

FAQ #1:

Is it always God's will to heal physically?

1.a) Knowing God's will is surely the cornerstone to divine healing. Fortunately, praise God that He had already revealed His will to us through scripture that it is always His will to physically heal, 100%, all the time. **This is because physical healing was included in the atonement of Christ in conjunction with the forgiveness of sin.**

- In **Isaiah 53:4-5**, the prophet Isaiah prophesies that the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, will not only give Himself for the propitiation of sins, but that He will also give Himself for the physical healing of man.

- *⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.*

- *⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed."*

1.b) Some argue that this scripture is speaking of "spiritual healing", meaning only the forgiveness of sins, and not physical healing. Nevertheless, a closer examination of the original Hebrew text will reveal that this is not the case.

- In verse 4, we read, "**Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."** This word "*grief*" in the original Hebrew text is "*choli*", which translates to "sicknesses" or "diseases". And the word "*sorrows*" in Hebrew is "*makob*" which translates to "pain". Both of these Hebrew words mean literally physical sicknesses. Therefore, verse 4 should actually read: "**Surely He has borne our sicknesses (choli), and carried our pains (makob)" or "Surely He has borne our diseases (choli), and carried our pains (makob)" (Isaiah 53:4).**
- As we can see, not only did Jesus die for our sins, He also made provisions in the atonement for our physical healing. This is because "**by His stripes we are [physically] healed**" (Isaiah 53:5). We are physically healed from all physical "sicknesses/(choli)" and all "pain/(makob)" as explained in verse 4."

- To be absolutely sure about our Hebrew in this passage, let us consider a man named T.J. McCrossan who is a Greek and Hebrew examiner for the Presbyterian church ordination staff. He was also their seminary professor for teaching Greek and Hebrew and is still accepted virtually by all scholars today to be the expert and authority of the Greek and Hebrew language. With such a person, he made the following statement:
 - For any scholar to say that physical healing is not included in the atonement proves one of two things:
 - 1) The person is either not a scholar and does not know Greek or Hebrew; or
 - 2) He is a liar.
 - Now remember those were his words, not the ones of this response. But it is clear by simply looking at the original Hebrew text that God intended physical healing to be in the atonement along with the propitiation of sins.
- Centuries later in Peter's epistle, he also quoted the prophet Isaiah and wrote: "**By [Jesus'] stripes we were healed**" (1 Pet 2:24).
 - There are two important things to note:
 - 1) In **Isaiah 53:5**, it reads, "**By His stripes we are healed.**" However, in **1 Peter 2:24**, we read, "**By His stripes we were healed.**" The difference is that the prophet Isaiah used the "present tense" while Peter used the "passed tense." How come?
 - This is because when Isaiah prophesied about Christ's atonement in physical healing, Jesus had not yet gone to Calvary. But by the time Peter wrote his epistle, Jesus had already died and resurrected. Thus, the "past tense" signifies that the atonement had already been accomplished, and so physical healing has since been a "done deal".
 - And because it is a "done deal", God will not go back at anytime to change His will on what He had already

accomplished two thousand years ago. This means that He will not say today that His will is not to heal at any given point in time. As we read in **2 Corinthians 1:20**, "**All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.**" Paul reminds us that all the promises of God, such as physical healing in the atonement is always "yea" and "Amen"; not "sometimes" or "maybe".

- 2) Some will say that because the beginning of **1 Peter 2:24** speaks of Christ bearing our sins to give us righteousness through Him, then the context of this verse "**by [Jesus'] stripes we were healed**" should be interpreted as a "spiritual healing" from sin, not physical healing.
 - However, when we look at the original Greek in this verse for the word "healed", we will know that Peter was not talking about "spiritually healing", but rather "physical healing". The word "healed" used in **1 Peter 2:24** in Greek is "*iaomai*", which literally translates to the meaning "physically healed".
 - This Greek word "*iaomai*"/healed was never once used in the bible to refer to "spiritual healing". Rather, it was repeatedly used in the New Testament to describe physical healing, not spiritual healing. (**Matt 8:8, Matt 8:13, Matt 13:15, Matt 15:28, Mark 5:29, Luke 5:17, Luke 6:17, Luke 6:19, Luke 7:7, Luke 8:47, Luke 9:2, Luke 9:11, Luke 9:42, Luke 14:4, Luke 17:16, Luke 22:51, John 4:47, John 5:13, John 12:40, Acts 9:34, Acts 10:38, Acts 28:8, Heb 12:13, James 5:16, 1 Peter 2:24**).
- Therefore, in the context of these scriptures, Peter was indeed referring to Christ's stripes bearing our "physical healing", not a spiritual one. The reason Peter mentioned both the forgiveness of sin and physical healing in **1 Peter 2:24** is apparently because he understood that both are in the atonement. How else could he have gained the faith to do so many healing miracles as he proclaimed the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (**Acts 3:1-10, Acts 5:14-15, Acts 9:32-34, Acts 9:36-41**)? Hallelujah, praise God!

- In addition, we can gain further assurance to know that physical healing is in the atonement by reading **Matthew 8:16-17**.

- **"¹⁶When evening had come, they brought to [Jesus] many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, ¹⁷ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:**

*"He Himself took our infirmities
And bore our sicknesses."*

- According to Matthew, why did Jesus "healed all who were sick?" Matthew explained immediately, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses."
- How much more clear, direct and in context can Matthew get in order to explain that physical healing is in the atonement? He practically spelt it out by the letter. He explained this by quoting in context of what Jesus did first, that is, "Jesus healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet" (Matt 8:16-17).
- **Now that we have established that physical healing is in the atonement of Christ, it is clear that healing is always God's will, 100%, all the time.**
 - Since the atonement had already been accomplished over two thousand years ago, it is impossible for God to now "retract" what He had already accomplished. The scripture tells us that God will not lie, and His words are always true and will not return to Him void (Heb 6:18, Isa 55:11).
 - This means that just as God's will is always to provide sinners redemption through His blood 100%, all the time (John 3:16), His will is also to provide physical healing for the sick 100%, all the time. This is because both redemption and physical healing have already been accomplished. It is a "done deal", period. God will not change His mind anymore on physical healing in as much as

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He will not change His mind on desiring none to perish, but for all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

- Understanding this truth gives us immense freedom because no longer do we have to doubt and wonder whether it is God's will to heal a person at any given time. Instead, every time we see a sick person, we will know that it is God's will to heal that person undoubtedly. Our job then is to simply lay hands and command healing because Christ had already paid for their healing by His stripes (1 Pet 2:24, Isaiah 53:4-5).

FAQ #2:

I am skeptical of false healings/prophets.

2.a) While it is true that there are many false prophets in the last days working miracles to deceive many (Matt 24:24), it would be unwise to readily discount teachings and testimonies of divine healing simply because there are some "bad apples in the basket". So even if we find some people who are false prophets today, still, that should not stop us from obeying Christ's commandment in healing the sick.

- If we are to use the same logic towards salvation, then perhaps all Christians should consider abandoning their faith because there are many false believers today professing to be "Christians". They even regularly serve and attend church on Sundays, yet their fruits and unrepentance clearly reveal that they are not truly saved (Matt 7:22-23, 1 Cor 6:9-10, Eph 5:5, Gal 5:19-21).
 - But of course most of us would not do that because we know that our faith in Christ is based on our belief in the word of God (hopefully), and not on how well other alleged believers practice their faith. Similarly, we should not discourage teachings and testimonies of divine healing due to the "bad apples in the basket". Rather, we should obey Christ's commandment to heal the sick simply because it is the word of God (Matt 10:7-8, Mark 16:18).
 - We should also be careful not to readily raise doubt and objections in the absence of proofs and substantial scriptural basis because doing so may discourage others from obeying Christ's commandment to heal the sick.
 - This is not to say that we should not test every spirit (1 John 4:1), not evaluate any teachings by scripture (2 Tim 3:16) and not judge a person's fruits to see whether they are a false prophet (Matt 7:15-16). We must. But perhaps it would be best to reserve our opinions to ourselves until we first affirm that what we tell others are indeed in line with the teachings of scripture.
 - After all, how can we guide a discussion to a correct biblical viewpoint if we are not sure in the first place ourselves? May we all carefully heed the advice of the Lord Jesus Christ as He rebuked the Pharisees of His time, "They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch" (Matt 15:14).

- The unfortunate reality is that many people will often believe what is said to them before they examine it themselves. That is probably the reason why James warned us to "let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment" (James 3:1).
 - And if those two scriptural warnings are not alarming enough, let us also not forget when Jesus said, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea" (Mark 9:42).
- While scripture did give many of these fair warnings, let us not be discouraged to think that we can never share our beliefs in fear of condemnation. We simply need to assure that we are correct about the truth, and then we can openly share them with everyone else. Subsequently, we should also be opened to discuss with anyone about what is shared in light of the teachings of scripture (2 Tim 3:16).
- Notice however when we do come to share the truth, it does not necessarily mean that people will applaud us, agree with us and freely accept us. In fact, Jesus warned His disciples that quite the contrary may take place.
 - He said: "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matt 5:11).
 - Furthermore, He said, "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets" (Luke 6:26).
- **When we preach and practice the true gospel, many people will not like us. That is a biblical fact.** But we must decide who we will obey: God or man.
 - Again, Jesus reminds us, "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen

you out of the world. That is why the world hates you" (John 15:18-19).

- Does the world hate us or love us? That is an important question we must ask ourselves. The honest answer to that question will reveal whether we belong to this world, or whether we belong in the Kingdom of God (according to Jesus).
- This is not to say that we should recklessly offend people in order to get our share of persecution. Rather, the true biblical persecution is to continue preaching and living in the teachings of scripture despite of the attack from others who refuse to embrace it.
- **Therefore, if we find that we have never been persecuted about the gospel we preach and practice and all we get are the applauds of men, then we ought to wonder if we are truly preaching and living the gospel that Jesus and the disciples lived in their time.**

FAQ #3

I saw posters of faith healers that look like a scam.

