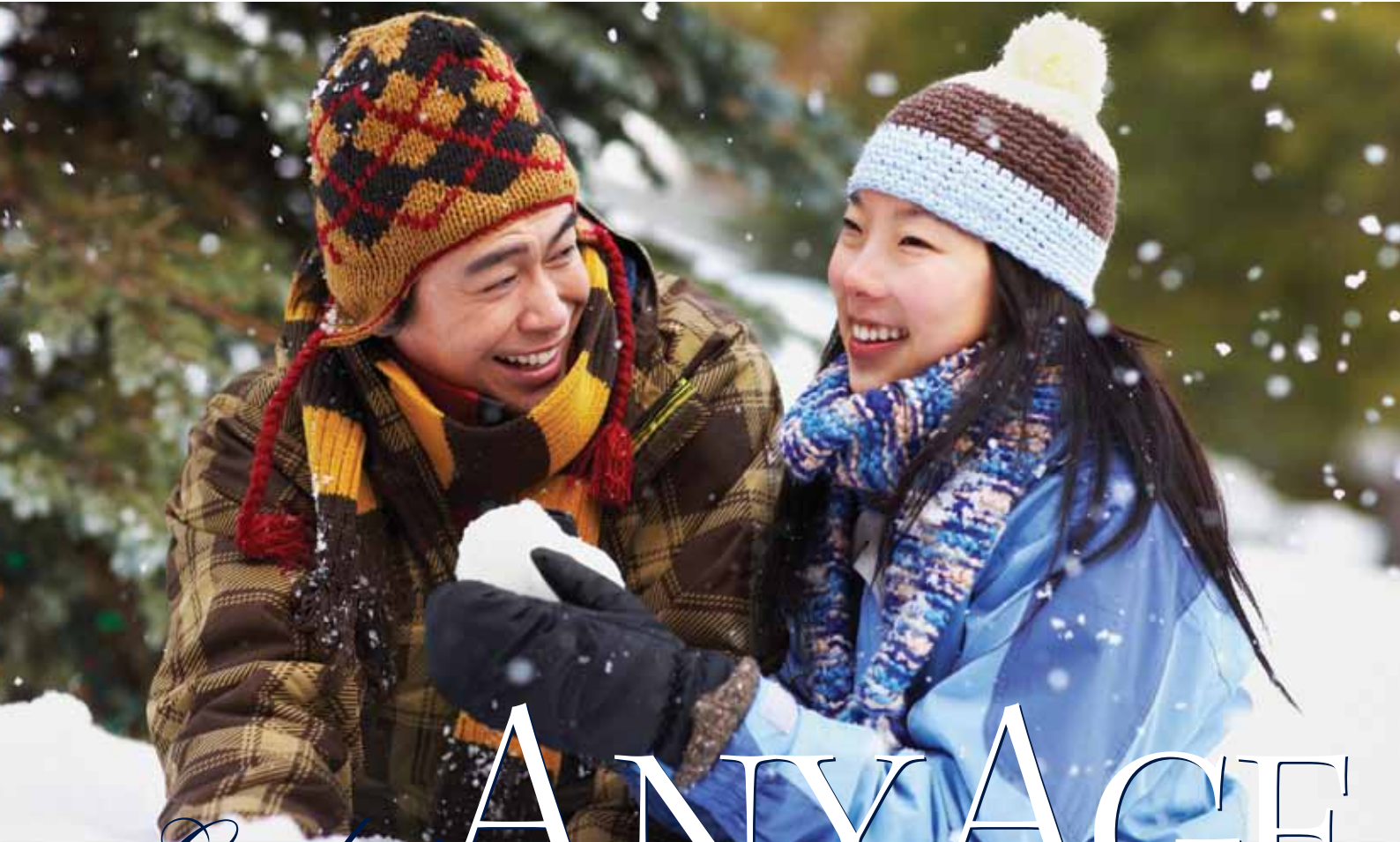


GOD'S HEALING PROMISES



Good at ANY AGE

I want My people well! :: These are the words God spoke to my heart many years ago when He told me to teach healing and lay hands on the sick in our Believers' Conventions. *I want My people well!* He didn't

say, "I want My young people well." He didn't say, "I want all My people under 80 years old well." He didn't even say, "I want all My people well, except those who are so old they must suffer from age-related infirmities."

