

# The Healing Doctrine

**By Jamie McNab**

*The following article is an excerpt from the report of the Church of God conference held in 2001. It sets out a presentation of the history and current practice of healing among the Churches of God.*

## **Recent History**

Mr. McNab started by reviewing the history of this teaching in God's church since the Philadelphia era began.

Mr. Herbert Armstrong learned that God heals, in the summer of 1927. His wife, Loma, was miraculously healed of several ailments, though the doctors had given her only 24 hours to live.

In 1928, still some years before his ordination, Mr. Armstrong gave his first sermon. It was on the subject of *the Sabbath*. A few weeks later, Mr. Armstrong gave his *second sermon* — which was about DIVINE HEALING. After Mr. Armstrong spoke, an elder from the Church of God Seventh Day stood up, and preached *against* divine healing. There has been *opposition* to this doctrine from the very moment it was restored to the church!

The early teaching of the Church of God can be found in Mr. Armstrong's booklet *Does God Heal Today*, issued in 1952. Some of the paragraph headings from that booklet read:

- **God PROMISES to heal**
- **Medicine Condemned as Idolatry**
- **Pagan Origin of Medicine**

Mr. Armstrong's teachings were based on scriptures such as Exodus 15:26, where God states, "I AM the LORD who heals you". God is named for what He is. The Hebrew here is *Jehovah-Rapha* — our God-Healer.

Then in 2 Chronicles 16:12 we read of King Asa who "became diseased in his feet, and his malady was very severe; yet in his disease he did NOT seek the LORD, but the PHYSICIANS. So ... he died".

The Church's emphasis was on *relying on God* for healing. The church had a negative view of the medical profession. This can also be seen in other publications, such as *The Origin of Medical Science* in the October 1959 Good News, and *The Origin of Medical Practice*, an Ambassador College thesis produced by Sherwin McMichael in 1969.

In the 1970's came the infamous STP — the Systematic Theology Project (otherwise known as Slowly Turning Protestant). One of the earliest doctrines to be attacked at this time was *healing*. Healing was said to be something God did from time to time in His sovereign mercy; it was not a Biblical *promise*, and was not dependant on people having FAITH.

In 1979, Mr. Armstrong powerfully revived and restored the doctrine of healing, in his 72-page book, *The Plain Truth About Healing*. Regarding the STP teaching, HWA wrote on page 52, "It is part of a whole new, erroneous and corrupt teaching encouraging faith in MEN and doubt in God ... this entire UNauthorised teaching [has] been made null and void BY JESUS CHRIST through His apostle". As for the medical profession, Mr. Armstrong states on page 49, "Once more to the question, Did God raise up the medical profession for our day? EMPHATICALLY NO!"

In 1986, Mr. Armstrong died and Mr. Joe Tkach was appointed. Although many hundreds of changes in doctrine have since occurred, one of *the very first* was healing, with Mr. Tkach's series of articles on the *Plain Truth about Healing*. This was serialised in the Worldwide News from March 1987 — barely a year after Mr. Armstrong's death. Mr. Tkach reverted to the STP teachings — that God had never promised to heal, there was no such thing as physical sin, and healing was not a matter of faith. The meaning of the *Passover symbols* — especially the bread — was changed.

In 2001, one Church of God group, the Church of God Established in Modesto (COG-EIM), has announced that it is adding healing to the list of 18 *restored truths*, thus making it *the 19<sup>th</sup> Restored Truth*. They have said, "We preach it as one of the original doctrines placed in the church by Christ through the early apostles and restored by Mr. Armstrong".

### **Personal Experience of the Changes**

When I first came into the church I was impressed by people who mentioned miraculous healings. One elderly lady, then in her 70's, explained to me how she had suffered for years from angina. On the day she was baptised, she threw her tablets down the toilet and

flushed them away! That was ten years earlier, and she had been well since that time.

But by the late 1970's, when I would approach ministers for anointing, I would be asked, "Have you seen your doctor yet?" Ministers, at least in our church area, were reluctant to anoint unless medical advice had been sought.

