

Healing in the Plan of Salvation

by Charles Ewing Brown

Charles Ewing Brown preaches on 'The Faith That Heals,' emphasizing the connection between religion and health throughout history. He discusses the ministry of healing in Christianity and the importance of reuniting the healing of the body with the healing of the soul. Brown explores the concepts of natural and miraculous healings, delving into the understanding of miracles, the laws of nature, and the supernatural. He also addresses the possibility of healing through prayer, the role of divine healing in the atonement, and the ultimate redemption of the body in the resurrection.

Description

Charles Ewing Brown preaches on 'The Faith That Heals,' emphasizing the connection between religion and health throughout history. He discusses the ministry of healing in Christianity and the importance of reuniting the healing of the body with the healing of the soul. Brown explores the concepts of natural and miraculous healings, delving into the understanding of miracles, the laws of nature, and the supernatural. He also addresses the possibility of healing through prayer, the role of divine healing in the atonement, and the ultimate redemption of the body in the resurrection.

Transcript

healing-in-the-plan-of-salvation.pdf" txtUrl:
 "/pdf-text/text/c/charles-ewing-brown---healing-in-the-plan-of-salvation.txt" thumbnailUrl: "" hasTranscript:
 true oneLinerSummary: "The sermon explores the integral relationship between healing and salvation,
 emphasizing the importance of both physical and spiritual health in the Christian faith." sermonType:
 "topical" topics: - name: "Divine Healing" slug: "divine-healing" - name: "Faith And Health" slug:
 "faith-and-health" bibleRefs: - text: "Isaiah 53:5" bookId: "ISA" chapter: "53" verse: "5" - text: "Matthew
 4:23" bookId: "MAT" chapter: "4" verse: "23" - text: "Matthew 8:16" bookId: "MAT" chapter: "8" verse: "16" -
 text: "Romans 5:12" bookId: "ROM" chapter: "5" verse: "12" - text: "Romans 8:23" bookId: "ROM" chapter:
 "8" verse: "23" - text: "James 5:14" bookId: "JAS" chapter: "5" verse: "14" outline: - heading: "I" points: -
 "Introduction to the connection between health and religion" - "Historical perspective on healing in ancient
 religions" - "The role of healing in early Christianity" - heading: "II" points: - "Modern division between body
 and soul healing" - "Consequences of this division for evangelical Christianity" - "The rise of non-Christian
 healing cults" - heading: "III" points: - "Understanding natural vs. miraculous healing" - "The definition of
 miracles and their relation to natural laws" - "God's personal will in miraculous healing" - heading: "IV"
 points: - "The ethics of divine intervention in natural laws" - "The implications of miracles for faith and
 understanding" - "The relationship between healing and the atonement" faq: - q: "What is the relationship

between health and religion?" a: "Health has always been closely connected to religion, with many ancient practices focusing on both physical and spiritual well-being." - q: "What is the difference between natural and miraculous healing?" a: "Natural healing occurs through the body's inherent processes, while miraculous healing is a direct act of God, often facilitated through prayer." - q: "Is healing part of the atonement?" a: "Yes, divine healing is considered part of the atonement, reflecting God's grace and favor, though not all prayers for healing result in physical recovery." - q: "How can we reconcile unanswered prayers for healing?" a: "Unanswered prayers do not necessarily indicate hidden sin; many faithful individuals experience illness despite their devotion." quotes: - "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." - "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." - "A miracle need not be something violating the laws of nature, but something which God intentionally does by his own personal will." applicationPoints: - "Recognize the importance of addressing both physical and spiritual health in our lives." - "Engage in prayer as a means of seeking divine healing and understanding." - "Acknowledge the complexities of faith and healing without attributing illness to personal sin." keywords: - "healing" - "salvation" - "miracles" - "faith" - "atonement" - "natural law" - "spiritual health" - "divine intervention" ---

The Faith That Heals

Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And 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" (Matt. 4:23-24). "Is any sick among you? 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 shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:14-16).

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (III John 2).

That health is a boon for which all men long is a statement too self-evident to require proof. Throughout all the ages of time up until our modern era it has always been accepted as a matter of fact that religion and health are closely connected. Nearly all ancient religion was concerned with the health of the body as well as, and sometimes more than, the health of the soul. Not only did the savage medicine man exert all his efforts to heal the sick among his fellow tribesmen, but the cultured pagans of classical Greece and Rome resorted to the temples and the priests for the healing of their diseases. The ministry of healing by religious means was carried on in the Christian church, and has continued right down to modern times. Religious healing is still followed to some extent in the church of Rome, as well as by many individual Protestant Christians.

