

Series: Divine Healing Series

Title: Session 10 – Does God Discipline Through Sickness?

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False Obstacles to Healing

- Example: I was once in a store with my boy Justin buying groceries. While I was waiting in line to pay for the groceries, I see a big box with a lot of fancy soccer balls. And my son sees them too. And it was written in very big letters something like: Make your son a surprise for only 1 euro!!! I was thinking in my mind: that's a good bargain for the good quality of the ball. I will buy one for Justin, he will love it. While I was still in line, suddenly, I see written somewhere down with very small letters: Only with purchases of over 100 euro. What??? Come on!!! Are you kidding me??? I hate disclaimers, don't you? They usually cancel all the joy of an offer or discount.
- But God is not like that when He promises healing. There are no disclaimers with God whatsoever. And here is where we will try to dismantle all the so-called false disclaimers from people's minds regarding healing.

1. The Hidden Will of God

- God is not our problem; He is our help.
- That means whenever you run into something that seems to try to stop a healing, you don't go to God and ask Him: Why don't You do something? Why are You letting this person stay seek?
- Any resistance when you try to receive healing for yourself or minister it, is on the part of the enemy, and not on God's part. God is not holding anybody's healing back until they get all things right, like a formula.

Isaiah 55:6–9 (NKJV)

⁶Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near.

⁷Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

⁸“For **My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,**” says the LORD.

⁹“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.

- First, God's higher thoughts and ways are not some mysterious will we cannot understand, as many Christians imply. According to the context of the passage above, those thoughts and ways are compassion and abundant pardon instead of punishment when we deserve it. That is the context of the saying.
- Second, even if that verse would refer to a difference of thoughts and ways between us and God in different areas of our lives, that verse applied to the Old Covenant people. In the New Covenant, we have the Holy Spirit who teaches us all things (John 14:26), reveals to us what God has freely given us (like healing – 1 Corinthians 2:12), and takes the deep things of God and discloses them to

us (John 16:14). So there is no hidden will of God in regards to healing that we cannot know in the New Covenant.

1 Corinthians 2:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” **But we have the mind of Christ.**

- We have the mind of Christ, so we know the will of God through Christ. There’s no hidden will, especially about healing, which is clearly revealed in Scripture.

2. God Is Teaching Me Something

- If sick people tell you that God is trying to teach them something through sickness, ask them back: What do you think God is trying to teach you? If they don’t know, then tell them: “Than God is a bad teacher, because if He wanted to teach you something through this sickness, He would have told you what He was teaching you.
- To say that God uses sickness or disease to teach you something is to say that the sickness is the Holy Spirit, or that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of infirmity. Why? Because the Bible says in John 14:26 that when the Holy Spirit comes, He will teach us all things. The Holy Spirit will teach us everything, and not sickness or disease. God doesn’t use helpers like sickness, but the Helper, the Holy Spirit.

John 14:26 (NKJV)

²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He will teach you all things**, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

- Remaining sick and living in sin are both a choice. If God used a sickness to teach me something, then He would also want me to live in sin sometimes, so that I would learn something.

3. God Is Disciplining Me

- Many Christians believe that God disciplines His children with sickness, either for their sinful actions, or to make them humble. But this is a lie from the pit of hell.

James 1:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷**Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above**, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

- Only good gifts come from our heavenly Father. Sicknesses would hardly qualify as a gift, not to mention being a good or perfect one. Sickness is from the devil and God doesn’t need the devil’s tool to fix any good thing for His children. Why would He have to use the instrument of Satan to perform a good deed in your life? If God put sickness on you to humble you and then you ran to your doctor, or took drugs to take away what God put on you to make you humble, wouldn’t that be hypocrisy? The truth is God never inflicts sickness on any of His children to make them humble.
- A good father would never like to see his children suffer. Rather, he works hard to ensure they don’t. No earthly parent could love or care for his children better than God. No parent could be

more willing to do good things for their family than He. God is the best daddy there is. He is your Father and He wants the very best for you. Recognize and take full advantage of the Fatherhood of God, knowing that His will is to bless and not to curse.

3 John 2 (NKJV)

²Beloved, I pray that **you may prosper in all things and be in health**, just as your soul prospers.

- John by the Spirit spoke the heart of God. This is God's desire for you. He is more willing to heal you than you are ready to be healed.

Matthew 7:11 (NKJV)

¹¹If you then, being evil, know how to give **good gifts to your children**, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

- Jesus Himself shows how good our heavenly Father is. So, if earthly fathers do not teach or discipline their children with sickness, disease or poverty, then all the more, our heavenly Father will never teach us by punishing us with bad things.
- The main biblical basis for the false assumption that God disciplines us through sickness to humble us is Hebrews chapter 12, where the Bible talks about God disciplining His children.

