

WHAT DOES CHRISTIANITY OFFER TO THE WORLD?- CHRISTIANITY OFFERS HEALING

Acts 14:8-20

WHAT DOES CHRISTIANITY HAVE TO OFFER THE WORLD?

Christianity offers hope.

Christianity offers help.

Christianity offers healing in the midst of sickness and pain.

In the past 38 years of ministry I have seen
the power of Prayer in healing.

My own mother was healed when she had given birth to my younger brother Leon.
She was hemorrhaging having given birth at home on the farm.

She was in great danger of dying.

My grandmother had helped her in the birth and finally said:

I am going upstairs to talk with God.

About an hour later she came down and said:

Everything is going to be ok.

At the same hour the bleeding stopped.

We do not offer to the world our healing,

But our healing God.

Every month we meet at the altar or prayer chapel

And bring our request.

I remember a woman came for prayer with an open ulcer the size of a 50cent piece

We prayed for her.

Monday at her doctor's appointment

Her husband asked the doctor what they could do
about the open ulcer on back of her neck?

The doctor said what ulcer.

It was healed over in 24 hours.

Another young 15 year old girl suffering from ashma and allergies

Was healed after prayer.

Cancers have gone to remission.

Hearts have been calmed.

Anxieties have been laid to rest.

Marriages have been healed.

Sins have been forgiven.

I have seen God heal people of addictions and take away
the terrible anguish of guilt, sin, and bitterness.

Because Christianity offers to the world a healing God.

The Church has always been at the heart of the healing ministry.

It was the church that started the first great hospitals.

Even in Aberdeen.

It was a diphtheria epidemic at the turn of the century in Aberdeen,
 that led to the beginning of what is now called Avera St. Luke's Hospital.
 Local physicians ask the Presentation Sisters who had kindergarten school
 To convert their classrooms to sick ward when the epidemic struck.
 As a result after the epidemic subsided Doctors and citizen of Aberdeen,
 asked the Sisters to establish a hospital.
 On October 18, 1901, St. Luke's Hospital, a 15-bed facility,
 was dedicated and expansion began.
 Their Motto is: 'Caring for life'

Methodist have been in the health business since the beginning.
 Methodist Hospital in Mitchel.
 Methodist Hospital and St. Marys' hospital at Rochester.
 joined to become a vital force in the world.
 With a motto of 'And Jesus healed all.
 And Jesus made no distinction of race, color, creed, gender or nationality
 The new **Orthopedic Surgery & Sports Medicine Ctr**
 Has as its logo: "To Bring Healing to our Community."

In the Middle Ages, devils called "Blue Devils
 were thought to be the major cause of disease and misery.
 Three hundred years later the American writer,
 Washington Irving, abbreviated "blue devils" to "the blues."
 From that time on "the blues" has been a common expression
 When we have low moods from disease, depression, or discouragement.
 We say we are in "a blue funk."
 Very few people think we're dealing with devils anymore.

Uncle Remus in Briar Rabbit called the pain and depression of life,
 Of having a case of the mullygrubs
 This week I read how long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was
 called witchcraft. Today it's called golf.

Whatever is the actual cause of depression,
 moods of sadness and despair,
 Pain in sickness
 Behind it is a person searching for healing.
 And the one thing that Christianity bring to the world
 Is (CHRISTIANITY BRINGS)

I. THE POWER OF A HEALING GOD

**Jeremiah 17:14 Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed, save me and I will be saved,
 for you are the one I praise.**

Apostle Paul comes to Lystra.

**⁸In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had
 never walked. ⁹He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him,**

saw that he had faith to be healed ¹⁰and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk. Acts 14:8-10

The world desires healing.

Instantaneous healing.

We want it now.

But most of the world wants it without God being involved.

A few years ago a movie came out called : “The Green Mile”

It featured a black man in the 1920’s rural south,

He is on death row or the green mile

He has the gift of healing

The man heals the wardens wife of cancer.