3.a) It may not seem best to pass judgment on anyone hastily simply by looking at a "poster", especially when the claim is serious in that these pastors are trying to "get away" with what they are doing. Maybe it would be more reasonable if someone actually attended the meeting and personally verified that such deceptions were made? Since many claim that they will believe in divine healing only if they can personally witness it, it would seem reasonable that the same standards are used on the contrary (Matt 7:2). If not, it would be unfair for the person(s) in question, and it will also dangerously open oneself to the possibility of passing unrighteous and hypocritical judgments (Matt 7:1-5). This is something that Jesus had rebuked the Pharisees for doing: "Do not judge according to appearances, but judge with righteous judgment (John 7:24).

3.b) May we find encouragement to remember that our beliefs should always rest on the word of God and not on our personal experiences and circumstances. We must always use scripture to change our experiences, and not use our experiences to mold scripture. Remember that no matter how much the world and people may fail us, God will never fail, leave or forsake us (Josh 1:9, Heb 13:5). We can trust in Him!

FAQ #4

Why do some healings look so theatrical/sensational?

4.a) Numerous times in the bible when people were oppressed by demons or when the demons were being casted out, these people were often accompanied by physical sicknesses (Acts 10:38, Matt 9:32, Luke 8:2, Luke 11:14). They would also react in the following ways:

- crying out with a loud voice (Mark 3:11, Luke 8:38)
- convulsing and shaking violently (Mark 1:26)
- foaming at the mouth (Luke 9:39)
- naked (Luke 8:27, Acts 19:16)
- overpowered (Acts 19:16)
- jumped on (Acts 19:16)
- acting extremely forceful (Matt 8:28)
- appearing to be crazy and insane (Mark 5:4)
- having seizures (Matt 17:15)
- bloodily beaten (Acts 19:16)
- cutting themselves (Mark 5:5)
- thrown on the ground (Mark 9:18)
- gnashing their teeth (Mark 9:18)
- rigid (Mark 9:18)
- thrown into the fire (Mark 9:22)
- thrown into water (Mark 9:22)
- rolling around on the ground" (Mark 9:20)
- All of these manifestations are quite "sensational", especially for the spectators. Yet did Jesus or the disciples do that on purpose to "broadcast themselves" and "invite/create sensationalism?" Obviously not. It was simply how the demons worked in the spiritual realm as they oppressed human beings, whether in physical sicknesses (Mark 9:14-29, Acts 10:38, Matt 9:32, Matt 12:12, Luke 8:2, Luke 11:14) or total demonic possessions (Luke 8:29).

FAQ #5

God will not heal us if we have sin in our lives!

5.a) Fortunately, we have already established from the word of God that it is always God's will to heal, 100%, all the time (See FAQ #1). So any statements or explanations that say "it is not God's will to heal" can be freely discarded to line up with the teachings of scripture (Psa 103:2-3, Isa 53:4-5, Jas 5:13-16, 1 Peter 2:24).

5.b) However, to further investigate whether or not sin is a reason why God will not heal, let us examine **John 5:5-14**. In this passage, Jesus healed a man with an infirmity for thirty-eight years. Following this healing, Jesus told the man to **"sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon [him]" (John 5:14)**. Clearly, Jesus did not withhold physical healing from this man even though Jesus knew this man was in sin. Rather, Jesus chose to demonstrate His love first to heal him, and then to instruct him to sin no more.

5.c) Consider also the blatant answer that Jesus gave His disciples when they asked: **"Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him (John 9:2-3).**

5.d) Furthermore, since the scriptures tells us that no one is without sin (**Rom 3:23, 1 John 1:10**), this means that everyone whom Jesus healed had sins; yet never once did Jesus withhold their healing (**Matt 8:13, Mark 5:41-42, Luke 8:43-44**). Therefore, the explanation that sin is a reason why God would not heal is unbiblical, not to mention that it also contradicts Christ's accomplished work and promise in the atonement.

6.e) To say that God will choose not to heal a sick person due to his sin is the same as saying that God will not save a sinner due to his sin. This is because physical healing and forgiveness of sins are both included in the atonement. But is it possible that God will not save a sinner in his sins? This would completely defeat the purpose of the gospel because the gospel is to deliver sinners from sin, sickness and death unto righteousness (**Rom 8:2**), physical healing (**Isa 53:4-5**), and resurrection in Christ (**Eph 2:4-6**).

- Were we not in our sins the moment when Christ saved us? Therefore, if God is willing to save those who are in sin, surely God is willing to heal those who are sick while in sin. Of course, it is never God's will for anyone to remain in sin but to repent (**2 Pet 3:9**), but sin alone will not nullify His atonement and stop God from healing a person in His will. We must remember that we bring absolutely nothing to the table for our righteousness in Christ because it is the sacrifice of Christ that saves us from our sin, not how good we have earned it. Thus, the same is true for physical healing. God wills to heal us 100%, all the time, simply because it was an accomplished work of the atonement, not because of how holy we are to earn our healing.

FAQ #6

The bible is replete with examples of suffering or withholding of healing for God's own purposes!

6.a) The phrase "the Bible is replete with examples" would be more appropriately used for demonstrating God's promises and examples of healing, not Him withholding them. (Ex 15:26, Ex 23:25, Deuteronomy 7:15, Psalm 30:2-3, Psalm 34:19, Psalm 41:3, Psalm 73:4-5, Psalm 103:2-3, Psalm 107:20, Psalm 147:3, Isaiah 53:4-5, Isaiah 38:16, Isaiah 57:18, Jeremiah 30:17, Jeremiah 33:6, Jeremiah 17:4, Proverbs 3:7-8, Proverbs 4:22, Matthew 4:23-25, Matthew 8:1-4, Matthew 8:5-13, Matthew 8:14-17, Matthew 8:28-34, Matthew 9:1-8, Matthew 9:18-26, Matthew 9:27-34, Matthew 10:8, Matthew 12:9-14, Matthew 12:15-21, Matthew 12:22-23, Matthew 13:34-36, Matthew 14:14, Matthew 14:35-36, Matthew 15:21-30, Matthew 17:14-21, Matthew 19:2, Matthew 20:29-34, Matthew 21:14, Mark 1:21-28, Mark 1:29-34, Mark 1:35-39, Mark 1:40-45, Mark 2:1-12, Mark 3:1-6, Mark 3:7-12, Mark 5:1-20, Mark 5:21-43, Mark 6:53-56, Mark 7:24-30, Mark 7:31-37, Mark 8:22-26, Mark 9:14-29, Mark 10:46-52, Luke 4:31-37, Luke 4:38-41, Luke 4:42-44, Luke 5:12-16, Luke 5:17-26, Luke 6:6-11, Luke 6:17-19, Luke 7:1-10, Luke 7:11-17, Luke 7:21-22, Luke 8:26-39, Luke 8:40-56, Luke 9:1-3, Luke 9:37-43, Luke 9:56, Luke 10:8-10, Luke 11:14, Luke 13:10-17, Luke 14:1-6, Luke 17:11-19, Luke 18:35-43, Luke 22:49-51, Luke 4:43-54, John 4:43-54, John 5:1-15, John 9:1-41, John 11:1-44, Acts 3:1-10, Acts 4:8-14, Acts 5:12-16, Acts 8:7, Acts 9:33-35, Acts 10:37-38, Acts 14:9, Acts 19:11-13, Acts 28:8-9, James 5:13-16, 1 Peter 2:24). Note that this is not an exhaustive list of the healing scriptures in the bible.

FAQ #7

Suffering is God's will: consider Job!

7.a) Let us consider Job. First, we must understand that it was Satan who authored and brought about Job's sickness, not God (**Job 2:7**). So for anyone to say that he is trying to hold on to his sickness just like how God had given Job would be unbiblical.

- According to many biblical scholars, the book of Job was likely one of the oldest book in the bible. If this is the case, this would mean that Job never had the benefit of an Old Covenant with God unlike the Israelites. Job then would not have had a promise from Jehovah Rapha: "**I am the Lord who heals you**" (**Ex 15:22-26**), nor would he have had an advocate from the Father, Jesus Christ (**1 John 2:1**), who took our sicknesses and diseases upon Himself by His stripes (**Isa 53:4-5**, **Matt 8:16**, **1 Peter 2:24**).
- When believers claim allegiance to Job's sicknesses, it reveals that they do not likely understand who they are in Christ as a New Covenant (**Heb 8:13**), redeemed (**1 Cor 1:30**), sanctified (**Col 1:12**), delivered (**Col 1:13**), and healed (**1 Pet 2:24**) saint (**Phil 4:21**). Job never had the benefit of the New Covenant with God since Jesus had not yet gone to Calvary in his lifetime. On the other hand, we who are New Covenant believers today are completely different because we have the stripes of Jesus to physically heal us (**Isaiah 53:4-5**, **1 Peter 2:24**); Job did not.
- Therefore, next time when someone asks us the question regarding divine healing, "What about Job"? Then we can confidently say, "Yes, what about Job"? Job and I are totally different. Even if Job had the Old Covenant with God (which was not likely), we would still not be the same. This is because the Old Covenant is now "obsolete" (**Heb 8:13**) and we are rooted in the New Covenant established in the Lord Jesus Christ. So let us simply forget what is behind and press on towards what is ahead (**Phil 3:13**)!

FAQ #8

Suffering is God's will: consider Paul's thorn!

8.a) Let us now consider the infamous "**Paul's thorn**" in **2 Corinthians 12**. Many who read **2 Corinthians 12:7-10** often hastily conclude that Paul's thorn is a "physical sickness". As such, they deduce that sometimes God's will is not to heal.

