

intellectual, and spiritual. In the New Testament they are summarised in three groups—the neighbours, the brother, and the family. At the centre of all these relationships stands the individual believer. What he is in himself determines what he will be to others. The spheres outlined above are comparable to the synchro-mesh gear on a car. Christ supplies the spiritual dynamic to the believer, but his hand regulates the lever that transforms potential energy into practical action. The perfections of divine grace in the gift of Christ for man's complete salvation leave nothing to be desired. Imperfect response to, and relationship with, Christ mar the completeness of the divine work within the soul. "The indicatives of the Christian Faith," declares Dr. L. P. Jacks, "are veiled imperatives." Become what you are!

The Holy Spirit and the Body

Divine Healing

BY THE REV. F. L. WYMAN

ONE of the most significant promises made by Jesus Christ to His disciples was that with the coming of the Holy Spirit they would be guided into all truth. The disciples, under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, would be led into truths that would glorify Jesus Christ (John xvi. 13, 14). All too infrequently, alas, the Church has not availed herself of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit in relation to the truth concerning mental and physical restoration, as practised and promised by Jesus Christ.

There can be no reasonable doubt but that it was the absence of the Holy Spirit within the Church that was responsible for this essential part of Christian truth being largely lost, and man-made dogmas substituted in its place. Because there is not always careful recognition of the difference between Truth, as revealed by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and Tradition, which often boasts no greater authority than time-honoured practice or an Early Father of the Church, a belief concerning sickness has come to be generally accepted by Christian people which bears no relation to the truth declared by Jesus Christ and revealed to the Early Church by the Holy Spirit. Amidst the confusion of beliefs promulgated on this subject we find ourselves having to make the choice between the teaching of the Holy Spirit and the teaching of man.

"He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." In that significant passage lies the whole purpose of Christ's desire to heal human minds and bodies—in order that Christ might be glorified. In actual practice it always is so. No man or woman can be healed, manifestly by the hand of Jesus Christ, without very great glory being reflected upon Him.

The question naturally arises, How did men come to omit this divinely provided blessing of mental and physical restoration in their presentation of Christian truth? The answer would appear to be in

the fact that the precise nature of the ministry of the Holy Spirit has not always been, and still is not fully, recognised. The human mind is at best faulty and liable to forget important facts and truths. One function of the Holy Spirit is to aid human memory. "He shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John xiv. 26).

Without the Holy Spirit men would and did forget the things Jesus Christ had told them concerning His will to heal sickness. Thus man created his own theories, and the Church adopted those theories and worse still perpetuated them to posterity. Much of this inherited teaching is accepted even to-day as sacrosanct because it bears the label "tradition". Strange as it may seem, many people are prepared to accept and vigorously defend what the "Church teaches" whether it agrees with written revealed truth or not. Hence many Christian people are prepared to believe that sickness is very often sent by God, and—the reasoning goes—if it is God-imposed what right have we to interfere with God's will?

I

It is not realised that this theory came to the birth as a result of a defeated and a deluded Church. For some centuries after Jesus Christ's Ascension the Church preached and practised Divine Healing as part of her normal ministry. There was a simple, confident reliance upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit to bring to the memory all things that Christ had taught.

So from generation to generation the Church was reminded of her Lord's Divine Commission to heal the sick as well as to preach the Gospel. For some six or seven centuries the bodies and minds of sick people were healed in the Name of Christ according to His Command. The Church was the centre of healing.

Then slowly dark shadows, legion by name, were cast across the path of the Church. Disobedience, pride, superstition, all took their part in bringing about the period of defeat and delusion referred to earlier. Man was now to receive the honour and the glory that were due to Christ. The Church increased and Christ decreased. Superstition entered in at one door, and simultaneously faith in a living, healing Christ went out at another door.

The Church laid its avaricious hands upon the riches of Christ and they became materialised, and so lost to men and women.

