the goodness of God is vital to this debate. I would say that I cannot reconcile God's absolute goodness with Him actively sending sickness to teach us a lesson, and if He does, at what point do I know I have learnt the lesson and it is ok to pray for healing, or indeed go to the doctor?! Equally, however, I would not use phrases like 'God cannot send what He has not got', because The Egyptian plagues would be difficult to explain and so would Ananias and Sapphira's death!

I believe God has to allow the sickness otherwise God ceases to be sovereign. So, I think we are AGAIN back to understanding the various types of God's will including His 'passive' and 'active' wills. I personally would argue that there is a lot of difference between God allowing and actively willing/sending something. However, the Bible is full of judgement moments and even more morally complicated are those occasions when He executes those judgements through His people such as Joshua and Jericho!

Once again, I think we are back to holding a tension and bringing an emphasis.

When bad things happen.

- People often blame God when bad things happen but the truth is God gave mankind free will out of His goodness.
- Adam and Eve chose to listen to/trust Satan and not God. In doing that they disobeyed God, sinned, and Satan was given an access point to wreak havoc.

a. **The fall** [Genesis 3:3](#). You will surely die. The common pattern of this world is live, get sick, die. [Romans 8](#) we are in bondage to decay.

b. **Foolish living**. Sowing and reaping. If a drunk driver crashes their car, or someone experiences health issues from a poor diet, or global climate change results from pollution, is God to blame?

HOWEVER, NOTICE THIS!

c. **Satan** [Luke 13](#), [Acts 10:38](#). The default option of Jesus and the local church is to treat sickness as the work of Satan:

³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

[John 10:10](#)

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Ultimately, we rest on the sovereignty of God:

[Romans 8:28](#)

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

What about sickness that leads to suffering - That brings perseverance, isn't that a good thing?

The fact that God is so good at turning stuff around for the good does not mean He is therefore responsible for sending it in the first place! Interestingly the New Testament never consistently links sickness and suffering and Jesus underlines this by attacking sickness. If sickness is a friend that results in suffering that brings fruit in the form of perseverance, why does Jesus model a lifestyle of healing and commission us to do the same? Why defeat a friend that is sent by God? Bad things do happen to good people, and by God's grace we are empowered to live and even grow through them, but we should still be crying out for deliverance in the middle of the storm NOT passively accepting it as though the situation were our friend.

What about Paul's 'thorn in the flesh'?

Paul's thorn in [2 Corinthians](#) could be sickness but it might not be! It could equally be people resisting Paul. If it is sickness, then the following needs to be understood.

(i) Source is Satan

(ii) Better to say that this horrible thing was turned around by the grace of God to bring good.

Once again, just because He is so good at turning things around does not mean He sent it. We have to resist oppression otherwise we get a passive, powerless church – “Oh well God sent it and we just have to cope with it”, NO! Paul assumes divine healing. We don’t know if he was ever healed but we do know that he contended for it.

Additionally, this exception must not be claimed as the normal Christian life. Surely the commission is clear. We have to judge the whole of the Christian life by what Jesus did. This passage is an exception, and it is best not to build our whole doctrine on exceptions.

What if my sickness is the result of sin and I am under God’s judgement?

John 9 Jesus said “Neither this man nor his parents sinned...” He does not say all sickness is caused by specific sin, but it can be. *Psalm 32* David is sick because of his sin.

Some would argue that God does not use sickness as a tool of judgement on the believer in the New Testament. So that leaves two sources of sickness, which are; natural means, and the demonic. This would be nice and neat but what about *James 5* ‘if he has sinned’ or *1 Corinthians 11* they were sick because of abusing communion (Ananias and Sapphira) - a pretty clear judgement Usually it is not a specific sin that leads to sickness but it clearly can be in the New Testament as well as the Old Testament.

“Sin deserves death, and it is because of God’s mercy that we are not each struck down whenever we sin”

Carson

Here we are again back to a tension. Sickness is an enemy but sometimes our sin results in sickness - is that judgement? Probably. **Nevertheless, God heals!**

Is it always God’s will to heal?

Yes! Because this was the default position of Jesus and the early church. Why complicate something that scripture is so clear on?