- However, by looking at the Old and New Testament and considering Paul's earlier writings in chapters before He mentioned his thorn in the flesh, we will see undoubtedly that Paul's thorn is not a physical sickness.
- When we look at the phrase "thorn in the flesh" or "thorn in something" in the bible, we find that the first time this expression was used was in **Numbers 33:55**. God told the Israelites:
 - "But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land, those you allow to remain will become barbs in your eyes and **thorns in your sides**. They will give you trouble in the land where you will live" (Num 33:55).
- God told the Israelites that if they do not drive out the inhabitants of Canaan, then the remaining Canaanites will become "thorns in [their] sides". What does the "thorn" mean? It means that "they will give you trouble in the land where you will live" (Num 33:55). God forewarned that these remaining Canaanites will bring the Israelites trouble in different facets of life. He was not saying that these "thorns in [their] sides" are physical sicknesses given to them.
 - Therefore, the phrase "**thorns in your sides**" is a figure of speech.
 - Notice that God used the phrase "**barbs in your eyes**" and "**thorns in your sides**" concurrently, both of which are a figure of speech.
- The second time we find this phrase "thorn in something" used again in the bible is in **Joshua 23:13**.
 - "Know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and **thorns in your eyes**, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you" (Josh 23:13).
 - Once again, three figurative phrases are used here: "Snares and traps to you", "scourges on your sides" and "**thorns in your eyes**".

Evidently, God was saying that it is the "people" who will be their "thorns", not physical sicknesses.

- The last time this phrase "thorn in something" is used in the bible prior to Paul's thorn in the flesh is found in **Judges 2:2-3**.
 - "But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be **thorns in your side**, and their gods shall be a snare to you'" (Judg 2:2-3).
 - In **Judges 2**, an Angel of the Lord spoke to the Israelites about their disobedience towards God. And in the midst of this, the Angel quoted what God had said earlier in **Numbers 33:55** and repeated that the remaining Canaanites that they did not drive out will become their "**thorns in [their] sides**."
 - This expression "**thorns in your sides**" again can be seen as a figure of speech. It is not a literal translation of how the Canaanite's arms and legs are sticking out of the Israelites' ribs, nor are they physical sicknesses. It simply means that the "people" of Canaan will bring trouble to the Israelites. Had the Israelites obeyed God in driving out all of the inhabitants in Canaan from the beginning, they would not have had these "**thorns in [their] sides**".
- Let us now examine the very last time this phrase "thorn in something" was used in the bible. Of course, that would be **2 Corinthians 12:7-10**: Paul's thorn in the flesh.
 - By now, we should have realized that this phrase "thorn in something" has been used as a figure of speech every single time it was used in the bible. So let us see if this pattern lines up with the context of what Paul was saying in **2 Corinthians 12:7-10**.
- To look at the entire context, it is not enough to just read the full chapter 12. We must understand that Paul was writing a "letter" to the Corinthians and there were no "chapters" in them as we see today. This means that we must find out what Paul was saying from the very beginning of the book of 2 Corinthians.
 - If we go through each chapter, we will find that Paul have said much about his persecutions, trials and sufferings for the gospel of Jesus Christ, but never once did he mention a physical sickness. In speaking of his troubles and persecutions, he said he was:

- Burdened beyond measure (2 Cor 1: 8)
- Above his strength (2 Cor 1:8)
- Despaired even of life (2 Cor 1:9)
- Given a sentence of death (2 Cor 1:9)
- Hard pressed on every angle (2 Cor 4:8)
- Perplexed, persecuted and destroyed (2 Cor 4:9)
- Always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor 4:10)
- Delivered to death for Jesus' sake (2 Cor 4:11)
- In stripes above measure (2 Cor 11:23)
- In prisons more frequently (2 Cor 11:23)
- In deaths often (2 Cor 11:23)
- Striped 39 times from the Jews (2 Cor 11:24)
- Beaten 3 times with rods (2 Cor 11:25)
- Stoned once (2 Cor 11:25)
- Shipwrecked 3 times (2 Cor 11:25)
- In the deep a day and a night (2 Cor 11:25)
- In journeys often (2 Cor 11:26)
- In perils of waters (2 Cor 11:26)
- In perils of robbers (2 Cor 11:26)
- In perils of his own countrymen (2 Cor 11:26)
- In perils of the Gentiles (2 Cor 11:26)
- In perils in the city (2 Cor 11:26)
- In perils in the wilderness (2 Cor 11:26)
- In perils in the sea (2 Cor 11:26)
- In perils among false brethen (2 Cor 11:26)
- In weariness and toil (2 Cor 11:26)
- In sleeplessness often (2 Cor 11:26)
- In hunger and thirst (2 Cor 11:26)

- In fastings often (2 Cor 11:26)
- In cold and nakedness (2 Cor 11:26)
- Notice how Paul described he was persecuted and suffering from every angle possible, yet never once did he mentioned that these persecutions was in any form of a physical sickness. Granted that he was beaten, striped and stoned multiple times, it surely would have caused him much physical injuries. Yet this is not the same as him having a physical sickness that he cannot get rid of.
- Thus, by looking at the context of many chapters before **2 Corinthians 12:7-10**, we know that Paul was not talking about a physical sickness. Rather, Paul was describing the outward persecutions and trials he was enduring for the faith.
- With this context settled, let us now consider the actual scripture of Paul's "thorn in the flesh".
 - "⁷And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.
 - ⁸Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
 - ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor 12:7-10).
- First, let us note that Paul said his thorn in the flesh was given to him by a messenger of Satan, not God (2 Cor 12:7). So next time when we hear people say things like "Oh brother, I guess that's just a thorn God gave you to teach you something", then we know exactly what to do: ignore them (it is also a good idea to tell them the truth). By the way, God will not use sicknesses to "teach us something" as New Covenant believers because it violates scripture. (See FAQ #10.b below).
 - Notice how Paul said that his thorn in the flesh is: "A messenger of Satan". So once we find out what this "messenger of Satan" is, then we will know exactly what Paul's thorn is.

- The word "messenger" in Greek is "agello" which was translated in the bible 179 times as "angel" and 7 times as "messenger". Not once was it translated as a physical sickness. Thus, to be faithful to the original text, Paul was saying: my thorn in the flesh = messenger of Satan. Period.
- And what was this messenger of Satan sent to do? It was there to "buffet" him (2 Cor 12:7).
 - The word "buffet" literally means "to deal blow after blow". Since Paul had received such an abundance of revelation, Satan decided to attack him blow after blow. With what? All the things he described earlier in his sufferings and persecutions: **burdened beyond measure (2 Cor 1: 8), above his strength (2 Cor 1:8), despaired even of life (2 Cor 1:9), given a sentence of death (2 Cor 1:9), hard pressed on every angle (2 Cor 4:8), perplexed, persecuted and destroyed (2 Cor 4:9), always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor 4:10), delivered to death for Jesus' sake (2 Cor 4:11), in stripes above measure (2 Cor 11:23), in prisons more frequently (2 Cor 11:23), in deaths often (2 Cor 11:23), striped 39 times from the Jews (2 Cor 11:24), beaten with rods 3 times (2 Cor 11:25), stoned once (2 Cor 11:25), shipwrecked 3 times (2 Cor 11:25), in the deep a day and a night (2 Cor 11:25), in journeys often (2 Cor 11:26), in perils of waters (2 Cor 11:26), in perils of robbers (2 Cor 11:26), in perils of his own countrymen (2 Cor 11:26), in perils of the Gentiles (2 Cor 11:26), in perils in the city (2 Cor 11:26), in perils in the wilderness (2 Cor 11:26), in perils in the sea (2 Cor 11:26), in perils among false brethren (2 Cor 11:26), in weariness and toil (2 Cor 11:26), in sleeplessness often (2 Cor 11:26), in hunger and thirst (2 Cor 11:26), in fastings often (2 Cor 11:26), in cold and nakedness (2 Cor 11:26).**
 - To consider this further, let us remind ourselves again why Paul received this messenger from Satan. He said it was because he received an "abundance of revelations" (2 Cor 12:7). In fact, Paul wrote about 2/3 of the New Testament. So to say that he had an abundance of revelations would certainly be fitting.
 - Does that tell us something? Yes it does. It tells us that next time when someone is trying to claim Paul's thorn or tell another person that they need to bear their thorn in sicknesses, then that person in

question better have received at least as much revelations as Paul did to make up 2/3 of the New Testament. Not only that, those revelations better line up with the rest of scripture. And if that person does not measure up, then simply stop trying to claim Paul's thorn (not to mention that Paul's thorn was not even a physical sickness).

- Some will say that Paul took pleasure in his "infirmities" (2 Cor 12:10) and so he is referring to his thorn in the flesh as a physical sickness. Let us look at the original Greek and see if this is the case.
- The word "infirmity" in the original Greek is "*astheneia*", which stems from the root word "*asthenes*", which translates to a "negation of strength" or "weakness".
 - This word "*asthenes*" or weakness have been used many times in letters written by Paul which indicated trials and persecutions, but not physical sickness. For example:
 - "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses (*asthenes*), but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Heb 4:15).
 - "[They] quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness (*asthenes*) were made strong" (Heb 11:34).
 - "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses (*asthenes*). For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom 8:26).
 - This word "weakness/*asthenes*" is the same word used in 2 Corinthians 12:9 when God said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness (*asthenes*)."
 - Thus, this thorn in the flesh and infirmity/weakness that Paul was describing was not one of physical sickness, but rather one of persecutions he was enduring which made him feel weak. But God told him that it was through his weakness that God's strength was made perfect in him.
- Consider this also: If Paul really had such great physical sicknesses as some claim, how do you suppose he was able to do many mighty and miraculous work for the Lord Jesus Christ, while labouring more abundantly than

everyone else (Rom 1:1)? A sick person does not have the strength and capability to do all that he did while enduring all the persecutions he faced.

