

## Bible Study: Sept. 20, 2022

# Is Healing Meant for Today's Church?

- I. The vast majority of churches in America adhere to a cessationist theology, believing that “the sign gifts” — gifts of tongues, healing and miracles — were meant to be used only in the very earliest years of the church. In other words, the church should no longer be involved in healing, that the time of miracles is past, and that tongues is an inferior gift and was meant only for the very early church. So are they correct? Is this a reasonable theology? Is cessationism good theology?**

**And the answer is No! No! No! No! Cessationism is bad theology. It's wrong from the get-go and contradicts an abundance of Biblical teachings. Tonight, I'm going to show you why cessationism is not a Biblical teaching and actually works against the teaching of Christ.**

- II. The teachings of Jesus Himself do not support cessationism.**

Understand first that the practice of both healing and deliverance are functions of authority. When Jesus healed people or cast out demons, He set people free not by prayer but by drawing upon His authority as a Son of God and commanding demons to leave and illnesses to be healed.

The best example of that is in Luke 4:31-39 where Jesus first commands a demon out of a young man and then heals Peter's mother-in-law by commanding a fever out of her body. Three times in those verses, Jesus “rebukes” both the demon and the fever, twice provoking witnesses to exclaim about His power. Vs. 32 says, *They were amazed at his teaching, because his words had authority.* Vs. 36 says, *All the people were amazed and said to each other, “What words these are! With authority and power he commands impure spirits and they come out!”*

- A. God intended from the very beginning for His children to share in His authority.**

Gen. 1:26-28 — Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” *So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. 28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill*

*the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.*

**B. Jesus practiced healing and deliverance to provide evidence of both His identity and the truth of His message.**

*John 10:24-25, 37-38 — The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” 25 Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me. ... 37 Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. 38 But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I (am) in the Father.”*

*Matt. 11:2-6 — When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples 3 to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” 4 Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: 5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. 6 Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”*

**C. Jesus shared His authority with both apostles and disciples for the same reason: to provide evidence of Jesus’ identity and the truth of His message.**

*Matt. 10:1, 5-8 — Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. ... 5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. 7 As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.*

*Luke 10:1, 8-9, 17 — After this the Lord appointed 72 others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. 2 He told them,... “8 “When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. 9 Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ... 17 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.”*

**D. Jesus intended for His authority to accompany all of those who followed Him as they shared and preached the Gospel with others.**

Matt. 28:18-20 — *Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

**E. Jesus extends that same divine authority to all those who believe. There was no statute of limitations or limits placed upon His promises.**

John 14:12 — *Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.*

Matthew 5:3 — *He said: 3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (The word kingdom here is “basileia” and is defined in Strong’s concordance as “royal power, kingship, dominion, rule — not to be confused with an actual kingdom but rather the right or authority to rule over a kingdom)*

Mark 16:17-20 — *And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.” 19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.*

**F. The early apostles and disciples saw healings, miracles, signs and wonders to be an essential element in the preaching of the Gospel.**

Acts 3:29-31 — *Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” 31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.*

1 Cor. 1:17 — *For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.*

1 Cor. 2:4-5 — *My speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

1 Cor. 4:20 — *The kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.*

Eph. 6:10 — *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.*

**F. God was not happy with those who, when faced with a deliverance or healing situation, would not or could not get the job done.**

Matt. 17:14-18 — *When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. 15 “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. 16 I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.” 17 “You unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.” 18 Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment.*

Ezek. 34:1-2, 4, 10 — *The word of the Lord came to me: 2 “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to you shepherds of Israel who only take care of yourselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? ... 4 You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. ... 10 This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them.*