Speaking generally, however, modern informed opinion has tended sharply to divide healing of the body from healing of the soul. The main bodies of Protestant religious belief have been inclined to follow this lead, and thus the custom has grown up among us to refer the sickness of the soul to the care of the minister and the sickness of the body to the attention of the physician in the definite opinion that neither of these has anything to do with the work of the other. Such an attitude was quite consistent with the narrow materialistic science of the age which is now passing.

Every thoughtful Christian should have his attention directed to the loss which evangelical Christianity has suffered by this sharp divorce of the healing of the body from the healing of the soul. The draining out of the ministry of healing from the work of evangelical religion has tended to impoverish and to dry out that religion. When we remember that ancient Christianity ministered to mankind economically in love and charity, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and lodging the homeless; physically in the work of bodily healing; and educationally by teaching the minds of children and youth, as well as religiously, it is easy to see what a loss our modern evangelical Christianity has suffered by its divorce from three of these ministries. The rise of modern non-Christian cults which attempt to exercise a ministry of healing has been greatly encouraged, if not entirely made possible, by this loss of the ministry of healing from Protestant Christianity.

Inasmuch as healing has been given up largely in response to the claims of science it will be interesting to note the development of the next fifty years, for science is now beginning to recognize something of the meaning of religion for health. The science of the last hundred years has tended to be analytical, dividing each aspect of reality into its minutest part, but the science of the present day moves in a different direction and seeks to understand the organic relation of the things to be studied. In regard to the human personality, the wholeness of man's being is better understood now than previously. The parts of a man's body have no meaning except in their relations to the whole body, and the body itself cannot be treated fully and satisfactorily except with some knowledge of its relation to that consciousness commonly called "mind," which Christians call the "soul," or "spirit." The relation of the mind to health is discussed in the science called psychiatry. This is a term made up of two words: "mind" and "healing." This scientific development is producing a revolution in our thinking regarding the relation of religion to health. While it is not my intention to delve into the mysteries of this new science, I may simply say in passing that it has not given much encouragement to the modern healing cults and to the common idea of healing by suggestion, or as it is sometimes called, "mind healing." Most people have very naive ideas about healing by faith. They assume that faith healing means that if you think you are well you are well, and if you think you are sick you are sick. It is your beliefs that change your physical condition. This is the kind of healing which the healing cults usually promote, and the scientific name for it is suggestion, or hypnotism. Psychiatry takes a different turn entirely. It has no such simple message as "think you are well and you are well." It goes far beyond that. Modern scientific study of the mind delves deeper than hatred, stubbornness, despair, and the like as causes of disease. It penetrates to the frustrations, discouragements, and disappointments, and even the false ideals and false philosophies of life which cause these sickly attitudes of the mind and are often reflected in sickness of the body. Modern science does not teach that we should ignore all these hidden diseases of the personality and simply think we are well in spite of them. It teaches, rather, that the personality must be healed and that when the personality is thoroughly healed the recovery of health is likely to be more easily accomplished. I say "more easily accomplished" because it is an extreme position to say that all disease arises from disorders of the mind.

NATURAL AND MIRACULOUS HEALINGS

Nearly all Christians who have an interest in this subject seek an answer to the question: what is the difference between natural healing and healing by the power of God? To this question many Christians reply that there is no difference because it all comes from the Lord anyway, since God gives nature its power to heal. Others are not satisfied with this answer, and yet do not know whether, or how, it is defective.

It seems to me that the answer to this question waits upon our understanding of the definition of miracle and the difference between the natural and the supernatural. If we can find our way through this mystery the answer to our question ought to stand out fairly clear. Evidently the meaning of "natural" and "supernatural" is a baffling subject to some of our greatest minds. I have read weighty books by professors which completely miss the point here and involve the whole subject in hopeless confusion. Many people regard the supernatural as merely an extension of the natural into realms which we cannot understand. They think of the supernatural as a region of mystery, a land of ghosts, dreams, visions, and fantasy. Some people describe a miracle as a violation of the laws of nature.