- In Acts 19:11-12, we read that "God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them."
 - Imagine Paul being very sick, coughing blood, swollen in the eyes and having sores all over his body. In spite of this predicament, people still took the handkerchiefs and aprons that Paul touched and put it on their sick loved ones? Would they not have wanted to throw those handkerchiefs and aprons away to avoid his germs and viruses?
- Paul tells us in Romans 15:17-19 that he was able to lead the Gentiles to become obedient to God by his preaching and working of signs and miracles through the Holy Spirit.
 - Now can we imagine Paul being so sick with his eye disease (as some claim to be his thorn), that as he paces around the marketplace preaching, he trips over five people because he can barely see; he scrapes himself to bleeding, barely catching his breath from his illnesses and then still being able to work signs and miracles and instill faith in people? Could he have declared that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour who will deliver the Gentiles from their sin and sicknesses by the atonement, while he rubbed his eyes furiously because pus are spewing out uncontrollably?
 - Does that look like a scene where Paul created a lot of faith for the Gentiles to trust and obey God by his deeply sick testimony? Would not his life seem to be a mockery against what he preached? That is, the gospel has power to deliver people from sin and sicknesses in the atonement of Jesus Christ.
- Alright, enough of this "Paul's thorn is so bad, and I have to keep my thorn" discussion. Paul's thorn was not a physical sickness. Next.

FAQ #9

Sickness and disease is a cross that we should carry.

9.a) When Jesus told His disciples in **Luke 9:23** that they need to deny themselves and pick up their cross to follow Him daily, He was not referring to a cross of carrying one's physical sickness. If this were true, then Jesus would have contradicted Himself in His Godhead in the Trinity when the Holy Spirit inspired Isaiah to write **Isaiah 53:4-5**.

- Furthermore, if we pay close attention to all of the writings about Jesus and even the disciples, never once are we taught literally that "physical sickness" is something we are to bear, but rather, we are instructed to cast them out (**Matt 10:7-8, Luke 9:1-6, Luke 10:19**).
- The "true cross to bear" that Jesus commanded was one of self-burial (**Gal 2:20**), dying to the flesh (**Rom 8:13**), forsaking all we have (**Matt 19:27**), serving the fellow man as to the Lord (**Eph 6:7**), living in the Spirit (**Gal 5:16**), resurrection in Christ (**Eph 2:5**), walking in newness of life (**Romans 6:4**), counting all things but loss for the gospel (**Phil 3:8**), preaching and living in truth despite opposition (**Matt 5:11**) and even dying for His name's sake (**Matt 16:25**). But it is never to suffer in physical sickness.

9.b) In order to fully comprehend **John 15:18-25**, we need to understand what happened in Jesus' ministry prior to Him reminding His disciples that they will be hated and persecuted for His name's sake. By this time in **John 15:18-25**, Jesus had already performed numerous miracles, confronted the religious leaders with truth and demonstrated His great love and compassion towards many (**John 5:8, John 6:11-12, John 9:7**). Yet many were still in unbelief (**John 7:1-9, John 7:45-52**) and the religious leaders were even plotting to kill Jesus in the midst of all of His good works (**John 11:53**). As a result, Jesus instructed His disciples that they should not be surprised if the world hates them because the world had hated Him first (**John 15:18**). The world will hate the teachings of Christ in their unbelief because He testifies that their deeds are evil (**John 7:7**).

- What this scripture tells us then is not how we are to suffer in our sicknesses to bear the cross. But in its full context, Jesus reminds us that there will come a time when the true disciples of Christ must endure and receive the same persecution and hatred from the world and from many religious leaders just as He did. Why?
- Because the true disciples of Jesus are those who will not only preach but also practice in their lives regularly the commandments and teachings of Christ, such as:
 - Abiding in Him in His words (**John 15:5-7**),
 - Living in holiness (**1 Peter 1:15, Heb 12:14**),

- Feeding and clothing for the least of these (Matt 25:31-46),
 - Loving the neighbour (Mark 12:31),
 - Making disciples of all nations (Matt 28:16-20),
 - Laying hands on the sick and seeing them recover (Mark 16:18),
 - Casting out demons (Matt 10:8),
 - Doing the word, not just hearing only, deceiving oneself (Jas 1:22),
 - Preaching truth boldly in the Spirit despite opposition (Acts 4:31),
 - Doing works of Jesus and even greater works (John 14:12-14),
 - Living in true grace and faith bearing good fruits and works (Matt 3:8, Matt 7:19, Eph 2:10),
 - Preaching and demonstrating the kingdom of God with not only words, but with supernatural signs and wonders (1 Cor 4:20, Mark 16:20, Acts 14:3) and the list goes on...
- and for **preaching and practicing** these things regularly, Jesus warned his disciples that the world and many religious leaders will surely hate and persecute them just as they did to Jesus.
 - So fellow comrades in Christ, be on guard and get ready, **for the time has already come!**

FAQ #10

God uses sicknesses to edify, sanctify and humble us...

10.a) Let's get something straight. To endure suffering and persecution for the faith: yes. To endure physical sickness for the faith: no and never; because this clearly violates scripture (Psa 103:2-3, Isa 53:4-5, James 5:13-16, 1 Peter 2:24).

10.b) The statement that God uses "physical sickness/suffering" to "teach" his children is a clear violation of New Testament scripture (which is what applies to us today because we are New Covenant believers).

- In John 14:26, Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit comes (which He has), the Holy Spirit will "teach [us] all things". If the Holy Spirit will teach us all things, then everything that we know will be from the Holy Spirit. Thus, to say that a physical sickness is to teach us something is to say that the Holy Spirit is a physical sickness Himself (which clearly cannot be the case because God is an incorruptible God (Rom 1:23), and physical sickness is corruptible).
- Some will suggest that there are various scriptures in the Old Testament where God literally said that He would inflict diseases and sicknesses upon His people if they did not keep His precepts. So they conclude that God is still doing this today to His children to inflict them with diseases in order to "teach" them something.
 - Nevertheless, to make this conclusion would be a great error because we are not Old Covenant believers, but rather, New Covenant believers in Christ. Many things that happened in the Old Covenant between God and man do not apply to us today because we are New Covenant believers. While we should still read the Old Testament because it is still the word of God, we must read the Old Testament through the lens of the New Testament. As Paul tells us clearly in Hebrews 8:13, the Old Covenant has been made "obsolete and will soon disappear".
 - We read in Hebrews 8:6-13:
 - ⁶But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.
 - ⁷For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. ⁸But God found fault with the people and said:

"The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

⁹It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers
when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt,
because they did not remain faithful to my covenant,
and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.

¹⁰This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel
after that time, declares the Lord.
I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their
hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

¹¹No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother,
saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me,

from the least of them to the greatest.

¹²For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more. "[c]

**¹³By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one
obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.**

- In the Old Covenant, God had to treat the Israelites in a certain way in order to have them walk with the Lord Yahweh. One of these ways for God to do so was to warn them not to depart from keeping His laws unless they want to be inflicted with physical illnesses. Nevertheless, the scripture in its entirety tells us that this type of relationship between God and man will not remain once the New Covenant is established. Indeed, the New Covenant had been established more than 2000 years ago when Jesus went to Calvary. This is why there is not one single scripture in the New Testament that directly and literally say that God will inflict us with a disease if we do not obey Him or that God will give us a physical sickness to "teach" us something.
- Some may ask, why "Yes" in the Old Testament and "No" in the New Testament?
 - The answer is because in the New Covenant (which we are in today), Jesus had already accomplished the atonement, ascended to heaven, and also had given His believers the Holy Spirit so that He could teach and guide them into all truth. God no longer need to inflict sicknesses on His children in order to "get their attention" or to "teach" them something because the Holy Spirit is now the one who will "teach us all things" (John 14:26).

- We must remember that the Israelites in the Old Covenant never had the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. That is why they needed people such as the prophets to tell them about the things of God. Even then, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit was temporary and selective of people (e.g) prophets. It was never given to everybody nor was it given indefinitely even to the select few. It was only after Jesus had ascended to heaven that the Holy Spirit was given to all believers to indwell in them permanently (John 16:5-11), and also to completely fill them for empowerment if they ask in faith (Luke 11:13, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:1-4, Acts 8:17).

FAQ #11

God uses sicknesses to teach us something...

11.a) Let us simply apply this idea to earthly parenthood and it will be clear whether this statement is sound and logical:

Big Old Johnny recently became a father of a beautiful young daughter named Jessica. He loved her with all of his heart and would not hesitate a second to die for her to save her life.

After five years of raising her and seeing her grow up, he decided that it is now time to teach and encourage her some things about life. So Johnny went down to the liquor store and purchased 3 bottles of Vodka and then headed over to the nearby grocery store to purchase another 12 packs of cigarettes.

Upon going home, Johnny became very excited because he could find his beloved daughter Jessica to teach and encourage her some things about life. So he took her into his arms, seated on the sofa, and started to feed the five year old Jessica with much of that Vodka! He was convinced that if she experiences the pain and suffering of the consequences of drinking much alcohol, she would learn to abstain from it when she grows up.

And for the next 6 months, Johnny also decided to smoke repeatedly in the presence of the five-year-old Jessica so that when she catches lung cancer from second hand smoking, she would have learned and have been encouraged that smoking is indeed bad.

But let's not forget, she can only learn all of these "lessons" if she actually survives the lung cancer and miraculously receive a new liver. Big Old Johnny better be in luck this time to see if it is God's will to heal poor Jessica. After all, who knows what the will of God is this time?

- God forbid! Sadly, this is how many believers think of God today.
- But does this pattern of reasoning line up with the character of our Almighty God who is slow to anger and abounding in love (Num 14:17-19, Ps 103:8)? Our God Yahweh who delivered the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt (Ex 20:2) and our God whose name is Jehovah Rapha: "I am the Lord who heals you" (Ex 15:22-26)? And our God of the word incarnate, Jesus Christ, who gave his body for physical healing in the atonement and never once denied a person's healing but healed all who came to Him (Matt 4:23-25, Matt 8:16-17, Mark 6:56, Luke 6:17-20)?

