

7 Reasons Christians Should Believe in Divine Healing

Some individuals within the church mistakenly align the doctrine of physical healing with the so-called prosperity gospel. While I challenge the tenets of the prosperity gospel, it's crucial to acknowledge that God's willingness to bestow physical and material blessings upon us stems from His inherent goodness. The real contention with the prosperity gospel lies not in denying God's desire to enrich our lives physically and financially but in the problematic perspective it promotes: pursuing God not for His essence but for the benefits He provides. True faith prioritizes seeking the giver of blessings, not merely the blessings themselves.

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1. Divine healings and miracles are part of the global expansion of Christianity. Scholars and theologians who have moved away from cessationism—the belief that spiritual gifts like prophecy, healing and speaking in tongues ceased with the apostolic age—often do so in light of empirical evidence of the church's growth and the manifestation of signs and wonders. This is particularly true in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Observations of the dynamic development of Christianity in these regions, often accompanied by reports of miracles, healings and other signs and wonders, challenge the cessationist viewpoint. Scholars who value empirical evidence must recognize the widespread reports of supernatural activities in these vibrant Christian communities.

Contextual Theology: Witnessing the ongoing spiritual phenomena, some scholars have revisited biblical texts to explore the possibility that cessationism may not be a biblically warranted stance. Their studies often lead to a

more continuationist view that the gifts of the Spirit are available and active today.

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Also, the explosive growth of Pentecostal and charismatic movements in these regions, known for their emphasis on the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts, provides a compelling narrative of Christianity's expressions of power evangelism.

Untold multiple thousands of cases documented healings and miracles. These specific instances challenge cessationism.

Finally, some scholars and theologians have shifted their views based on personal encounters or firsthand accounts of spiritual gifts in action within these global contexts. Witnessing the transformative impact of such ministries has led some to reconsider their stance on the cessation of spiritual gifts. These factors contribute to reevaluating cessationism, especially as Christianity continues flourishing in contexts where signs and wonders are reported as part of the church's growth and ministry.

2. The word "salvation" implies physical healing. In the Bible, salvation is often presented as a comprehensive term encompassing spiritual redemption and restoration in all areas of life, including physical well-being (Luke 1:69-71). The Greek word for salvation, *sōzō*, used in the New Testament, can mean: "to save," "to keep safe and sound," "to rescue from danger or destruction" or "to heal." James 5:15 says the prayer of faith will "save" the sick. The same Greek word, *sosei*, is the word for "saving" a soul from death in James 5:20.

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3. The disciples pointed to physical healings to prove Christ rose from the dead. The miraculous healings served not just as a testament to the resurrection's power but also as significant markers of the dawning Messianic age and the imminent restoration of creation in every dimension, encapsulating the assurance of renewed physical well-being as depicted in Acts 4:1-14. If the apostles underscored physical miracles as evidence of Christ's resurrection, how could one argue that such manifestations are irrelevant for impactful evangelism in our time?

4. Jesus never turned anyone away who needed physical healing. Jesus assured us He would never reject anyone who approaches Him (John 6:37), and according to Luke 6:18-19, individuals sought Him out both to listen to His teachings and to receive healing from their afflictions. Remarkably, He "healed them all." Not once do the Gospel narratives record an instance where Jesus refused healing to those who came to Him seeking it.

5. The Scriptures connect the atonement with physical healing. Some scholars see a connection between the gospel and physical healing through passages like Isaiah 53:5c (NASB), which states, "By his wounds we are healed." Isaiah 53:4a (ESV) says, "Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." This was interpreted in Matthew 8:17 as: "This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: 'He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.'" Furthermore, Jesus said He could prove His ability to forgive sins by healing a paralytic man (Matt. 9:6-7.) Psalm 103:3 even connects forgiveness with physical healing when it says "who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases."

According to Dr. Michael Brown, "Isaiah 53:5 strategically joins *peša'*, *'awon*, *šalôm*, and *rapa'* – transgression, iniquity, well-being and healing: The servant's sufferings would produce complete restoration for his sin-sick people." Indeed, Jesus implied that healing was "the children's bread"

(Matt. 15:26-28).

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6. Biblical foundation. The Bible provides numerous instances of divine healing throughout the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, we see accounts of miraculous healings performed by prophets like Elijah and Elisha, demonstrating God's power to heal various ailments. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ performed countless healings, restoring sight to the blind, enabling the lame to walk and curing various diseases. Furthermore, Jesus instructed his disciples to heal the sick and cast out demons in His name, emphasizing the importance of divine healing as a manifestation of God's kingdom on earth.

7. Personal testimonies. Countless Christians worldwide have experienced firsthand the transformative power of divine healing in their lives. Our local church was built in the 1980s through a combination of evangelism and seeing God miraculously heal many. Through prayer, faith and the laying on of hands, many individuals have been healed of physical illnesses, emotional wounds and spiritual afflictions. These personal testimonies are powerful reminders of God's faithfulness and compassion towards his people. By sharing these stories of healing and restoration, believers can inspire others to trust in God's ability to bring about miraculous healing in their own lives and communities.