On one occasion, by the early 1980's, I had to almost fight to get a minister to anoint my baby son, who was unwell. Thankfully, my son was healed instantly, even though I had to almost force the minister to comply with the biblical instructions of James 5:14.

### **Foundation Scriptures on Healing**

One of the *key passages* on healing is Isaiah 53:4, "Surely He has borne our *griefs* and carried our *sorrows*". The KJV and NKJV translations obscure the plain meaning of this verse.

The Hebrew for griefs is *choli*, which is usually translated SICKNESS (12 times) or DISEASE (7 times). The word for sorrows is *makob*, which can be translated PAIN.

Young's Literal Bible Translation gives this verse as, "Surely *our sicknesses* He hath borne and *our pains* — He hath carried them".

Jay P Green's Interlinear gives, "Surely He has borne our *sicknesses* and our *pains*".

And just in case we're wondering which of the translators has done a better job, the question is answered once for all in Matthew 8:17. Here God inspired Matthew, under *inspiration* of the Holy Spirit, to translate the verse as, "He Himself took our INFIRMITIES and bore our SICKNESSES".

Jesus has indeed done something VERY SPECIAL for us — He has taken *from us*, and carried AWAY, our sicknesses!

But WHEN did Jesus accomplish this?

We know Jesus paid for our sins by His DEATH. It is through *the death* and shed blood of Jesus that we are *forgiven*, and can look forward to the gift of eternal life.

But WHEN did Jesus pay for our PHYSICAL HEALING?

The answer is that Jesus volunteered to undergo a tremendous *physical beating* and punishment BEFORE GOING TO THE CROSS, so that He might pay the penalty for our *physical sins*, and bring us HEALING!

Isaiah 53:5 tells us, "And by *His stripes* we are HEALED". The word stripes means *bruises* or *wounds*.

In 1 Peter 2:24 we read of Jesus, "who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose STRIPES you were HEALED". The word for healing refers to PHYSICAL HEALING throughout the New Testament — such as the centurion's servant who was *healed*, or the woman with the issue of blood who was *healed*.

We need to clearly understand that Jesus' *stripes* — the physical beating He underwent in the hours *before* He was crucified — and His eventual *death* on the cross, are TWO SEPARATE ASPECTS of His sacrifice for us.

The ONLY REASON for the tremendous physical beating and pain that Jesus went through was so that HEALING could be provided FOR US. The Father and Jesus both wanted *so much* to make healing available that they were willing to go through this horrible experience for *our benefit*.

Some today pay *thousands of dollars* for medical assistance, but Jesus has paid a FAR GREATER PRICE!

It would be a great WASTE — a tragedy — if we were to ignore, or take lightly, such a precious gift.

Consider Psalm 103:2-3, "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all *His benefits*; who forgives *all* your iniquities, who HEALS ALL YOUR DISEASES".

There can be *serious consequences* if we do not understand and avail ourselves of what God has provided. In 1 Corinthians 11:23-30 Paul writes about the meaning of *the Passover*. The *wine* represents Jesus shed blood — *His death* — by which we are forgiven and can enter the New Covenant. The broken *bread* represents Jesus' broken BODY — for our healing.

Paul writes, "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgement to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason MANY are weak and SICK among you, and *many* SLEEP (margin: are DEAD!)", verses 29-30.

Notice that Paul says that MANY were sick or had even DIED. And the deaths must have been *premature* and unnecessary deaths — otherwise Paul would not have felt it needful to comment.

Paul's words apply to us TODAY. If we see many who are sick in the Churches of God, and many who are dying prematurely, then we need to do as Paul says and EXAMINE ourselves (verse 28), and ensure we fully understand what the Passover is about.

If we think back to the FIRST PASSOVER, we will see that there were TWO SEPARATE ASPECTS. The BLOOD of the Passover lamb was splashed over the doorposts, and was a SIGN to the death angel to pass over the Israelites' homes. In this manner they were delivered from DEATH.