FAQ #12

We can pray for the sick, but only if it's God's will...

12.a) To repeatedly state that God still heals today yet at the same time deny His absolute will to heal 100% all the time in the atonement is a clear contradiction. After all, how can we "continue to pray for the sick" in faith (James 5:15) if each time we have to wonder if we are violating God's will to pray for this sick person? The answer is we cannot.

- Therefore, let us simply hold on to the word of God as final authority, not relying on our past experiences, and simply go out and do His will and commandments in preaching the gospel, healing the sick, raising the dead, casting out demons and cleansing the lepers (Matt 10:7-8, Mark 16:9-20). While we are at it, let us be bold with power in the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:23-27), but at the same time adopt the attitude of John the Baptist: "[God] must increase, we must decrease" (John 3:30).
- And if people ever look at us with amazement because of the healing power flowing through us, let us also respond like Peter did to the public after he had healed a crippled beggar: "Why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?...It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him" (Acts 3:12,16). May God receive all the glory through our obedience in fulfilling His commandments!

FAQ #13

Healing comes from God alone, so why pray/lay hands?

13.a) The statement that "healing ultimately is accomplished through God alone" is actually inconsistent with the teachings of scripture.

- If healing is only accomplished by "God alone" with no human intervention, then:
 - Why did God give Ananias a vision in **Acts 9:10-11** and commanded him to go to the house of Judas to lay his hands on Paul so that he can restore his sight? God could have made those scales fall off Paul's eyes without Ananias going there, couldn't He?
 - Why did God use Peter's hands to miraculously heal a crippled man in **Acts 3:1-10** when He could have done it Himself?
 - Why did God use Paul to work signs and miracles to the Gentiles in preaching the gospel (**Romans 15:17-19**) when He could have showed up in a cloud instead to prove His reality (**Mark 9:2-9**)?
 - And the list goes on.
- Therefore, while God is very able to do things alone, He does not seem to like doing things alone just "by Himself" throughout the entire bible. Rather, He likes to partner with man to bring His Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven (**Matt 6:10**). What an honour it is that we can participate in the harvest of God through power, signs and wonders that He had given us to proclaim the gospel (**Matt 28:18-20, Mark 16:18-20**)!
 - As an aside, some people have trouble using the phrase "believers healing the sick" or "we will heal the sick" because they think ultimately it is God who heals. Granted, it is true that people are healed because of the stripes of Jesus (**1 Peter 2:24**) and this power does not "come from man". Nevertheless, this does not mean that believers have no part to play in the equation of healing the sick. Rather, believers are commanded to lay hands to "heal the sick" (**Matt 10:8, Mark 16:18**).
 - Every police officer has been given authority, power and the permission to use firearms by the government that they serve. That authority and power surely does not "come" from the police officer himself. Nevertheless, imagine what it would be like if every time a police officer sees a criminal, and instead of stopping that criminal, he would try to explain the "nuts and

bolts" of where he got his ability, power, and firearms. The town in which they serve will certainly be in chaos and oppression because the officers are not doing their jobs.

- On the other hand, a loyal and responsible police officer will do his job, arrest criminals, avoid oppositions and protect the innocent people that he had sworn to serve and protect. And when it is time for him to face the board of inspectors to explain why he used his firearm, authority and power, he will then explain it in detail. A responsible and trustworthy police officer spends the majority of his time on the streets doing his job, fulfilling his responsibilities and protecting others, not sitting behind a desk. We must never allow "studying the word" as an excuse for us from "doing the word". Because if we do that, the bible tells us that we are "deceiving ourselves" (James 1:22).

FAQ #14

I don't have the gift of healing, so it won't work for me...

14.a) First, the "gift of healing" is not a biblical term nor is it found in the bible. Rather, the "gifts of healings" is the actual term properly translated from the original Greek used in **1 Corinthians 12:30**. If we examine the word "gifts", which is "*charismata*" in the original Greek, we will find that this word translates to "extraordinary power", a power that is above the ordinary. Therefore, Paul was saying that some believers will have an extraordinary power to heal the sick above the normal healing ability given to all believers (**Luke 9:1, Luke 10:1, John 14:12-14, Mark 16:18**).

- In **Acts 5:15**, we see that many people brought their sick to the streets and laid them on beds so that the shadow of Peter may fall on them. Later in **Acts 19:12**, we read that: "**Handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched [Paul] were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.**" Does that sound like an extraordinary power to heal? Sure does!
 - But should every believer expect to heal others by giving away their handkerchiefs and aprons? Obviously not. Paul tells us that not everyone will receive this extraordinary power. Nevertheless, every believer still have the full ability to lay hands on the sick and see them recover (**Mark 16:18**).
 - In addition, the "extraordinary power/gifts of healings" is not limited to handkerchiefs, aprons or shadows. In fact, they may not even be a manifestation of that "extraordinary power"; it could be something even greater. However, what is important to remember is that believers do not need to rely on this "extraordinary power" to heal the sick. This is because every believer has been given the full ability to heal by laying hands on the sick (**Mark 16:18**).

14.b) Therefore, the "gifts" of healings as Paul described in **1 Corinthians 12:9** is not the same as the "ability" to heal that Jesus gave all His believers (**Luke 9:1, Luke 10:1, John 14:12-14, Mark 16:18**).

- Everyone has the "ability" to sing, yet not all have the "gift" of singing. The difference is that a "gifted" singer will sing better, and the "not gifted" singer will not sing as well. But both still have the "ability" to sing Happy Birthday on their grandmas' surprise party.
- It is important to remember that every believer had already been given the "ability" to heal at the new birth (**Luke 9:1, Luke 10:1, John 14:12-14, Mark 16:18**). It is the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power" that some believers

may not have. But both can still heal the sick regardless of whether they have the gifts or not.

- While some think that if they do not have the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power", then they should give up altogether. However, they forget that healing the sick is a direct commandment from Jesus (**Matt 10:8, Mark 16:18**). It is not a "suggestion", just like the Great Commission. Thus, regardless of whether we have the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power" or not, we must still go out and lay hands on the sick with our given "ability" (**Luke 9:1, Luke 10:1, John 14:12-14, Mark 16:18**).
- Besides, how would anyone know if they have the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power" or not if they would not even go out and lay hands on the sick? So, let us stop waiting and wondering. Simply go out and find some sick people, lay hands on them and then tell them about the gospel. You may be in for a big surprise!

FAQ #15

We should not expect to have the gifts of healings.

15.a) Actually we should expect it. We should expect to have the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power" because two chapters later Paul instructed us to "eagerly desire spiritual gifts" (1 Cor 14:1). And to "eagerly desire" something, we must pray fervently (James 5:16) and present our requests to God (Phil 4:6). And if we pray, we must pray in faith and believe that we have received what we asked for (Mark 11:24), far beyond just "expecting" it. We can also have confidence in approaching God for this prayer because if we ask anything according to His will, he hears us (1 John 5:14). Since we are simply praying what the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write, that is, "eagerly desiring spiritual gifts" (1 Cor 14:1), we are certainly in His will in this prayer and thus should have confidence and faith. If we do not, then we should forget praying in the first place because we will not receive what we ask for in our doubt (James 1:6-7). However, we cannot abandon praying because Paul instructed us to "eagerly desire the spiritual gifts", a clear command (1 Cor 14:1). Thus, that leaves us with no choice but to pray in faith and expect that we have already received what we have asked for; that is: the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power".

- While the Holy Spirit will distribute the spiritual gifts as He determines (1 Cor. 12:11), what makes us think that He will give them to us if we are not even mindful of the will of God in this matter nor will we pray in faith for it? Remember the bible tells us that we do not have because we do not ask (James 4:3).
- Yes, it is true that different believers will have different gifts operating in one body to edify one another (1 Cor 12:7). But that does not give us the right to be passive and to sit and wait. At the very least, we ought to pray the prayer of faith in "eagerly desiring the spiritual gifts" that Paul commanded us to do. And to pray that prayer biblically, we need to "expect" it.

FAQ #16

The gifts of healings is not the most important...

4.a) Since a large part of Jesus' and the disciples' ministries on earth involved divine healing, Matthew 4:23-25, Matthew 8:1-4, Matthew 8:5-13, Matthew 8:14-17, Matthew 8:28-34, Matthew 9:1-8, Matthew 9:18-26, Matthew 9:27-34, Matthew 10:8, Matthew 12:9-14, Matthew 12:15-21, Matthew 12:22-23, Matthew 13:34-36, Matthew 14:14, Matthew 14:35-36, Matthew 15:21-30, Matthew 17:14-21, Matthew 19:2, Matthew 20:29-34, Matthew 21:14, Mark 1:21-28, Mark 1:29-34, Mark 1:35-39, Mark 1:40-45, Mark 2:1-12, Mark 3:1-6, Mark 3:7-12, Mark 5:1-20, Mark 5:21-43, Mark 6:53-56, Mark 7:24-30, Mark 7:31-37, Mark 8:22-26, Mark 9:14-29, Mark 10:46-52, Luke 4:31-37, Luke 4:38-41, Luke 4:42-44, Luke 5:12-16, Luke 5:17-26, Luke 6:6-11, Luke 6:17-19, Luke 7:1-10, Luke 7:11-17, Luke 7:21-22, Luke 8:26-39, Luke 8:40-56, Luke 9:1-3, Luke 9:37-43, Luke 9:56, Luke 10:8-10, Luke 11:14, Luke 13:10-17, Luke 14:1-6, Luke 17:11-19, Luke 18:35-43, Luke 22:49-51, Luke 24:43-54, John 4:43-54, John 5:1-15, John 9:1-41, John 11:1-44, Acts 3:1-10, Acts 4:8-14, Acts 5:12-16, Acts 8:7, Acts 9:33-35, Acts 10:37-38, Acts 14:9, Acts 19:11-13, Acts 28:8-9, it would be safe to infer that the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power" is rather quite important. While the bible mentioned that some spiritual gifts are more important than others (e.g) prophecy (1 Cor 14:1), what makes us think that God would put the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power" on a rank of "not-most-important-so-don't-expect-it" category? How can it not be important if Jesus gave His body to be scourged for our physical healing in the atonement, and He also commanded us to heal the sick everywhere as we preach the gospel (Matt 10:7-8, Mark 16:9-20)?

