

Faith in God—Mark 11:22–24 Specifically Faith for Answered Prayers

Faith: As it was preached, taught, and demonstrated by Jesus as well as the whole Bible as our example to follow.

Seldom is faith being preached today. Preachers are wincing at it, apologizing for it, backpedaling from it, ignoring it, and speaking of it just to pay lip service and be politically correct. They can't even quote Jesus concerning faith without hedging and apologizing for it.

When you have an apologetic style of preaching, it takes the force and power out of the words spoken. That was not the style of Jesus, the apostles, or the prophets; “For the word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). Just let the Word do its work. Expound on it, elaborate on it, but don't take away from it.

The apostles got rebuked in Matthew 17:14–21 by Jesus for not being able to cast out the demon and heal the man's son. They were called faithless and perverse. Why are we excusing ourselves from this high standard of faith? Peter got rebuked for not being

able to walk on water. The apostles were rebuked for being afraid of the storm at sea.

Why are pastors shielding us from faith in our Lord to do miracles?

Jesus said in John 14:12, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto My Father.” When Matthew 17:20–21 is read from the pulpit, it’s not time for another speech on grace. Jesus told them exactly why the demon didn’t come out. He said it was because of the disciple’s unbelief, and the reason for their unbelief was because they had a lack of prayer and fasting in their life. They thought they had faith. That’s why He called them perverse. You see, the Lord had already taught them that if you pray in faith, you will get results.

Many Christians today think they prayed in faith for their healing or about the healing of someone else, but no one got healed. If they have given up, it’s not faith. Because a lot of things can nullify faith, for example: Mark 11:25–26, unforgiveness; James 1:6, wavering; James 5:16, not confessing your sins; and John 15:7, not abiding in Jesus and having His words abide in you, etc. People would rather doubt God’s Word and blame God instead of searching the Word and their own hearts for answers. There’s no need for bitterness toward God. Get your theology straight, and get set free from bitterness and a false concept of the will of God concerning faith for healing. Faith doesn’t work with unbelief or doubt present in us.

The Revelation of Faith (Mark 11:22–24)

“Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatever he saith. Therefore, I say unto you, Whatever

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

Matthew 21:22, “And all things, whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

Matthew 7:7, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

John 14:14, “If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it.”

Matthew 8:13, “[A]s thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.”

Matthew 9:22, “[T]hy faith hath made thee well.”

Matthew 9:29, “According to your faith be it unto you.”

The entire chapter of Hebrews 11, along with the definition of faith found in verse 1, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

In Luke 11:11–13, Jesus teaches us we will get what we ask for. If you ask for the Holy Spirit, He will give you the Holy Spirit. If you ask for a fish, He will give you a fish, not something else.

In Mark 11:22–24, Jesus taught how to pray in faith. The emphasis is upon the believer’s responsibility to pray in faith. Six or seven times, Jesus puts it on us. He tells us what to do. He gives instruction on how to release faith. Remember, faith is the channel through which God works. If you’ve got that channel clogged up with sin, don’t expect to lay hands on the sick and see them healed. Don’t expect to lay hands on someone and see them get the baptism with the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues.

Jesus was a faith teacher. There is a revelation of faith, a vision for faith in God. Mark 11:22–24 talks about faith itself; verses 25–26 talk about one of the conditions you have to meet in order to release biblical faith. Verses 25–26 say to forgive others and that is just as important as verses 22–24.

Answers to prayer are conditioned on three things:

Faith—Mark 11:22-24; Matthew 21:22; James 1:6–7, James 5:15.

Obedience—John 15:7; Mark 11:25–26; Psalm 37:3–4.

God's will—1 John 5:14–15.

These basic truths should be laid out from the pulpit so that people can live the Christian life. The Assemblies of God should move toward structured teaching, systematic building blocks. I thank them for already moving in this direction for decades. But this shouldn't be left to some little Sunday school lesson. We all need to hear it together.

This faith teaching is what's needed to get the baptism with the Holy Spirit. This type of faith, the high expectation faith, and the rise up and take your inheritance kind of faith; this revelation of faith for all things, 1 Corinthians 3:22 and 2 Peter 1:1–9, that the preacher conveys to the people is imparting the vision to them. He is capable of doing so because he is living it. This is paramount.

What's happening is pastors, churches, and nationwide leadership are **staying away from faith** because it's been abused by the Word of Faith Movement, the name it and claim it people, and the prosperity teachers. While it is true that they are abusing faith, almost everyone else is neglecting faith. The devil has each one of the two camps ensnared in either abuse or neglect, and he has each camp trying to pull the beam out of the eye of the other. The Assemblies of God and non-Pentecostals in general should first pull the beam of neglecting faith out of their own eyes so that they can see clearly to pull the beam of abusing faith out of the eyes of others (Matthew 7:1–5; Luke 6:37–42).

I have been on the inside looking out, and I have been on the outside looking into the Assemblies of God many times, and I have gained perspective and insight through these experiences.

There is a way to preach faith that lights up the soul with liberty and vision to go forth and conquer (Romans 8:37). This type of faith has been preached only once during the three years that I've been in my present Assemblies of God Church (January 2015). During the sermon, I noticed in the congregation the people's eyes lit up with the joy of faith. This message was not given

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

by a lead pastor, a missionary, or traveling evangelist. It was preached by a person in our own church, a young pastor of children and families; his name was Jason. He's only been allowed to preach once to the congregation. This type of faith was also in the pastor that prayed for me to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit in 1978. It took only about five seconds to receive. He was not an Assemblies of God minister.

Let me give you a personal faith testimony. Four years ago, my ears began to ring. The ringing has been louder than most cases of people who have this problem. Other sounds around me have not silenced it. The tinnitus has caused anxiety. In the beginning, I prayed for my healing. To this day, the ringing has persisted. It's been a real fiery trial with anxiety and distraction. The tinnitus has hindered my preaching and reduced the quality of life. I believe that I have my healing by Jesus stripes (1 Peter 2:24) and that I'm waiting for its manifestation in God's sovereign timing as my faith is being perfected. But His sovereign timing does not mean I'm waiting on Him. He healed me 2,000 years ago, **“by whose stripes ye were healed.”**

That's past tense! But rather, it means He is waiting on me to purify my faith from all doubt. Faith for healing works the same way that faith for salvation works. If we meet the same conditions of faith and repentance, then His sovereign grace to save and heal will be manifest in our life. If I completely submit to the work He's doing in my heart, through the trial, and let Him accomplish His purpose, then my healing will be manifest sooner.

In the meantime, I pursue His purpose in the trial, the pursuit of love out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned (1 Timothy 1:5). Contentment and humility are produced, but I also pursue aggressive faith in Jesus to manifest my healing (Mark 11:24). I renew my mind with the healing scriptures of God's Word. This produces results as I learn to be a doer of the Word, not a hearer only. Faith in God just believes He will do what He said and that God's promises are real!

As I get closer to Jesus, it seems as though the problem can no longer exist. During great times of prayer and communication

with Him, the ringing has gotten much lower and less intense. Various stresses throughout each day have affected the volume. Certain stresses have intensified it. Certain blessings have reduced it. I am happy because I know God paid for my healing with Jesus's stripes. He is doing a deep work in me as I overcome anxiety and perfect my faith; I am drawn closer to Him. He may manifest my healing directly or indirectly by setting me totally free from the cause. If He manifests my healing directly, He will simply remove the ringing. If He heals me indirectly, He will totally set me free from the type of stress that affects my nerves which caused the ringing to begin with, a chain reaction of three healings.

