

When Your Miracle Doesn't Immediately Happen

I never ever thought I'd write a book on restoration, wholeness and healing. Because, quite honestly, I've struggled with some of the theology that proclaims that God always heals, and if you don't get your healing, it's because you don't have enough faith. People said those kinds of things to me in my early years when I battled Lyme disease; not only were the comments not helpful, they were downright hurtful.

For years I've felt protective of those who've suffered long without a breakthrough. I've asked God to give them a gift of faith. I've asked God to protect them from people who sound like Job's friends and who assess the sufferer with the preface You know what your problem is?

Those who've suffered long don't need more ought-to's and should-do's. Those compassionless statements only make our burden heavier.

But the thing is, when we suffer long, we get used to our situation. We identify with it. And we lose our sense of expectancy. I know this well from personal experience.

It's in those places that we need hope and God's perspective. He doesn't leave us in our pain. He redeems us right in the midst of it. God still moves, still cares and will do something in our situations that we never expected if we will dare to lift our eyes and trust Him, and if we'll determine to contend for the promise He's put before us. God's promises are as potent as they've ever been.

If you're willing, let's embark on a journey and explore Jesus' desire to see us flourish, to heal our soul and to make us whole. Sometimes we'll get an immediate miracle, but I'd say more often, our healing-wholeness journey is more of a

process. No matter what ails us—be it emotionally, physically or circumstantially—God has more for us. We're not meant to stay stuck here.

My recent heartbreak and health battle compelled me to dig deeper into God's promises regarding health, healing, and wholeness. I don't know that I'd say my faith has changed as a result of my most recent battle, but it certainly has deepened. I'm convinced—like never before—that God intends to do miracles in our day. I believe—with all my heart—that we'd see far more miracles on the earth today if there were more faith in our hearts. May God stir up a fresh gift of faith in us!

But I also firmly believe that there's a mystery to God's ways and that we don't dictate to Him; instead, we serve Him, honor Him, revere Him and trust Him. Godly people get sick and die. I look at men like my dear brother-in-law Donny, or Nabeel Qureshi, the Christian apologist and author. Both of them died of cancer—far too young. But I now see that they won their battle. They didn't lose it. Cancer no longer grips them in its ugly, devastating clutches or robs them of health and peace. They're with Jesus—full, healed and free. And our time with them will far exceed our short time without them.

And there are those whose lot involves life with a disability. Such a cross. Such a cost. But God is with them, and He'll either miraculously heal them, or He'll miraculously use them in a way that allows them to flourish and reflect the Father's heart right in the midst of their vulnerability. Life on earth is short. Eternity is long. God's promises are true. And if you follow Jesus through the Gospels, you'll find a Savior who cares deeply about the human condition.

What, Then, Are We Called to Do?

That fact—our Savior's heart for the human condition—is what brings us the assurance that God wants us to thrive, and He's

with us every step of the way.

You and I need to make some adjustments amidst the craziness of this world and the toxicity of our times. God offers us wisdom from above, wisdom that's unique to us and to our situation. But in order for us to know the fullness and the restoration that are possible for us as heirs of God, we have some things to learn. We cannot and must not keep grinding our gears through life while ignoring the physical and emotional toll that our hardships have had on us. Neither can we ignore the mental and/or emotional symptoms that are trying to get our attention.

I can't prove this, but I believe there's a trapdoor in our hearts that drops things into our souls. Our soul is the place where our emotions brew and our hurts collide, and the turmoil of it all can put the squeeze on our hopes, our dreams and our perspective. Jesus wants peace to rule and reign in our hearts so that we can prosper in our soul. He wants us to flourish in every way possible.

"My beloved friend, I pray that everything is going well for you and that your body is as healthy as your soul is prosperous." (3 John 2, VOICE).

So here's what we're going to do on this journey:

We're going to pursue wholeness.

And we're going to pray for a miracle.

We're going to ask God for a fresh vision of what flourishing can look like for us, and then we're going to position ourselves on the path of healing—whatever it takes. Some of this will be hard. But you're no stranger to hard. You've done it before. We can do hard if it leads us to a better life, right? We're going to roll up our sleeves, take inventory of our habits, give our soul some room to breathe and maybe change a few of our ways so we can enjoy better health.

And then we're going to go before the Most High God, who loves us with a passion we cannot fathom, and we're going to ask Him for a miracle, because He's the same God yesterday, today, and forever. He loves us, and He still performs miracles today.
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