- Jesus gave His back to be whipped repeatedly on the whipping post of Pontius Pilate before He was crucified (John 19:1). He did this so that believers since then could have physical healing by His stripes (Isaiah 53:4-5, 1 Peter 2:24). What the Son of God offered with His body in the atonement, bless God, let that be very important!
- This is not to say that the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power" is in the atonement, but rather "physical healing by the stripes of Jesus" was accomplished in the atonement. And if that is the case, then anything associated with that, such as the "gifts of healings/extraordinary power", ought to be very important. (Note: for a full detailed explanation on healing in the atonement, please see FAQ #1).

FAQ #17

Jesus only gave authority and healing power to His twelve disciples, not to believers today!

17.a) If we are to follow the advice that whatever Jesus said "to his twelve disciples" should be generally ignored because it does not apply to us today, then we should:

- Not take up our cross and deny ourselves to follow Jesus daily, because in **Matthew 16:24**, it reads "then Jesus said to His disciples."
- Not participate in the Lord's Supper, because in **Matthew 26:26**, "Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."
- Not beware of being hypocritical in our lives just as the Pharisees were, because Jesus only "began to speak first to His disciples" regarding that teaching in **Luke 12:1-3**.
- Not listen to the teaching for "not worrying about what we will eat or drink", because in **Luke 12:21-23**, it was written: "Jesus said to His disciples".
- Not be pure in heart, because Jesus only "taught His disciples" in the Sermon on the Mount regarding this teaching (**Matt 5:2, Matt 5:8**).
- The list would end up very long if we are to continue. In fact, it will virtually discard every commandment and teaching from the bible because none of them was worded: "Jesus said to the 21st century Christians who are to come."

17.b) With this in mind, how are we to live our Christian lives? Do any of these teachings and commandments that Jesus gave His disciples apply to us today? There is one key scripture in the bible that will unlock this question, and that is: **Matthew 28:18-20**.

- "Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (**Matt 28:18-20**).
- Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He instructed His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. Following that, He said, "Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you" (**Matt 28:20**).

- In other words, Jesus told His disciples that they must now carry on the mission that He started. They are to make disciples of all nations. How? By teaching all of their new disciples to obey everything that Jesus had first said and commanded the twelve. This means that when Jesus told the twelve that He had given them authority and power to cast out devils and heal every kind of disease (**Matt 10:1-8, Luke 9:1-6**), this authority, power and commandment is now given to every new disciple made from the twelve. Respectively, this would apply to every new disciple down the line which leads to us today.
- Therefore:
 - When Jesus said: "As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' **Heal the sick**, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give" (**Matt 10:7-8**), **that applies to us today. Not only that, He commanded us to do.**
 - When Jesus said: "I give you the **authority** to trample on serpents and scorpions, and **over all the power of the enemy**, and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (**Luke 10:19**), **that applies to us today. Not only that, He commanded us to do.**
 - When Jesus said: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And **these signs will follow those who believe**: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; **they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover**" (**Mark 16:15-20**), **that applies to us today. Not only that, He commanded us to do.**

FAQ #18

Can we really trust Mark 16:9-20 to be in the bible?

18.a) When we investigate the reliability of **Mark 16:9-20**, we will soon realize that there are many different opinions surrounding it. One of the biggest controversies is regarding the "authorship" of **Mark 16:9-20**, that is, whether Mark himself originally wrote this passage. Nevertheless, even in the midst of this controversy, it is encouraging to find that there are still agreements on some observations in **Mark 16:9-20**.

- One of these agreements is that the contents of **Mark 16:9-20** are indeed trustworthy and credible, because every single verse (except one), can be verified with numerous other scriptures in the bible. The only exception is verse 13 when Jesus appeared to two men and their testimony were not believed afterwards. But this is hardly the controversy in this entire passage.
- Let us examine each verse. Purple indicates supporting scriptures.
 - ⁹Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene (Matt 28:1, John 20:1-9), out of whom He had cast seven demons (Luke 8:2).
 - ¹⁰She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept (Matt 28:8).
 - ¹¹And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe (Luke 24:11).
 - ¹²After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country (Luke 24:13-16).
 - ¹³And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either (The only exception, but in context would appear true).
 - ¹⁴Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen (John 20:19-29, Luke 24:33-45)
 - ¹⁵And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (Matt 28:18-20).
 - ¹⁶He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned (John 3:16, John 3:18).

- ¹⁷And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; (Matt 10:8, Mark 3:15, Luke 9:1, Luke 10:17, Acts 16:16-18); they will speak with new tongues (Acts 2:4, Acts 2:11, Acts 10:46, Acts 19:6, 1 Cor 12:10, 1 Cor 12:28, 1 Cor 13:1, 1 Cor 13:8, 1 Cor 14:5-6, 1 Cor 14:18-23, 1 Cor 14:39).
- ¹⁸They will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them (Luke 10:19); they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover (Matt 10:8, Acts 3:1-10, Acts 6:8, Acts 8:13, Acts 9:10-11, Romans 15:17-19).
- ¹⁹So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven (Luke 24:51) and sat down at the right hand of God (Heb 1:3).
- ²⁰And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen (Acts 3:1-26, Acts 5:12-16, Acts 6:8, Acts 8:4-25, Acts 8:13, Acts 9:10-11, Acts 9:36-43, Acts 11:1-18, Acts 17:1-9, Acts 19:11, Acts 28:1-10, Romans 15:17-19).
- It is clear that the "contents" of what is written in **Mark 16:9-20** are biblical and faithful to the rest of scripture. Thus, this reason alone should strongly urge us to believe in the trustworthiness of this passage.
- But to be sure, let us consider other factors that substantiate the credibility of **Mark 16:9-20**.
 - There are two major manuscripts considered authoritative that do not contain the ending of **Mark 16:9-20**. They are the "Sinaiticus" and "Vaticanus" manuscripts, which were dated around the 4th century.
 - Since these manuscripts do not contain verses 9 to 20, they ended on verse 8 of **Mark 16**. And here is the key:
 - Both of these manuscripts end with the word "GAR" in Greek, which translates to "for" or "because" in English.
 - So these two manuscripts would end literally like this on verse 8: "**And they said nothing to anyone, and they were afraid because/(GAR).**"
 - The modern bible translations have the order reversed in verse 8 that read: "**And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.**" But this was not how the two original manuscripts were written. They both ended with the word "GAR" in

Greek which means "for/because", which again would have translated verse 8 to read: "And they said nothing to anyone, and they were afraid because." That would be the end of the gospel of Mark according to those manuscripts that do not have verses 9 to 20. But does that appear strange?

- No one would speak in Greek or in English and end their sentences on the word "because".
 - We would be quite concerned for a person if he repeatedly converse in the following manner: "I will drive to Michigan because", or "My cell phone is broken because". The sentences are clearly incomplete.
 - Therefore, to discount **Mark 16:9-20** with one of the reasons being that "some manuscripts did not have **Mark 16:9-20** as their ending" does not appear to be convincing. This is especially true when the ending of those manuscripts can be seen as incomplete and strange.
 - We should also remember that the content of **Mark 16:9-20** can each be verified by other scriptures verse by verse (except one) as explained earlier. Thus, to discount **Mark 16:9-20** in light of these clear scriptural and logical support seems to be unwise.
- On another note, instead of "being cautious" in formulating doctrine from **Mark 16:9-20**, perhaps it is more beneficial to "be cautious" for doubting scripture whenever it does not line up with our past experience or previously taught doctrines. **We should remember this general rule: scripture dictates our experiences, not our experiences molding scripture.**
 - Consider the other numerous controversies in the bible today, such as, the reliability of the book of James. In fact, the famous Martin Luther who inspired the Protestant Reformation objected to the book of James because he thought that it contradicted the teachings of grace by Paul. Many attempts were also made in the past to question whether the book of James should be kept in the canon. Should we be in great concern now and begin doubting the trustworthiness of the book of James even though it had been long established in our biblical canon?

- What is more important for us to consider is this: if every time a biblical controversy does not match our previous experience or beliefs and our attitude is to be skeptical towards those scriptures, then our faith will definitely be on very shaky grounds.
 - We should definitely examine teachings of scripture when it does not match ours to see if it is the truth (2 Tim 3:16). But it is the "attitude" of doubting scripture when it does not conform to our past experiences or preconceived beliefs that must be promptly discarded.
 - May we find comfort to remember that our God who we believe to be sovereign and in control will ensure that the things He wants us to know and obey remain intact in the established canon.

FAQ #19

Doctors are the healing methods of today. Even Jesus approved of doctors in Matthew 9:12!

19.a) If Jesus indeed approved of doctors as being the preferred way of physical healing, then:

- Why did Jesus give His body to be scourged so that "by His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:4-5, 1 Peter 2:24)?
- Why did Jesus not store up boxes of medicine to be given away to the multitudes as they came to Him?
 - Why did Jesus instead "healed them all" with the divine healing power of God (Matt 4:23-25, Matt 8:16-17, Mark 6:56, Luke 6:17-20, Luke 9:11)?
- Why did Jesus give His disciples authority and power over all sicknesses and diseases and commanded them to go and preach the gospel while healing the sick?
- Why did Jesus not instruct His disciples to bring doctors with them and buy boxes of medicine as they went into the villages?
 - Why did He instead instruct them to "take nothing for the journey" but simply operate in faith with the power and authority given to them (Luke 9:1-6)?
 - Why is it that even in the absence of doctors or medicine, the disciples still "departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere" (Luke 9:6)?