I am also happy because I know I will receive the manifestation any day now. The high expectation and growing faith for the manifestation of my healing actually produces contentment and submission to the sovereignty of God. But if I allow my mind to think, it may not be God's will to heal me, then at that point, I surrender my faith and give up my healing. James 1:6-7 reads, "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." A thought of doubt is not unbelief. Dwelling doubt is. It's when you resign yourself to it.

God's sovereignty is His will. His will for us is in His Word. His declaration that healing is in the atonement together with His instruction to pray, and His promises to heal us if we meet the conditions are God's sovereignty in action. The Word is a revelation of His will. We line ourselves up with His sovereignty by asking for our healing, which was purchased at Calvary.

He reveals His sovereign will for healing in His Word. Psalm 103:2-3 states, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases."

Now, you can't just believe half this verse. If it's going to be all iniquities, then it's going to be all diseases. Exodus 15:26 says, "[I]f thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee.”

New Testament 1 Peter 2:24, already healed by Jesus’s stripes, “[B]y whose stripes ye were healed.” We just need to learn to receive. Rebuke lying symptoms and confess God’s Word.

Exodus 23:25 gives us another sovereign promise of healing if we meet the conditions of obedience and faith, “And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and He shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.”

Deuteronomy 7:14, “Thou shalt be blessed above all people; there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.” He fulfilled this promise by taking away the barrenness of numerous women of God, such as Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Samson’s mother, Samuel’s mother, and John the Baptist’s mother.

Psalms 113:9 reinforces the revelation of God’s will in His promise. “He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord.”

Also Deuteronomy 7:15, “And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness.”

Proverbs 4:20–22 is another great promise of healing. “My son, attend to My words; incline thine ear unto My sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.”

2 Corinthians 1:20 reinforces the truth that His promises in His Word are His sovereignty in action. His Word is living and powerful. “For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” His Word is an unfolding of His will for His people. **He speaks, we believe, it happens** (Psalm 107:20), “He sent His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.”

If sick, never claim to have Paul’s thorn. The phrase “thorn in the flesh,” or similar to it, occurs three other times in the Bible, and in every case, it’s referring to people, not sickness. Numbers 33:55 talks of “thorns in your sides”; Joshua 23:13 has “thorns in

your eyes”; Judges 2:3 writes “thorns in your sides.” Paul’s experience of having a thorn in the flesh is described in 2 Corinthians 12: 1–10, but the full content should begin with 11:21. In 12:9, the same Greek word is translated once as weakness and once as infirmities. In verse 10, it’s translated as infirmities and also as weak.

The Greek term can mean many things. Any human weakness, it can be personal or involve others, perhaps an inability to speak well. It can mean sickness, but this term is used by Paul many times in the New Testament and never translated as sickness. It’s rendered as weakness in 1 Corinthians 2:3, 15:43 and 2 Corinthians 10:10, and as infirmities in 2 Corinthians 11:30. Anywhere else in the Bible, when someone was sick, they just say they were sick. Thorn in the flesh is never used as a figure of speech for sickness. The Greek word can also mean infirmity, but that doesn’t have to mean sickness. In Galatians 4:13–15, Paul tells of an experience of having a trial in his flesh. But he speaks of this trial in the past tense. Also, the book of Galatians was written several years before 2 Corinthians. So there’s no basis for relating Galatians 4:13–15 to Paul’s thorn.

The first miracle that Jesus did He didn’t plan to do (John 2:4), “Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.” It wasn’t time for Him to start working miracles; but yet, He honored the faith of His mother (John 2:5), “His mother saith unto the servants, Whatever He saith unto you, do it.” And Jesus turned the water into wine (John 2:6–11), a very unimportant miracle, yet He responds to faith and persistence.

In Matthew 15:21–28, the deliverance of the Syrophenician woman’s daughter was contrary to Jesus’s mission at that time. She was not a Jew. Jesus says, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (verse 24). At first, He ignored her, but she persisted. Then He basically said no to her, but she still insisted. What was His reaction? Verse 28, “O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.” He did not say “O woman, great is your presumption, be careful not to tread on My sovereignty. I already told you no.”

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

In Mark 5:25–34, a woman got healed when she touched Jesus’s garment with a spoken word of faith. Verse 28, “For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be well.” Jesus did not even know who had touched Him or why, but He immediately knew that power had gone out of Him. She got healed by the healing power of Jesus coming forth from His body, through her faith, by her spoken word. Did she bypass His will? Did she bypass communication with Jesus? No! The healing power was there, just like it is today. It’s in the atonement. He has already communicated to us; she bypassed the asking.

With these three passages in mind: Together with the fact that Jesus was always teaching “be it unto thee according to thy faith,” **adding to this:** Jesus’s method of healing was the spoken word of faith, most of the time with the laying on of hands. **Adding to this:** We are joint-heirs with Christ called to follow in His steps (Romans 8:17; Galatians 3:29; 1 Peter 2:21).

Adding to this: He said in John 14:12 that we can do the same works that He did. We see this same pattern when He sent the twelve disciples forth (see Matthew 10:1–8), and the seventy forth (Luke 10:9), to go heal the sick and the diseased, and to raise the dead. They did not pray by asking. He gave them authority to heal. You see the same pattern in the book of Acts in the following passages: Acts 3:4–8, 5:12–16, 8:6–8, 9:17–18, 9:34, 9:40, 13:11, 14:8–10, 16:18, 19:11–16, 20:9–12, 27:21–26, 27:31, 28:8–9.

Adding to this: Jesus’s basic instructions in the prayer of faith are filled with the spoken word of faith (Mark 11:22–24).

Adding to this: God told Moses not to pray at the Red Sea but to speak unto the children of Israel to go forward and lift up his rod over the sea to divide it.

Adding to this: Elijah and Elisha were constantly using the spoken word of faith. This should exhort and encourage us in the faith, for miracles of healing; God said in James 5:17 to consider Elijah who was a man just like you and me, subject to like passions as we are. We can learn from their examples.

With all this in mind, it is clear that the leadership of the church today is shrinking back from faith. Leadership on a local

and national level is too afraid of violating God's sovereignty with their false humility and false submission to the will of God. When Elijah comes back, will they recognize him and his spoken words of faith (Malachi 4:5–6)? Many prayer situations in the Bible and in our lives do require a spoken word of faith. When the situation arises for a commanding faith, are we ready?

In 1990, I was walking down a New York City sidewalk with some other saints. We met a young man who was dying of AIDS in the advanced stage. We started talking to him about Jesus. The man soon gave his heart to Christ and was saved. Right after that, I said to him, "Do you believe God will heal you right now as we pray for you?"

He nodded his head yes.

We laid hands on him and prayed. The power of God hit him. His knees buckled. The healing power of God shot right through his body. We took the man to get something to eat. His face completely changed from depression to joy. He kept saying over and over again, "I feel brand-new. I just feel brand-new." A few days later, he went to the doctor to be checked for AIDS. They could not find a trace of it. He was completely healed.

God's Word has awesome power to create, and when we speak His Word, there is change. People are born again by the Word of God. They become new creations by the Word of God that is spoken, when they mix faith with that dynamic Word. That creative power of God's Word becomes effective to the sinner if he responds with action when the Christian speaks it.

