



The Hindering of Our Healing!

What is hindering you from being healed?

Paul mentioned a, “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor 12:7). More people have been pricked by Paul’s thorn than any other thorn in the history of mankind! It is actually ironic since the Lord told Paul, “it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks” (Acts 26:14). Many believe that God gave Paul his “thorn in the flesh!” What is the truth?

Why do we even care? How could Paul’s thorn of two thousand years ago possibly impact Christians of today? Because of the prevailing teaching about Paul’s thorn, we are forced to answer the question, “Should Christians claim the *healing capacity* of Jesus’ sacrifice equally as much as they claim its *saving power*? After all, if Jesus didn’t heal Paul’s infirmities, He certainly may not heal our illnesses!”

Should Christians expect the grace of the cross to bring about healing in their bodies when sick? Perhaps Peter overstated Jesus’ healing power when he wrote of two main aspects of Jesus’ crucifixion, “Who his own self (1) *bare our sins* in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: (2) *by whose stripes ye were healed*” (1 Pet 2:24).

The Bible teaches that Jesus died that we might obtain grace!

So what are the various aspects of that Grace? The Bible teaches that there are five separate tangible results which we should expect through the Grace of Jesus Christ; the five aspects are, (1) forgiveness of sins; (2) healing in our bodies; (3) deliverance from the evil one; (4) prosperity in our finances; and (5) protection from evil!

The Hebrew word for Jesus, “*Jeshua*,” means, “God is Salvation!” Likewise, the Greek root word for “saved” & “salvation,” is “*sozo*” which means deliverance or to be set free. Salvation is a *total complete setting free in the mind, soul and body!*

Jesus alone provides this complete salvation, “Neither is there *salvation* in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12), no, not even your name! Put your name in the blank of the next sentence.

_____ can not save himself/herself! Salvation comes only through the saving Grace of Jesus Christ, “And if by grace, then is it no more of works” (Rom 11:6)! Therefore, the following “law” is Biblically proper:

“The Law of Human Sufficiency:” **Jesus + Nothing = Everything!**
Jesus + Something = Nothing!

So, how do we receive that salvation or “*total complete setting free in the mind, soul and body*” from Jesus? We realize that Jesus does everything and that our works result in nothing! So, is there *anything* that we are supposed to do, “if thou shalt *confess with thy mouth* the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe in thine heart* that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom 10:9). We humans have a two-part responsibility in the process of salvation: (1) confess with our mouth; and (2) believe in our hearts!



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Healing too? Really!

It sounds as if this “total complete setting free in the **mind, soul and body**” includes healing in my flesh! Jesus experienced three forms of bleeding in His body: (1) He experienced a flow of blood when the crown of thorns were smashed down on His head (*this represents healing of the mind* (“*be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind*” (Rom 12:2)); (2) He experienced a flow of blood each time He was pierced: (a) in the hands (b) in the feet (c) on His side (*this represents the blood atonement for our sins* (“*this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*” (Matt 26:28); and (3) He experienced a flow of blood each time He received beatings with the cat of nine tails (*this represents healing of the body* “*with his stripes we are healed*”(Isa 53:5)).

Jesus experienced all of the major problems that mankind knows! Isaiah writes, “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not” (Isa 53:3). As a result of His rejection, Jesus went to the Cross and became the atonement for all human sin! However, the remission of sin is not the only reason that He suffered. He also suffered under several severe beatings prior to His crucifixion! His several beatings consisted of 39 separate lacerating floggings across His back! These beatings severely broke open the skin and flesh on His back and caused a great deal of bleeding! Isaiah described these beatings several hundred years before Jesus’ time, “Surely he hath borne our **griefs** (*kholee* – sickness), and carried our **sorrows** (*mechol* – pains): yet we did esteem him **stricken, smitten** of God, and afflicted” (Isa 53:4). During Isaiah’s time, all sickness and illness was considered to be the direct result of mankind’s fall that took place in the Garden of Eden!

Realize, before Christ even went to the cross He was beaten multiple times with a “cat of nine tails” consisting of 39 separate strokes! Interestingly, medical scientists claim that every major disease falls under one of 39 major categories within the human body!

Scripture teaches that every time they tried to kill Jesus Christ during His ministry they could not do it! Yet, in the garden of Gethsemane His sweat became as great drops of blood! The prince of the world had nothing in Jesus; yet, Jesus began to take on all the sins of the world! Just like on the Day of Atonement, every sin of all of the people passed onto the Goat! In the garden, Jesus began to feel the weight of all of mankind’s sin! He said to the Father, “if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matt 26:39).