19.b) When Jesus said, "it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick" (Matt 9:12), He was not saying this to put His stamp of approval for doctors. By looking at the context of where Jesus made this statement, it will be clear that He meant it to be an "analogy", not one to be taken literally.

- Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

When Jesus heard that, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I

desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Matt 9:10-13).

- Let us consider the context of this passage. Some Pharisees were upset that Jesus was eating with sinners and tax collectors. They thought this should not be the case because sinners and tax collectors were defiling and were considered social outcasts.
- In responding to the Pharisees' grievous concerns, Jesus said "**those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick**". He continues later to say that "**for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance**" (Matt 9:12).
- Jesus explains that He is eating with the sinners because the sinners are the ones that need Him. Similarly, the sick are the ones who need the doctors, not the healthy. It is a mere analogy.
 - Some may say that if Jesus "acknowledged" that the sick need doctors, that means Jesus had approved of it. But just because Jesus "acknowledged" something does not mean that He approved of it. Jesus certainly "acknowledged" that the people in His time were an "adulterous and sinful generation" (Mark 8:38), but does that mean He "approved" of it? Clearly not.
 - This is not to say that God disapproves healing through doctors. It just means that this verse alone in Matt 9:12 does not substantiate the claim that "Jesus approved the mundane healing method of using doctors."
 - While it is not to say that God disapproves healing by doctors, why would we even want something not biblically promised to us as a means of healing (doctors), over what is biblically promised to us as an assured way of healing (in the atonement)?
 - Furthermore, consider that when we become parents and whenever our children have problems and their first response is to seek the help of others before us, would that not deeply hurt us? If that is the case, what makes us think that God is not equally grieved every time when Christians would rather first seek out doctors before coming to their heavenly Father for their healing?

FAQ #20

Spiritual healing is more important than physical healing. Even Jesus realized that in Mark 1!

20.a) The reason that Jesus said "your sins are forgiven" when the paralyzed man was lowered was not because "spiritual resurrection" is "more important". It was because Jesus understood that the forgiveness of sins came with physical healing as found in **Isaiah 53:4-5**. Thus, the moment Jesus said "your sins are forgiven", He knew that the paralytic man was also healed. That is why He said, "Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'your sins are forgiven', or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'" (Mark 1:9)? For Jesus, both were the same thing and both were just as easy to say.

- Notice that the term "spiritual resurrection" was used, not "spiritual healing". This is because no sinner is capable of being "spiritually healed". Paul tells us clearly that we were "dead" in our sins (**Eph 2:5, Col 2:13**) and were needed to be made "alive" and "resurrected" in Christ (**Rom 6:5**). Since a dead man cannot be "healed" but rather need a "resurrection", it demonstrates once again that Isaiah was speaking of physical healing for the body in the atonement, not an "impossible healing" of a "dead" sinner (**Isaiah 53:4-5**).

FAQ #21

Timothy's illness proves God doesn't heal sometimes.

21.a) The fact that Timothy had frequent illnesses could have meant that he got sick again every time after he received healing from God. Perhaps Timothy had a weaker immune system, but God likely healed him every time. Why would God not heal Him especially when physical healing had already been accomplished in the atonement? Timothy certainly could not have remained sick very long. How do we suppose he could have continued his ministry with much pressure because many looked down on him for his young age? That is why Paul encouraged him and said, "**Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in life, in love, in faith, in speech and in purity**" (1 Tim 4:12).

21.b) When someone is sick today, many will say, "drink more water, get more sleep and drink some orange juice to get more vitamin C." On the basis of these statements, does that suddenly discount the finished work of Christ in the atonement for our physical healing?

- Does it mean that orange juice should now be the preferred way of healing? Obviously not. Similarly, Paul likely knew that a use of a little wine would help Timothy remain healthier (as wine can destroy germs and bacteria). But that does not mean Paul has now discarded the surest way of physical healing in the atonement and had gone on with something else: the "little wine medicine".

FAQ #22

Trophimus's illness proves God doesn't heal sometimes.

22.a) The fact that Paul "left Trophimus sick in Miletus" proves absolutely nothing about the will of God to heal. When Jesus ascended to heaven, He surely left millions of people unhealed around the world. Does that suddenly nullify His accomplished work of physical healing and propitiation of sins in the atonement (Psa 103:2-3, Isa 53:4-5, Matt 8:16, 1 Peter 2:24)? Obviously not.

- Paul might have simply left "Trophimus sick" without ministering healing to him and that is why Trophimus did not get his healing. In Luke 5:15-16, we read that, "The news about [Jesus] spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed."
- Jesus did not always minister healing for everyone who was sick (Mark 1:29-39, Luke 5:15-16). In fact, He understood that His mission was to preach the Kingdom of God everywhere with signs following. This means that Jesus certainly "left some people sick" in order to further preach the gospel in other towns (Mark 1:29-39). But that does not mean that His will is for people to remain sick.
 - If that is the case, then Jesus would have contradicted Himself earlier when the leper asked, "If You are willing, You can make me clean" (Mark 1:40), and Jesus answered, "I am willing" (Mark 1:41).
 - If God does not show favouritism towards people (Rom 2:11), that means that just as He is willing to heal the leper, He is also willing to heal all. This is especially true when physical healing had already been accomplished and provided in the atonement of Christ.
- On the same token, could Paul not have withdrawn himself to pray just like Jesus did so that Trophimus was left sick? Or maybe Paul was heavily involved with the churches he established that he simply left Trophimus sick without ministering healing to him? Or perhaps Paul mentioned this in the first place so that other believers can go minister healing to Trophimus instead of himself. This way, he can also encourage other believers to obey the commandment of Christ to heal the sick (Matt 10:8, Mark 16:18).

FAQ #23

Jesus only chose one man to heal in John 5. This means that it's God's will to leave some people sick!

23.a) The statement that Jesus only "healed one man" by the pool of Bethesda in **John 5** is not entirely accurate. While there is only one "record" of healing by the pool of Bethesda in **John 5**, this is not equivalent to saying "Jesus only healed one man" by the pool of Bethesda. Jesus *might have* healed all of the sick people by the pool of Bethesda and John simply did not record them down. Remember that John himself said in his own gospel in two occasions that:

- "Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:30-31).
- "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written" (John 21:25).
 - Surely, it would have been impossible for John to record every single healing that Jesus did by the pool of Bethesda *if* indeed that is what Jesus did. Why? Because John said if every single thing that Jesus had done was recorded, then there would not even be enough books to contain them in the whole world (John 21:25).
 - Therefore, to remain faithful to the biblical text, all we can infer from **John 5** is that there was only one "record" of Jesus healing a man with an infirmity for thirty-eight years. Period.
 - To take that further and suggest that Jesus only "healed one man" that day because it is His will for some not to be healed is surely "over-extending biblical scriptures" which we should definitely avoid.

FAQ #24

Scripture and my experience show that even the most faithful Christians sometimes won't get healed.

24.a) Where exactly is this "shown in scripture" when one asked for a physical healing but never received it? In fact, we cannot find one scripture at all, especially in the New Testament (which is what applies to us today as New Covenant believers). The other so called "examples of scripture" of God denying healing have already been addressed elsewhere in this response to be false (please read FAQ #8 for Paul's thorn, read FAQ #21 for Timothy's illness, and read FAQ #22 for Trophimus left sick).

- On the other hand, there are numerous occasions when people came to Jesus and asked for healing and He healed them all and did not deny any one of them (Matt 4:23-25, Matt 8:16-17, Mark 6:56, Luke 6:17-20, Luke 9:11).

24.b) Secondly, our own experiences have essentially little value or authority especially when they are clearly inconsistent with the teachings of scripture (Psa 103:2-3, Isa 53:4-5, Matt 8:16, 1 Peter 2:24).

- The general rule again is: scripture dictates our experiences, not our experiences molding scripture.

FAQ #25

God will not heal those who reject Him and have no faith in Him.

25.a) If it is true that God will not heal those who rejects Him and have no faith in Him, then why is it that Jesus still "laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them" in the midst of people's unbelief (Matt 13:58, Mark 6:5)? We read in Mark 6:1-5:

- "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles! Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.

Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honour." He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their lack of faith.

- We are told that Jesus could not do many "miracles" in His hometown because of people's unbelief and lack of faith. But even in the midst of this unbelief, Jesus still healed the people there (Mark 6:5). This is because there is a distinction between "miracles" and "healings".
 - The people's unbelief probably stopped Jesus from walking on the water (Matt 14:22-33), turning water into wine (John 2:1-11), calming the sea (Mark 4:35-40), all of which are "miracles". But it did not stop Him from being able to "heal".

25.b) If the sick person is supposed to have faith for their healing, why did James say that the elders are the ones to pray the prayer of faith for those who are sick (James 5:13-16), and not the other way around? This is because the responsibility of having faith is on the person laying hands and ministering healing, not the sick person. (Note: the elders are not the only ones commanded to heal the sick, every believer is commanded to do it. Please see FAQ #27).

- If faith is a "prerequisite" for the sick person to receive healing, who then had faith for Lazarus to be raised from the dead (John 11:38-43)? Should not a person wanting a resurrection need more faith than one who needs a physical healing? If so, then how is it possible for Lazarus to have this great faith while being wrapped up and lying dead in the tomb (John 11:38-43)? Evidently, it was Jesus' faith that resurrected Lazarus, not the contrary.

- Furthermore, if faith is again a "prerequisite" for the sick person to receive healing, then Jesus must have been one "lucky healer" to have healed every single person who came to him because each one of them had just enough faith to get themselves healed (Matt 4:23-25, Matt 8:16-17, Mark 6:56, Luke 6:17-20, Luke 9:11).