On October 6, 2016, the eastern half of the state of Kansas was under a tornado watch from midafternoon to 9:00 p.m. Shortly after 4:30 p.m., a tornado was spotted on the ground southwest of Abilene, moving northeast toward Chapman where I live. As it continued on the ground and missed Abilene, they warned the towns of Enterprise and Chapman to get ready. Dickinson County, our county, was under a tornado warning until 5:30 p.m. The TV channel continued to report a current sighting of the tornado moving toward Chapman. I was in my basement but not in the tornado shelter.

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

Sometime around 5:00 p.m., the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said, “What are you doing just sitting here? Use your faith.” Then right after that, the anointing of God came upon me, so I stood up, pointed in the direction of the tornado, and said, “Tornado south of Abilene, I rebuke you in the name of Jesus and I command you to cease in the name of Jesus Christ.” There was no doubt in my heart when I spoke those words. From that point on, they could not find the tornado. Ten minutes later, they reported that the tornado had dissipated, so they lifted the tornado warning for Dickinson County ten minutes early at 5:20 p.m.

On May 25, 2016, at around 8:30 p.m., the national weather service reported that Chapman, Kansas, was about to take a direct hit by a category 4, half-mile wide, wedge-shaped, very dangerous tornado in just a few minutes. The sirens came on, and soon after that, it was reported on the radio that it had just torn up railroad tracks one mile west of Chapman. The report said, “This is unheard of by a tornado. It may be a category 5, so Chapman people, get ready!”

I was in my basement in the tornado shelter sitting on a chair, staring at the floor, feeling unable to pray. The only copy of my book was on a flash drive in the front pocket of my pants. I didn’t want to lose the flash drive. I felt that the book was far more important than the house but was somewhat frustrated because I was wearing sweatpants which had loose pockets.

As Christians in Chapman cried out earnestly to God to spare their little town, they had memories of the June 2008 category 3 tornado which destroyed much of the town. Then just a half mile from hitting us, God began to turn that beast to the southeast. A tornado tracker later reported that when it got close to Chapman, it started to do a lot of dancing. So the angels of God turned it to the southeast. It’s very rare for a tornado to travel in that direction. It just missed Chapman. But it was so close that for twenty minutes, they continued to report that it had gone over southeast Chapman—that’s my home; it happens to be the most southeast house.

The angels of God performed a miracle that night, but it wasn't because of my prayers. I had none. I thank God. And I also thank God for my brothers and sisters in the Lord who took care of me that night and preserved this book. What was the difference between my spiritual conditions that night compared to that of the October 6 experience? On May 25, I was drained because my two jobs overlapped in the spring, so I had been working overtime for weeks. But the main thing was I was not prayed up and fasted up. For weeks, I had been praying less, and I had stopped fasting in mid-April. So I had no faith that night, not the type that it takes to pray effectively against a beast that's about to tear my little town into shreds!

On October 6, it was a different story. Even though my two jobs also overlapped in the fall, I was prayed up and fasted up. In addition to that, October 6 was on a fast day! And so the confidence was there to speak to the tornado with no doubt in my heart!

When I pray for healing, sometimes I ask, but other times, I rebuke the sickness in Jesus's name. The Bible gives us the option, but the common practice in the acts of the apostles is the spoken word of faith. Spoken words of faith in the Bible are not isolated cases, like the Assemblies of God have portrayed. Go to www.ag.org and go to the Beliefs tab, click on Topics, and then click on Faith for Answered Prayer. Go to paragraph 3.

Casting out demons is almost always by a spoken word of faith in Jesus's name. The devil doesn't want us to have this authority in Christ. The equation is this: "Devil, I command thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her" (Acts 16:18). **It's essential to say "I" as in "I command." You have the authority. It's been given to you.** In Acts 19:15, the seven demons recognized Paul's authority in Christ. It's **you** that has to take authority over the powers of darkness and sickness in Jesus's mighty name. Remember, the apostles got rebuked sternly for not using the authority that had already been given them (Matthew 17:14–21).

But you have to be walking in holiness and righteousness to have this authority. To the extent that you are manifested died out to self, will you be operating in Christ's resurrection power.

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

God is not going to use someone who doesn't take up his cross and die to self. You can talk grace all day long if you want to, but you're not going to do away with this truth. People who abuse faith also abuse grace and neglect obedience. They usually go hand in hand.

There is a lot of big talk on grace today, but very little talk on faith, not the full counsel on faith, not the rightly divided Word on faith. There is a lot of general exhortation to faith and stories from the Old Testament but hardly any teaching on faith in God to do miracles of healing: healing of people, pets, fruit trees in your yard, crops in your field, and even bees in your beehive.

When Jesus touched people, the virtue of the life and healing power of God went forth from Him. This connection of the laying on of hands, together with the spoken word of faith, is how He healed. At other times, folks were healed without Jesus even touching them. So if we are walking with God and abiding in Jesus and lay hands on someone to pray for them, or even if we do not touch them, the virtue of the life and healing power of Jesus Christ should flow out from us. Jesus said in Mark 16:17–18, “And these signs shall follow those who believe...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

When people are healed through the prayers of Christians, it happens by the same methods and means that were demonstrated by Jesus in the gospels. Healing is by the life of God through the faith of God. We are followers of Him. Christians live by the faith of the Son of God (Galatians 2:16, 20). The faith that we have is His faith. We have the same faith that He has. Sometimes the Bible will call it **His faith**, “the faith of Christ.” But other times, the Bible will call it **our faith** (Colossians 1:4; 2:5; Ephesians 1:15; Philippians 2:17). It is still His faith, the faith of Christ. I'm talking about the nature and essence of it. But it is ours because it's been given to us. It now belongs to us.

The Bible speaks of our faith as our faith and also as Christ's faith. This is because of our relationship with Him. We are adopted into the family of God as a son, “For ye are all the sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ” (Galatians 3:26). Jesus said to us, “Heal the

sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons; freely ye have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8).

We shouldn't say “I was healed by faith” or “They got healed by faith” or “This person is a faith healer.” Also, it's not exactly accurate to say: “I was saved by faith.” We should say, “The Lord saved me” and “Jesus healed me.” People are saved and healed by grace. Faith is the spiritual mechanism and reality through which God's power to save and heal flows (Ephesians 2:8–10). Faith doesn't heal. Faith doesn't save. God saves. God heals. When Jesus taught the principle of faith, saying, “According to your faith be it unto you” (Matthew 9:29), He said this to the two blind men immediately after He touched their eyes. It was according to their faith in Jesus: His touch and His words.

The connection and relationship between faith and God is taught in the gospels and throughout the Bible. But there are four events in the gospels which could be misinterpreted by some. They are as follows:

- (1) The woman with the issue of blood for twelve years, who touched the garment of Jesus and was instantly healed, “For she said, If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be well” (Mark 5:28). Jesus said to her, “Daughter, thy faith hath made thee well. Go in peace, and be well of thy plague” (Mark 5:34). This event is described in Mark 5:25–34. The same account is also recorded in Matthew 9:20–22 and Luke 8:43–48.
- (2) Blind Bartimaeus receives his sight after crying out “Jesus, thou Son of David; have mercy on me” (Mark 10:47). Jesus said unto him, “Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee well. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus on the way” (Mark 10:52). This is described in Mark 10:46–52 and also recorded in Luke 18:35–43.
- (3) The woman who was a sinner that washed, kissed, and anointed Jesus's feet with ointment. He said to her, “Thy

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

sins are forgiven” (v. 48) and “Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace” (Luke 7:50). The context is Luke 7:36–50.