The interesting thing about this movie is that the healing does not mention God, or give God credit, or glorify God in the least.

The movie won all kinds of awards because,

This is the way the world likes to see someone healed, instantly, now.

Without credit to God or the Spirit of God..

Even today people pray in their ignorance for physical healing

Without an understanding the Spiritual responsibility behind their request.

and it doesn’t happen.

The world continue to look for that someone who has the power to heal

That is what Christianity offers to the world.

In Hebrew God gives himself the Name Jehovah Rapha

—**The God who heals - Exodus 15:26**

Throughout Jesus ministry he healed to bring Glory to God

And even today healing occurs for The Glory of God.

He is still in the business of forgiving sin and healing sickness.

Christianty offer the power of healing God.

Let me also says that most time it was used by God

As a tool to substantiate a new ministry

Or to revive a dead one,

Or to confirm a new faith.

Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed ¹⁰and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk. Acts 14:8-10

Healing compliments the ministry of God’s grace.

THE BIBLE IDENTIFIES 5 DIFFERENT KINDS OF HEALING.

1. Healing occurs with Time. **Ecclesiastes 3:3 A time to heal**
2. Healing occurs with medicine Take an aspirin for headache, antibiotic for infection. **Revelations 3:18 ..salve to put on your eyes so you can see.**
3. Healing occurs with miracle Jesus touched the leper and in **Matthew 8:3 Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.**

4. Healing occurs with **surgery**- We cut out an infected Appendix or gall bladder. St. Luke was a doctor. **Mathew 5:29-30 Cut out eye, cut off offensive hand.**
5. Healing occurs with death. When cancer or another disease has taken the body to where it cannot function in this world God rescue us and redeems us. **I Corinthians 15:42-44 The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory, it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.**

Christians believe in a God who is active in our lives.
 We even have room for a Satan who is active in our affairs.
 But we have little or no room for a God who afflicts us or coerces us,
 or seems indifferent or vindictive to our suffering.

Like the husband who just got a new car. He was reluctant to let his wife to drive his prized possession even to the grocery store which was a few blocks from the house. After she insisted, he finally relented, cautioning her as she departed, "Remember, if you have an accident, the newspaper will print your age

**Christianity provides the power of a healing God to the world
 To accentuate Gods grace and goodness.**

CHRISTIANITY BRINGS II. THE OPPORTUNITY OF CHOICE

In every healing there is an opportunity to believe God or discredit God.
 To grow in our faith or to stow our faith.
 To join the agnostic secularism of the day or
 Celebrate the power of Christ.

¹¹When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" ¹²Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. ¹³The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them. Acts 14:11-13

There are a lot of gullible people in the world.
 They believe anything.
 They wanted to make Paul and Barnabas their gods.

¹⁴But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: ¹⁵"Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them. Acts 14:14-15

Paul tore his clothes a sign of **BLASPHEMY**
which is the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God
 Whenever there was blasphemy their clothing was torn.

If the Apostle Paul was watching TV today,
He'd be tearing his clothes every hour on the hour.

Some people wanted to make them gods.

To fit into their mythological belief system of Superstition and idolatry.
Pointing to the healers and not to Christ.
Paul argues from the side of intelligent design. Acts 14:14

SOME people wanted to stone them.

Healing can also bring out the worst in people.
I can assure you that there will be people who will hate you as a Christian.
Even be Jealous of your healing.
Of your salvation and peace in Christ.
Paul healed the man Crippled from birth

Acts 14:19 Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead.

CHRISTIANITY BRINGS

I. POWER OF A HEALING GOD

II THE OPPORTUNITY OF CHOICE

III. A THEOLOGY OF HOPE IN OUR SUFFERING.

The problem with healing is that not everyone gets healed –

Our church prayed for healing for years for a young women with chronic pain due to a car accident and still today she suffers debilitating migraines and cannot function on many days.