But, IN ADDITION, the Israelites had to EAT THE BODY of the lamb, too. Why? Perhaps the answer is given in Psalm 105:37 "[God] brought them out [of Egypt] with silver and gold, and there was NONE FEEBLE among his tribes". Even though there were many MILLIONS of Israelites — undoubtedly some in their eighties, nineties or even older, they were all strong and HEALTHY — they had been *miraculously healed* before they left on their journey to the Promised Land.

### **Jesus Healed ALL!**

Let's look at the EXAMPLE Jesus gave us in the New Testament. And remember that Jesus only did the WILL OF THE FATHER.

Matthew 4:23-24. "Now Jesus went about all Galilee ... healing ALL KINDS of sickness and ALL KINDS of disease among the people. Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He HEALED THEM".

Matthew 8:14-16. "When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed ALL who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying; 'He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses' ".

Matthew 9:35. "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages ... healing EVERY sickness and EVERY disease among the people".

Matthew 12:15. "But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there; and great MULTITUDES followed Him, and He healed them ALL".

Matthew 14:35-36. "And when the men of that place recognised Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all that were sick, and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched were made PERFECTLY WELL".

Luke 4:40. "Now when the sun was setting, all those who had anyone sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on EVERY ONE of them and healed them".

Luke 6:19. "And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed THEM ALL".

There is no example in Scripture of Jesus ever saying it was not His will to heal — or that it was good for someone to remain sick — or that someone would learn more if they stayed sick. Jesus healed ALL. And He is THE SAME yesterday, TODAY, and forever (Hebrews 13:8)!

Jesus continued His healing ministry even after He ascended to heaven.

Acts 5:16. "Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were ALL HEALED".

Acts 28:8-9. "And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him. So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and WERE HEALED".

### **Instructions to the Church**

James makes plain what church members should do in the event of sickness.

"Is anyone among you sick? [It's interesting that this is almost a hypothetical question — *IS* anyone sick...? James implies that this may be a rarity!] Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them *pray over him*, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the *prayer of faith* WILL SAVE the sick, and the Lord WILL RAISE him up. And if he has committed sins [that would be *physical sins*], he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses one to

another, and pray for one another, that you may be HEALED. The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much...Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth (of God as Healer, perhaps?), and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins", James 5:14-20.

And note that it is the *prayer of faith* that saves the sick, not simply the anointing with oil.

### **The Teaching of Herbert Armstrong**

Let's refresh our memories as to what Mr. Armstrong taught, and what most Church of God members at least *purported to believe*, say twenty years ago. The following quotations are all from Mr. Armstrong's 1979 book, *The Plain Truth about Healing*.

"God had said to ancient Israel, 'I am Yahweh-Rapha' – that is, 'I am the Eternal who heals you'. He also said in the Ten Commandments: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before Me'... None but God heals! God is a jealous God. He is not going to allow anyone else to heal. Medicine and drugs do not, cannot HEAL!"

"God wants His people to rely on Him, to TRUST Him...Is it because some of us do not know and rely on the true God that we rely instead on medical doctors? God has said, 'I am the God who heals you'".

"What a TREMENDOUS price God Himself, through Christ, paid in order that He might perform for us this MIRACLE OF HEALING...He is so willing, indeed so anxious, to relieve us from the pain, suffering or affliction that He gave His only begotten Son ... to be beaten, to suffer in our stead, so that, without violating any principle of His LAW, we may be healed ... We need to realise God's LOVE and compassion. Healing must not be taken for granted or treated cheaply".

"And when we ask, for instance, for healing, we do have an evidence – proof positive – that the healing will be done...He promised to heal you. But 'according to your faith be it unto you'".

"The Bible reveals God's will. We need never say, 'Well, I know God could heal me IF IT IS HIS WILL'. You can know His will. And as far as healing is concerned, I can tell you definitely that His word says plainly and emphatically that it is His will ... HE CAN'T BREAK A PROMISE".