I feel sure that this subject cannot be discussed profitably in a popular book without making a large use of figures and illustrations drawn from our everyday life. And if some lofty philosopher should deign to cast his eye upon the simple illustrations he need not feel too contemptuous, inasmuch as all human thought, even the highest, has climbed up such simple ladders as these. Such being the case, and meanwhile fully bearing in mind that no symbol or illustration can completely express all the riches of these truths, let us boldly face our hard problem. The mystery of the world is shut up in each man's own personality. All the things that puzzle us come to a focus within our own selves and the only way we can grasp the slightest idea of what God is like is by comparison with ourselves. Many people have condemned this method of approach. They say God is so far above us that it is blasphemous to make any comparison. To this we reply that we do not deny that God is above us; we do not pretend to know all about God. Nevertheless, if the meaning of "spirit" is not given to us in our own spirit, then we can never have the faintest surmise as to what spirit is. Now the Bible teaches us that God is a Spirit; it teaches us also that he is our heavenly Father. If these things are true, there must be some likeness between God and ourselves.

As we study the Bible we discover that men were made in the image of God. Human beings originally possessed that image in two phases: naturally, as personality and immortality; and morally, as righteousness and true holiness. When Adam sinned against God he lost the moral nature of God but he still retained the natural image of God in human personality and immortality. This human personality in man has three phases: intellect, emotion, and will. Surely God has such a personality as that, although he may have other phases of personality which we cannot even imagine. He certainly has no less powers of personality than we have. If, then, there is this likeness between the nature of God and of mankind, we have here a fairly clear mirror in which we may study the difference between the natural and the supernatural. A man looks at his physical body and sees that it has been endowed with certain powers of functioning quite independently of his conscious will. The heart beats, the liver secretes, the bones of a child grow, and many other functions of physical life are carried on quite independently of the personal attention of the human being who occupies the body. And yet we know that it is through the activating power of his soul that the otherwise dead elements of his body move, live, and function in accordance with a predetermined pattern which we call the nature of the human body. In the same way, God lives in his universe. He is not the same as the universe, just as my soul is not the same as my body. If I should die my soul would be withdrawn from my body and the body would perish as a human body. When God shall withdraw his presence from the universe of matter, then that material universe will perish. However, it will not perish as my body does, but it will go out of existence entirely.

In such an illustration as this it is necessary to be closely on our guard not to identify God's presence and life in matter with matter itself because matter is a creation of God, and to identify the two is one of the greatest heresies in religious thought. Now, this presence of the life of God in matter is called the "divine immanence." By his presence in matter God causes matter to function according to certain definite and

universal laws. These laws are, so far as we can tell, perfectly uniform and the same for all people and all time. It is this uniformity of the laws of nature which makes science possible; if these laws varied from day to day no certain knowledge could ever be gained. Now, while I live in my body, I also have a self-conscious life in which I can direct my thoughts and my activities and even the behavior of my body by my own personal will. This phase of life in man we call self-consciousness, and the self-consciousness of God is the realm of the supernatural. This self-consciousness of God in which he can look upon the universe as something other than himself and in which he can will and choose and live his own personal life is sometimes called "divine transcendence." We can call it by any one of these names: the self-consciousness of God, the transcendence of God, or the realm of the supernatural. The realm of the supernatural, then, is that phase of the life of God in which he is conscious of himself and lives the life of a free, self-directing personality. Many scientists and philosophers deny this exalted state of being to God, but it is of the essence of Christian doctrine that God shall be a personal being, for only as such can he be our heavenly Father.

To make our illustration fully Christian it is necessary to remember that, while I am not conscious of all the functioning of my physical body nor of its nature and structure, God is all-wise and all-knowing, therefore he knows all about the structure of the universe and is fully aware of every operation in the realm of nature. The difference between the supernatural and the natural comes in here. Although God is fully aware of the rise of sap in the tree in the spring and of the process by which the diamond is crystallized in the heart of the mighty rock, yet in his infinite wisdom he permits these things to exist and function in accordance with one enduring and fixed purpose and mode of activity which we call "natural law." The miracle occurs when God, for the purpose of accomplishing his holy purpose, exercises his personal will and power to accomplish results which otherwise would not come to pass by the free functioning of the laws of nature. If this is true, then, we may begin to understand that whatever comes to pass in the realm of the supernatural is a miracle. Whatever God does by personal intention is a miracle. Everything that happens, therefore, in this realm of the divine personality is a miracle. That is why all Spirit-inspired prayer and all the works of salvation are miracles. In other words, a miracle need not be something violating the laws of nature, but something which God intentionally does by his own personal will.

DOES A MIRACLE VIOLATE THE LAWS OF NATURE?