5. Why did Jesus not heal more people around the pool? *John 5:1-18*

Johnson says the reporters would focus on what he doesn't do – we have to celebrate what God is doing. That is the platform for more. Why didn't Jesus heal more on that day? I am not sure. Maybe it was because he wanted the sick man to carry on the good work, and that is why Jesus goes back to this man and rebukes him. If you have been sick and lying around a pool looking for healing, when you get healed the first person who you should tell is the person next to you who is still sick and say it is for you too. The first person he told was the authorities. Maybe Jesus is surprised and shocked at the hardness of heart.

It's not just by faith and it's not just 'I only do what I see the Father is doing', it is both coupled with compassion.

Why doesn't everyone get healed?

My position on this is simple. To go after healing we must accept that not everyone will get healed, therefore our theology and culture has to be able to accommodate that. The church needs to be helped to be emotionally healthy, by being allowed (even encouraged) to be real and open about their disappointments and even potential offence with God. We cannot simply train people to give the correct evangelical answer!

This means we can go after the miracle and robustly and honestly pastor the person in the process until we see the breakthrough. If we do not see the breakthrough and are asked why we haven't seen God answer our prayers, I personally think Bill Johnson's "I don't know" is a good answer, and his advice to avoid giving answers where God is silent is wisdom.

The more we pray for people, the more people we will see people healed. The more we contend for, the more breakthrough we will see.

What is the place of faith in healing?

Faith is always present somewhere.

How does God's sovereignty and my responsibility interact when it comes to healing?

God has very clearly commissioned us to heal the sick and so we should step out with confidence and faith and go after healing intentionally.

What do I make of faith theology and 'name it claim it' and 'blab it grab it'?

Unhelpful and potentially toxic. Although God does respond to our faith-filled activity such as when we pray He acts, or when I give He gives back. However, God is not a cosmic 'slot machine' where I put the coins in, pull the lever and get the desired outcome. He is God, I am not.

It's better to emphasise faith in the context of relationship over and above methodology. We function relationally as sons and daughters with our Heavenly Father, not transactionally.

How do I walk the tightrope of faith, power and pastoral wisdom?

(i) Living in the Radical Middle

Biblically, very often we need to hold two extreme views in tension. Not the compromise of standing in the middle but rather holding two views in tension. We hold the precious doctrine of the sovereignty of God, whilst simultaneously hear the Biblical call to intentionally engage in spiritual warfare, pray for the sick and confidently believe that God can do supernatural wonders beyond what medicine can achieve and what science can explain; that will be worked out through the church stepping up and out. I feel comfortable with challenging myself to step out and believe for more (risking disappointment) whilst also trusting God to be God – **Miracle with Mystery!** However, when praying for a sick person my assumption is that sickness is from the devil, that God has assigned me the task of bringing the Kingdom of God to this person and that I have authority to administer change.

Simon Holley helpfully says this, ***"I don't know how much of the Kingdom we are supposed to see come but it must be more than we are seeing"***.

Some others helpfully have written:

"We live in the tension of the kingdom 'now and not-yet'. With the arrival of Jesus, the kingdom of God has broken into this world, but it has not yet arrived in all of its fullness. This won't happen until Jesus returns. Whilst we see many amazing healings, we also still lose people that we love. The challenge for us is to remind ourselves of God's character and

to trust his heart even if we can't see his hand. It is also to recognise that if something isn't good enough for the future kingdom we, as Jesus' people, shouldn't settle for it now. So if we see tears, we wipe them away, where we find mourning we bring comfort, and if we meet sickness (regardless of past experiences) we set ourselves to pray with authority for healing".

Bill Johnson says:

"In all things, especially in the last few years, my initial response is, "God you are good every time, and I celebrate your goodness". That is the bedrock of theology for me, and from there, I watch how God takes the very weapon formed against me and turns it in my favour."

Simon Holley comments

"Sticking to a simple theology is the best way to keep the heart free from the unpleasant rock of disappointment. God is good. The devil is bad. God can use bad for good but he doesn't want bad".

Paul leaves Trophimus sick, but he saw everyone on the island healed when he then ministered. Disappointment would not hold him. Often after losing a battle we win the next war.

Analysing these comments Jamie Lee writes:

"The goodness of God is never easy to proclaim when disappointment hits. Some things are a mystery, if you have no mystery in your life it means that you have reduced God to your level of understanding. God is good and that never changes. We cannot afford to lower the standard of His goodness to make sense of our loss or disappointment".

