



The Country Preacher's Newsletter

"...speaking the truth in love" Ephesians 4:15

Getting A "Cure" By Randall F. Matheny

I freely admit that I am no medical doctor, but I have always had an interest in things medical. My mother spent 45 years as registered nurse, and when I was little the "autoclave" room at the hospital was often daycare center for me and my siblings, and various nurses, who would check on us from time to time were our baby sitters. Perhaps this had something to do with the fact that all four of my sisters entered the nursing profession and, after a brief experiment with law enforcement, I applied for and was accepted in the pre-med program at Ohio University. I guess that I was trying to talk myself out of the direction that my life was already headed in, that of preaching the gospel. I am happy preaching finally won out, although I did keep my hand in the medical field for a number of years as an Emergency Medical Technician.

These experiences probably qualify me for nothing more than an observer with just a little bit of an edge over the average person. I have observed many people seeking a "cure" for their ailments, but who never seem to

fully achieve what they seek, because they were willing to do little or nothing for themselves in making the changes necessary to full recovery and wellness, including those of habit, environment, attitude, diet and activity. Those who get "cured" are those who not only seek and secure the best medical advice and treatment, but who also accept a healthy helping of personal responsibility in making whatever

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changes are necessary to achieve and maintain wellness.

Sin, in the Bible, is often illustrated in the figure of a disease, such as leprosy (2 Kng. 5:1-14), blindness (Mat. 15:14), or cancer (2 Tim. 2:17-18), while Jesus is recognized as the "Great" physician (Lk. 5:31-32). Searching for a cure, many people come to "church" only to find that their lives are as troubled there as in the world, who never seem to fully achieve what they seek, because they are willing to do little or nothing for themselves in making the changes necessary to full recovery. Jesus teaches, in order to be cured of the disease of sin, that repentance is necessary. Repentance means change, but

change cannot come short of admitting, in confessing sin (1 Jn. 1:8-9; Jas. 5:16), that we have been wrong. Repentance demands a change in habits, which include regular assembly, prayer and Bible study; a change in environment, including preferring the company of Christians over that of non-Christians; a change in attitude, from "me first" to "Christ first;" a change in diet, from the bread of wickedness (Prov. 4:17) to the bread of life (Jn. 6:35); a change in activity, from wasting away in sin to having the "senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14), and from being a slave of sin unto death to obedience leading to righteousness (Rom. 6:16). Those who get "cured" of sin are those who not only seek out and secure the best spiritual advice and treatment, but who also accept a healthy helping of responsibility in making whatever changes are necessary to achieve and maintain righteousness.

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“Come Lord Jesus”

By Randall F. Matheny

John closes out the book of Revelation with these heart touching words, “He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (Rev. 22:20-21). This was spoken to the church of Christ during a time shortly preceding several periods of intense persecution of the church which would end in the fall of the mighty Roman Empire. Throughout the Revelation Jesus had comforted and encouraged His faithful by revealing His majesty, authority and might, and in reassuring them (eight times in eight verses) of their victory and their eternal reward if they “overcome.” (Rev 2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:26; 3:5; 3:12; 3:21; 21:7) If John was truly “that disciple whom Jesus loved” (Jn. 21:7), he had a special interest in seeing the Lord whom he had loved so deeply return once again. Some suggest that since John likely referred to himself as the “disciple whom Jesus loved,” that the Lord had a special affection for him that He did not have for the others, but it is equally likely that John simply recognized and appreciated Christ’s love for him as worthy of emphasizing as he does in the gospel of John and his four epistles. Do we appreciate Christ’s love for us so much that we are willing to emphasize it in our lives and in our relationships with others? Do we have the same longing to see the Lord who

bought us with His blood? Can we say, “Even so, come Lord Jesus?”

Those who are longing for the Lord will always be in a state of readiness for His coming. “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect” (Lk. 12:40). They will be using their diverse abilities wisely and constantly in His service (Mat. 25:24-30). They will be busy ministering to the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick and imprisoned (Mat. 25:31-46). They are faithful to consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of themselves together (Heb. 10:24-25). They remain composed and steadfastly faithful when harbingers of doom stir up the fearful with their misinterpretation of “signs,” for when the end come we are assured that His coming will be unexpected (Mat. 24:36-39; 1 Thes. 5:2-4). Those who love Him will always be ready. “But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober” (1 Thes. 5:4-6).

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Tidbits

Overcoming Obsacles

“Good timber does not grow with ease. The stronger the wind the stronger the trees.” -- *Williard Marriott*

“Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed.” -- *Booker T. Washington*

“Any great achievement is preceded by many difficulties and many lessons, great achievements are not possible without them.”

-- *Brian Tracy*

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