And every virtue we possess,
 And every conquest won,
 And every thought of holiness,
 Are His alone.

No Holy Spirit, no virtue, no conquest, no thought of holiness.

So for the time being the light had gone out. This was man's day of opportunity and it was by no means lost to him. This page of history is open for all to read. The light had turned to darkness and how great was that darkness!

Chaucer's picture of this period is enlightening. In 1388 he made his famous visit to the Shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury.

On this Pilgrimage Chaucer met people who really believed that their visit to the Shrine would procure for them both spiritual and physical blessings. To those who were unable to undertake the journey there was still left the ministry of the Pardoner to whom Chaucer satirically refers :

With him there rood a gentil Pardoner,
That streight was comen fro' the court of Rome ;
His walet lay before him in his lappe,
Bret-ful (brimful) of pardoun coine from Rome al hoot.

Midnight indeed ! What is important is that we should realise that we have never fully recovered from this period. The Reformation certainly swept away many abuses, but it did not restore the simple trust in Christ as mental and physical healer.

The truth is that there has always been a minority who have cherished much that belongs to this period. Indeed, the last few decades have witnessed a vigorous attempt to resuscitate to full life much of the teaching and practice that came to the birth at that time. This fact in itself is doing much to hinder a return to the simple faith in Christ as healer to-day, within the Church.

We think of ourselves as free men in the realm of religious thought. The fact is that no age is free from influences which have automatically flowed into it from the past. We do not live unbiassed by the past, however much we think we do. Much of our thinking in relation to Divine healing is based on yesterday. Yesterday supplied no entirely impartial judgment.

Nevertheless, man can by a conscious supreme effort in the power of the Holy Spirit stand aside independent, uninfluenced, unprejudiced by the trammels of the past. This it is our bounden duty to do if we would constantly travel back to the Source where alone the River of the Water of Life flows in all its God-ordained purity, unmarred, and unsullied by the bespoiling hand of man.

If we are to understand what Jesus Christ's real will and purpose is towards mankind in relation to the great problem of human sickness we must, under the guidance of The Holy Spirit, seek God's direction through His own revealed Word. Reason, unaided reason alone, is helplessly and totally inadequate for the task.

What saith the Scripture ?

II

" And they brought unto Jesus all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy ; and he healed them " (Matthew iv. 24).

Of a woman whom Jesus healed, He said : " This woman, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years " (Luke xiii. 16).

To the man of Gadara Jesus said : " Come out of him, thou unclean spirit " (Mark v. 8).

To another man Jesus said, before He healed him : " Thy sins be forgiven thee " (Matthew ix. 2).

To two blind men, before healing, Jesus asked the question : " Believe ye that I am able to do this ? " (Matthew ix. 28).

Blind Bartimaeus, when he heard Jesus was passing by, cried out, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." And we read: "Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto Him, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way" (Mark x. 47-52).

Those few passages contain the vital and indispensable factors concerning healing through Jesus Christ. Let us gather up their teaching:

1. In the first place, undeniable evidence is supplied showing that Jesus Christ healed the sick in body and the sick in mind during His earthly ministry. He had said, "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." Thus when we read of Jesus constantly healing sick people it is only natural to assume that the healing of sickness is consonant with the will of God. We ought never to be in doubt as to what is God's will concerning sickness.

Christ came that He might go to Calvary, so that by His "full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction" He might accomplish the complete redemption of mankind, soul, mind and body. His glorious Resurrection and Ascension were the final sealing and crowning of this completed and redemptive work, while the coming of Thy Holy Ghost was God's enabling sanctifying power whereby man might remember and appropriate these blessings. For unless the Spirit of God reigns within the heart of man, the spirit of evil reigns there, and Christ's redemptive work is unknown where evil reigns. Where this condition obtains soul, mind and body remain exposed and subject to the power of Satan.

