

Now Concerning Spiritual Things

an historical account of one man's walk with God

6031 Steamboat Drive
Dallas, Texas 75230-1851

Copyright February 1, 1999
Jim Ash letter No. 17

(972) 458-2260 Fax (972) 458-0288
e-mail: jimash.min@worldnet.att.net

SUMMON THE PHYSICIAN PART I

A year ago I got the "thought" to write about physical health and healing available to Christians today. I have been reluctant to do so, but since I have been prompted to tackle the subject, here goes.

Many servants of God have written books on God's power to heal, some of which I have read and are in my library. But that is not what originally prompted my interest in God's desire to heal and bless with improved health. My interest began more than thirty-three years ago when I prayed for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.¹ The Lord's response to that prayer was such that it changed my life forever. Thereafter the Spirit confirmed within me that every word in the scripture was true.² All my doubts were gone. The legalistic doctrinal partitions I had erected in the bible were obliterated, and the Holy Spirit confirmed to me the assurance of my salvation.³ I then realized that since the occurrence of Pentecost,⁴ as recorded in the second chapter of the book of Acts, the things Jesus

told His followers to do were accessible *today* – and miracles did not cease with the death of the original Apostles. That took some adjusting to get used to. Then as the bible became *alive*, for the first time in my life I believed that what I read applied to *me* and not just to the one hundred twenty⁵ disciples in Jerusalem that Pentecost morning. What a wonderful thing it was to discover that the Holy Spirit had been alive and well on planet Earth for lo, almost two thousand years, and I had been dead and blind to that *Reality*. But no more!

Here is a scriptural foundation for what I have just written: "The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all his innermost parts."⁶ When the Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) touches the spirit of man, the lamp of the Lord, the light and life of the Lord is imparted to him. The Holy Spirit Who imparted resurrection life to Jesus imparts that same eternal life to man's *spirit*.⁷ When that happens one is born again,⁸ the curse of the Adamic sin is lifted from his life,⁹ the Spirit becomes oil for the Lord's *lamp* within man and he begins to see spiritually for the first time. These are spiritual principles that the world will not accept but are discernable to a born again Spirit filled Christian.

As these things became apparent to me spiritually, I began to realize for the first time, the blessings that I had rejected by my legalistic doctrine and my lack of faith. In effect, Satan had stolen these blessings from me since he comes only to steal, kill and destroy.¹⁰ In the parable of the sower, "...some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and

¹All four of the Gospel writers record that Jesus came to baptize with the Holy Spirit. See Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16 and John 1:33. All scripture references are from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

²Read John 14:16, 17 and 16:13.

³In good conscience, I had previously been baptized in physical water twice to become part of two different denominations, both of which taught different reasons for the same act and both of which taught that Holy Spirit baptism of the first century A.D. is not for today. But after Holy Spirit baptism I understood for the first time what the Apostle Paul meant when he wrote, "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and were all made to drink of one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:13, RSV).

⁴Just before the ascension of Jesus He told His disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49 confirmed in Acts 1:8). That *power* in the form of the Holy Spirit fell in Jerusalem about nine A.M., ten days after Jesus ascended, which marked the birthday of the Church on earth. That *power* imparts understanding of what Jesus said and the faith to act on His Word in order to *birth* into existence His promised blessings.

⁵See Acts 1:15.

⁶Proverbs 20:27 RSV.

⁷Read Romans 8:11.

⁸See John 3:3 - 8.

⁹Read Romans 5:19.

¹⁰Jesus said, "The Thief [Satan] does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they might have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10, brackets added).

devoured them.”¹¹ Jesus explained, “When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one (Satan) comes and snatches away what was sown in his *heart*. This is he who received seed by the wayside.”¹² Satan is alive and well on planet Earth and is doing exactly what Jesus said. He comes to *steal* the seed (word of God) from your *heart* so you will not believe what Jesus said *you are* when you accept Him as Lord. He comes to *kill*. Man was not created to die; he was created to live. Satan, not God, is the author of death. Death, the wages of sin, was not known to man until Adam’s sin in the Garden of Eden. He comes to *destroy*. The word destroy is translated from the Greek word *apollumi*, which means “to destroy fully, to lose, mar, perish.”¹³ He knows that his final destination is the lake of fire¹⁴ and – make no mistake – he wants to take you with him. Satan is the “accuser of our brethren.”¹⁵ One of his jobs is to see that you don’t believe what Jesus said. It’s counter to his objective.

After the Holy Spirit quickened my spirit to *life*, and the words of the Bible became *alive*, I learned more about God’s word in twelve months than I had in the prior forty-five years of my life, even though I had been a teacher of adult Bible classes for over ten years. A year after my new *life* began, it became apparent that the exclusive, legalistic doctrine of our church made me “no longer one of them.” While I was being expelled from that denomination, the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said, “Leave this church.” This was God’s voice calling me out of the organized church to minister to those in that denomination who were spiritually hungry for something more than a doctrine of legalism, devoid of the love, joy and peace that Jesus came to give.