On earth as it is in Heaven... There is no sickness and evil in Heaven. We mustn't attribute to God what is a result of the curse, the fall, the consequence of our free will (reaping and sowing principles) and the result of demonic activities. [John 10:10](#) It was the devil who came to steal, kill and destroy; Jesus, on the other hand, came 'doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil' [Acts 10:38](#).

Notice in [Mark 9:14-29](#) Jesus does not blame their inability to do this on the will of God or even indicate that he was uniquely able to set the boy free. Jesus seeks to lead and provoke His disciples into a greater lifestyle of power, by pointing them to its source in intimacy with their Father. We must resist anything that destroys faith and robs the church of both the bold expectation that God will work and courageous contention for more of the Kingdom now. We must be blasted out of fatalism, passivity, hopelessness, victimhood, and Kingdom limiting beliefs.

(ii) Expectation

A culture of expectation looks for a miracle and pastors the process, not the other way round!

Is it OK to go to the doctor?

I heard of a story where going to a doctor was considered lack of faith and one church member died of breast cancer as a result of that faulty thinking! The medical profession is part of God's grace to us and is a good thing. Healed through medicine is as much a sign of God's grace to us as a miraculous healing. Let's remember Timothy took a little wine (medicine) for his stomach!

One of our church who was facing cancer said to his Doctor, "You do your best and I will pray". Through worship, an encounter with God and his ongoing medical treatment he got cancer free.

Another lady in our church facing cancer saw the 'boundaries' of the cancer sovereignly kept in place and surgery brought healing. The surgeon even commented on the operation being easier than expected.

How does God's goodness relate to a Christian with cancer?

He is eternally good and even as someone wrestles with cancer they can know the goodness of God. He has not sent this cancer to train me, He is ready and willing to heal me, even if I have not seen a breakthrough yet. Doctors and treatment is an expression of God's common grace to me.

How can I pray for healing when I am sick or someone close to me is sick?

Emotional maturity to keep processing disappointment, potential offence with God and mystery whilst holding all the above points about God's willingness to heal, and our authority to minister healing whatever is going on for us.

Summary Points from this Paper

1. **God is healer:** God is called Healer and wants to heal and has always been healing.
2. **Jesus is perfect theology:** Jesus is a direct representation of the Father and modelled a lifestyle of kingdom advance including healing. Jesus demonstrated the nature of God by going around doing good, healing the sick and setting the captives free and in doing so waged war on the devil.
3. **Source of sickness:** Sickness was never meant to be part of things but as a result of the fall it can come from the enemy or from natural means. It's never from God but remains under the sovereign will of God (His permissive will). Therefore, sickness is from the devil and the product of a fallen creation. God's sovereignty means He must always have allowed something, but this does not mean that He sent it.
4. **God's will is to heal:** Jesus healed everyone who approached him for themselves or on behalf of someone else when *faith* was in the mix somewhere!
5. **Jesus' divinity and humanity:** Jesus is fully man and fully God. I argued that His ministry was a product of His Spirit-filled life, with him choosing not to minister out his divinity and therefore He is an example to us of what is possible for us as Spirit-filled believers.
6. **Apostolic assignment:** We have been commissioned to continue the work Jesus begun on earth [Acts 1+2](#) and as we do we wage war on the enemy.
7. **Mystery:** We are comfortable with the answer "I don't know" (mystery) when someone is not healed, but our starting place is expectation for a miracle. Today is a great day for a miracle!

The following captures the prevalent theological principles and practices related to healing:

Healing certifies Lordship: healing certifies the resurrection, Lordship, glory and the message of Jesus. It is part of the kingdom of God being near.

Proclamation is accompanied by demonstration.

Willing: God is always willing to heal.

Faith: The importance of faith being in the mix somewhere.

Compassion: The importance of being motivated by and expressing compassion.

The Name: The importance of the name of Jesus.

The Cross: There is a definite link between the cross and healing [Matthew 8](#), [1 Peter 2:24](#), [Isaiah 53](#).

Intimacy: The importance of intimacy with the Holy Spirit and ministering healing from His anointing and empowering.

Warfare: Healing is a matter of spiritual warfare.

Our authority: We have been commissioned to heal [Matthew 10:8](#), [John 14:12](#), [John 20:21](#).

Demonic Sickness: Normative New Testament view is that sickness is always from Satan.

