

Why Doesn't Every Person We Pray for Get Healed?

We live in a diseased and fallen world (2 Cor. 4:16). Our bodies are growing older. We can't run as fast. Our hearts are not as strong. The longer we live, the clearer it becomes that we are slowing down and wearing out!

In this week following our observance of Christ's resurrection, we can find hope for our mortal bodies in this promise from the apostle Paul: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that lives in you" (Rom. 8:11).

Divine Healing in and Through the Church

Our health—or the absence of it—is affected by many things. James tells us (5:15-18) that if a believer is sick, he or she should exercise faith by calling for the elders or pastoral leadership of the church to come and pray. These church leaders should follow certain prophetic actions of faith. James explicitly directs them to "anoint with oil" (representing the Holy Spirit who is present to glorify Jesus—the Anointed One—in healing works) and "lay hands on" the sick, as representatives of the divine healer, Jesus Himself.

James goes on to describe divine healing, which may come from prayers and actions within the local body of believers in Christ. Believers, he says, are to "confess your faults to one another and pray for one another" (James 5:16a) that we may be healed. Our physical health is often connected to our spiritual health.

The apostle Paul spoke of some believers partaking of the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion's bread and cup, symbolic of

Jesus) in an unworthy manner, “not discerning the Lord’s body” (1 Cor. 11:29b). God may need to lovingly discipline disobedient believers by allowing sickness to afflict them, even to the point of allowing their premature death, in some cases (vv. 30-32).

But we don’t have to die of sickness or disease. Instead, divine healing may come as a result of our personal prayers, confessions and forgiveness. Healing may also come through corporate prayers by other believers and pastoral leaders or as an expression of special graces from those among us to whom God has granted supernatural giftings. Also, God’s compassion and mercy may find expression through medical science, since all healing finds its origin in Him.

Where the King is, There Is His Authoritative Rule and Reign

Jesus appointed 70 and sent them ahead of where He was about to come. He commissioned them to “Heal the sick who are there and say to them ‘The Kingdom of God has come near to you’” (Luke 10:9). It is this *presentness* of the kingdom of God in Jesus that continues our mission and ministries today. For, where the King is, there is His authoritative rule and reign.

King Jesus has *positionally* delivered believers from Satan’s domination at the moment of salvation (Col. 1:13). This deliverance continues *practically* as a present reality and a foretaste of the total freedom in the age to Come, when Satan’s power will be bound and he awaits final destruction (Matt. 13:41-43; 1 Cor. 15:24-25).

The perfected kingdom of God awaits the age to come. Our present kingdom awareness has been described as both “now” and “not yet.” We must live in the dynamic tension between the “presentness” of the kingdom of God in this evil age, and the complete manifestation of the kingdom’s rule and reign in the age to come.

This duality of destiny is partly why “the whole creation

groans and travails in pain” as we “eagerly wait” the full redemption of our bodies (Rom. 8:22-23b) and why we ultimately pray “Even so, come, Lord Jesus! (Rev. 22:20b).

We experience some of the “first fruits of the Spirit” as certain healings and miracles flash before us in this present age, but the fullness of the Spirit in divine healing is on experiential hold until the age to come, caught in that “now ... but not yet” tension between the present and the future (Rom. 8:18-25).

Some of us are not healed simply because the fullness of the kingdom is not yet here among us. It is available now in part and revealed in stages because Jesus won the victory on the cross. But, divine health and healings are not released fully in this age because they yet belong in the future.

The Spirit Himself intercedes for us “according to the will of God” (Rom. 8:27), dividing spiritual gifts and manifestations “dividing to each one individually as He will” (1 Cor. 12:11b). We cannot pull into human experience now what He has sovereignly suspended until after His return. It is not our prerogative to neither manipulate nor outmaneuver the sovereign God of the universe!

But, we should always pray and *ask* for God’s best “that our joy may be full.” We should continue to *seek* and *knock* with persistence and patience. We never know when an aspect of the life of the age to come may flash into our current experience.

The Last Enemy to Be Defeated is Death

No matter when or how we may be healed in this life, it is only temporary. The day will come when we are appointed to die (Heb. 9:27). The only exception is if we are still living on earth when Christ Jesus returns to “snatch us” away to heaven (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-11), together with those who already “sleep in Jesus.”

Paul taught the Corinthians that all who are in Christ “shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward, those who are Christ’s at His coming. Then comes the end when He will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He will reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death” (1 Cor. 15: 22-26).

Until that day, let us pray with Paul that our “whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:23b).”

Listen to the podcast for more answers to healing questions.

*Ordained to the ministry in 1969, **Gary Curtis** is a graduate of LIFE Bible College at Los Angeles (soon to become Life Pacific University at San Dimas, California). He has taken graduate courses at Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois and Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. Gary served as part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the First Foursquare Church of Van Nuys, California, for 27 years (1988-2015), the last 13 years as the vice president of Life on The Way Communications Inc., the church’s not-for-profit media outreach. Now retired, Gary and his wife have been married for 50 years and live in Southern California. They have two married daughters and five grandchildren.*