This point, however elementary it may sound, is important to keep in mind, since the Christian world is slow to recognise that physical and mental healing are part of the redemptive work accomplished by Jesus Christ at Calvary. It is true that in the scheme of redemption the soul stands first, since the soul is the mainspring of man's whole personality; "for as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Jesus once said: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matthew xv. 19). It is quite obvious that there can be neither mental nor bodily healing by Jesus Christ in the presence of such things. In other words, a man must seek first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness before those "other things" can be added.

But having attended to first things first, the New Testament evidence leaves no room for doubt but that the benefits of Calvary were intended to include restoration to men's minds and to their bodies. There are two verses in St. Matthew's Gospel that are completely devoid of any intelligent meaning if they do not convey this truth: "When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew viii. 16, 18). If Jesus healed the sick in mind and body in order to fulfil Isaiah's prophecy, how can we

interpret Calvary as efficacious for the soul only?

Christ's work at Calvary was not an incomplete work, or He could not have declared it in that last great moment of triumph as "finished." In this finished work man can with complete confidence repose his faith, in the knowledge that Jesus Christ is his Healer, in every part to make whole. "If any man be in Christ he"—the whole man—"is a new creation."

2. The statements of Jesus Christ in which He ascribes sickness to Satan are a corrective of the theory that God sends sickness, and that therefore sickness must be in accordance with His will. There can be no doubt that when Jesus Christ healed sickness it was no incidental happening but a conscious part of the great mission for which He had come to earth in the flesh, *viz.* to destroy the works of the devil (1 John iii. 8). For man to ascribe sickness to God, when Jesus Christ names Satan as its originator, is to come near to calling evil good and good evil.

3. It is clearly evident that Jesus Christ cannot effect healing without complete co-operation on the part of the sick person. This is generally accepted as a necessary factor between doctor and patient. Let it not be thought that co-operation can be dispensed with between the sick person and Jesus Christ. In the very nature of things no blessing can come to any man through a spiritual channel unless the channel is clean. A state of sin will clog the channel and hinder the blessing. It is impossible to contemplate being a recipient of divine blessing while unrecognised, unacknowledged, unforgiven sin remains in the life. "Thy sins be forgiven thee" is the only place of commencement possible to God or to us. He cannot give, we cannot receive, until we have allowed Him to make all things new within our hearts. Forgiveness and Sanctification, Calvary and Pentecost, must both be actively operative within the heart before divine blessings can flow freely to any man.

No wishful thinking, no rigid adherence to Church ordinances, no action of the Ministry, can be substituted for personal holiness unto the Lord. Spiritual co-operation there must be before Christ can confer His blessing, be the blessing physical or spiritual.

4. Nor is Jesus Christ free to bless until He is assured of confident *faith* on man's part. Christ still asks, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" "According to your faith be it unto you" is a principle we so often forget, to our own cost.

Then we have to exercise careful thought so as to ascertain precisely what we mean by *faith*. The writer has visited many sick people who certainly possessed faith that they would be restored, but by no stretch of imagination could it be concluded that their faith was always a living faith in Jesus Christ.

One lady I know lives in the daily belief that something that went amiss in her body years ago causing semi-paralysis will one day right itself just as suddenly as it went wrong. She has lived twenty years in this faith. Undoubtedly it is a marvellous instance of patience, endurance, and hope; but faith in Christ is just non-existent. She has not as yet met Him on the road. She cannot trust One Whom she does not know.

Others I have visited have been proud of their faith, but when one analyses it one finds it is a faith wholly and exclusively reposed in the doctor. From the medical point of view it is highly important that the patient should be able to place implicit trust in the doctor, but we do have to remind ourselves that when we talk of faith in the doctor, and faith in Jesus Christ, we are talking of two entirely different things. It is possible for very great faith to be placed in a doctor, while from the same person faith in Jesus Christ may be completely absent. This may appear to be labouring a simple point, but such is the confusion in the minds of so many sick people that it is imperative that the issue should be clarified.

