

A note from Pastor Tim:

In my experience, discussing something like miraculous healings inside and outside of Scripture, comes with a particular weight. We do not discuss these issues simply as brains detached from our bodies or ideas detached from our lived realities. A question on healing is never simply a question on healing. There is often something deeper. We do not ask simply, "Does God still heal today?" but rather we want to know, "Is God going to heal this person?" or "Why didn't He heal this person?"

There is a weight of grief that comes with this discussion. While the purpose of this article was to discuss the Biblical and theological ideas behind miraculous healings, I know this can be painful for many of us. If you are in the middle of processing grief over God's response to illness or sickness or disease in your life, please let me know so our leadership can care for you as a part of our church family.

Do Miraculous Healings Still Happen Today?

We've opened our Bibles to spend time with the Lord and we're confronted with a story - a man or woman plagued by a sickness, disease, or ailment comes face to face with Jesus or one of the apostles working in the power of the Spirit, and they are healed. Maybe it's Matthew 9 and the healing of the paralytic at Capernaum. Maybe it's Mark 5 and the woman who touched Jesus cloak and was instantly healed. Maybe it's Act 3 and Peter healing the 40-year-old crippled man at the temple.

We read these stories, and we're left with a couple of questions:

- Do these types of instant, miraculous healings still exist today?
- If they do, why hasn't it happened in my circumstance or to the people I love?
- How should we think about and should we pray for miraculous healings?

On Sunday, we talked about the healing in Acts 3. And while there was not enough time to specifically talk about miraculous healings, we did want to give some time to discuss some specific questions about healing that often arise.

1. Why do sickness, disease, and pain exist?

We know that when God created the world, he declared it "very good".¹ However, as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve, sin entered the world, and with sin came brokenness. Not just spiritual brokenness, but also physical brokenness as well. All of creation now heads towards death and decay. Sickness, disease, and death are not the way things should be, but we know God still steps in and makes things right.

2. Does God still heal today?

Yes. Though some today would argue He does not, there is nothing in the Bible that indicates God has stopped or would stop. Also, this doesn't mean you should believe every report of

¹ Gen 1:31

miraculous healings that you hear. Unfortunately, due to the corruption of sin, there are false teachers who use fake healings to gain wealth, power, and fame. In all things, we should use discernment.

3. Why does God heal?

There are several reasons why God heals.

- God heals as an act of love and mercy to the suffering person.
- God heals as a validation of His servants and His witnesses.
- God heals as a sign of the future return of Christ when He will make all things new.
- God heals as a witness to non-Christians such that they might turn from their sin and put their faith in Him.
- God heals as a means of grace and motivation to His people to worship Him.

4. Should healings like the one in Acts 3 be our everyday expectation?

Yes and no. God can do anything He wants. And that includes healing in miraculous and instantaneous ways. We should pray and ask Him to heal in faith.

But we also know through lived experience that our world and our bodies are broken. God still works and heals, but in His sovereignty does not always heal when and how we would like, Which leads to our next question:

5. Will everyone who prays in faith receive healing?

Yes and no. Eventually, yes. The day is coming when God will restore all things, the dead in Christ will be raised with new, resurrected bodies, and there will be no more disease, pain, mourning, crying, or anything that is broken.² But in the short term, no, not everyone. God sometimes has bigger purposes on earth than giving us physical healing. Sometimes He allows us to know Him better through the pain in this life, and sometimes He uses our suffering to bring others to Him.

6. Should hope of supernatural healing ever replace normal medical procedures?

Never! The Bible never says that. Luke, who wrote the book of Acts, was himself a physician. Sometimes God heals miraculously without medicine or doctors, and sometimes God heals miraculously through medicine and doctors. We should pray for both and seek both. We should pray for miraculous and instantaneous healing and for the doctors and nurses to use the right treatments and have the right knowledge to aid and cure as well.

² Rev. 21:1-4

7. What should I do if I am sick or experiencing disease?

James 5:14-16 says this,

14 Is anyone among you sick? 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. 15 And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

According to this passage we should do two things:

- We should have the elders/pastors from our church come, anoint us with oil, and pray for healing with faith.
- We should confess any known or unknown sins to other believers and then pray together for healing with faith.

8. What does all of this mean for Citizens Church?

We want to be a people that believe in the miraculous healing power of God, whether instant or through medical care. If you are sick or struggling with a disease or illness, let a pastor walk through James 5 and pray for you in faith, trusting the Lord's will and hand in how He chooses to work.

Recommended Resources:

- "Healing and Faith", sermon by Trip Lee,
https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/conference_media/healing-and-faith/
- "Why Doesn't God Always Heal", by Sam Storms,
<https://www.samstorms.org/all-articles/post/why-god-doesnt-always-heal--2-cor--12:8-10->