

# Spiritual Diseases and the Biblical Cure

by Peter Hammond

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and overcoming spiritual diseases through repentance, daily obedience to God's Word, and a wholehearted commitment to following Jesus.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 59:1, Acts 3:19, 1 Corinthians 3:1, Ephesians 6:10, Hebrews 3:15, Hebrews 12:1, James 4:4, 1 Peter 3:15, 1 John 1:5, Revelation 3:15

**Topics:** "Spiritual Health", "Repentance"

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## Description

Peter Hammond preaches on the importance of trusting in the Lord wholeheartedly, emphasizing the need to acknowledge Him in all aspects of our lives to receive His guidance. He highlights various spiritual diseases that hinder believers, such as sleeping sickness, lockjaw, amnesia, deafness, blindness, lameness, spinelessness, and scurvy, urging for repentance and a return to God's Word for spiritual health. Hammond warns against lukewarm faith, the dangers of sin, and the necessity of thorough repentance to restore fellowship with God.

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## Transcript

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh and strength to your bones." Proverbs 3:5-8

We cherish health for our bodies but most tolerate disease in their souls. Holiness is to our soul and spirit what health is to our bodies. We are body, mind and spirit. Our thoughts affect our emotions. Our understanding affects our decisions. It is all interconnected. Many people today are living far below their potential and failing to fulfil their purpose, or accomplish their destiny, because of spiritual diseases.

### Sleeping Sickness

A widespread epidemic prevalent throughout large sections of the Church is sleeping sickness. It results in members being inactive, passive, neutral, lethargic and apathetic. Consequently numerous blessings are lost, countless opportunities are missed and enormous dangers arise unnoticed. "How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep - so shall your poverty come on you like a prowler and your need like an armed man." Proverbs 6:9-11. "His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber." Isaiah 56:10

## Lockjaw

This condition paralyses the jaws of believers when the opportunity to witness arises. Sometimes silence is golden. Other times it is just plain yellow. "...always be ready to give a defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you..." 1 Peter 3:15

## Amnesia

This tragic ailment usually occurs in worldly company when some Christians just forget who they are and what they are doing here. Consequently they act like they are part of the world, laughing at the world's jokes, listening to the world's music, repeating the mantras of the world and behaving as if they are of the world. "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world, makes himself an enemy of God." James 4:4

## Deafness

Some people are so spiritually deaf that they do not even know if God talks! They are deaf to God's Commandments and to the Bible's warnings. They do not hear the still small voice of the Holy Spirit speaking through their conscience. They do not recognise the clear Words of God as recorded in the Bible. When God speaks, they look blankly and declare: "I never heard a thing!" "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." Hebrews 3:15

## Blindness

This affliction affects an unexpectedly large amount of churchgoers who are blind to the dangers around and the traps of the devil right in front of them. In fact they have a great difficulty seeing the difference between the lies, traps and deceptions of the devil and the will and Word and warnings of God. "But even if our Gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe lest the light of the Gospel of the Glory of Christ, who is the image of God should shine on them." 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. "We grope for the wall like the blind and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noonday as at twilight; we are as dead men in desolate places." Isaiah 59:10. "Having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Ephesians 4:18

## Lameness

Then there are those lame disciples who experience some inexplicable paralyses of the legs when there is any activity to be undertaken in God's Kingdom. Where Jesus leads, they do not follow. "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." Mark 8:34

## Spinelessness

There is an incredible lack of moral backbone among all too many. Instead of being Evangelicals they act like eanjellyfish, filleted of spine. These spiritual jellyfish do not stand for the principles of Scripture. Consequently they fall for anything. "Finally My brethren, 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... therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with Truth..." Ephesians 6:10-14

## Scurvy

Due to a lack of spiritual meat (as found in the Bible) and spiritual fruit and vegetables (Faith and obedience); and an overdependence upon spiritual ice-cream (blessings) and sweets/candy (benefits), these spoilt, undernourished, self-indulgent, believers develop a scurvy that rots away their spiritual life. "And I brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?" 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

## The Cure for Spiritual Diseases

The Scriptural cure for all these spiritual diseases is a healthy dose of daily obedience to the Word of God. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6

## Wholehearted

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart..." We must love the Lord our God with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind and with all of our strength. We need to be wholehearted Christians, not half-hearted, or heartless.

## Bible-Based

"...and lean not on your own understanding." We must never trust in just what we think we know. We are not to follow our heart, we are to follow the conviction of the Holy Spirit as our conscience is captive to the Word of God.

## Prayerful Study of God's Word

"In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths." We need to put first things first. The Bible before breakfast, Scripture before supper. Humble prayer and seeking God's guidance through diligent study of His Word before making any important decisions.

## Wisdom from Proverbs

"Do not be wise in your own eyes..." The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. God alone is all knowing, everywhere present and all-powerful. We need to study the Word of God daily. There are 31 Chapters of Proverbs, one chapter for every day of the month. It is wise to begin our days with readings from the Book of Proverbs. Wisdom for the decisions of each day.

## Fear God Alone

"Fear the Lord and depart from evil." We must not fear man. We must fear God. When we fear the Lord then we are freed from the fear of man. Either we will fear God and not man, or we will fear the opinions of man and fail to truly fear God. It is either or. We must choose. Either we will seek to please God, or we will seek to please man. Either we will fear man, or we will fear God. If we fear God, then we will discover it is the beginning of wisdom and this will enable us to choose wisely and depart from evil.