It is generally supposed that a miracle is necessarily a violation of the laws of nature. In speaking here a devout Christian must tread softly before the Lord. The laws of nature are merely uniform from the standpoint of our observation. The Christian cannot easily conceive of these laws as being necessary and fixed from the standpoint of the power of God. Our faith in God's infinite power makes it easy for us to believe that he could and will suspend or, as we say, violate any or all of the laws of nature whenever he chooses to do so. For us it can never be a question of power. There is, however, for thoughtful Christians a question of ethics, a question of right and wrong. Would it be right for God to change or to suspend these laws of nature upon which all our earthly knowledge depends? They seem to stand as God's pledge for the accuracy and truthfulness of our knowledge. We base all our science and all our reasoning upon the proposition that these laws are true. If God should purposely upset any of them it would be as great a shock to thoughtful men as if he had violated some other kind of contract or agreement. Remember, I do not say that God will not suspend, or change, or violate the laws of nature. I only say that it does not seem probable, though it may be possible, because such knowledge is beyond our finite grasp. However, even should the laws of nature be uniform and infallible so that God himself would respect them for moral considerations, not because of any lack of his power, I do not thereby see any reason to doubt any miracle

of the Bible nor the possibility of any kind of miracle which God might choose to perform.

Without being dogmatic, I merely suggest here that men have by a partial understanding of the laws of nature combined those laws to produce astonishing effects. It is now possible for some ten tons of steel to float through the air from New York to San Francisco. Only a few years ago people would have said that such a wonder was impossible and that its performance would involve a miracle. Now we know that men can perform this stupendous feat by managing the laws of nature with which they have become acquainted. If men, who know the smallest part of the laws of nature, can do such things when they wish, why cannot God, with his infinite knowledge of all the laws, manipulate and combine them in such a way as to produce any effect which he might have a wish to perform? Of course, I know the question will arise here that if God should do such things using natural means it would not be a miracle because a miracle is something contrary to nature. That is just the point which I am laboring: that a miracle need not be contrary to nature but that it must be above nature, and it must be the personal act of God growing out of his personal wish and the conscious exercise of his power. The supernatural would appear in the purpose of God and the conscious combination of physical forces which otherwise would not be thus combined. Thus a man builds a house on a lot which without his personal agency would never have such a house, and yet he does not call that a miracle. I do not see why God could not, if he so desired, build any kind of house imaginable without violating any law of nature any more than a man would. Here, of course, we would say that the building of such a house would be a miracle, if we could really believe that it happened.

These reflections will help us to see the difference between natural and miraculous healing. If a man exercises, eats proper food, takes the right medicine, and thus regains his health we should say that while what he did was not contrary to the will of God, nevertheless the restoration of his health came through the operation of purely natural forces and laws without any personal intervention on the part of God; therefore it was a natural healing. The same thing happens when a person uses suggestion and thus gets over the belief that he is sick. But supernatural, or miraculous, healing comes to pass when, through prayer, the afflicted person gets in touch with God personally, and God, as a personal act of love and favor, heals the sickness and restores the person to health.

HOW IS HEALING POSSIBLE?

For a good many years Christians have been debating the question of whether this supernatural physical healing is in the atonement. Some have said it is not in the atonement, but that it is a redemption blessing. Of course such talk is childish, for a redemption blessing is something that comes to us through the atonement. Others do not like to admit that divine healing is in the atonement because they think that to do so involves the conclusion that all sick people are sinners and that if they do not get healed in answer to prayer it is a mark of grave spiritual defect. Or to put it plainly, the person who prays for healing and is not healed thereby proves that he is stained with some secret, hidden sin. When matters are pushed to such a conclusion it is small wonder that many find themselves unable to follow. Most of us know saintly souls who have suffered much from illness despite the fact that they have prayed earnestly and apparently not without some faith. Rather than accuse such people of being guilty of some secret sin, many prefer to reinterpret the doctrine. It is usually taken for granted that if physical healing for the body is in the atonement, then such healing may be expected in the large measure of the widest conception of God's grace on exactly the same basis as forgiveness of sins. Now it is our common experience that divine physical healing does not come so universally as that, and even though we grant that weakness of faith limits the expected result we are still faced with the fact that some of the apparently best people fail to get healed. How shall we explain this apparent contradiction? To begin with, let me state clearly that I believe

divine healing is in the atonement. Every supernatural blessing which we receive is a mark of God's personal favor, or grace. Supernatural healing is one of these marks and can be based only upon the atonement. The only way in which healing would be possible, aside from the atonement, would be through the ordinary processes of nature working in man's body according to natural law precisely the same as they work in the bodies of animals and vegetation and in the inorganic world of nature. Since most Christians believe more or less that God can heal our bodies, then to that extent do they necessarily believe that our bodies participate in the benefits of Christ's atonement; for the supernatural grace of God, the personal evidence of his favor, comes in no other way.