It wasn’t long before people in that denomination would call on the phone, come by our home or write us for advice, counsel and prayer for

healing and other needs. Our home became a haven for those in that denomination who had outgrown the doctrine and didn’t know what to do and for those who were searching for something more -- for the true Spiritual Manna Who came down from heaven.¹⁶ One interesting thing about Holy Spirit baptism is that He makes you personally acquainted with Jesus. That, of course, is one of His jobs.¹⁷ Now *that* takes a while to get used to. Prayer then becomes a conversation with Someone you *know and love* and the formality of “stuffed-shirt” words and phrases that used to find their way into prayers are discarded because they no longer have meaning. Talking to Someone you love is easy, informal and meaningful.

Of course, I discovered and accepted the words of Jesus when He said of His followers, “In my Name they will cast out demons” and “They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover.”¹⁸ In one thirty-day period¹⁹ I was called to three different homes to pray for people who had serious needs in their lives²⁰ -- people who could not find that kind of simple trusting faith in their own church. And so they turned to me. I was not a member of a church. Neither was I an elder, deacon, minister, pastor nor priest. News travels fast in the underground church.

One evening I got a phone call from a friend in Austin, Texas who had learned of someone the Lord had blessed when I had prayed for her. He asked if I would come to Austin and pray for a woman who had been diagnosed as terminally ill with cancer. The woman was the wife of a Professor in the Austin Presbyterian Seminary. The next week I was in Austin and prayed for the woman as I was requested. When my friend called from Austin that night, I said something like this to him: “I can do no more in praying for this woman than you can. You are also a

¹¹Matthew 13:4 (b).

¹²Matthew 13:19 (Parenthesis and italics added).

¹³New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of The Bible, Strong’s Number 622, p.320 & 11, Greek Dictionary.

¹⁴See Revelation 20:10. All who have rejected Christ, whose name is not found in the Book of Life will also be cast into the lake of fire, See Revelation 20:11 – 15.

¹⁵See Revelation 12:10.

¹⁶Read John 6:31 - 35. In this passage Jesus reveals Himself as the true Bread of God. Jesus Himself is the One Who maintains and sustains us as the Bread of Life.

¹⁷Read John 14:21, 23.

¹⁸See Mark 16:17 & 18.

¹⁹This occurred about twenty-seven years ago.

²⁰One man who was critically ill and was practically bankrupt from the cost of his medical care, asked me to anoint him with oil and pray for his healing, as referenced in James 5:14 – 16. Another of the three needed deliverance.

Christian. All I can do is pray for healing as Jesus said and you can do the same thing. Whatever is done in such circumstances is done by the Lord, not be the one who prays.” Then my friend replied, “Yes, but you have a track record.” That statement defined where that man was in his walk with the Lord. When you pray for someone by faith, *you must take your eyes off of the problem, off of the circumstance or the disease, off of yourself and off of the one for whom you are praying, and put them on the Lord!* Only “with God all things are possible.”²¹ In retrospect, I have wondered if the Professor, with the academic and spiritual qualifications to teach at the Seminary level, had no one in the Seminary on whom he could call to pray, with the laying on of hands, for his wife’s healing as Jesus prescribed. Often it is not possible to follow Jesus and remain in the good graces of the religious establishments. Christianity is not a religion. It is a *relationship* with a Person. It’s too radical for some Christians. But when you are called on to make a choice and take your stand with those of us who have, it becomes the greatest leveraged investment you will ever make.

Let’s look at what the fifth chapter of James says about the subject of healing. “**14**Is anyone among you sick? 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. **15**And the prayer of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. **16**Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective fervent prayer of a righteousness man avails much.” I wonder how many of the larger mainline churches, Protestant or Catholic, practice this ceremony in public or in private. There may be some who do but I believe they would be the exception to the rule.²² In most cases I believe the reason is because the pastor, priest or the leaders in the denomination don’t believe this ceremony is for today, in a similar way that they don’t believe the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit are for today. God

²¹Matthew 19:26 (b).

²²It is my opinion that all of the churches who accept baptism of the Holy Spirit without restriction today, practice this ceremony publicly in the worship service and/or privately. And the number of those churches is not a few. That number is growing. Many people today are hungry for something more – for something that is real. Jesus is real. And so is a personal relationship with Him.

will honor that kind of unbelief. He will not demand obedience to what Jesus said, but “Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.”²³ The passage of scripture referenced above quoted from James is one of the Great Physician’s prescriptions for illness. It is practiced regularly in our Church. For example, there are ten or twelve prayer rails at the front of the auditorium. At each service, trained prayer rail ministers are available to agree with you in prayer, in confidence, and anoint you with oil upon request, for whatever your needs might be. Miracles occur at those prayer rails because God’s Word is honored. Dire need is a great equalizer. No one leaves a church service without an opportunity to agree with someone in prayer concerning a need in their life. The church should be the avenue through which God meets the needs of people. And everyone has a need. Everyone.