Another dedicated Christian woman was prayed for, anointed with healing oil, and in the daily prayers of her family and loved ones, but died of the disease that took her ability to function and left her without movement at the end of her life. Godly woman.

Another family had a new born baby from our congregation who is on her third spinal surgery with many more to come. She has been lifted up for healing many times since her birth. And still she suffers.

Does this mean that God has failed?

Does that mean that we have failed?

Our faith as vanished.

Or is there a greater purpose coming out of the suffering and circumstance.

That we are not privileged to understand at this time.

And Romans 8:26 The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

Suffering is part of our calling

God promises us that he will be in the midst of our suffering.

Psalms 23 Ye thou I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil because thou art with me.

God is with us in our suffering, in the .

Sickness and storms of our lives.

We do not have a God who is inactive in our midst.

Psalms 34:19 A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all.

Joni Erickson Tada injured her spinal chord at 16

And faced a life of paralysis.

She prayed, believing God would heal her.

The pastor gathered, the church prayed.

She said: “from time to time, God in his mercy, may grant us healing from disease as a gracious glimpse, a ‘sneak preview’ of what is to come.

It is my opinion that he sometimes does heal.

But, in view of the fact that the kingdom has not yet come in its fullness, we are not to automatically expect it.”

God did not heal Joni physically,

But he healed her emotionally and spiritually.

Her life did not end,

Her suffering did not end,

but she became a testimony to the sufficiency of God’s grace.

Learning how to paint with her teeth and write and speak

And has touched more lives in her paralysis than she would have in her wholeness.

God has provided the peace and comfort she needs from day to day.

Our world is filled with suffering and death.

Without a theology of suffering

We will fall apart when we face it.

But we live with a living God.

With a concept of a just and eternal life.

So when we are called to endure.

We know that we are in the precious hand of God.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

There are some lessons that can’t be learned any other way, apart from suffering.

Romans 5:3- we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us.

Well Paul healed the lame man,

The people Stoned Paul right there in the street,

And then drug him outside the city for dead.

But the church was there

²⁰But after the disciples had gathered around him, (The church was there) he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe. Acts 14:20

But the church was there.

They gathered around Paul.

They prayed and laid hands on him in the name of the living God.

He got up and went back into that very city.

You may be here today because- you need a helping hand.

You friends and employees can be sarcastic and unkind -you need a lift.

Your sickness or illness may have beaten you down- you need a healing.

Your relationship have left you stressed and in emotional trauma --you need peace.

Your Sins have overwhelmed you and left you for dead- you need forgiveness.

We are the church of a healing God.

The church is here to gather around you.

The church is here to pray.

To offer hope

And the possibility

That God will touch you and raise you up.

James 5: 14-15 Is anyone of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well and the lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

the Apostle Paul was stoned and left for dead,

But he got up and went back into the city

And the next day walked 60 miles to Derbe.

What a miracle.

When I get off my treadmill after just 30 minutes I need rest.

When the Apostle Paul left.

He left a worship center not a healing center Acts 14:23

A place where battered and bruised people can gather to pray.

And can comfort each other

As a place where people could come to worship the living God.

It emphasis was not on healing.

But on helping.

Our God is the same yesterday today and forever.

And he asks us to come for healing and boldly ask, seek and knock.

and leave the results in his hands.

We all have a need.

We all need the savior.

This morning, we are going to close this service with a time of prayer around the altars.

As we sing the last hymn I invite you to come to the altar

We will pray with you and anoint you with oil.

If you have a physical need for healing, I invite you to come.

If you emotional need for healing God wants you to come.

If you have a need in your relationship are struggling with bitterness or anger, You come.

Or if you have a friend or love one who is suffering and you want to intercede for them, pray for them, then you feel free to come.

Pastor Tom and I will meet you here to pray and anoint with oil.

And if there are people still at the altar when the song is done.

I invite you to quietly leave the sanctuary, or you may choose to remain in your seats praying EXPECTANLY for these who have come.

This will be our benediction.

Come now as we sing this hymn.