BY GLORIA COPELAND



No, He simply said, *I want My people well!*

I know I heard Him correctly because He expresses the same desire throughout the Bible from beginning to end. In Genesis, when He created the earth and prepared the Garden of Eden for Adam and Eve, He didn't put sickness in it. He made it a good place, a healthy place, because He wanted His people well. In Exodus, when He delivered the Israelites from slavery, though sin had entered the earth and sickness had become rampant by then, He brought His people out of Egypt, healthy. Unlike the actors in the old movie, *The Ten Commandments*, who portrayed the Hebrews dragging sick folks along on stretchers and helping crippled, old people hobble along, the real Israelites—from the youngest to the oldest—marched out of Egyptian captivity in vibrant, good health. “[God] brought them forth,” says Psalm 105:37, “with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes.”

Imagine aged grandmothers and grandfathers, white-haired octogenarians and centenarians, whose bodies had once been bowed over by hard work under merciless Egyptian taskmasters. Think of them with heads held high, striding with strong steps alongside their children and grandchildren. Not one of them was feeble—despite their age and the difficulties they had endured.

God meant for His people to stay well, too. He intended for them to leave sickness, disease and frailty behind them forever, in the land of bondage where it belonged. So He told them how to do it. He said:

✿ “If you will listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his sight, obeying his commands and keeping all his decrees, then I will not make you suffer any of the diseases I sent on the Egyptians; for I am the Lord who heals you” (Exodus 15:26, *New Living Translation*).

✿ “You must serve only the Lord your God. If you do, I will bless you with food and water, and I will protect you from illness” (Exodus 23:25, *NLT*).

✿ “Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he swore unto thy fathers: And he will love thee, and bless thee.... And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee...” (Deuteronomy 7:12-13, 15).

✿ “My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body” (Proverbs 4:20-22,

NLT).

It's regrettable, but the great majority of Israelites didn't obey those instructions. Even those who received them directly from the mouth of Moses, cast them aside not long after they heard them and brought sickness on themselves by their disobedience. God's will for them remained unchanged, however. He still longed to heal them. So much that He lamented over their disobedience and said, “O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that *it might be well with them*, and with their children for ever!” (Deuteronomy 5:29).

The Hebrew word translated *well* comes from the root word *yatab*. It speaks of being blessed in every area of life, spirit, soul and body. It means to make “well, sound, beautiful, happy, successful, right, be accepted, amend, benefit, make better, seem best, make cheerful, be comely, find favor, be glad, goodness, make merry, please, show kindness, and make sweet.” There is no doubt this word includes a sound, healthy body.

Throughout the Bible, God's desire to provide physical health to His people never wavered. Thousands of years after those first wilderness wanderers died out, He was still saying, Obey these commands and “...thine health shall spring forth speedily. For I will restore health unto thee.... Behold, I will bring [Jerusalem] health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth” (Isaiah 58:8; Jeremiah 30:17, 33:6).

Notice, God didn't put any expiration date on His healing promises. He didn't say He would give health just to people who hadn't yet celebrated their 70th birthday. He didn't say that those who had already lived 90 or 100 years wouldn't qualify for His cures. No, all the way through the Old Testament, God offered to all His people of every age the promise of radiant health. He desired for even the oldest of His obedient people to be able to say with the psalmist: “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is the health of my countenance, and my God*” (Psalm 42:11).

Jesus Never Asked Anyone Their Age

“But all those healing promises are in the Old Testament,” you might say. “Do they really apply to us today?”

