

Should Christians expect to be healed?

"If anyone could tell you the shortest, surest way to happiness and perfection, he must tell you to make it a rule to yourself to thank and praise God for everything that happens to you. For it is certain that whatever seeming calamity happens to you, if you thank and praise God for it, you turn it into a blessing..." - William Law, English clergyman

"I thank God for my handicaps, for through them I have found myself, my work and my God" Helen Keller

There is much confusion among Christians today about healing. Many believe that because they have been born again, then their birthright is perfect physical health.

Let's **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."** (2 Timothy 2:15)

Moses was healthily, why not me?

We read in the Bible **"... Moses** was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his **eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."** (Deut 24:7).

Wow! We say to ourselves, "Why can't I have perfect health like Moses." So we attend many healing services, participate with world famous TV `healers', repeat all the `health' scriptures we can, pray, cry out to God, fast, strike deals with God (you know the ones - `I'll serve you all my life etc etc if you heal me') - **but we don't get healed! Why not?**

Why was Israel given perfect health?

Very simply, the Jew was under a **covenant** with God. In Deuteronomy chapter 30 we read that if Israel kept their side of the bargain, God would bless them with health and wealth.

What is the difference between a covenant and a testament?

A **covenant** is a two-sided agreement and
a **testament** is a one-sided blessing.

Aren't Christians under the new covenant?

No, but they come under the **new testament**. (1Cor 11:25; Matt 26:28). For example, when a person dies, their last will and testament is read out. Generally speaking, relatives are blessed with money and goods as gifts and these can't be taken away from them.

When Jesus died, his testament was also `read out'. His shed blood paid for mans' sin and if you will believe on him, you can receive eternal life. Health and wealth are never

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promised to the Christian and nowhere in the Bible does God say he's made a covenant to this effect.

Old versus new testament

A testament can't be in force until the testator dies (Hebrews 9:16). The Jew was under the old testament with the blood of their testators being bulls, goats and sheep. Jesus Christ's shed blood, puts the believer under the new testament.

Who then is under the new covenant? In reading Hebrews 8:8 we see "... Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a **new covenant with the house of Israel** and with the house of Judah:"

God will make another covenant with the nation of Israel, the new covenant, and this **will** happen in the soon coming seven year tribulation (Jer 31:31; Heb 8:9-13)

But aren't Christians spiritual Israel? No, this is another error that comes from misinterpreting Romans 2:28-29. Christians wrongly say "I've been circumcised in the heart so that means I'm a spiritual Jew." This is not correct. The apostle Paul is addressing the Jew here and is saying that a true Jew is circumcised in the heart not just the body.

Summary:

| Mosaic Covenant | New Testament |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| The promise of health and wealth | No promise of health and wealth |
| No promise of eternal security | The promise of eternal security |

So what's all this mean?

Simply, Christians can cause themselves much pain and heartache in attempting to claim the promises of healing, health and wealth that were given only to the Jew.

What about the versewith his stripes we are healed"?

Dear reader, this verse of Isaiah 53:5, has caused much grief and agony for sick Christians than any other. Why? The healing spoken of here, is the **healing from sins** and not physical healing. Turn to 1Peter 2:24 and confirm the meaning "Who his own self **bare our sins** in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto **righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.**"

If we would judge ourselves

However, in 1Cor 11:25-32 God sets out the conditions for being under the new testament. While being promised eternal security, Christians are warned. God says "**For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged** i.e. become weak, sickly and die (fall asleep)."

Do Christians bring their own sicknesses on themselves?

According to what we've just read, this can happen and Satan is not to blame in these cases. As unpalatable as it sounds to many Christians, many sicknesses and diseases have simply come as a result of not judging themselves. Furthermore, their diets and unhealthy lives can also bring on disease and sickness as well.

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Paul had a `thorn in the flesh'

He did, but he never blamed satan for it. There was particular reason that God blessed Paul with a physical illness. **"...lest I should be exaltedI besought the Lord thrice... I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."** (2Cor 12:7,8,9). Paul knew he was under the new testament and this didn't guarantee health or wealth. It was to God's glory that Paul had this condition.

What about the multi-billion dollar industry of the famous TV/faith/charismatic healers?

Speaking plainly, many are frauds, super salesmen or slick con-artists. Why, with genuine healing powers, they would roll in untold millions of dollars with a few visits to some geriatric homes and hospitals.

The rest are merely well-intentioned, blind guides (Matt 15:14) who can't or refuse to 'rightly divide' God's word when it comes to physical healing.

Mighty saints of days gone by

Are men and women of today more spiritual than the following saints? Tyndale (prison sickness), Elliot (lifetime sick), Crosby (blind), Knox (lifetime sick), Bradbury (TB), Toplady (TB), Doddridge (TB), Adams (TB), Bunyan (disease), McCheyne (lung), Brainard (lung) and Natts (acute physical suffering).

Why wouldn't God heal them?

Only he knows, but like Paul, we can get our 'attitude' right. He says "My grace is sufficient for thee: for **my strength is made perfect in weakness.** Most gladly therefore **will I rather glory in my infirmities,** that the **power of Christ may rest upon me.** (2 Cor 12:9)

Can you pray for health? Of course!

Pray according to God's will. Look up the following - Luke 5:12 and 1John 5:14. We may not understand God's purposes regarding our health, but we can take comfort in the fact that the Judge of all the earth shall do right (Genesis 18:25).

Dear Reader

If you have Calvary's healing from sin, you've got everything! True, our sins are forgiven, but the legacy is physical death as `The wages of sin is death." (Rom 6:23). Until we have resurrected bodies, all men will continue to grow old and die. But God says **"...though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."** (2Cor 4:16). Can you praise him for that?

Will you even go so far as **"Giving thanks ALWAYS for ALL things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;"** (Ephesians 5:20)?

By Harley Hitchcock.