
Words of Truth

She Touched The Border Of His Garment

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It is commonly thought, amongst churches of Christ, that the Lord heals people today by working through doctors. It is often taught that if you pray to be healed you can go to the doctor and the Lord will be with the hands of the doctor to help you. Such is said, most of the time, in regard to situations that require surgery. To support this, there is often a quick citing of James 5:15. Yet, most do not take the time to actually look at this passage in context to even know if it supports the claim that God is working through medical professionals to heal them. It is just a commonly accepted idea.

Consider the context of the passage mentioned in the paragraph above: *“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 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. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit”* (James 5:13-18). Where, in the Scriptures you just read, is the mention of a physician or other medical professional? Did the text say to call for a doctor? What you did read is, “call for the elders.” The elders would have prayed and anointed with oil and that prayer of faith would heal the sick.

Anointing with oil occurred during the time of miraculous spiritual gifts. Notice: *“And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them”* (Mark 6:13). That time has ceased (I Corinthians 12:4-13:13). Those who use James 5:15 most often know that. Those amongst churches of Christ most often would concede that casting out of devils has ceased too. In all the times I have heard or read the argument made from James 5:15 that person making the argument has never said we can pray for a drought to last 3 and ½ years as the context of James 5:15 speaks of. Most understand that what Elijah did was miraculous (I Kings 17:1-18:46). Yet, they use James 5:15 as though it applies today. That is dishonest. God does not work through doctors of this world to heal anyone. He didn’t even do that in the first century.

God Did Not Use Physicians To Heal

Let me be clear that this section of the article is not speaking against medicine or physicians. Both are approved of in the Scriptures (Ezekiel 47:12 and Colossians 4:14). The point we are about to see is that God did NOT heal people by working through doctors. He did

not have control of their minds and their hands. He did not work through them in some secretive way. Consider this context that proves such: *“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 Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace”* (Luke 8:43-48).

Miracles, including healing, were performed to confirm that the message and the messenger were from God (Mark 16:15-20, Acts 2:22, Acts 8:4-6, and Hebrews 2:1-4). God did not work something through someone so that men would not be sure if He was behind it or not (Isaiah 42:8 and Isaiah 48:11). When God did something, He made it known that such was His work (Psalms 145:9-13). This has been the case since the rainbow first appeared in the sky (Genesis 9:11-17).

Those who proclaim that God’s hidden hand is in the medical profession often say that it takes time and who will know if God will heal or not. When someone dies on the surgeon’s table or by disease that God didn’t cure, the false teachers often have to find some curious way to explain away why God didn’t work that time. When God healed someone, it was immediate without any need of aftercare, rehabilitation, etc. (Matthew 8:1-3, Matthew 20:29-34, Mark 1:29-34, Acts 3:1-10, Acts 9:36-42, etc.). This confirmed that God was at work.

The word of God has been delivered and confirmed. The purpose of God healing people has come to pass. God never intended to be in the medical profession. His healing of the sick and raising of the dead accomplished the purpose of confirming His word. Paul learned, as we all should, that God’s grace is sufficient for us (II Corinthians 12:7-10). To be faithful followers of our Lord we should not need carnal benefits. Our desire and hope needs to be in the things to come (I Peter 1:3-9), not in a life of comfort in the present. The very idea that God is going to keep us well and healthy because we are Christians is false. The fact is, the physical life of faithful Christians is often met with many obstacles we must overcome on our own (Matthew 5:10-12, John 16:33, Acts 14:22, Romans 8:35-36, and James 1:2-3).

Conclusion

When you go to the doctor you are in his or her hands. When you go through a surgery, you are in the surgeons hands. At some point, if the Lord doesn’t come first, we are all going to die (Psalms 89:48 and Hebrews 9:27). As the woman having an issue of blood twelve years found out, sometimes the doctor is not going to be able to help us through the physical ailments we are facing. God does not give us physical rewards for following Him. He has not put a force field around us. What we are to look for from our Lord for our faithful service to Him is the promise of eternal life (Romans 6:23).