- (4) The ten lepers who “lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us” (Luke 17:13). They were healed by Jesus, but only one returned to give glory to God, falling down on his face at Jesus’s feet, giving him thanks (Luke 17:15–16). Jesus said unto him, “Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee well (Luke 17:19). Read Luke 17:11–19.

In all four cases, Jesus was speaking about their faith in terms of them demonstrating faith with humility, confession, and worship. They were focused and fixed on Jesus. Their faith was not in their faith but in Him to save and heal. Hebrews 11:1 says, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Jesus was referring to their faith as the channel through which salvation and healing flow. Faith is the means. Jesus is the object. Faith saved and healed only as a channel by which the blessings are received. Only Jesus saves and heals. Faith saved in practicality but not in actuality.

Hebrews 11:6 says, “But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” Faith has no power in itself. Even God needs more than just faith to create, save, and heal. He also needs power. And God most certainly has power. He is omnipotent, all-powerful. God Almighty upholds all things by the Word of His power (Hebrews 1:3). We as believers also have both the faith and the power by which to pray and see miracles.

The reason the faith of Jesus has power is because the God of all power is a faith God. He speaks with His faith and power. We speak with His faith and power. There is power in His words. There is power in our words when they are His Words!

Jesus did not heal only by faith, but by power also. We are commanded to heal by His faith and by His power. Therefore, all glory is from Him. We acknowledge all glory to Jesus. But make

no mistake, it is His will for us to partake of and enjoy His glory (Romans 2:10, 8:18; Ephesians 3:13; 1 Peter 1:8, 4:14, 5:1, 4; 2 Peter 1:3). It isn't even scriptural to say someone got healed by faith, even though they say it's Christ's faith because Jesus healed with His power and life. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). It's Christ in us, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). We have the Spirit of Christ in us. It's the life and power of Jesus and the faith which is by Him, of Him, and in Him that heals through our prayers (Acts 3:16).

We can quote any scripture for the purpose of teaching sound doctrine as well as expressing our experiences if it means the same thing that the Bible does and falls within the range of God's intended application. Jesus's statements about faith are easily understood by most anyone to include sovereign grace and the saving and healing power of Jesus Christ. Faith is the all-important means through which we receive from God. We, as Christians, should be allowed to use the same liberty in expression as the Bible.

There is a time to emphasize faith, and Jesus knew this. Faith will purify the soul from dead works. The authority of the Holy Spirit can say anything He wants as He speaks in scripture and through us. It's not our job to parse things but to be teachable to receive the spirit and intent behind the words. We have to address such things because of extreme teaching by ministers in these last days.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews speaks about faith the same way as Jesus. It declares what the saints of old accomplished by and through faith. But this was possible because of their faith's personal connection with their Lord. This is easily seen in Hebrews 11, and those four events in the gospels. In Acts 2:40, Peter said to the multitude of Jews, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." He had just finished preaching about Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Peter was appealing to the individual responsibility under the New Covenant the simplicity of faith in Jesus Christ and the call to repent and be baptized.

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:22, “[T]hat I might by all means save some.” Everybody knows that Paul can’t save anybody but that Jesus saves by using him, and that’s what Paul meant. The Holy Spirit takes liberty also, in other passages, to emphasis things which should not be taken out of context of the whole Bible. James 5:15 says, “The prayer of faith shall save the sick,” but immediately after that, it says, “and the Lord shall raise him up.”

James, in 5:13–18 is highlighting the importance of the prayer of faith and faith’s place in the arena of God’s kingdom. I will not quote them, but there are three more passages which show similar expressions. They are 1 Timothy 4:16, James 5:19–20, and Jude 23. Everything we do is by the grace of God and in His strength. All glory is to Him.

I was an altar counselor in Times Square Church for three years. In one case, a man said to me, “As soon as you touched me, I felt the power of God.” When my kids had a fever, I always rebuked it, like Jesus did in Luke 4:39. When I was with this church, I noticed I hadn’t seen a pastor’s wife for a long time. I asked my wife if she knew anything about it. She said, “Yes, she can’t come to church anymore because there’s pain in her side. She’s been to the doctor, but they don’t know what it is. She’s talked with Pastor Dave (David Wilkerson). He’s prayed for her. The pastors and staff are praying for her, but she’s not getting any better.”

This lady’s husband, a pastor, was about twenty-nine years old. He had lost his first wife of five years because of disease and had been married to this woman for just a few months. I attended their wedding. When I heard this news about her side, a holy anger came upon me, and I thought, *Oh devil, you’re going. I will see to it.*

I also realized that if I did not take charge of the situation, no one else would. A couple of days later, on a fast day, I went into a room in my house to pray for her. First, my prayer time consisted of two or two and a half hours on my face drawing near to God (James 4:7–8). Then, when I knew the time was right, I stood up and confronted the demon directly. As I commanded the demon to

come out of her, it was as real as if it were standing before me visibly. I spoke to the demon with great authority, with the certainty that it had to go now! It had no choice! I had knowledge that it was cast out instantly. It was not the word of knowledge. It was not the gift of faith. But rather, it was the measure of common faith that all believers have: the fruit of faith.

My faith for the pastor's wife had become so strong that it grew into knowledge: **the knowledge of faith**. Later on, it was reported to me that she was completely healed at that very same time! The aggressive pursuit of doing miracles for God is much more prevalent in the Bible than the church wants to admit. The spoken word of faith was the common way of getting things done for the kingdom in the book of Acts.

I developed three cysts on my body in 2008. I prayed, I asked, I rebuked—yet nothing happened. Seven months passed, then one afternoon, I just prayed with faith. I asked God to heal me. I did not use any type of spoken word, but when I asked God this time, **the gift of faith was there**. I just knew I was healed, and I was, instantly. This was the gift of faith, one of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10. It just came upon me at that time. So there are many ways God can work. Be open to all His ways.

The **checks and balances** of a pastor's teaching are his responsibility. But concerning faith, the fear of offending someone, has caused timidity instead of bold preaching. In a crisis, when a Christian's first thought and action is the EMS and not Jesus, something is wrong. I will save the testimony of God healing my injured eye for later. It's in chapter 35.

Congregations hang in a state of doubt and unbelief, and Jesus is asking the question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth" (Luke 18:8)? It's much easier to go with the flow of natural circumstances, but who will take a stand for God? The Bible says that faith works by love (Galatians 5:6).

Do you have a great love for God? If you do, it
will compel you to have great faith in God.

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

So what are we going to do with “faith”? Just let it lie dormant on the pages of the Holy Bible? Or are we going to pick it up and teach it, preach it, articulate it, and live it? How can the church say that they are praying in faith for healing when the pulpit ignores all of this teaching by Jesus, in the Gospels, on faith and answers to prayer? If the pastor never quotes the Lord concerning His instructions and promises, then how can they say they have faith? Faith comes by hearing the Word (Romans 10:17).

When that one good faith message was preached in my church, the speaker never apologized or qualified his strong statements of faith. And he never did point out the excesses of the “name it and claim it” bunch. If he had, he would have killed his message. Thus, the Word of God was able to do its work. Faith and joy, the joy of faith, arose in the hearts of the people. The theme of the message was: **“There was only one thing that caused Jesus to marvel, and it was the issue of faith.”** He marveled when He saw great faith (Matthew 8:10). And He marveled when He saw no faith (Mark 6:6). How do you want Jesus to see your faith?