We all know that when sickness comes we get nauseous, feverish, and achy! Through his sacrifice, Jesus stamped out sickness and sin, “Himself **took our infirmities**, and **bare our sicknesses**” (Matt 8:17), and, “the blood of Jesus Christ his Son **cleanseth us from all sin**” (1 John 1:7)! Jesus took a beating for our healing! Jesus did not just suffer the weight of the world; “he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and **with his stripes we are healed**” (Isa 53:5)! Since Jesus has already paid the price; our healing is assured!

We are admonished to endure hardness or demonic persecution for the word’s sake, “endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (2 Tim 2:3). We are never told that we need to endure illness! The Lord’s Supper teaches us that if we understand or discern Jesus Christ’s sacrifice we will be healed. Paul wrote of those, “not discerning the Lord's body. 30 **For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep**” (1 Cor 11:29-30).



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The Europeans practice various forms of cell therapy! This means that doctors have learned how to use the cells of animals to heal those same cells in humans. For example a calf's liver is used to induce healing in the human liver; and animal heart cells are used to induce healing in the human heart. They have learned that the cells of calves and lambs especially the liver, heart and other organs, when injected into humans can induce healing! The US pharmaceutical industry has blocked cell therapy from the US!

Interestingly, on the first Passover, God instructed the Israelites to eat all of the LAMB! When the children of Israel ate the lamb they were supernaturally healed and they all walked out of Egypt!!!! The Bible teaches that the aged and the decrepit all walked out of Egypt! They ate the brain, the heart, the liver, and the kidneys! All of the Lamb's body was eaten and caused healing to every one of the Israelites who were about to leave Egypt!

Not discerning the body of Christ leaves many in a sickened condition! This happens because they don't understand Christ's sacrifice, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, *ye do shew the Lord's death till he come*" (1 Cor 11:26). How does our taking of the bread and wine show the Lord's death? What specifically about his death heals us?

- The thorns in His head released the *healing of our mind* or mental things we suffer!
- The stripes from the beating on His back released our *physical body healing*!
- The piercing of His hands, feet and side released the *blood of atonement for our sins*!

We must discern the whole body of Jesus Christ!!! We all want to experience the salvation available through Jesus' grace! However, his sacrifice imparts other benefits also, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him" (1 Cor 1:4-5). When we are sick we are specifically told that we will be healed as we, "call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up" (James 5:14-15)!

God tells us concerning our pitiful conditions, "I, even I, am he that blot out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. 26 Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified" (Isa 43:25-26). We need to realize that God is challenging us to "put me (*Him*) in remembrance!" He actually tells us more than that; we are also admonished to, "declare thou!" This means that when we are in sin or sickness we are to put the Lord in remembrance of our covenant with Him and that He has promised through Jesus Christ to forgive and to heal us! A sample declaration is found in the book of Joel, "let the weak say, I am strong" (Joel 3:10), meaning that when we are sick (*weak*) we are to proclaim and declare our health through Jesus Christ our Lord! The Psalmist teaches us that God equates the forgiveness of sins and *healing*, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps 103:3). This is a rock solid promise from God if we will but proclaim it and believe it! When we proclaim God's promise through His word regarding our healing, God responds, "Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses. He sent his word, and healed them" (Ps 107:19-20). God hastens his word, "for I will hasten my word to perform it" (Jer 1:12). Our job in affliction is to declare God's word, "But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth" (Deut 30:14).



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Salvation gets us into Heaven; but we have a life to live now! Christians are never admonished to suffer anything except persecution, “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall

suffer persecution” (2 Tim 3:12). Paul suffered persecution continually! The source of his suffering was a “thorn in the flesh!” However, **Paul did not suffer from any illness!**

Various HUMAN Reasonings Regarding Paul’s Thorn in the Flesh!

Many say that God was the author of Paul’s “thorn in the flesh!” We have often heard “religious” statements such as, “God knew that Paul needed to be kept humble, So He gave Paul a “thorn in the flesh!” But did God really give Paul this problem? The Bible Study sections entitled, “**What Paul’s Thorn in the Flesh was not!**” and “**What Does God Give the Christian?**” will thoroughly resolve this aparent “uncertainty.”