Transformed thinking: It is normative to see sickness as a work of the enemy and therefore ministering healing is a matter Kingdom warfare. This takes away doublemindedness.

Adapted from PJ Smythe

Adrian Holloway writes:

In summary, God heals because of...

- a) His eternal desire to glorify Himself and His Son
- b) His deep compassion for those who are suffering
- c) His constant willingness to respond to those who have faith
- d) His response to His own command and promise to the church

None of these has changed since New Testament times. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever' [Hebrews 13:8](#). Death and disease have no part in God's original purpose for us, and they play no part in his ultimate purpose for us in the new heaven and new earth. God is against sickness and disease. And Jesus has now inaugurated the Kingdom.

Practical Suggestions

1. Recognition that the Christian life is not *like* a war it *is* a war.

2. We press even more intentionally for healing (on the streets and in our meetings) based on the nature of God, the earthly ministry of Jesus and the apostolic assignment that we have been given that requires faith-filled militancy with compassion.
3. We are comfortable with saying that it is normative for sickness to be from the devil and that God's will is to heal (whilst accepting there is some 'grey' in this and times for pastoral sensitivity and discernment).
4. We approach sickness as an enemy that we are assigned to attack and minister Kingdom healing to.
5. We are diligent about building a culture that can cope with disappointment and mystery without it impacting the confidence to keep pressing for more.
6. We multiply the contexts we are praying for the sick e.g., healing on the streets, healing rooms and we run with all our hearts and minds going after this.

Appendices

Appendix One

Link between sickness and Satan

- Enmity between Satan and seed of woman: Genesis 3:15
- Job's affliction with boils: Job 2:7: "Satan...afflicted Job with painful sores"
- Jesus' manifesto: Luke 4:16ff (Isaiah 61:1ff)
NB lived out: Matthew 4:24 – all conditions, including "the demon-possessed" = "healed"
- Individuals like woman in Luke 13:16 ("crippled by a spirit for eighteen years") & demon-possessed man (blind and mute) in Matthew 12:22 ("a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him")
- Sickness "rebuked" (like demons): Peter's mother-in-law with a high fever in Luke 4:39 ("he bent over her and rebuked the fever" – c.f. v.35 in synagogue)
- Possibly the discipline exercised by Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:5 ("hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed")
- Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7) = "messenger of Satan"

ACTS 10:38?:

1. *Greek:*

"healing" – iamai (verbal) = cure; heal

"under the power" – synecho (verbal) = oppress; rule; overpower (Stott: 'tyrannize')

This particular form?: 2x in NT only. James 2:6 re. rich oppressing poor!

Kittel: sickness 'oppresses' in Luke 4:38

2. *Commentators:*

Background of Isaiah 61/Luke 4

- Marshall p.192: "the healing miracles rescued people from the power of evil which was responsible for their suffering (Lk.13:16)"
- Barrett p.162: Devil = "responsible not only for possession, but for illness in general; God was making through Jesus a decisive attack on him"

- Harrison p.183: = re. exorcisms; but wider range may be healings (Lk. 13:16)

Andrew Whitman

Appendix Two

Balancing the Classic Pentecostal View (healing in the atonement) and the Classic Charismatic View (Kingdom Now and Not Yet)

1. CLASSIC PENTECOSTAL VIEW

Summary: Jesus' death on the cross was to bring healing and not just forgiveness and therefore healing has been bought for everyone through the cross and simply needs to be received through faith that healing is in the blood.

Technically known as: *'healing in the atonement'*

Key scriptures: [Isaiah 53v3-12](#); [Matthew 8v16-17](#); [1 Peter 2v24](#)

2. CLASSIC CHARISMATIC VIEW

Summary: Kingdom is now-but-not-yet and sometimes the fullness of the kingdom spills out from the future into the present through the mystery of the compassionate and gracious God.

Holding the Tension

Wayne Grudem

'All Christians would probably agree that in the atonement Christ has purchased for us not only complete freedom from sin but also complete freedom from physical weakness and infirmity in his work of redemption. And all Christians would also no doubt agree our full and complete possession of all the benefits that Christ earned for us will not come until Christ returns...When people say that complete healing is 'in the atonement' the statement is true in the ultimate sense, but that does not tell us anything about when we will receive complete healing'.