As I said earlier, unanswered prayer should compel us to increase our faith and obedience as well as our understanding of the will of God. Faith and obedience are most important because there are a lot of scriptures about these as conditions for answered prayer. There are far less scriptures for meeting the condition of praying in the will of God. I’m talking about praying for anything. Psalm 37:4 and Romans 12:1–2 are the hinging point for all of this. Submission to God brings a revelation of His will, the submission of increasing our faith and obedience. **The knowledge and understanding of the will of God is gained by faith and obedience and study of scriptures.**

“Delight yourselves in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart” (Psalm 37:4). This promise, based upon the integrity of God’s Word, goes far beyond your needs. He’s talking about desires. Do you desire for that person to be healed when you pray? Then delight yourself in the Lord, 24/7. Psalm 37:4 doesn’t say He will give you whatever His will is. It says His will is to

give you the desires of your heart! Jesus repeated this offer in John 14:13–14.

Sad to say, there are far too many comments from the pulpits today concerning God’s will to heal. When prayer goes unanswered, the church majors in comments concerning God’s will and higher purpose, whereas the Bible majors in faith and obedience. If the church continues to pamper and babysit itself by not preaching the responsibility of faith and obedience, then God will continue to withhold healing, especially when they are blaming God and talking about anger toward God in a subtle, religious, almost justifiable way. I cannot overestimate the importance of the church focusing on the teaching of Jesus on faith for answered prayer in the four gospels. We need to get our theology straight from the Son of God, untwisted by the traditions and doctrines of men.

I’ve been in both camps, and I know for a fact it’s this theology that produces the most bitterness toward God. God has lifted His blessing; we reap what we sow. As a minister of God, all I ask is to say what Jesus says. The same people I hear preaching higher purpose, never preach faith and obedience, and it’s always God’s will to heal. Their concept of “healing in the atonement” has hardly made it off the pages of their position papers. Springfield’s agenda on faith is costing them hundreds of thousands of conversions to Christ, healings, and baptisms with the Holy Spirit worldwide.

When we get into the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, we will see that everything is ordained by God, including your prayers for healing. When you begin to see His sovereignty behind your prayers, your faith will increase for the answer, the answer being “yes” and “amen” in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 1:20).

Many who choose to lean toward Arminianism end up using God’s sovereignty in the wrong way. They use it to excuse their doubts and unbelief in God’s promises. The truth of predestination, when perceived correctly, increases a Christian’s faith for divine healing. God is not happy with what’s going on. He is offended with the theology of today.

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

Stories are told that plant seeds of doubt and unbelief in the heart of a congregation. A missionary goes to China and one month later contracts a disease, then dies and leaves his wealth to a good cause. This type of testimony insinuates that it was not God's will to heal because of the resulting benefit of the man's proceeds. But this is contrary to God's Word, which says, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick" (James 5:15).

"As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee" (Matthew 8:13).

"According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29).

"And all things, whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22).

"He heals all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:3).

Healing is in the atonement (Isaiah 53:4 and Matthew 8:16–17). The missionary's wealth was distributed because God's providence, goodness, and wisdom work despite doubts and unbelief in healing. You have to stay with the Bible, not a story. The Word promises healing. We have preachers of doubt and unbelief today, and they need to be rebuked.

There are only three cases in the entire Bible where saints, who were in good standing with God as far as we know, died of a sickness—Jacob, Elisha, and Rachel. Except for Jacob, the Bible doesn't tell us why they died. It just tells the story. It doesn't tell us how old two of them were, although Elisha had a long ministry during the reigns of four kings of Israel: Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Jehoash. These four reigns lasted for seventy years. Elisha appears to have had a full life with a complete ministry.

Rachel died while she was giving birth to Benjamin, the twelfth and last son to be born to Jacob. Rachel died without reaching full age. Jacob lived a full life, dying at age 147. But the sickness hardly had a say in the matter (Genesis 47:27 through 49:33). It was his time to die (Genesis 47:29, 48:21). Genesis 48:1 says he was sick. But he was well enough to give prophetic blessing to his twelve sons and two grandsons. As soon as he finished commanding them, he died (Genesis 49:33).

If a Christian gets sick, they shouldn't claim Elisha's experience or even Rachel's. They should ask for their healing, which is in the atonement. Search their hearts and lay hold of the promises of God and walk in holiness. I don't know why Elisha and Rachel died, but I do know what God says to me in His Word about healing. Job was healed (Job 42:10, 16). Hezekiah was healed (2 Kings 20:1–6). Epaphroditus was healed (Philippians 2:25–27).

We don't know exactly what Paul's thorn was. It is described in 2 Corinthians 12:1–10. The Scriptures indicate it was persecution. Right before Paul speaks about his thorn, he describes his hardships, giving us a long list of trials and afflictions. He never says anything about being sick. In fact, a sick man could not survive all this (2 Corinthians 11:23–33). But, nevertheless, I know what God says to me in His Word. He says, "Incline your ear unto my sayings, and it will be health to all your flesh" (Proverbs 4:20–22).

He says, "Obey Me, and I'll take all sickness out of the midst of thee" (Exodus 15:26, 23:25; Deuteronomy 7:15).

He says His Word heals me (Psalm 107:20). He says He heals all my diseases (Psalm 103:3). He says to ask "anything in My name, and I will give it unto you that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13). He says, "Delight yourself in me, and I will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). He says, "Speak to the mountain of sickness and disease, not doubting in your heart, and it shall be cast into the sea" (Mark 11:22–24).

Backsliders and sinners on the street will tell me they have faith in God. But in reality, they don't even know how to spell the word *faith*, spiritually speaking because they're not walking with God (James 2:18–20). Even the demons believe and tremble. These people may insist they have faith, even faith in God to heal. The church says this also. But their faith won't work because seeds of doubt have been sown in their hearts, causing unbelief and double-mindedness.

The earlier story implies it was not God's will to heal the missionary, which suggests it may not be God's will to heal you or anyone you pray for. The story has a strong emphasis on higher

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

purpose; it just assumes it. The same pastors who tell these stories are never faithful to preach faith for healing. This proves they are on shaky ground.

They may say positive things about healing from time to time, but for the most part, their messages cause double-mindedness (James 1:6–8). These preachers need to be rebuked because they are preaching doubt and unbelief instead of preaching the Word on miracles and healing. Their teaching is robbing the sheep of knowledge for divine health. It's a fulfillment of Ezekiel 34:1–10, a prediction of things to take place at the end of the age. This is also fulfilling Hosea 4:6, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," and Isaiah 5:13, "Therefore my people are gone into captivity because they have no knowledge."

Ezekiel 34:1–2: "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds: Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?"

Verse 3: "Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe yourselves with the wool; ye kill those who are fed, but ye feed not the flock."

Verse 4: "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost, but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them."

Verse 5: "And they were scattered because there is no shepherd; and they became food to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered."

Verse 6: "My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill; yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them."

Verse 7: "Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord."

Verse 8: "As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food to every beast of the field because there was no shepherd, neither did My shepherds

search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not My flock.”

Verse 9: “Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord.”

Verse 10: “Thus saith the Lord God: **Behold, I am against the shepherds**, and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock, neither shall the shepherds feed themselves anymore; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be food for them.”

The deeper truths of God set forth in the book of Job, concerning all levels of purpose in our trials, are not a call to the human spirit to retreat from aggressive faith in the promises of God. But to march on as soldiers of Christ, enduring hardships with joy, and to excel in faith, “calling those things which are not, as though they were” (Romans 4:17).

Hebrews 11:33–34 says “Who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of the aliens.”