So many people whom the writer has visited over the years have had the idea that to say they have *faith* enables them to pass the 'means test.' It has a religious sound about it and a pious flavour; but unless each individual case is enquired into very carefully, the substitute is allowed to pass for the reality in the mind of the patient, who is incidentally rendered a great disservice.

Diligent, tactful discrimination and guidance is needed that the faith of the sick may be lifted from all wholly or partially inefficacious objects to Jesus their Saviour and Healer.

The ministry has a most definite and solemn task to perform in this matter.

Faith in a doctor, or in will-power are essential, but what the patient needs to realise is that Jesus Christ can save *to the uttermost*, and when doctors have reached the end of their resources, and will-power can no longer function, Christ can still heal.

III

Having reached such a faith what is the next step? The unequivocal guidance of the New Testament is that believers should avail themselves of the opportunity of outwardly expressing that faith. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the *prayer of faith* shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up" (James 3. v. 14-15).

These words clearly demonstrate the fact that faith in Jesus Christ for healing was the accepted thing when James wrote his Epistle (? A.D. 60). The message of James to the Christians of the Dispersion is also the message to all Christian believers in every age. The power of Jesus Christ is present to heal to-day, equally as it was then, for those who will trust Him implicitly and seek to do His will.

May the following brief accounts bear witness to this fact.

A man (a parishioner) was lying in hospital seriously ill, suffering from cancer of the liver. The doctor stated it was impossible for him to come out alive. The writer ministered to the man in the hospital ward and held a healing service. The man was healed, and to this day is enjoying better health than he has known for years past.

Another parishioner, a lady, recently suffered two paralytic strokes. A service of healing was held for her, and although she is nearly seventy years of age she now walks four miles to church every Sunday entirely unaided.

A child of six lay dying of Haemophilia in a nursing home. The parents sent a telegram asking if a service of healing could be held. The child was visited and a service was held. Christ's answer was restoration to health for the little boy.

"Oh taste and see how gracious The Lord is. Blessed is the man that putteth his trust in Him!"

IV

A final word should be added concerning the value of intercession in the ministry of healing. "Pray one for another that ye may be healed," says the Apostle James (v. 16). A Christian acting as an intercessor possesses the very great privilege of bringing healing to another's mind or body by his intercession at the Throne of Grace. Not all Christian people are prepared to accept the teaching of Divine Healing with any degree of definiteness. A man must be fully persuaded in his own mind of the efficacy and willingness of Christ to grant healing before he can approach God with confidence on behalf of another.

The most effective and consistent intercessors will be found among Christian people who themselves have had an experience of healing or have witnessed it in others. To them doubts have disappeared and they know they can pray with fullest anticipation.

Consistent intercession is something that demands complete unselfishness, since it consists in thinking wholly of others. Hence spiritual qualities of a high order are the requisite of every intercessor.

Intercession can be offered either privately at home, or in groups in a church, or in a parish room, under leadership. For those who are able to intercede privately and corporately the office of intercession is more completely effective. Where there is an operative group of intercessors, the names of those in need of healing, and who themselves believe in healing, should be supplied from time to time.

Services of intercession should be held frequently—once a week if possible. The leader should go through the list of the sick, describing in brief outline the up-to-date need of each patient. Some are improving; for these thanksgivings should be offered. Some are extremely ill; these will call for concentrated prayer.

On a certain occasion one such name was that of a woman suffering from mental illness. Her condition had become considerably worse and it was decided that further treatment was useless. Arrangements had accordingly been made for her to be removed to a mental home.

This news was communicated to me, and at the next intercessors' meeting these facts were told. Special prayers were offered at that meeting for the patient. While we knelt the miracle of grace happened. The Lord heard and answered those prayers and healed the woman. That is four years ago; she has since enjoyed perfect health.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James v. 16).

"Life giving Spirit, o'er us move,
As on the formless deep;
Give life and order, light and love,
Where now is death, or sleep."