Other human forms of reasoning come from “scholars” who all claim that they know exactly what Paul’s, “thorn in the flesh” was! However, they do not agree with each other. Here are the four most well-known “diagnoses” of Paul’s “thorn in the flesh:” (1) Paul had some type of an eye disorder as proof of his difficult time in writing his epistles; (2) Paul had an unconverted wife who created an impediment at his every turn; (3) Paul’s thorn was a physically short stature; (4) Paul had a hunch back! All of these and any other hypotheses that you may hear are all man-made! They all seem plausible; the only problem is that they are not the Bible truth; rather they are man-made theories!

Indeed, Paul was blinded on the road to Damascus. However, Ananias prayed for Paul and he was **healed**, “he received sight forthwith!” (Acts 9:18) There are no examples where Jesus healed, yet, left the person flawed in his health. Since Paul was a pharisee he probably once had a wife; however, when he wrote 1 Cor 7:8, he was unmarried! Paul could not have been a hunchback or dwarf according to Lev 21:20.

Still others say, “Nobody knows what Paul’s thorn was; nor will any man ever know before the resurrection!” However, this also is not true. We do have a Biblical explanation of Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” which we shall see in a later section.

What Paul’s Thorn in the Flesh was not!

Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” was certainly not a literal thorn! Paul’s expression was intended to be taken figuratively! However, we need to learn what the figurative expression, “thorn in the flesh” is in Biblical parlance. Have you ever heard someone say, “That (*person, place or thing*) is a pain in the neck!” In practically every case they do not intend to convey that their physical neck experiences pain as a result of contact with the (*person, place or thing*); rather, they are using the expression, “pain in the neck” to put across the concept that they experience a snare or a vexation of the spirit as a result of contact with that thing.

What was Paul’s Thorn in the Flesh?

What is the Bible definition of a “thorn in the flesh?” You will soon realize that Biblical “thorns” announce two distinctive characteristics: (1) they could and should have been “driven out;” and (2) they are problems that have become a snare and a vexation of spirit. Let’s observe our specific Biblical references to these “thorns” hindering God’s people, “But if ye will **not drive out** the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be *pricks in your eyes*, and *thorns in your sides*, and *shall vex you* in the land wherein ye dwell” (Num 33:55). In the book of Joshua we



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learn, “Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will **no more drive out** any of these nations from before you; but they shall be ***snares and traps unto you***, and ***scourges in your sides***, and ***thorns in your eyes***, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you” (Josh 23:13). The concept continues into the book of Judges, “Wherefore I also said, I will **not drive them out** from before you; but they shall be ***as thorns in your sides***, and their gods shall be ***a snare unto you***” (Judg 2:3).

The phrases “thorn in the flesh,” and “pricks in our eyes,” and “thorn (*scourge*) in your side” all have the same connotation that we today would attribute to a, “pain in the neck!” Paul was a Rabbi of Rabbis and would have been completely familiar with that specific Hebraism (*Meaning a phrase common to the Hebrews, especially teachers!*) From his background in the scripture, he would have easily understood exactly what was a “vexation” or a “snare.” He would also understand from scripture that they should have been driven out!”

So what exactly was Paul’s “thorn?” Is there a Biblical answer? Let’s remember that Paul himself labeled and characterized his “thorn,” “there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, **the messenger of Satan** to buffet me” (2 Cor 12:7). Paul called his thorn a “messenger.” The Greek word for messenger is “*angelos*,” which is used over 180 times in the New Testament. The great majority of the references translate the Greek word as “angel;” however, on seven occasions the word was also rendered as, “messenger.” Paul’s messenger was an angel from Satan!!! Paul had a particular fallen angel whose specific duty was to “buffet” Paul! Next, observe every other scriptural reference using the term “buffet:”

- Matt 26:67 “Then did they spit in his face, and ***buffeted*** him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands”
- Mark 14:65 “And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to ***buffet*** him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands”
- 1 Cor 4:10-11 “We are fools for Christ’s sake . . . but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are ***buffeted***, and have no certain dwellingplace”
- 1 Peter 2:18-20 “Servants, be subject to your masters . . . For what glory is it, if, when ye be ***buffeted*** for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God”

The word “buffet” means, to keep smacking (*boxing*) around or to deal blow after blow! The Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary defines “*kolaphizo*” buffet – **to rap with the fist**.

