

Chronically Ill Pastor Says 'Name It and Claim It' Healing Is Not Biblical

Christian rapper and pastor Trip Lee recently preached about healing and faith at the Gospel Coalition's 2019 National Conference. Those are topics Lee is very familiar with, given his 12-year battle with chronic fatigue syndrome, an incurable illness. Preaching out of Matthew 8:1-13, Lee affirms that Jesus can still heal. But Lee also says he knows—from both his own experience and the experiences of friends and family—that faith alone doesn't bring healing for many people. That can be tough to wrestle with, he says, given that stories like Jairus' daughter or the woman with chronic bleeding encourage the idea that faith alone can heal you.

"To read passages like these, if I'm honest, can be difficult for a sick person," Lee says. "Because it just seems so easy. It seems like 'just believe and you're healed.' ... It seems like faith just takes care of it. So what can happen—and I know I'm not the only one who has an illness or who has friends and family who have illnesses—the question can be, 'Why isn't God willing to heal me?' It can be confusing, especially when you have false teaching that'll say, 'Look, if you're sick, it's a lack of faith. Faith always leads to healing.'"

However, Lee contrasts the leper's example in the Bible with the "name it and claim it" healing model that some preach today.

"If we want to present our brokenness to Jesus, ... the question is never about God's ability," Lee says. "It's a question of whether or not it's in His will. That's how we should bring our brokenness to a Savior as amazing as ours—with an open

hand, saying, 'I know you can. I'm asking if You will.'

"Not only that, but real faith isn't demanding," Lee says. "He doesn't say, 'Yo, Jesus, you've got to do this.' He doesn't say, 'You healed other people. Now it's my turn.' He says, 'If you're willing, I know you can.' Demanding things of God—I know it can seem like some kind of stronger, bolder faith, but that is fake pseudo-faith. That's not the kind of faith we see in Scripture. Making God your servant. Naming stuff and claiming stuff. That is not in the Bible. We should say, 'Lord, if you're willing, I know you can.'"

He concludes his remarks on the leper with a note of hopefulness, noting that sickness is never God's eternal plan. Instead, everyone will eventually be healed when we are resurrected with new, perfect bodies.

"When we ask God to heal us, if we're in Jesus, the answer that He gives us is never 'No,'" Lee says. "It's 'not yet.' Because what we know is that Jesus purchased perfect healing for us on the cross. What we know is that we'll be resurrected with new bodies. What we know is it'll do away with all sin and death. What we know is it'll wipe every tear from my eyes. The question is not if He'll do it; it's when He'll do it. So if you're here today, you're saying, 'I have been praying that God would heal, and He hasn't yet,' the worst-case scenario is that He said 'not yet.' And if He's decided for me right to deal with this trial for the rest of my life on this earth, then He's doing for some wise purpose that's for His glory and my good, but I know that I do have healing to look forward to."

Watch the embedded video to hear Lee's full sermon.