Notice in the preceding column, James, chapter five, verse fourteen, the one who is ill acts on his faith to call for the elders. Then by faith they respond, pray and anoint the patient with oil in the name of the Lord. When there is agreement in prayer²⁴ by both the one who is ill and the ones who come to minister, notice in verse fifteen: “*And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.*” Healing is promised in obedience to the word of God. In addition, if the patient has committed sins, he will be forgiven. This is the only place in the bible that I know of where sins are remitted *without confession*. Now look at verse sixteen again.

Here the word says when we confess our trespasses – that means our faults, our weaknesses, our sins, -- to one another and pray for one another, *God’s word promises healing*. Satan would have you believe otherwise. He will put thoughts in your head like, “Don’t tell anyone about **that!** You ought to be ashamed of that. Keep it to yourself. Don’t let anyone else know about it. *Try harder!* If you tell someone else you will lose them as a friend.” All of these statements are lies and contrary to God’s word. The truth of the matter is, when you find someone with

²³1 Samuel 15:22 (b).

²⁴A powerful principle concerning prayer was stated by Jesus who said, “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.” (Matthew 18:19).

faith in whom you have confidence or whom you can trust and then confess to that one your weaknesses and ask for prayer, *it will draw you closer together than you have ever been.* And you will often find that friend will have the same weaknesses you have *and you will be asked to pray for them.* This is in keeping with something the Lord has impressed me with: *He has freed me to be vulnerable and has allowed me to be vulnerably free!* And that is true freedom. Then the latter part of verse sixteen tells of the power of the prayer of a righteousness man. Hear what the prophet Jeremiah says about your righteousness and mine concerning the coming of Jesus over six hundred years before He was born, “In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”²⁵ Notice now the similar writing of the Apostle Paul, “He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our *righteousness* and sanctification and redemption; therefore, as it is written, ‘Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord.’”²⁶ You see, *Jesus is our righteousness!* We therefore can come boldly to the throne of grace, in his Name, and ask knowing full well the *hot line* is open to us as a child of God! Of course there are conditions to God’s promises. His word to me most recently along this line was, “Stay close to Me, cleaned up (inside), prayed up and available.”

I have seen numbers of people blessed and healed by God. And I have also observed numbers who were not healed. I understand the general reason why, but not the specifics, unless the Holy Spirit points them out. This happened while I was praying the morning of October 13, 1998. I refer you to my 11/1/98 letter, page four following the prophecy. I repeat here a part of that last paragraph since it is pertinent as a conclusion to this letter. “There are conditions to receiving God’s promises for salvation, healing and other blessings. When those conditions are met, nothing can prevent the blessing from occurring. If they have not been met, the blessing cannot be given.” Hence the reason to search the scriptures to claim God’s treasures.

Here are two instances where the Lord healed me: Thirty years ago I had a lower back problem and

went to a chiropractor for treatment. He suggested exercise and I began doing sit-ups in the morning and jogging in the afternoon. One day I got angry, opened my bible to a verse of scripture that promised healing and in no uncertain terms pointed out to God that *His word promised* healing and claimed His promise *for me right then.* A few days later while I was doing sit-ups, the Holy Spirit spoke one word to me: “Healing.” I concluded that my healing would come through exercise, which I continued to do each morning and afternoon. Some fifteen years later, I was sitting at our breakfast table one morning working on the manuscript of my first little book, **For Christians Only**, and the Lord healed my back. I didn’t ask Him. He just did it. I could feel Him doing the healing in the exact spot of my lower back where the problem had first occurred. It is healed today!

Five years ago the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said, “Play in Nursing Homes.” Since I play the piano, I knew what He meant. Then I remembered that I had begun to have an arthritic condition in my right elbow and right knee. Realizing that I would need to play continuously for about forty-five minutes to an hour, I sat down to play as a test. After twenty minutes, the pain in my right elbow was so severe I had to quit. I then simply said something like this to the Lord, “I know what you have told me to do, but I need You to heal my elbow so I can do as You have instructed.” Then I promptly forgot the problem. My first gig was in a Retirement Center one Friday from 4:30 to 5:30 P.M. Later I realized that I had *no pain* in my right elbow that afternoon while playing the piano for an hour. I had been healed *and* given a bonus. The Lord healed my right knee without my asking. Regardless of how long I play the piano now, there is no pain in my right elbow. (Vitamin J is good for joints).

Learning to live in good conscience before God as I walk with Him on a daily basis has improved my physical health. Learning to deal first with illness symptoms spiritually has also been a blessing and continues to be a learning experience.

....more later, the Lord willing.

²⁵Jeremiah 23:6.

²⁶1 Corinthians 1:30, RSV, Italics added..