Was Paul ever figuratively or literally slapped around and dealt blow after blow? Lets observe his own words concerning this matter, “Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, ***in stripes*** above measure, ***in prisons*** more frequent, ***in deaths*** oft. Of the Jews five times received I ***forty stripes*** save one. Thrice was I ***beaten with rods***, once was I ***stoned***, thrice I ***suffered shipwreck***, a night and a day I have been ***in the deep***; In journeyings often, ***in perils of waters***, ***in perils of robbers***, ***in perils by mine own countrymen***, ***in perils by the heathen***, ***in perils in the city***, ***in perils in the wilderness***, ***in perils in the sea***, ***in perils among false brethren***; ***In weariness and painfulness***, in watchings often, ***in hunger and thirst***, ***in fastings often***, ***in cold and nakedness***. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of **the things which concern mine *infirmities***” (2 Cor



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11:23-30). In this insightful passage Paul himself identifies all of these various forms of suffering and being buffeted under the general heading of, “*infirmities!*”

Paul experienced many forms of suffering demonic “buffeting:”

- Acts 9, Threatened and escaped over the wall in a basket
- Acts 13, Accused of the Jews of blasphemy
- Acts 14, Dragged outside Lystra and stoned
- Acts 15, Strong contention with Barnabus
- Acts 16, Arrested, beaten, placed in prison
- Acts 17, Preaching caused an uproar
- Acts 18, Rejected for his message and arrested and put on trial
- Acts 19, Riot broke out as a result of he converted some
- Acts 21, Riot broke out and Paul arrested
- Acts 22, Sent to court for preaching the Gospel
- Acts 23, Zealous Jews sought to kill Paul
- Acts 27, Paul survived a shipwreck
- Acts 28, Paul bitten by deadly viper

Notice the specific word that Paul uses to identify his problems, “If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine *infirmities*” (2 Cor 11:30).

Yes, God gave Paul wonderful and awesome revelations; he understood that this spiritual exposure was the reason for his warfare against evil spirits! This “buffeting” from the forces of evil continually kept him before God’s presence. We will see more on this later!

What about Paul’s glorying in infirmities? “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness (Greek word for weakness “*astheneia*” is also translated as “*infirmities*” just 10 words later →). Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my *infirmities*, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in *infirmities*, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Cor 12:9-10).

Let’s observe other scriptural examples where Paul used the word “*astheneia*” meaning feebleness of mind or body:

- “And I was with you in *weakness (infirmities elsewhere)*, and in fear, and in much trembling.” (1 Cor 2:3);
- “It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in *weakness (infirmities elsewhere)*; it is raised in power” (1 Cor 15:43);
- And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in *weakness (infirmities elsewhere)*. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities” (2 Cor 12:9-10);
- For though he was crucified through *weakness (infirmities elsewhere)*, yet he liveth by the power of God. (2Cor 13:4);
- Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of *weakness (infirmities elsewhere)* were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens (Heb 11:34). Were all of the ancient prophets sickly? Absolutely not! However, they certainly did fit into the category as humans doing God’s work who were familiar with human weaknesses!

Paul obviously often used the term, “*astheneia*,” translated as “infirmities.” However, from all of the Biblical references above we realize that it means any form of *lack, weakness* or



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inadequacy. It does not limit the “infirmity” to a physical ailment as our modern English might imply! Biblically it means “any lack, weakness or inadequacy.”

As a reason for his “thorn in the flesh” notice how Paul **twice** used a specific phrase in just one verse, “And **lest I should be exalted above measure** through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, **lest I should be exalted above measure**” (2 Cor 12:7). “**Lest I should be exalted above measure**” is clear. However, we often attribute the sponsor of Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” to the wrong being! Many contend, “God gave Paul a ‘thorn in the flesh’ to keep him humble.” If they quote a scripture it is usually, “God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time” (1 Peter 5:5-6). Notice however, that the same passage ends with the concept that the humble will be **exalted!** God wanted Paul **exalted!** God wanted His Gospel spread!

Obviously, “the abundance of the revelations” (2 Cor 12:7) were God sponsored, “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (James 1:17); however, notice to whom Paul himself attributes the interfering aspect in his ministry, “but **Satan** hindered us” (1 Thess 2:18).

It does not make sense that God would give someone a good gift such as special revelation and then turn around and cause him or her to be hindered by numerous setbacks so they would not be able to productively share that revelation! On the other hand, satan made certain that Paul experienced an abundance of problems in order to keep him from having a free reign to spread the gospel of Christ, “Yea, so have I strived to **preach the gospel** . . . as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand. 22 **For which cause (the Gospel’s sake!) also I have been much hindered from coming to you**” (Rom 15:20-22). Satan constantly hindered Paul as he withstood the Gospel! Satan assigned a demonic spirit to “buffet” Paul; do you think he accomplished his mission?