[Deut 29v29 a and b.](#)

(i) Revealed things: The Bible is clear that neither Jesus nor the apostles refused anyone who came to them for healing telling them that it was not God's will to heal them or not yet their time to be healed.

- **All Healed:** We are told constantly and repeatedly that Jesus healed all those who came to him (Mt 4v23; 8v16-17; 12v15; Lk 4v40; 6v19) and that the apostles tended to heal all the sick who came the them (Acts 5v19, 28v9).
- **Greater Things:** Jn14v12
- **I am willing:** Mt 8v2-3 1v140-42.
- **NB:** Jesus healed by the power of the H/S in his humanity we are commissioned to do the same. Acts 1v1.

(ii) Secret Things: Despite all of the above some people are still not healed and that is most definitely one of the *secret things* of God.

- In **John 5** Jesus himself only healed one of a large number of people.
- We read of people in the NT having long standing illnesses even Christian leaders - **1 Timothy 5v23; 2 Timothy 4v20**
- There is for all a time to die **Ecc 3v2**
- There are sicknesses that end in death **John 11v4** – Jesus is making it clear that some sickness do otherwise why say that?

Too much emphasis on the secret things of God Deut 29v29a = **'the secret things belong to the Lord our God'** and you get passivity.

Too much emphasis on the revealed things of God Deut 29v29b = **'the revealed things belong to us and our children'**. And you get a very dogmatic position that cannot embrace mystery.

We must not over-simplify healing miracles. Sometimes healing happen when we pray in the name of Jesus sometimes, they do not. Any methodology that chooses to live on the extreme end of a theological polarity is doomed to eventual disappointments. Those who over emphasise the Kingdom view of healing can end up with passivity that says "it's all up to God". Those who overemphasise the faith view of healing can end up with an activism that says "It's all up to me". The truth is, healing miracles are a dynamic mysterious cooperation between

God's sovereign will (Kingdom) and our desperate believing (faith) it's not either/or but – as in so many things both/and.

We need to move from meditating on what has not been revealed to confidence in what has been revealed but holding confidently and unashamedly that it is God who is sovereign and over it all and that that there will always be an element of mystery in divine healing.

There is an element of mystery to physical healing. No church sees everyone healed. However, I will not lower my theology to my experience.

GETTING TO KNOW THE ROOTS OF AN ILLNESS

Man is a unity of mind, emotions, spirit and body that are all interconnected. Hence sickness can have different roots. Medicine now recognizes that pain can have psychosomatic roots or other causes.

a. Sin

Sometimes sickness can be the result of sin. Jesus implies this [James 5v14](#). Caution – this does not mean that all sickness is the result of sin by the person or their family. [See John 9v1-3](#).

In general terms all sickness is the result of sin having come into the world through the fall of Man. However, condemning a person by blaming a person's sickness on their sin must be avoided.

HOWEVER, we must not be afraid to confront sin if there is an issue there. Sins in emotional areas such as bitterness and unforgiveness are often important and can 'block' healing .

[James 5v15-16](#) part of the healing process involves confessing our sins to one another

b. Emotional Difficulties

- Sickness may be rooted in emotional difficulties such as unforgiveness, bitterness, fear, perfectionism, tension and stress

c. Demonic

- Sickness can sometimes be demonic in origin. In Jesus' time he identified 'spirits of infirmity' [Luke 13:12](#); [Is 53:4](#) and is described by Peter as 'healing all who were under the power of the devil' [Acts 10v38](#).

d. Curses

- Sometimes physical illness can be the result of a curse upon an individual or family. This is more readily accepted in Third world situations, but we need to be alert to this but again be careful of extremism both ways.

e. Other Causes

- Excessive work pressure
- Overtiredness
- Heredity
- Purely physical cause e.g., an accident

f. Pray for Discernment

- As we pray we can ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the root. E.g., If sin is identified there can be repentance.

DIFFERENT WAYS IN WHICH GOD HEALS/ANSWERS PRAYER

1. Instantaneously.

- Might be obvious e.g., walking, seeing, lump gone etc.
- Might need medical confirmation

2. Through a Process

- Need to support people through this

3. Spontaneous

- Some people are healed during a worship time for example as they are in the wonderful presence of God. Kathryn Kuhlman would often have words of knowledge about the conditions that were being healed at that moment.