If at this point we will observe closely the path of scriptural teaching we shall be saved from many heartbreaking discouragements. The text in Isaiah 53:5 which says: "With his stripes we are healed," has prompted many efforts to explain it away as having no reference to healing of the body. I regard these efforts as futile and unworthy of serious consideration, partly because they are made from dogmatic motives; that is, they are simply an effort to disprove something which for dogmatic reasons we do not wish to believe. That the sufferings of Christ were endured in behalf of our bodies as well as for our souls is the plain teaching of Matthew 8:16-17, where we are told that Christ "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." It should exalt the plan of salvation for us to realize that it includes the whole nature and being of the sinner within the scope of its redemptive grace and power. Here, however, we are forced to admit that there is a distinction in the time when the fullness of redemption is realized by body and soul. Space forbids arguing the point here that salvation for the soul is perfect and complete here and now in this earthly life. Every believer has full access to all the blessings of the redeeming grace of God insofar as these apply to redemption from sin. Nevertheless, we are free to state that there is a time limit regarding the redemption of the body from the penalty of sin, which is disease and death. In the Roman letter the Apostle Paul argues at great length and with tremendous emphasis that physical death is the result of sin: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, AND DEATH BY SIN; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (5:12). This great passage alone would place healing and the redemption of the body within the scope of the atonement, otherwise there would never be any resurrection of the dead.

Death, then, in the teaching of Paul, is caused by sin. It would take a book to go into this point fully, inasmuch as the researches of geology show us that animals died before the coming of man. No doubt a provision was made in God's grace whereby man would not suffer the penalty of death if he were obedient and holy. This provision was lost in man's transgression and restored eventually in the atonement of Christ. We must see clearly that all forms of disease are simply one phase of death. Death and disease are two aspects of the same thing. Any disease will kill you if it runs its full course unhampered. No one ever dies without some disease, if we take disease in the broadest meaning of the word, a disordered condition of the body. If an automobile strikes a tree and its occupants are killed suddenly, investigation will show that each body was in a disordered condition. Whether this disordered condition is wrought by being suddenly dashed against a tree or by the ravages of germs over a period of time is immaterial. Disease is the beginning of death, and death is the completion of disease.

If the atonement of Christ was meant to deliver our bodies from death, the unbeliever will say that it was all in vain since we all do die. The Apostle himself taught the same thing when he said: "It is appointed unto man once to die." How and when, then, is this redemption of the body completed? It is the universal faith of Christendom that this redemption of the body is completed in the resurrection when all of the effects of sin are completely overruled forever -- all of its penalty forever canceled -- and the redeemed bodies of the

saints arise from their graves shining with the glory of the sons of God. This, then, is the full fruit of the redemption of the body. It is never completely realized, and cannot be completely realized, until the resurrection day. And so we read: "Not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23).

Redemption from sin is complete here and now in this world, but redemption from the physical effects of sin, disease and death -- that is, the adoption or redemption of our bodies -waits for that time when we shall share the glory of the sons of God in the resurrection.

This fact ought to explain many of the baffling questions which have been raised concerning divine healing. If healing is in the atonement, how does it come that many saints are sick and all of them eventually die, mostly by afflictions which are plainly acknowledged as disease? To this the answer is that supernatural physical healing is the first fruit of the resurrection life of Christ. By faith it is experienced here and now in this world according to our needs from time to time. All who have been healed in this way are witnesses to the sublime joy which one experiences as he realizes the inflowing of this gracious healing touch of the Spirit into his afflicted body. No wonder this touch gives joy, for it is actually a foretaste of the resurrection life of Christ poured graciously like healing balm into our pained earthly bodies.

In many cases this healing grace seems to flow like the tides of God's life through our sick bodies, washing out every trace of the old disease or affliction which has troubled us, but in all such cases we must bear in mind that it is God's intention that this blessing shall be temporary and shall in no wise annul completely the penalty of death which stands upon the race until its perfect realization in the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body at the resurrection. Nevertheless, multitudes of true Christians have enjoyed a deeper sense of fellowship with God and a keener realization of his presence in their lives by trusting him for the healing of their physical diseases. By this means they have found not only a cure for the most painful and desperate afflictions, but also the sweet comfort and encouragement which comes from a vivid assurance of friendship with the Eternal.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/charles-ewing-brown-/healing-in-the-plan-of-salvation/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net