Leaders of the church, as well as those in the congregations who have not been healed nor received answers to prayers, need to **take heed** as to what they say in church. They have actually been speaking doubt and unbelief. These people should be more concerned about their own faith and obedience rather than justifying and explaining why they didn’t see an answer. It’s a religious “blame God” game that they are playing and it’s a serious thing. **It’s time for repentance.**

Too much emphasis on your faith will cause you to have faith in your faith and not faith in God. Mark 11:22–24 starts with, “Have faith in God.” Being too concerned with faith and obedience, as conditions for answered prayer, can cause the believer to lose the simplicity of the faith. Childlike faith, seen in Matthew 18:3, which focuses on “It’s done,” “I’m saved,” and “I’m healed.” It should be manifested now because by Jesus’s blood, I am saved when I believe. By Jesus’s stripes, I am healed when I believe.

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

Faith and obedience should be balanced with grace. Your salvation, healing, and new life in Jesus Christ was purchased for you 2,000 years ago. Freely receive all that God paid for.

A theme which runs throughout this book is that grace, faith, and obedience go together. For the Christian, these are supposed to be joined together. People separate these; they are not separate. They don't oppose each other. People confuse them. All three work to energize and complement each other. You don't have to get God to act. He already acted 2,000 years ago. God caused you to be birthed into this world. He continuously acts and speaks. God is ready and willing to act again if you respond in faith and obedience. Just freely receive by grace, and His healing will flow. It's not an issue of obtaining more faith so you can be healed or receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit or love your neighbor or stay off alcohol. But it's a matter of using your faith, stretching your faith, and having your faith strengthened (Romans 4:20). Jesus taught the quality of faith. He also spoke on the quantity or amount of faith. He said if you have just a mustard seed of faith, small amount, you can do great things by God's power. When Jesus spoke of great faith, He was referring to its quality as well as its quantity.

The Lord spoke of little faith, no faith, faithless, according to your faith, if you have faith and doubt not, and where is your faith? His focus was on the quality of faith because every believer has been given the measure of faith (Romans 12:3). And that measure, even if it's as small as a mustard seed, can move mountains. In Mark 11:22–25, Jesus is teaching purified faith or pure faith, which has no doubt or unforgiveness.

Faith is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, so it grows, it's increasing, both in quality and quantity (Galatians 5:22). "Your faith growth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (2 Thessalonians 1:3). Faith grows with love. Faith grows as love grows. "Faith which worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6). Christians gain stronger faith as they mature. But that gain is still the original fruit of faith, which was given by God at conversion. It's actually the faith of Christ (Galatians 2:20) which can do the works of Christ!

Romans 10:17 says, “So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” The context is salvation, but this still applies after being born again because your faith grows and matures. Romans 12:6 speaks of the proportion of faith in the believer. Second Thessalonians 1:11 speaks of the work of faith with power. Titus 1:13 says to be sound in the faith.

When the Bible teaches faith, it first and foremost, instructs us about the purity of faith. Secondly, scripture explains to us about the amount of faith. Because of God’s mercy, faith will work through imperfect humans that are still immature. The danger is when Christians, and especially ministers, grow in the amount of faith, but not the purity of faith. The Bible speaks about this in Matthew 7:21–23 and 1 Corinthians 13:1–2. There are such ministers today. Faith can become mechanical. It may still operate without love. It’s possible for faith to operate without regard for the full character and message of Jesus Christ. Faith may still function outside of the will of the Father and knowing Jesus! But most of the time, faith doesn’t work when it’s not pure. That’s why there is so much unanswered prayer. Jesus is speaking to some in Word ministry: “Woe unto you! Repent! And purify your faith! You rich charlatans” (James 5:1–6).

When faith and obedience are not seasoned with grace, then pride and self-righteousness will come (Romans 12:3). It’s not an issue of you obtaining more faith so that you can be healed or forgive somebody or get the victory over lust. But it’s a matter of you purifying your faith, which was given to you by grace. **You have allowed impurities in your faith.** These are preventing your healing or anything that God wants to do in you! One of those impurities may be an overfocus and reliance on your own faith if you forget that it’s Christ’s faith in you. Also, don’t dwell on your obedience, forgetting it’s the life of Christ in you. This hinders grace! When God heals someone, technically, it’s grace healing; it’s by grace. Ephesians 2:8 says, “For by grace are ye saved through faith.” To be consistent, we should say the same thing about healing as well as any provision from God. By grace

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

are ye healed through faith. By grace are ye freed from addiction through faith.

Obedience and faith are very important, but grace is the doorway to God. And it's God's love, mercy, and compassion which opens that door of grace through Jesus Christ. If obedience and aggressive faith are not seasoned with grace and love, then your heart will condemn you, and you won't receive from God (1 John 3:17–23). This is true whether you are praying for yourself or for someone else, unless they have their own faith. You don't have to be perfect to see God heal those for whom you pray. Don't let your heart condemn you. Peter said in Acts 3:12 it's not "by our own power or holiness we had made this man walk."

He explains how this man got healed in verse 16. "And His name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know." Then Peter doubles up on grace. "Yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Even the faith that they exercised is grace. It's grace because it's a gift from God, and it's called the faith of Christ.

Ephesians 2:8–10 starts with grace and then showers faith and obedience with grace. In fact, Ephesians 2:1–10 and Titus 2:11, 3:3–7 explain the method of salvation, and these scriptures are dominated by grace. This should set anyone free from pride. If God heals a thousand people through your prayers, you have no reason to fall into the sin of pride. You are just doing your job. Your boast is in the cross. It's not about us getting anyone healed. It's about us yielding to the Holy Spirit to heal through us. The Holy Spirit heals them! When you lay hands on the sick, it's not that you have to work. It's God's life and power flowing through you which causes the miracle.

The name of Jesus is not some divine invocation. You are not persuading God to show up. He is a part of you. He lives in us. It's not all about power. It's about having the nature and character of Jesus in you to flow through you. Be led by God's character. You don't need a special leading. Jesus healed because people needed healing. He healed out of compassion. Follow Jesus. Your leading

is the fact that you see the sick. They need healing, and we have compassion as our life is filled with the presence of Jesus. And so we pray for others with the faith of Christ by commanding the sickness to leave in Jesus's name.

Several times, Jesus healed **all** the people who were there; multitudes were healed. He never dealt with a generational curse before healing them. He never made sure they were all saved before healing everyone. Jesus didn't check to see if people had enough faith to be healed. Not one person had to remain sick because of higher purpose. And the Lord never waited in case there was sin in any of them, which might prevent their healing. Problems in your life are not going to stop Jesus from healing you and those for whom you pray. Don't let your untrained conscience condemn you when God has not condemned you. Only let the Holy Spirit convict you. Pursue holiness and be free to take authority over the devil who is oppressing people. All sickness and disease is directly or indirectly caused by the devil.

Acts 10:38 says, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him."

Christians are followers of Jesus. We are supposed to follow His example. We should see all sickness and disease as our enemy. The church in the Acts of the Apostles followed Jesus by doing what He did.

And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, Insomuch that they brought the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them who were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one. (Acts 5:14–16)

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

Look at the story in Acts 28:7–10. Paul didn't preach salvation to them first before he prayed for their healing, but yet all were healed.