Yes, they do! In fact, they apply more fully to us than they



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did to the Israelites because we have “a better covenant... established upon better promises” (Hebrews 8:6). As believers, we are in Christ and, as we’ve already seen, all God’s promises are yes and amen in Him. God has said to us just as clearly as He said to the Israelites: “I am the Lord that healeth thee.” For us, as for them, His unchanging desire is: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 2).

That one, short, New Testament verse captures, with perfection, God’s will for all of us who are His children today. It tells us God still wants us to enjoy physical health. He doesn’t just want our souls to be strong and blessed. He isn’t concerned only about our spiritual well-being. He cares about our bodies too. Some have doubted that fact but according to *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, 3 John 2 leaves no room for dispute. The Greek term *hugiano*, which refers to our health, in that scripture, is not a spiritual word. It simply means “to be healthy, sound, in good health.” Its application is so distinctly physical that the English word *hygiene* is derived from it.

Even if we didn’t have that verse to rely on, we could still be certain that God’s will for us is health and healing. The New Testament practically shouts it from the rooftops in one book after another. All of the Gospels show Jesus demonstrating His heavenly Father’s desire to heal. The book of Matthew alone should be enough to convince the greatest skeptic that God delights to heal people as much now as He ever did. Keeping in mind that Jesus came to earth to do the will of His Father, consider the following statements about His ministry:

✿ “His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them” (Matthew 4:24).

✿ “They brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses” (Matthew 8:16-17).

✿ “And great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all” (Matthew 12:15).

✿ “Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw” (Matthew 12:22).

✿ “And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed

their sick” (Matthew 14:14).

✿ “And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus’ feet; and he healed them” (Matthew 15:30).

✿ “And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there” (Matthew 19:2).

✿ “And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them” (Matthew 21:14).

Anyone who might be tempted to think Matthew was in some way overemphasizing Jesus’ commitment to heal all the sick who came to Him needs only to read the Gospel of Luke to put that thought to rest. Luke confirms all Matthew said and even provides additional reports. He says:

✿ “Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them” (Luke 4:40).

✿ “But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities” (Luke 5:15).

✿ “And a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all” (Luke 6:17-19).

✿ “And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchd. And...she was healed immediately” (Luke 8:43-44, 47).

✿ “And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing” (Luke 9:11).

✿ “And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God” (Luke 13:11-13).

✿ “And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. And Jesus...healed him, and let him go” (Luke 14:2-4).

✿ “And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy

on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed" (Luke 17:12-14).

The Gospels of Mark and John include similar verses and cite only one occasion when Jesus wasn't able to heal all who came to hear Him. It was in Nazareth. The reason some went away without receiving there is no mystery. The Bible explains it by saying, "He could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:5-6).

Do you know what amazes me about that incident? Even when people's unbelief short-circuited the fullness of the divine power flowing through Jesus, He still endeavored to get them healed. No wonder the book of Acts sums up Jesus' entire ministry in this one statement: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38). Those words are a glorious confirmation that what God said to me so many years ago is undeniable and true—I want *My people well!*

For those believing for Bible longevity, that's especially good news. Who would want to live to be 120, if it meant putting up with years of arthritis, or dragging around with what are often referred to as "age-related diseases"? I certainly wouldn't. So the older I get, the more I appreciate Jesus' ministry to the sick and how it demonstrated God's will for our healing. I'm happy that the Bible says when the multitudes came to Him, He healed them all.

Aren't you glad He healed all? Aren't you grateful He didn't ask anyone their age before He ministered to them? Isn't it a relief that Jesus didn't say to even one person, "You are too old to receive healing. You just need to go home and die."

No, praise God, Jesus never once said those words to anyone during His ministry on earth and He never

says them to anyone today. He still heals all who come to Him in faith because He is "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). He is still the "same Jesus" (Acts 1:11) and His healing power and promises are good at any age. **VICTORY**

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