Before we can move on, we need to cover one last concept under this section. To observe that specific concept lets review the last part our main passage, “For this thing (*the thorn in his flesh*) I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee**” (2 Cor 12:8-9). “**My grace is sufficient for thee**” can mean one of two things: (1) You Paul, take the power I have given to you through my grace and you fight against the problem (*thorn in the flesh*); or (2) I am not going to take this away from you (*the thorn in the flesh*)! But, I will empower you through my grace that you are able to handle the problem! A third and even more likely possibility actually includes both of the statements! Jesus probably conveyed; “I am not going to take this away from you! Instead, Paul, you take the power supplied through my grace and you fight-off the hardship; in the mean time, I will empower you through my grace to handle each difficulty!”

How satan causes hindrances!

Realize that the messengers of satan **always use people** and circumstances to distract and hinder any ministry! Satan does not have any real power on the earth other than to shrewdly confuse or deceive, “I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent **beguiled** Eve through his **subtilty**, so your minds should be corrupted” (2 Cor 11:3). Evil spirits work through people as we see in Peter’s example, “then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. 23 But he turned, and **said unto Peter, Get**



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thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men” (Matt 16:22-23). Peter was not satan; yet, satan caused

him to speak against the divine will of God! Fallen spirits inspire flesh-minded humans to say and do things contrary to God’s word. Evil spirits provoked Saul to make twenty-one separate attempts against David’s life, “the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and **an evil spirit** from the LORD troubled him” (1 Sam 16:14), see also (1 Sam 18:10), “it came to pass on the morrow, that **the evil spirit** from God came upon Saul!” Without voice, hands, and feet of a human being, an evil spirit is greatly limited in what it can accomplish. Satan has a pattern of using people or forces of nature to oppose the work of the Gospel. Every Christian is born again, but his mind must be continually renewed, “be renewed in the spirit of your mind” (Eph 4:23). Carnal minds can yield to the fiery darts of the enemy and too often play into the hands of the worldly adversary!

Did Paul Ever Get free from His Thorn in the Flesh?

Paul did not have to contend with the “thorn in the flesh” until his death! It is true of his ministry that at every turn Paul had to withstand forces of evil. However, he eventually experienced relief, “And Paul dwelt **two whole years** in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, **no man forbidding** (*unhinderedly*) **him** (*We finally observe Paul operating in relative peace and tranquility!*)” (Acts 28:30-31).

God Gives Us Times of Refreshing!

We can glean a concept from one of Peter’s prophetic utterances, “when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19). This clearly teaches that prophetically there will be a day when Jesus Christ will return and bring refreshing to the earth. However, we now understand that there is a Biblical precedence which highlights the principle that the Lord will also bring **refreshing** to the embattled Christian just like He did with Paul! The Lord’s grace is sufficient to bring us through and out of our various spiritual warfare! We should expect to run into contrary winds designed to sink our ship. However, we know that the Lord calmed the storm for His disciples, “And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, **Peace, be still**. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm” (Mark 4:39). This same Lord through his grace will also calm the storm for us! However, we will be required to fight the battle and take dominion over our territory!

Just as He told Paul, Jesus might be saying to us, “I am not going to take this away from you! Instead, (*your name here* →) _____, you take the power I have given to you through my grace and you fight-off the problem in my Name; in the mean time, I will empower you through my grace to handle the various situations!”

When God Allows a Hindering Spirit!

The Christian will experience demonic inspired trials! However, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, **who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able**; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Cor 10:13). When we enter these seasons of trial we need to count on three aspects of God’s Grace!

- grace for the race
- grace for the place
- grace for the case



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Each of our individually unique missions require special grace. No one else can run our specific race. We all have individual problems and situations that arise against us.

However, we are empowered by God to be able to handle the specific conditions that we encounter. This is our grace for the race!

Our place is the specific daily situations that we find ourselves in. One person works at a cash register and has to deal with the “cranky” public day-in and day-out. However, God gives this Christian the grace to deal with that person who greatly needs personal assistance as well as the individual who may need much forgiveness! This is our grace for the place.

Finally, there is grace for the case, this is the special grace that God gives to each of us for the specific condition in which we find ourselves! We have already observed in the opening sentence of this section that God will not allow us to suffer above that we are able! No matter what kind of suffering we are involved in, God’s grace is available to us; Jesus will, “make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Cor 10:13).