Don't restrict yourself in praying for healing. Don't let any "sacred cows" of false religious beliefs keep you from seeing God work miracles through you. You don't even have to always ask permission to pray for someone. Jesus didn't ask permission from the man who was possessed by demons (Matthew 8:28–32). Jesus healed people through the faith of a third party. And He did it for the third party as well as the person being healed (Matthew 15:28, 17:14–18; Mark 5:22–23, 41; Luke 7:2–3, 9–10). Many times, Jesus healed by simply taking the initiative. **There was no request from anybody** (Mark 3:1–5; Luke 7:12–16).

Healing and deliverance are the children's bread, daily bread for God's born-again children (Matthew 15:21–28). But that does not mean God excludes the unsaved from being healed and delivered. Jesus cast the demons out of a man, and after that, he was in his right mind and wanted to follow Jesus (Mark 5:15–19). Bread means it is ours. We have access. Jesus has made full provision for it. Jesus paid for healing and salvation for all people who will receive.

God will move upon a sinner and heal them in a single instant! The goodness of God leads a person to repentance (Romans 2:4). Both sinners and saints enjoy the sunshine and the rain. God is abundant in mercy. There were many instances in the Old Testament where God healed the heathen. Think about it. Start in Genesis. And that was before Jesus took those stripes. Think about how much more it would be after the cross! Before the cross, when the heathen mob came to arrest Jesus, Peter took out his sword and cut off the right ear of an unbeliever. Then Jesus touched his ear and healed him (John 18:10–11; Luke 22:5–10).

The New Testament teaches that it's easier for crowds to receive healing when faith is present, but it's not a requirement. Jesus told people to only believe, which is what He wants to see. He always directed them to faith. When God gives instructions to the Church, He says to let the sick person call for the elders to pray

(James 5:14). This shows that the person has at least some faith. In a church service or on the street, when a Christian or a minister sees that a person has faith to be healed, it encourages them and quickens faith to pray for miracles. Like with Paul and the lame man in Acts 14:8–10, you notice Paul gave a command. He did not pray by asking God to heal the man. Paul had the life of God in him to exercise authority, and, “Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked” (Acts 14:10). We can give commands like that also.

Many in ministry today use an event that is recorded in the gospels as an excuse to not obey the full commission to heal the sick. These ministers think their hands are tied if the person being prayed for has no faith. They don’t realize that they can have faith for someone else. This event is in three gospels (Matthew 13:53–58; Mark 6:1–6; Luke 4:16–32). They make way too much out of Matthew 13:58, which says, “And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.”

Mark 6:5 renders it, “And He could there do no mighty work, except that He laid His hands upon a few sick folks, and healed them.” There are many things to take note of in this passage. First of all, read the account in Luke where the people tried to kill Jesus, and then notice what He said to them. This was in Nazareth (all accounts say Nazareth), His hometown. The Lord was not respected there as a prophet. People were offended at Him. This was a small town. Not much of a crowd gathered to hear Him, and not many wanted to be healed. There was a bad atmosphere. But as many as He laid hands on to heal, they were all healed. Jesus marveled because of their unbelief (Mark 6:6). He said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and in his own house” (Mark 6:4). In this case, it was not just that the people had terrible unbelief, but they also had contempt for Jesus. They persecuted Him. Most people of Nazareth rejected the healer and, thus, did not receive miracles.

Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is a description of the sacrificial, substitutional punishment and death of Jesus Christ for the sin of the world. His Atonement for our sins also included sickness and dis-

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

ease. Isaiah 53:4 states in the King James Bible, “Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” The Hebrew word for “griefs” means physical sickness and disease, and is translated as such, elsewhere in the Old Testament. It should have been translated this way in Isaiah 53:4. The Hebrew word for “sorrows” means physical pain. It is translated as pain, in other scriptures of the Old Testament, and should be in Isaiah 53:4. Verse 5 confirms that physical healing is in the atonement, by stating, “[A]nd with His stripes, we are healed.”

Matthew quotes Isaiah 53:4 in Matthew 8:17 and applies it to literal physical healing (Matthew 8:16). “And healed all that 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). Isaiah is describing the atonement, which is stripes with a whip that would produce blood, the blood caused by the cross, and the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Taken literally, Matthew 8:17, as well as every single time Jesus healed someone, it was a fulfillment of His atoning work. Whatever Jesus produced in His life He also produced at the cross. Just before He raised Lazarus from the dead, Jesus said “I am the resurrection” (John 11:25). God healed in the gospels, based upon the power of Christ’s future work at the cross. In God’s eyes, it was done, predetermined. The cross was in the heart of God from the foundation of the world. How could His atoning work not affect our physical body? Of course it would benefit the Christian’s body! We see in the gospels how important our bodies are to Jesus.

Our healing was paid for by Jesus’s stripes and crucifixion, already given to every person to receive, just like salvation. First Peter 2:24 says this in past tense, “by Whose stripes we were healed.” In the Old Testament, they were looking ahead to the cross. We are looking back. The ultimate healing of our bodies will be when we get a new resurrection body. But until then, because of His love and compassion, God heals as a sign of the coming resurrection. Jesus bore our diseases at the whipping post and the cross

already, so don't let the enemy keep you sick! Study scripture, meditate, confess, and command healing for yourself and others.

Some ministers teach the error of separating Jesus's stripes from His work on the cross. They teach that physical healing was paid for at the whipping post when Jesus was beaten with stripes, but salvation was paid for on the cross. This belief is wrong. Isaiah's prophecy of the atonement of Jesus Christ, in Isaiah 52:13–53:12, does not separate these. It doesn't speak of two events with two purchases. It teaches one event with many aspects and purchases for the believer. This false doctrine says that healing was not paid for on the cross but by Jesus's stripes only. Their focus is on Isaiah 53:5 and 1 Peter 2:24, which say, "By His stripes we were healed and are healed."

It is perfectly good to focus on these scriptures and confess them. But it is not theologically sound to place limitations on these verses when the scripture expands the application of healing to the Atonement. This incorrect doctrine minimizes the price that Jesus paid to provide for our healing and also for our salvation.

The Bible teaches that the atonement for our salvation and healing involves all things in Isaiah 52:13–53:12. Isaiah 53:5 says, "But He was **wounded** for our transgressions, He was **bruised** for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." The **wounding** and the **bruising**, both with the whip and the cross, as well as the mistreatment and physical affliction that Jesus received during the day of the crucifixion, would all be included in the price that He paid to purchase our salvation and healing. If the crown of thorns and the spitting in His face wasn't necessary to fully redeem us, then the Father would not have allowed it!

Surely, His blood was shed by the thorns and by the whip. Verse 5 speaks of salvation before it speaks of healing. Verse 8 says, "[F]or the transgression of My people was He stricken." Jesus was stricken with the whip, the nails on the cross, and the thorns on His head. They hit Him on the head! In verse 10, we see the bruising was necessary for Him to be an offering for sin. Isaiah 52:14–15 says, "As many were astounded at Thee—His visage

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men—So shall He sprinkle many nations.”

The brutalities described in the gospels are seen in Isaiah as he describes the Lord’s appearance as shocking, obviously referring to His stripes. In this context, Isaiah says, “So shall He sprinkle many nations” referring to blood atonement. Therefore, this false teaching also minimizes the price Jesus paid to provide salvation! Ironically, many of these same ministers wrongly maximize the price Christ paid after His death. They teach the heresy that Jesus died spiritually and suffered in hell.