## Spiritual Health

"It will be health to your flesh and strength to your bones." Holiness is to our spirit what health is to our bodies. The body, mind and spirit are intricately linked. Our spiritual health will have an effect on our physical, mental and emotional health. "A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones." Proverbs 17:22

### Backward Christian Soldiers

As a critique on the shameful plight of all too many Christians and churches today, one believer wrote this scathing adaptation of the famous Christian Hymn, Onward Christian Soldiers:

"Backward Christian soldiers, fleeing from the fight,

With the Cross of Jesus, nearly out of sight.

Christ, our rightful Master, stands against the foe,

Others have been battling - must we also go?

"Like a mighty tortoise, moves this church of God;

Brothers were we are treading where we've often trod.

We are much divided, many bodies we,

Having different doctrines, not much charity.

"Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise and wane,

But the church of Jesus neutral does remain.

Gates of hell should never against that Church prevail,

We have Christ's own promise, but think that it will fail.

"Sit here, then, ye people, join our useless throng,

Lend with ours your voices, in a feeble song.

Blessings, ease and comfort, ask from Christ the King,

With our modern thinking, we won't do a thing!"

### Lukewarm Believers Make God Sick

"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot, I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say 'I am rich, have become wealthy and have need of nothing' - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked... as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent." Revelation 3:15-19

### Biblical Repentance

Repentance deals with the root of all of our problems, dryness and failure - because Repentance deals with sin. We are not helpless victims. We are guilty sinners. God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. Sin is death (Romans 6:23). Sin separates us from God.

### Sin Separates Us From God

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue has muttered perversity." Isaiah 59:1-3

### Disgraceful

It is this disgusting habit of tolerating and excusing our sins that keeps us in this half dead, disgraceful condition. Our sin needs to be rejected, confessed and forsaken.

### Ensnaring

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us and let us run with endurance the race that is set out before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith..." Hebrews 12:1-2

### Frustration

We have been made in the image of God. We were created for fellowship and union with our Creator. Therefore, unless we are enjoying constant contact and communication with God, we are inwardly restless, frustrated and unfulfilled. He is the Vine, we are the branches.

### Poison

Now it is our personal guilt that has caused this rift and which constitutes the root of the problem. It is because of our sin that our fellowship with God has been disrupted, our Christian walk hindered, our moral judgment corrupted and our principles corroded. Our prayer life has been wrecked and worship made ineffective. Our witness has become impotent and our spiritual lives polluted. We need to recognise the irreconcilable and destructive nature of this poison of sin.

### What Has Sin Done?

Sin has made man a transgressor. "And you He made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins." Ephesians 2:1.

Sin has made satan the master of unrepentant sinners. "He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8

Sin made punishment a necessity. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

Sin made hell a reality. "Then death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. Any one not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:14-15

## We Reap What we Sow

Just as sugar in a petrol tank interferes with the running of a vehicle engine, so too sin in our lives adversely affects us, spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically. The inevitable results of sin include an uneasy conscience, unsettled emotions, emotional and physical exhaustion from seeking to suppress guilt, fear, anger, despair and depression.

## The Need for Thorough Repentance

Repentance can be compared with the demolition work on a condemned building and the excavations that follow in preparation for the laying of a new and firm foundation for a new building. "According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss... Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" 1 Corinthians 3:10-16

## Separation

Repentance is separating ourselves from what separates us from God. We must do a thorough work of Repentance. A hasty, or half-hearted, Repentance makes a shallow and unstable foundation for spiritual life. The joy and freedom of forgiveness is well worth the cost of Repentance and restitution. "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the Faith..." Colossians 2:6-7

## Those Who Will Be Condemned

The Word of God warns us: "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderous, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the Second Death." Revelation 21:8

## Repent

The Lord Jesus Christ began His public ministry with these words: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Matthew 4:17

This was the message of the early Church, "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." Acts 3:19

## Full Repentance

The Bible emphasises three aspects of Repentance:

Conviction: A change of mind.

Contrition: A change of heart and

Conversion: A change of life.

## Head, Heart and Hands

Repentance involves a change of mind, a change of attitude and a change of conduct. Head, heart and hands. Repentance is more than a change of mind and a change of heart, it involves a change of habits, lifestyle and behaviour. "God... now commands all men everywhere to Repent." Acts 17:30

## The Traps of Peer Pressure

We need to recognise sin and temptation for the poison and deadly dangers they represent. We need to reject the world's ways, social pressure, public opinion and peer pressure. "A man who flatters his neighbour spreads a net for his feet," Proverbs 29:5

## Two Ways

"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the Law of the Lord and in His Law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in season, its leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the Judgement, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Psalm 1:1-6.

## A Call to Confession

"This is the message which we have heard from Him and declared to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the Blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His Word is not in us." 1 John 1:5-10

"Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead and Christ will give you light." Ephesians 5:14

"Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober." 1 Thessalonians 5:6

## He Gives More Grace

"He gives more grace when the burdens grow greater.

He sends more strength when the labours increase.

To added affliction, He adds His mercy.

To multiplied trials - His multiplies peace.

"When we have exhausted our store of endurance,

When our strength has failed before the day is half-done,

When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,  
Our Father's full giving has only begun.  
"His love has no limit, His grace has no measure.  
His power no boundary known unto men.  
For out of his infinite riches in Jesus,  
He gives and gives and gives again!"

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