Appendix Three

Healing and Praying for the Sick

1. Healing is a **Normal** Expression of the Kingdom of God

- God's name is "healer"
- Exodus 15:26 "I am the Lord who **heals** you".
- Got to believe for more! John 14:12

2. Healing is Simply bringing what is in **Heaven** to **Earth**

- We have the **opportunity** and **responsibility** to bring heaven to earth by demonstrating and speaking the Kingdom of God now.
- Healing is about releasing the Kingdom and releasing His goodness.
- The Gospel should be preached with WONDERS as well as WORDS and WORKS.

3. Healing is released through **RISK** (Faith)

- Healing happens as we step out!
- **John Wimber** - Faith is spelt R.I.S.K
- It's believing that as we step out He will come!
Hebrews 11:6
- "Without faith (risk) it is impossible to please God, for those who come to Him (God) must believe that He exists and that he rewards those who diligently seek Him"
- God rewards RISK not SUCCESS....FAITH not PERFORMANCE...The ATTEMP not the OUTCOME!
- God will meet you where you are!

How to pray for the sick

1. Start with a brief interview

- Ask the person to briefly explain what's wrong. How long have they had the problem and what would they like to see happen?

2. Release the Kingdom in the appropriate way

- Listen to the Holy Spirit's promptings
- Declare promises (Bible, prophecy etc.).
- Take a risk and do what God is saying sometimes that may not seem obvious or logical!

3. Evaluate Progress

- Ask them to check it out, maybe by doing something they could not do before.
- Look for visible signs e.g., heat, electricity, peace, joy, shaking, tears.
- Ask them if their pain levels have changed (from 0 – 10)
- Give thanks for what has happened even if it only seems like a small improvement
- Pray again, pressing in until you don't sense any more progress, the person is frustrated or tired, or you don't get a breakthrough.

4. Always Bless Them

- Give the person confidence that God's presence is on them and working within them, whether or not they get healed at that moment.

5. Remember healing is not a formula or Technique

- Releasing healing is about His presence working in us and through us

Luke 5:17

¹⁷ One day as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there. And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick.

Acts 10:38 (NIV84)

³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

- We have to know and believe that we are partnering with God – not twisting His arm for healing. God wants to heal and we can step into this partnership with confidence and authority. We can declare healing as we partner with Him.
- Always pray with faith but also with care and sensitivity never leave people feeling guilty or condemned. Emphasise their identity in Christ and the love of the Father towards them.

When bad things happen:

- People often blame God when bad things happen but the truth is God out of His goodness gave mankind free will.
- Adam and Eve chose to listen to/trust Satan and not God and in doing that they disobeyed God, sinned and Satan was given an access point to wreak havoc.
- So when we see sickness or a natural disaster I don't ask why did God do that or is God bad or cruel? There is much more going on:

a. **The fall** [Genesis 3:3](#). You will surely die. The common pattern of this world is live, get sick, die. Romans 8 we are in bondage to decay.

b. **Foolish living**. Sowing and reaping. If a drink driver crashes their car or someone experiences health issues from a poor diet or global climate change results from pollution is God to blame?

c. **Satan** (Luke 13, [Acts 10:38](#)) the default option of Jesus and the local church is to treat sickness as the work of Satan:

³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

John 10:10 (NIV84)

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

d. **Sin** John 9 Jesus said “Neither this man nor his parents sinned...” He doesn’t say all sickness is caused by specific sin but it can be. Psalm 32 David is sick because of his sin. 1 Corinthians 11 they were sick because of abusing communion. Usually it is not a specific sin that leads to death but it can be. **“Sin deserves death and it is because of God’s mercy that we are not each struck down whenever we sin”** Carson

Ultimately we rest on the sovereignty of God:

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Appendix Four

Dealing with Disappointment

The more we go after miracles the more we will need to process disappointment

How you Process Mystery and Disappointment:

(a) Be real

It is ok to be real with God and other people – be reverent with God but be real – Allowing yourself to *feel deeply can hurt but it is essential to healthy Christianity!*

- “It feels like you let me down God but I know that you never would, it’s just how I feel right now, help me”
- “Lord please give me wisdom to see this thing how you see it because at the moment I just feel so confused and disappointed”.

Don’t accuse God, blame God, wave your fist at God because He is God and you are not. He has a perspective that you don’t but He can cope with your deepest longing and pain. He is a good Father.