Dealing with the Enemy

The diligent Christian will finally realize that he/she has satan’s number, “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor 2:11). Even though the councils of darkness conspire against us, they will never prevail, “Take counsel together, and *it shall come to nought*; speak the word, and *it shall not stand*: for God is with us” (Isa 8:10)! We can be confident that, “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn” (Isa 54:17). We know the enemies tactics and goals. Here are some proven counter tactics against the devil:

- **Don’t make satan appear greater than God.** In other words, don’t tell me how big your problem is; tell me how big your God is! We need to magnify God, “on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and *magnify God*” (Acts 10:45-46);
- **Don’t exaggerate satan’s ability.** The Christian must overcome the devil, “*by the word of their testimony*” (Rev 12:11)! This indicates that they are not to be timid in their battle against evil. Christians cannot run and hide; rather, we must advance and then stand to fight while proclaiming their victories. Many fail to advance because they “*expect*” or *fear* satan’s retaliation;
- **Don’t attempt to explain why the battle has come.** We would all be well advised to focus on the Lord’s “times of refreshing” and “way of escape!” However some unfruitful Christians focus on the “why” and “wherefores” of their trials. When we speculate on specific trials, we often attribute unbiblical things to God! If we focus on the trial we get off course in the fashion of Job’s friends of whom God said, “ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right” (Job 42:7);
- **Don’t entertain the thoughts that the enemy is inserting into you mind.** All fiery darts or doubt comes from the enemy in the form of thoughts! The thoughts generated by the fallen world are meant to hinder your growth! Our job is to resist satan’s “stinking thinking.” You cannot stop the birds from flying overhead; but you can stop them from building a nest in your hair;
- **Don’t let the devil’s belief be greater than yours.** The enemy believes that you will not make it as a Christian! He thinks that after a fall, you will not get up! You can penetrate his belief system by merely getting up and fighting! We are supposed to withstand against the fallen world, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). This means that we must defy the evil one. He wants us to believe that we are hopelessly bound by one or more of the following predicaments: a sin problem, ill health, inferiority to the demonic realm, a ruined financial status, or a doubtful state of security! However, the Bible clearly teaches that there are five separate tangible results which come from the Grace of Jesus Christ: (1) forgiveness of sins; (2) healing in



The Hindering of Our Healing!

What is hindering you from being healed?

our bodies; (3) deliverance from the evil one; (4) prosperity in our finances; and (5) protection from evil!

- **Don't believe that every problem is induced out of the spirit realm.** We often are the source of our own problems!

Our past choices often result in our present negative consequences as Peter described, "what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults" (1 Peter 2:20);

- **Don't become fearful of future conflicts.** The three Hebrew boys were not ministers of "the Congregation of The Fiery Furnace!" They experienced that specific problem one time! Because of a onetime experience *we should not be fearful* the rest of our lives! The enemy would like to arouse fearfulness in us; but we should remember, "he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44).

What Does God Give to the Christian?

We need to be certain of God's contribution to our situation, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). God never gives cancer or any disease to the Christian (*the one who claims Jesus Christ as his LORD and Master*), "I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee" (Ex 15:26). We were Egyptians (*before we were converted to Christ*). We may have contracted one of the Egyptian diseases during that period; however, even under those circumstances we can claim the latter part of that verse in believing prayer before God, "for I am the LORD that healeth thee" (Ex 15:26).

Some ignorantly claim, "God gave (*me/him/them*) that problem in order that they would get closer to Him!" Yes, that person may well have gotten closer to God as a result of their problem; however, God did not give that problem to the person so that they could get closer to Him, "Let no man say when he is tempted (*tried through a trial*), I am tempted of God: for **God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man**" (James 1:13)! Do not let "religion" or anything else fog your mind! Paul wrote that he feared that, "as the serpent **beguiled** Eve through his **subtilty**, so your minds should be corrupted" (2 Cor 11:3). If you believe that God gave anybody a (1) sin, (2) health, (3) demonic, (4) financial, or (5) evil problem, then just like Eve with regard to the evil one, you have been "**beguiled** . . . through his **subtilty**"!

TIME FOR A BIBLE TEST!

Q - Since Jesus did not heal all of Paul's infirmities; He certainly may not heal our illnesses! Therefore, Christians should not claim the healing capacity of Jesus' sacrifice equally as much as they claim its saving power.

A - (T) r u e o r (F) a l s e

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