Concerning healing by Jesus’s stripes and by His blood on the cross, what did Peter say in Acts 3:16? He said, “And His name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong.” Did he mean “His name” refers only to Jesus’s stripes and not the cross?? Of course not! Jesus’s name represents both. The Lord’s name is connected to His full experience, work, and accomplishment at Calvary. It’s perfectly scriptural to say, “By Jesus’s stripes, I was healed” because twice, the Bible clearly attributes His stripes to our healing. I don’t want to discourage people from making this confession of faith. I do it myself all the time. But this biblical confession of faith includes the cross. It does not exclude it. “I was healed by Jesus’s stripes” is a confession of faith that represents healing in the atonement of Jesus Christ.

The Assemblies of God position papers page on “Faith for Answered Prayer” appears to be very balanced and right on target, but it’s not because it doesn’t bridge the gap between aggressive faith and the sovereignty of God. It just leaves us hanging in confusion by indicating that there are exceptions to the promises of God. This discourages biblical faith. The topic of “Faith for Answered Prayer” deserves more than just one page to explain this important truth.

Paragraph 4 of the Assemblies of God “Faith for Answered Prayer” states:

Sometimes when prayers aren’t answered as one request, other zealous believers com-

ment, “You didn’t have enough faith” or “You need to increase your faith.” But to make such statements is as futile as to say “Stop being sick.” This gives emphasis on faith in faith itself rather than faith in God. He and He alone is to be the object and focus of our faith.

What is wrong with saying I did not have enough faith or my faith wasn’t strong enough? Or I wasn’t really walking in obedience? Is that so difficult? Is that unscriptural? Is that somehow a danger to having faith in faith itself, rather than faith in God? It all depends on your full beliefs. All truth in the heart of a Christian is calculated into their concept of faith. Whether or not one is neglecting faith, abusing faith, or has sound biblical faith completely depends on the entire teaching of the minister or organization.

In addition to this, the position paper fails to mention what Jesus says about faith. He tells people they need more faith! We follow His example. Jesus said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to me” (Matthew 17:17). Jesus said, “Because of your unbelief; for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Move from here to yonder place; and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible unto you” (Matthew 17:20). Does this passage teach it’s an issue of God’s sovereignty or an issue of not having enough Faith?

Our Lord emphasizes the importance of the believer’s faith! Jesus said, “O ye of little faith” (Matthew 6:30). “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel” (Matthew 8:10). “O ye of little faith” (Matthew 8:26). “Thy faith hath made thee well” (Matthew 9:22). “According to your faith, be it unto you” (Matthew 9:29). “Oh thou of little faith, why did thou doubt” (Matthew 14:31)? “O woman, great is thy faith” (Matthew 15:28). “O ye of little faith” (Matthew 16:8). “If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea,

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

it shall be done. And all things, whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” (Matthew 21:21). “How is it that ye have no faith” (Mark 4:40). “Daughter, thy faith hath made thee well” (Mark 5:34). “Thy faith hath made thee well” (Mark 10:52). “He shall have whatever he saith: (Mark 11:23). “Whatever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24). “Where is your faith” (Luke 8:23). “Oh ye of little faith” (Luke 12:28). “If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it should obey you” (Luke 17:6). “Thy faith hath made thee well” (Luke 17:19). “That thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:32). “And be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27). “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed” (James 1:6). “Be not afraid, only believe” (Mark 5:36). Lord I believe: help thou mine unbelief” (Mark 9:24). “These signs shall follow them that believe...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:17–18). “who for awhile believe, and in time of testing fall away” (Luke 8:13). “Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made well” (Luke 8:50). “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe” (Luke 24:25). “How can ye believe, who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only” (John 5:44)? “How shall ye believe My words?” (John 5:47) “Ye also have seen Me, and believe not” (John 6:36). “I say the truth, why do you not believe Me” (John 8:46). “Repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:5). “And being not weak in faith” (Romans 4:19). “But was strong in faith, giving glory to God” (Romans 4:20).

A well-known minister once said, “Nobody has more faith for healing than I do. I was going to go empty the hospitals! So don’t tell me I’m missing God on faith for healing!” Yet, he never would preach the same type of faith that Jesus did. He stayed away from all scripture regarding faith for answered prayer. Instead, he preached a general trust message, leaning heavily on the sovereignty of God. When a member of the congregation shared the Jesus kind of faith, he shut that down immediately. He took the

microphone from her and said, “Now we’re not going to get into this. Everyone was healed.”

A young minister of the Assemblies of God preached on healing and said, “Oh, I would never tell anyone they need more faith.” But this is exactly what Jesus told people all through the gospels: that they needed more faith! How blind can a minister possibly be? Who is doing this to him?

What is so difficult about admitting a lack of faith? A ministry is wrong when putting everyone’s faith, especially their own, on a pedestal as too personal to examine. It’s an untouchable idol in the church. This is where the devil wants them because to fix a problem, we need to first identify it.

The believer’s mindset should be a bold confession in faith of everything that God’s Word says about a subject and a continued persistence to see the answer manifested (Matthew 7:7, 15:27; Luke 18:1–8). Just stay with the Word. Ask, confess, and persist. Stand on a word of faith, followed by a positive confession and persistence. We don’t demand of God, command the devil. Rebuke anything that is contrary to God and His kingdom. For example, I command in Jesus’s name, “Depression go!” Also, “Cancer, I command you to leave now, in Jesus’s name!”

Jesus said we can speak to the mountain to be cast into the sea, and it will obey us. A command is to order or dictate. It’s an official exercise of authority and power to rule or to determine the power to compel obedience. It’s to exercise a dominating influence over. When addressing the kingdom of darkness, we are to exercise dominion, to demand what Jesus suffered to give us.

Whole books have been written on the same topic as this chapter, “Faith for Answered Prayer,” with an emphasis on healing, as do the gospels. There is only so much I can say in one section. But I highly recommend the following books which correspond to my teaching.

Healing the Sick by T. L. Osborn.

Christ the Healer by F. F. Bosworth.

A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

The Power of the Positive Confession of God's Word by Don Gossett & E. W. Kenyon.

Ever Increasing Faith by Smith Wigglesworth.

F. F. Bosworth is correct in his answer to the question, "Would God ever chasten a Christian with sickness?" His answer is yes. Others may rule out that possibility. I deal with this topic in my chapter on chastisement. The book on *Positive Confession* is amazing; I read it twice in 2018. I have heard about the authors of the first three books for about forty years, but I hadn't read any of their material until 2018. Their beliefs confirm mine about faith and answered prayer. In 1980, I began reading Smith Wigglesworth's books. Most of this chapter of my book was written during 2014.

Concerning the full scope of Christian truth, I'm not aware of any doctrine preached by Wigglesworth, Bosworth, or Gossett which differs from my beliefs in this book. Osborn and I don't believe the same on women in ministry, the wife's role in marriage, and the doctrine of chastisement. Kenyon and I disagree on much theology. We part company on the fundamental errors of the Word of Faith Movement, which will be listed below and explained in chapters 7, 8, 9, and 17. All of the above, including any Wigglesworth book, are excellent.

The eight fundamental errors of the Word of Faith Movement are listed below.

1. Jesus on the cross died spiritually, and became literal sin. Then He went to hell, and later was born again.
2. Man is a spirit being.
3. Only the spirit of man is born again, not the soul.
4. The Holy Spirit inhabits only the spirit of the Christian.
5. At conversion the spirit of man is not redeemed but is replaced with another spirit.
6. The saints before the cross were not born again. They were spiritually dead.

RANDY GINGRICH

7. God never chastens a Christian with sickness, no matter how serious the sin may be.
8. This movement has abandoned the traditional biblical role of women in the church and home. These leaders have embraced the women's liberation agenda that contradicts Scripture.