“And so with the member of God’s church who has not as yet achieved full FAITH to BELIEVE GOD’S PROMISES for the physical healing. He should have that faith! He may pay himself the penalty of the sickness or disease if he lacks faith to believe Christ paid the penalty for him – to rely on GOD’S PROMISE to heal. So therefore, if a member has not yet grown in the FAITH OF CHRIST to absolutely KNOW he can rely on God’s PROMISE of healing – and if this member does call in the doctor or go to the medical profession for help, God’s church does not condemn him – but rather, God’s ministers should encourage such a one to GROW IN FAITH until he can rely on God instead of relying on MAN”.

To summarise Mr. Armstrong’s book:

- Healing is definitely God’s WILL.
- Healing is a definite PROMISE.
- We should RELY ON GOD, rather than man.
- Those weak in faith should not be condemned if they look for medical help, but should be encouraged to GROW IN FAITH to where they *can* rely on God.

### **Questions**

But of course any discussion of healing produces many questions!

What about Paul’s thorn in the flesh?

What about Job? Didn’t God make him sick?

Doesn’t God use Sickness to Teach Us?

Didn’t Paul Have a Physical Infirmary?

What about those who died in faith?

What about modern medical science – isn’t it now so advanced, we don’t need God’s intervention?

Due to space limitations, we will just look at some of these areas very briefly.

### **Paul’s Thorn in the Flesh**

People sometimes say that Paul was afflicted with a horrible infirmity or disease — a *thorn in the flesh* — that God refused to heal (therefore, goes the argument, God probably won’t heal me either).

We can find the details in 2 Corinthians 12:7-9. "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a *thorn in the flesh* was given to me, a MESSENGER OF SATAN to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me".

A number of people say that Paul's thorn in the flesh was an unsightly *eye-disease*. Some state it was general ill-health, which plagued Paul throughout his life. When I was at school, my Catholic religious teacher taught that Paul's thorn in the flesh was the *sin of lust*! These are all human interpretations. But how does the Bible use the term *thorn in the flesh*?

In Numbers 33:55, we read, "But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and THORNS IN YOUR SIDES, and THEY shall *harass you* in the land where you dwell".

Joshua 23:13 "Know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and THORNS IN YOUR EYES, until you perish from this good land..."

So the Bible uses the term to apply to trouble and harassment caused by PEOPLE. It does not refer to sickness or disease. The term is merely a *figure of speech*. In our society it is not uncommon to refer to someone who is troublesome, or a real nuisance to us, as a *pain in the neck*. This doesn't mean we actually have a painful neck! God often referred to ancient Israel as having a *stiff neck* — but this also was figurative, not literal!

Looking back now at 2 Corinthians 12:7, Paul actually *tells us* what the thorn in the flesh was — it was a MESSENGER OF SATAN. The Greek word for *messenger* is the word usually translated ANGEL. This was a fallen angel, sent by Satan, to pester and harass Paul, and cause him as much trouble as possible! As Paul said, "to buffet me" or "beat me".

Should it be any surprise to us that Satan would personally set out to thwart everything that Paul would do? Paul was one of the mightiest of the apostles, and would be bound to attract Satan's attention and energy.

How was Paul buffeted? He gives us the full story in 2 Corinthians 11:23-30, "...I am more: in labours more abundant, in *stripes* above measure, in PRISONS more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews FIVE TIMES I received *forty stripes* minus one. Three times I

was BEATEN WITH RODS; once I was STONED; three times I was SHIPWRECKED; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often...”.

Paul probably had one of the toughest lives, and suffered more bruises, than any of God’s servants. Satan never stopped trying to destroy this apostle. Yet notice, in this list of Paul’s problems and difficulties, *sickness* is never mentioned.