Hebrews 11:32–12:13 (NKJV)

³²And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:

³³who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

³⁴quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

³⁵Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

³⁶Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

³⁷They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—

³⁸of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

³⁹And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,

⁴⁰God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

¹Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

³For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

⁴You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

⁵And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;

⁶**For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives."**

⁷**If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?**

⁸But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

⁹Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

¹⁰For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

¹¹Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

¹²Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,

¹³and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

- The whole context of the passage is Hebrews 11:32 to 12:13. First, the text doesn't say anywhere that the discipline of God is through sickness or poverty. All these are assumptions. Moreover, nowhere in the text it says that the purpose of the discipline is to humble us.
- Second, if we look carefully at the whole context, we can easily notice that the theme of it is "enduring persecutions because of the gospel", and not "discipline because of sin or immorality".
 - Verse 12:2 tells us to look unto Jesus,... who for the joy that was set before Him ENDURED the cross. The next verse tells us again to consider Him who ENDURED such hostility from sinners against Himself.
 - Immediately after that, the passage talks about our discipline. So, the parallel and the comparison is Jesus' suffering with our discipline.
- Third, in all this context, there are 3 categories of people:
 - Other sons (11:32-39) - These are the cloud of witnesses in verse 12:1, who were persecuted for their faith and endured, and stood firm until the end. Actually, verse 12:1 sets the tone for the whole passage.
 - Jesus Christ, the Son, who endured the cross
 - Us, His sons
- The word "sinners" from verse 12:3 who came against Jesus weren't sinners in general or necessarily immoral people. Those who crucified Jesus were Pharisees, priests, legalists, and self-righteous people.
- In verse 12:1, when it talks about laying aside every weight, it refers to the weight of the law, of works, of obedience to the Law, because all verses before this one focus on faith and persecutions and how to overcome persecutions through faith. And the word "sin" is in the same context. It refers to our own self-righteousness and unbelief, that clings to us and entangles us. That is true also because the whole context of the book of Hebrews is about the superiority of faith compared to Israel's fathers, to the Law and the prophets, and even to angels.
- Verse 12:4 is not talking about immoral sin or my/your sin. But it talks about the sin of other people, the general idea of sin, which is against the gospel, the atmosphere of sin around you. It talks about the sin of the legalists, of their unbelief. We always give in and compromise when we face opposition from sin.
- What is this discipline this passage is talking about? It is two-fold: persecution for the gospel and training in righteousness of faith through the word. God never brings hardships and persecution on His children, neither He gives them. God doesn't like it when you are smashed and broken. He didn't enjoy seeing Jesus crucified. Moreover, these persecutions don't come because of wrong doing or immorality. In fact, they come because we're doing something right.

- The persecutions both confirm to us that we are true sons of God and train us in how to endure them.
- The word “chasten” from verse 12:6 comes from Greek *Paideuo*, which means: to train, instruct, teach, cause one to learn. The same word is used in the context of education in: Acts 7:22 (Moses was educated in Egypt), Acts 22:3 (Paul educated by Gamaliel), 2 Timothy 2:25 (gentle correction of those in opposition), Titus 2:12 (instruction to deny ungodliness).
- The word “scourge” from verse 12:6 comes from Greek *Mastigoo*, which means punishment, accusation. The same word is used in: Matthew 10:17, 20:19, 23:34 (all in the context of persecution); Mark 10:34, Luke 18:33, John 19:1 (in the context of Jesus’ persecution and suffering).
- Verses 12:12-13 show us that this whole passage is actually an encouragement from God to not give up and push through when we go through trials and persecutions.
- The second type of discipline besides persecution is training in righteousness through the word. Verses 12:9-10 make a comparison between “fathers of our flesh”, or our earthly fathers, and “Father of spirits”, our heavenly Father. The “fathers of our flesh” discipline our flesh, while the “Father of spirits” disciplines us in our spirits, through His word. This means that as you read the Bible, or as you listen to God’s Word being preached, you are being trained, being taught by the Lord.

4. I Gave Authority to the Devil

- Some people say: “Oh yeah I know that it’s God will for me to be well, but I gave the devil authority in my life and opened the door to him.” Jesus has all authority in heaven and earth and He has given it to you. The devil has no authority. We are wrong to think that if the devil attacked us, then he must have had the authority to do so. The devil has ability which he abuses, and he can attack, but he has no authority to do so on Christians.
- Example: Let’s say I give the keys to my car to a friend to drive it. Then that friend gives permission to another friend to drive the car and that guy disappears with the car. What do I do then? I call the police. They find the guy and that guy says: Oh, but my friend gave me permission to drive the car? The police says: Is that friend Eduard Serediuc? The guy says: No, but my other friends gave me permission. The principle here is that only the person owning the car can give permission to someone else to drive it. We, as Christians, are owned by Christ. Jesus never gives the devil authority to do something on us.

Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV)

¹⁸And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.**

¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

- Jesus has all authority and power in heaven and earth.

- But, even if you've given the devil opportunities to come in, you can expel him out anytime.
- We are wrong to think that if the devil has authority, or if he was given authority, we cannot do anything about it anymore. That is wrong and it keeps people in bondage! You cannot give permission to the devil to do something, and then not be able to reverse it. You always have the authority to cast him out no matter out.