B) Worship

Try reading the Psalms and find a place that resonates with you and reflects what you are really feeling. Thankfully the Bible is a super-honest book when it comes to what people feel!

Psalm 13:1–2 (NIV)

¹ How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

² How long must I wrestle with my thoughts

and every day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

Why do you think John the Baptist sent his disciples to double check who Jesus Was?

Try it in different versions:

Psalm 13:1–2 (MSG)

¹⁻² 13 Long enough, God—
you've ignored me long enough.
I've looked at the back of your head
long enough. Long enough
I've carried this ton of trouble,
lived with a stomach full of pain.
Long enough my arrogant enemies
have looked down their noses at me.

Later In that same Psalm David says:

Psalm 13:5–6

⁵ But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
⁶ I will sing to the Lord,
for he has been good to me.

The Psalms are so helpful at being totally authentic but always centring us back on God and His goodness and power. Ultimately where else can we go when we recognise He has the words of eternal life.

C) Lay down Your Right to understand

- Many of us believe that if we could understand why something has happened then we would be fine.
- The truth is that life is full of mystery but there is a peace on offer that surpasses understanding and to access it we have to choose to lay down our right to understand. Not always easy to do!

Philippians 4:6–7

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ **And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding,** will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus

Jesus and John The Baptist:

- Jesus had proclaimed freedom for the prisoners but Jesus' cousin John is in prison?
- John is obviously conflicted by Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom and it must have been confusing in light of his present experience.
- **Ever felt like that** – “I have done everything you said God and look where it got me. What on earth is going on here?”

Jesus says this to John the Baptist's disciples:

Matthew 11:6

⁶ And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

- We mustn't try and answer questions that God is not giving answers to.
 - One of the most freeing things we can say is **“I don't know”**

“To have questions is healthy; to hold God hostage to those questions is not”

Bill Johnson

Isaiah 55:8–9

⁸ “For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord.

⁹ “As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

If God’s goodness is rooted in my understanding I will too easily become disappointed with God and disappointment leads to offence with God and offence with God leads to a whole host of trouble.

D) Speak it Out: Declarations

Nothing happens without someone speaking – look at creation God said and there was etc.

- Make it a habit to speak truth out – especially when it counters any lies you are believing. Come back to truth, speak it and sing it out because as you do that you are bringing life to yourself and those around you.
- Give thanks for what God is doing rather than focus on what He is apparently not doing.
- If you can’t see anything He is doing now deliberately remember His past faithfulness, goodness and character and speak it out. There is always something god has done even when you cannot see what He is doing now.
- Get good at sharing good news and celebrating even in the valley times! When you look for good news you will find it.

- These are all keys for digging into the Goodness of God.

Proverbs 18:21

²¹ The tongue has the power of life and death,

and those who love it will eat its fruit.

FIVE LIFE CHANGING BELIEFS WITH DECLARATIONS (Steve Backlund)

1. With God there is always a solution (Luke 1:37)
2. With God I will always know what to do (James 1:5).
3. With God I can do everything (Philippians 4:13).
4. With God I will always have the resources I need to do what needs to be done (Philippians 4:19).
5. With God everything can be turned round for good (Romans 8:28).

Recommended Reading and Watching

Reading:

Pete Greig 'God on Mute'

Listening:

<https://godfirst.church/conferences-and-courses/open-heaven-2023>

Learning:

<https://prayercourse.org/home/>

&

<https://unanswered.prayercourse.org>

REFERENCES

1. Terry Virgo preach on healing – I am indebted to Terry’s talk and used/adapted a chunk of what he said.
2. Newfrontiers Magazine Articles
3. Terry Virgo ‘a Journey into healing’
4. Lex Loizides ‘Expecting the Miraculous’
5. Andrew Wilson ‘Christus Victor’
6. John Groves ‘A healing king and a Healing Kingdom
7. Adrian Holloway ‘Confessions of a healing sceptic’
8. PJ Smythe: Suffering, Sickness and Healing TOAM Main Session 2011
9. Joshua Greeson ‘God’s will is always healing’
10. Eric Johnson ‘Christ in You’
11. Andrew Whitman personal communication
12. John Bament personal Communication
13. Andrew Whitman personal communication
14. Simon Holley ‘Sustainable power’

Audio

1. Simon Holley various preaches on healing from Kings Arms resources
2. Terry Virgo ‘Faith for Healing’ 2008 healing conference