25.c) If "rejecting God" is also a reason why God would not heal a sick person, then how did the person who had an infirmity for thirty-eight years get healed by Jesus in **John 5:8**?

- After this man's healing, Jesus told him: "**Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you**" (John 5:14). This means that this man was still in sin and have not yet repented, thus "rejecting God". But in spite of his rejection to God and even his apparent lack of faith (because he did not ask Jesus to heal him), Jesus still ended up healing this man.

25.d) In light of these findings, we can be assured that while God does not delight in people's rejection and their lack of faith, these two factors alone will not hinder God's healing to a sick person. This is especially true because Jesus had already paid for man's physical healing in the atonement (Psa 103:2-3, Isa 53:4-5, 1 Peter 2:24).

FAQ #26

John 9 reveals that sickness can be for a greater good...

26.a) A "greater good" being accomplished in sickness is nowhere to be found in **John 9:3**. When we read this entire story, we find that Jesus ultimately healed this blind man (John 9:1-7). He did not say anything about wanting this person to remain in blindness for a "greater good". In fact, the "greater good" was that Jesus healed this blind man so that the "work of God might be displayed in his life" (**John 9:3**).

26.b) Secondly, Peter was not talking about suffering grief and trials for "physical sicknesses" in order to bring about a "greater good". He was speaking of rejoicing and enduring persecutions for having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (**Matt 5:11-12**). This theme is almost identical to Paul's when he wrote about his "thorn in the flesh". As we discussed in FAQ #8, Paul's thorn in the flesh was not a physical sicknesses, but rather one of enduring persecution for his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

26.c) Just as a soldier cannot bring glory and "greater good" to his commander by being defeated and oppressed by the enemy, believers as soldiers of Christ (**Phil 2:25, 2 Tim 2:3-4, Phil 1:2**) equally cannot bring glory and "greater good" by being defeated and oppressed in sicknesses for the commander in chief, the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Indeed, it is true that some who are physically sick can still choose to glorify God by giving testimonies of their unshakable faith. However, that does not mean that God prefers to see Himself glorified in such a way. God does not want to see His beloved children suffering in sicknesses especially when He already paid for their physical healing in the atonement (**Isaiah 53:4-5, Matt 8:16, 1 Peter 2:24**).
- Similarly, while a captured and defeated soldier can choose to honour his commander by not revealing any military intelligence, it does not mean that the commander is now pleased with him for being defeated in the first place. What the captured soldier ought to do, if he is faithful and loyal to his army, is to find ways to overcome his enemy, break out of the enemy lines and rejoin his army to fight against the enemy. That, is bringing true glory and bringing "greater good" to his commander in chief and to his army; not by remaining in defeat and oppression indefinitely.

FAQ #27

James limited only elders to pray for healing, not all Christians.

27.a) The statement that James had "limited" the application of divine healing only to the "elders" is not only false, but also an overlook of many clear teachings of Christ (Matt 28:18-20, Mark 16:18, John 12:12-14). Jesus commanded all of His disciples in the following generations to do exactly what He did, which included divine healing. And if every believer are instructed to do what Christ had done (which included divine healing), then the statement that divine healing is only "limited to the elders" would be grievously false (John 14:12-14). (Please read FAQ #17 for further explanation).

- We must be very careful not to create a sense of a "church ladder" for people to climb in order for them to "earn the title" to do the works of Christ. Let us not forget that it was the son of God, Jesus Christ, who commanded each believer to do the works that He did with His given authority and power (John 14:12-14, Matt 28:18-20, Mark 16:18-20).
 - We should also not misunderstand and think that we are relieved of our responsibility to heal the sick simply because we are not "elders" or we have not "ascended the church ladder" to a higher position. Healing the sick is a clear commandment for every believer, not a suggestion (Matt 10:8, Matt 28:18-20, Mark 16:18). Similarly, it is a clear commandment for every believer to preach the gospel with signs following, also not a suggestion (Matt 28:18-20, Mark 16:18-20). This also means that it is not a matter of how "spiritual" we are that qualifies us to heal the sick. Rather, it is by faith and by Jesus' name that give us the ability to fulfill that commandment (Acts 3:12,16).
- **Our ability to heal comes only from the atonement of Christ, His authority, and His power given to us as believers** (Matt 10:7-8, Matt 28:18-20, Luke 9:1-6, Mark 16:14-20). This means that no one is exempt from healing the sick for reasons such as "I'm not spiritual enough", or "I don't know much about divine healing ". What counts is the atonement of Christ and His name. It is not about how spiritual we are, or how much we measure up.

This is the end of the response
to most common FAQs.

**Below are some additional sobering thoughts.*

Some *Practical* Considerations For Divine Healing.

1) ***If*** sometimes God's will is not to heal us so that we can remain in sickness for a "greater good" or "learning experience", then if we are sick in the future, we must never see a doctor or take any type of medicine. Why? Because how do we know this time if it is not God's will for us to learn something in our sicknesses? And if it is God's will for us to be sick this time, then we are surely in rebellion to His will in trying to get better by seeing a doctor or taking medicine. Oh wretched man that we are, God forbid.

2) ***If*** sometimes God's will is not to heal us so that we can remain sick for a "greater good" or "learning experience", then Christians who are associated with the medical field, such as, doctors, nurse, dentist, pharmacists, medical researcher and so on must now quit their profession in order to obey God. Because according to this teaching, if sometimes God's will is for people to be sick, then how dare these professed Christians even think of altering God's intended outcome by helping others get healed through medical means?

- Fortunately, we have already established throughout this response that God's will is always to heal us 100%, all the time (Isaiah 53:4-5, Matt 8:16, 1 Peter 2:24). He is a good, loving and compassionate God (Deut 4:31) who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow (Heb 13:8). So just as Jesus healed all who came to Him, God will do the same for us today. The Lord our God's name is also Jehovah Rapha: "***I am the Lord who heals you***" (Ex 15:22-26). Furthermore, Jesus will never want to see His children suffer in sicknesses because he had already been striped for our physical healing in the atonement. Therefore, God's will is always to physically heal us 100%, all the time (Isaiah 53:4-5, Matt 8:16, 1 Peter 2:24). Praise God! Hallelujah! Blessed be His name!

3 Simple Keys To Divine Healing

1) Is It Always God's Will To Heal and Why?

A: Yes, because healing was included in salvation/atonement.

V: "Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits- who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases." (Psalm 103:3)

V: "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5)

V: "[Jesus] healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.'" (Matthew 8:16-17)

2) Who Can Heal?

A: All Christians.

V: "These signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." (Mark 16:17-18)

V: [Jesus]: He who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son (John 14:12-14).

3) How To Heal?

A: Do what Jesus did. Know your authority in Christ and give commands with authority & not beg God to do it. In His sovereignty He said believers will lay hands on the sick, not Him. God already gave you authority & power to heal, you just need to be obedient & do it to glorify Him.

V: [Jesus]: "Stretch out your hand." (Luke 6:10)

V: Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." (John 5:8)

Practical Steps To Heal:

- 1) Find out the sickness/disease/symptoms.
- 2) Command sickness to leave in Jesus name.
- 3) Tell the body what you want it to do in Jesus name (e.g) be healed, pain leave.
- 4) Check immediately if they're better, ask them to do something they cannot do before.
- 5) Share God's love and the gospel, why you can heal, because of what Jesus did.
Explain God wants them to be both physically healed & spiritually resurrected, etc...

Final Encouragements and Caution

1) May it be an encouragement to us that our Lord Jesus Christ had entrusted us with such an important assignment to complete before His coming: the Great Commission (**Matt 24:14, Matt 28:18-20**). Not only that, may we find delight in knowing that Jesus had given us His full authority and power to accomplish the specific assignments and commandments that He wants done. That is: *making disciples of all nations, preaching the gospel, healing the sick, raising the dead, casting out demons, cleansing the lepers and freely giving just as we have freely received from Him* (**Matt 10:7-8, Matt 28:18-20, Luke 9:1-6, Mark 16:15-20**).

- Therefore, let us make our King proud and His name known by doing our jobs, especially doing the ones that He specifically commanded us to do.
- By doing so, we will know that we truly love Him, because Jesus said, "**If you love me, you will obey my commandments**" (**John 14:15**). We will also know that we are truly His disciples, because Jesus said, "**If you continue in my word, you are really my disciples**" (**John 8:31**).
 - This is not to say that we are now "working for our salvation". This is impossible because we are saved by grace and faith alone (**Eph 2:8-9**). Nevertheless, we know that the biblical faith and grace that will truly save us is not one of mere professing faith. It is rather one of having faith that transforms us to have action and bearing good fruits in our Lord Jesus Christ (**John 15:5-7, Matt 7:19, Luke 3:9, James 2:14-26**). As our brother James puts it sound and clear:
 - "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?... But do you want to know, O foolish man, that **faith without works is dead**" (**James 2:14, 20**).

True Faith - Works = Salvation (**Eph 2:8-9**)

∴ True Faith = Salvation + Works (**James 2:14-20**)

2) As we continue to consider the teachings in scripture regarding divine healing (or any biblical teachings for that matter), may our attitude always be one that James admonishes:

"Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (**James 1:22**).

As a warrior of the faith once said about a "deep theology": "*If you ain't doing it, then you ain't doing it!*" Meaning that if your friends are sharing the gospel and you are not, then you are not doing it. If your small group is praying for the sick and you are not laying hands, then you are not doing it. And if your church is feeding the poor and you are not there to financially and physically support them, then you are not doing it. Plain and simple.

"May the lamb that was slain receive the reward of His suffering!"

(A declaration shouted by two young Moravians as their ship departed in which they sold themselves to slavery in order to preach the gospel to three thousand slaves from Africa).