

Chapter Seventeen

Son, Your Unbelief Is Sin

What do you say to a precious brother or sister who is struggling in pain and poor health? Our human desire to reach out and comfort the sick is the God-given longing of every compassionate person. It is thus amazing that Jesus is rarely recorded as sympathizing with afflicted people. Instead, He often chided them for their unbelief (with words such as, “how long must I suffer you?”¹). Then He would proceed to deal with the unbelief, and command the problem to obey. Is this because He was not compassionate, gentle and loving? No, quite the opposite. Because He was so compassionate, He brought solution instead of sympathy.

The solution Jesus brought often first required fixing faulty, mis-placed faith. For example, consider the man who accused the disciples of not being able to heal his son (Mark 9:24-29). Jesus lovingly showed that the fundamental problem lay not with the spiritual ability of the disciples, but with the low expectation (unbelief) of the boy’s father.

Our response should be as the father of the afflicted child – *help thou mine unbelief!* But instead, we go to bed hoping that we will feel better in the morning, or we pray a while and then wonder why God has not healed us, or we short circuit the process completely and make appointments with doctors – all without having actually connected with God in the secret place to hear His counsel for the problem. This is the place of unbelief, masked by one-way prayer requests, but not two-way conversations with our heavenly Father.

I learned this lesson about my own unbelief the hard way as I was teaching at a wonderful church in Canada. I had completed a seminar during the course of the weekend, and on Sunday morning I awoke to get ready to teach the Sunday morning service. But I had a problem. I felt awful! My head ached, I felt weak and nauseous. I would have been very happy not to teach that morning. But I had no choice. People were still very excited by the teachings and wonderful miracles that the Lord had done at the seminar. And, having taught extensively about healing all weekend, could I now be so sick that I had to cancel teaching in the service? I was in big trouble and I knew it.

I held things together as I rode with the pastor over to his church. He had no worries, and we chatted on the way. I was still feeling wretched. As the praise and worship part of the service began, I was worse. By this time I had to throw up. I stumbled out of the pew and headed for the bathroom that was connected to the pastor’s study. I managed to make it just in time, and wobbled back to the pew to sit down. By this time I was no longer asking God to release me from teaching; I was at the point of demanding it. Some faith, huh?

The moment I sat down, the Lord sweetly spoke five words to me: “Paul, your unbelief is sin.”

¹ Matthew 14: 30-31; 17:17-20; Mark 6:6; 9:19-24; 16:14; Luke 9:41.

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How Can I Get My Healing From God?

Immediately I was convicted, and I asked God to forgive my unbelief for being sick. And just as immediately I was healed and felt great! In a short while, I was introduced and began to teach. It was a very anointed teaching. After all, I had a great incident to start the teaching about faith. God is so good!

Although unbelief (i.e. lack of faith) is a challenge that we all face, especially when we are hurting, we need not become personally offended when we discover this fact. Jesus dealt with unbelief often with His disciples.²

Our reaction to this discovery can go two ways. We can either respond to the truth of our lack of faith as the father did in Mark 9: 24, or we can be as Cain. Must we get offended when the Lord tells us (as He did to Cain in Genesis 4) that our sin offering (of forgiveness for our short comings) lies at the door, waiting for us to offer it up to Him?

Our beloved Lord and Great Physician knows how to deal with our hearts, and bring us from (our) faith to (His) faith. He is indeed all that we need. May our hearts stand still and see the salvation of our spirit, soul and our bodies as we go to Him, the One from Whom all blessings flow, and Who sent His revelation Word, and healed us, and delivered us from all our destructions. May He continue to honor and encourage our faith, and may our faith for our healing be ever enlarged in the secret place of the Most High.

² See verses noted in previous footnote.

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