Paul states in 2 Corinthians 12:8 that he asked the Lord “three times that IT (the evil spirit) might *depart* from me”. Did God refuse? No — He reminded Paul that He had made *supernatural provision* to help Paul in every difficult situation he would ever face. “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My STRENGTH is made perfect in (your) weakness’”. When Paul fully understood this, he was able to respond, “Therefore most GLADLY I will rather boast in my infirmities that the POWER OF CHRIST may rest UPON ME. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak (humanly), then I am STRONG (in the Lord)”.

Paul later explained to the brethren in Ephesus that it is *our responsibility* to resist Satan and evil spirits. God will not take them away, but He has given us all we need to OVERCOME THEM. “Be strong *in the Lord* and in the power of His might. Put on the whole ARMOUR OF GOD, that YOU may be able to stand against the wiles OF THE DEVIL. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers ... against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore (YOU) take up the whole ARMOUR OF GOD ... above all, taking the SHIELD OF FAITH with which YOU will be able to quench ALL the fiery darts of the Wicked One”, Ephesians 6:10-16. Paul knew what he was talking about! He had first hand experience of battling with Satan’s messengers on a daily basis!

So when we look closely at Paul’s *thorn in the flesh*, we do not see an example of God breaking HIS WRITTEN PROMISE to HEAL.

### **Job’s Sickness**

Some people say, “Well God made Job sick, so I guess He has made me sick too for some purpose”.

We need to remember it was actually SATAN who made Job sick. Yes, some will say, but God *allowed* it. True — but God will “allow” us to go out and rob a bank tomorrow. That doesn’t mean it’s His will.

There is much of interest in Job’s experience, and many lessons we can learn. But perhaps the bottom-line is: JOB WAS HEALED! Once he acknowledged his ignorance, and repented of his self-righteousness, he was HEALED.

The best estimate the commentaries can come up with is that the events recorded in the book of Job took place in *less than twelve months*.

Anyone who believes they are “another Job” should be *greatly encouraged!* Job was healed, within twelve months at most. And then lived another 140 YEARS!

So the story of Job gives *no excuse* for chronic sickness.

### **God Chastens Us with Sickness**

Some believe the Bible teaches that God will use sickness to chasten us. They point to Hebrews 12:5-11. “And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as sons, ‘My son, do not despise the *chastening* of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are *rebuked* by Him; for whom the LORD loves He *chastens*, and scourges every son whom He receives...now no *chastening* seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it”.

However, the word for *chastening* means to TRAIN UP A CHILD. To train up a child requires much INSTRUCTION given over many years. (There might even be the occasional spanking, but not many parents would choose *to teach* their children by injecting them with some horrible and painful disease!)

The Greek word for *chastening* can also be found in Ephesians 6:4 and 2 Timothy 3:16. These verses clarify its meaning as: to *train* and to *instruct*.

Ephesians 6:4. “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the TRAINING and admonition of the Lord”. This clearly has to do with instruction, guidance and example.

2 Timothy 3:16. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for INSTRUCTION in righteousness". God uses HIS WORDS to instruct us ... to child-train us ...to discipline us!

Paul says in Hebrews 4:12 that "*the word of God is living and POWERFUL, and sharper than any two-edged SWORD, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents OF THE HEART*".

If we have a converted heart then the words of God can CUT US DEEPLY when we are in the wrong. We can feel the wounds! God does not need to smite us with a dread disease.

### **Paul Had a Physical Infirmary**

But what about Galatians 4:13-15? Wasn't Paul troubled by physical infirmity? Doesn't this prove he had terrible eyes that oozed pus, and had a terminal case of ophthalmia?

Let's read the account. "You know that because of PHYSICAL INFIRMITY I preached the gospel to you *at the first*. And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus...For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have *plucked out your own eyes* and given them to me".

Paul relates here an experience that happened when he FIRST preached to the Galatians. Acts 14:19-21 tells us what happened at that time. "Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they STONED PAUL and DRAGGED him out of the city, supposing him *to be dead*. However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch".