Matthew 16:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹And **I will give you the keys** of the kingdom of heaven, and **whatever you bind** on earth will be bound in heaven, and **whatever you loose** on earth will be loosed in heaven."

- God will allow on you whatever you allow. He has given us the keys of the kingdom and the authority to bind or loose. However, there is no place where you've allowed something and then you cannot do anything about it to change. **YOU CAN!**

Matthew 18:21–35 (NKJV)

²¹Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

²²Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

²³Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

²⁴And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

²⁵But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.

²⁶The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'

²⁷Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

²⁸"But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!'

²⁹So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'

³⁰And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

³¹So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.

³²Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

³³Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?'

³⁴And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

³⁵"So **My heavenly Father also will do to you** if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

Matthew 6:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

¹⁵But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, **neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

- What about unforgiveness? If as Christians we fail to forgive others as we have been forgiven, will we get our original sin debt re-instated? Or will God put a sickness on us because of that? Or will the devil have authority to put a sickness on us?
- These passages seem to tell us that God's forgiveness is conditional upon our forgiving others, and to suggest that God will reinstate our sins even after we have been forgiven, if we do not forgive our brother, hence making salvation (or healing) conditional upon our forgiveness unto others.
- First, the King called that servant 'wicked', and that is not a term ever used for the Body of Christ, for believers in Christ's atonement. Moreover, Jesus was not saying anything about those unforgiving people being thrown into hell.

- Second, this parable is not saying that once people are saved and their sins are forgiven through the atonement of Jesus Christ, that their Salvation can be revoked. That would go against so many Scriptures that show we are secure in Christ from the moment of our Salvation onward. That would even contradict the words of Jesus Himself many times in Scripture.
- Third, in the 2 passages above there is no mention of God putting a sickness on us because of unforgiveness at all.
- Fourth, it is imperative for us to note that the context of Matthew 18:21-35 is the Jewish law. We also need to realize that Jesus was making the transition from the Law of Moses to the Gospel. He had not died yet, so most of the things He said and did were in the context of the Old Covenant, while a few were about the future New Covenant. The condition nature of His saying in this parable sounds very much like the Law of Moses. Jesus through His ministry on Earth took the Law of Moses and raised it to the strictest of standards. By showing the extremes of the Law, Jesus is preparing them for what is coming and what is coming is the New Covenant of the Grace of God, through Christ, which Jesus used Apostle Paul to teach to the Gentiles. The sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) is an amplification of the Law of Moses and this parable is on the same lines.
- As a matter of fact, the way the servant asked the King for mercy, and the request to give him more time (be patient) to pay back the debt shows that this individual did not grasp the reality of the situation. That's his first mistake. He thought he could pay back the debt of sin through self-effort, but we cannot ever pay for our sins ourselves. Only Christ accomplished that for us on the cross. And having been forgiven by the King, the servant then thought arrogantly that he was better than others, who were sinning and had a sin debt, as if he didn't have sins anymore. That's his second mistake. He treated others harshly based on their debt as sinners. He was too full of PRIDE just like Satan was.
- But, believers in Christ are no longer under the Law of Moses, neither salvation or healing is under the condition of obedience to the Law. Unforgiveness is a sin like any other sin. The apostle Paul writes the following about forgiveness:

Ephesians 4:32 (NKJV)

³²And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ **forgave you**.

Colossians 3:13 (NKJV)

¹³bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ **forgave you**, so you also must do.

- Notice here that God has forgiven you first. Then you are called to forgive, but not under the threat of losing your own forgiveness. The passages say that you should forgive as a natural flow and outcome of what has already been done for you. If you are in Christ, you have been forgiven. Now forgive. After the cross, we are forgiven first. Then we are to forgive. We no longer forgive to be forgiven.
- As a believer you must understand you are not just forgiven. You are justified. When my wife and I quarrel, we bring up things in the past. So, while I may have forgiven her, I have not justified her. God is different. He says, "I remember your sins no more." Justification means "as if you had never

sinned.” This is a very important theological concept. Jesus did not only forgive you. He did not only provide an atonement for your sins. These are old covenant concepts. The book of Hebrews said in chapter 10 “He took away your sins” once and for all. Forgiveness means to overlook the mistakes without doing any payment for them. We were forgiven by God only in the sense that we were not the ones that did the payment for sins. However, we were actually justified, way more than forgiven, because sin is also paid for, not overlooked by God.

- All your sins have been taken away on the cross. That is why before the cross, you must forgive before you are forgiven. After the cross, we are forgiven first. Then we should forgive, there is no must. But Paul says true forgiveness comes under grace, because we know how much we have been forgiven. Forgiveness under law comes from fear about being punished again. It keeps a record of wrongs and does not come from the heart. There is no forgetting of sins of the other.
- However, when you realized God does not even keep a record of your wrongs, He has chosen to forget your wrongs, you find that forgiveness flows from His grace. Moreover, when you come in Christ, you no longer live, but Christ lives in you. Christ is never offended by anyone, so you should never feel offended by anyone or have unforgiveness in your heart.
- Since all our sins have been taken away on the cross once and for all, then also the effects of sin were taken away, like sickness and disease.