Paul mentioned that he had a physical infirmity when he first preached to the Galatians. No wonder! If any one of US was *pummelled* with heavy rocks and stones — horribly bruised, bloodied, and battered — and then physically *dragged* along the ground, bumping our head and face — and giving the appearance of actually being *dead* — then WE would certainly have a physical infirmity! (Some commentators believe that Paul actually WAS dead after this particular beating).

What about the reference to the Galatians being willing to pluck out their own eyes? Well, *possibly* Paul's eyes had been damaged during his stoning. He may well have had two "black eyes", perhaps horribly bloodshot, and causing him difficulty in the immediate aftermath of his beating.

However, it is most likely to be another *figure of speech* (like Paul's "thorn in the flesh"). Paul was recounting the tremendous *affection* he received from the brethren in Galatia, and how in the early flush of their conversion they would have done *anything* for him — made *any* sacrifice. We have similar expressions in our culture. You might hear someone say, "I'd *give my right arm* to own a Rolls Royce". It indicates great desire for something or someone — but it doesn't mean you would LITERALLY cut off your arm!

There is no doubt Paul bore many scars and marks from the endless opposition to his preaching, but there is no indication that he went around *sick and infirm*. It would be difficult for a sick person to accomplish even *a fraction* of what Paul did!

### **Other "Problem" Scriptures**

There are probably a couple of other passages that someone might want to turn to to show that "God doesn't heal". Any such verses must be interpreted in the light of the Bible's *plain teaching* that God DOES HEAL, that He WANTS to heal us, and that Jesus Christ paid an ENORMOUS PRICE for us *to be* healed.

### **Doctors and Medicine**

What about doctors and the medical profession? Where do they fit into this question of healing? Isn't medical science far more *advanced* than in biblical times? Shouldn't we take full advantage of what man has to offer?

Some basic points we need to remember:

- THIS WORLD is not God's world — it is SATAN'S WORLD
- Satan has *deceived* the WHOLE WORLD
- Doctors, pharmaceutical companies, the American Medical Association, the whole medical profession, is part of *this world's* system — and is a multi-billion dollar *industry*

We need to be very careful if we look to man's systems for help. Dr. Robert S Mendelsohn has written, "I believe that more than NINETY PERCENT of Modern Medicine could disappear from the face of the earth—doctors, hospitals, drugs, and equipment—and the

effect on our health would be immediate and BENEFICIAL”, *Confessions of a Medical Heretic*. Dr. Mendelsohn was Chairman of the Medical Licensure Committee for the state of Illinois, associate professor at the University of Illinois Medical School, and a director of Chicago’s Michael Reese Hospital. He knows of the dangers of much of modern medicine.

Mr. Armstrong makes a number of comments on the topic of medicine in his book *The Plain Truth about Healing*, such as the following:

“Once more to the question, Did God raise up the medical profession for our day? EMPHATICALLY NO! ...To those whom He has called, He has revealed IN HIS WORD to them that HE is Yahweh-Rapha – their HEALING God – the God who HEALS those who believe”.

“You who misunderstand or lack faith, but trust in medical doctors, DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE MILLIONS WHO DIE, DIE UNDER THE MEDICAL DOCTORS’ CARE? Yet you who disbelieve still have faith in M.D.s. Frankly, it makes me a little indignant, as I fully believe it does the living CHRIST, to find people exalting the advances and “expertise” of medical doctors, while at the same time denying that God’s PROMISES are promises – discrediting faith in God, excusing their lack of trusting GOD while they argue for trusting MAN! God has PROMISED salvation and eternal life on the SAME conditions He PROMISED healing – obedience and faith”.

### **Conclusion**

Mr. Armstrong makes it very plain in his book that the church does not *condemn* those who choose to go to the medical profession for assistance. Nevertheless, he emphasises that we should be learning to RELY ON GOD, not on man. He writes, “God’s ministers should encourage such a one to GROW IN FAITH until he can rely on God instead of relying on MAN.”

Healing is a BENEFIT God has made available to us — at great cost to Himself. Let’s make sure we REMEMBER all His benefits!