

Institute for Christian Teaching

**A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON DISEASE, HEALTH,
AND HEALING**

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I. BIBLICAL PREMISES FOUNDATIONAL TO MY UNDERSTANDING OF MEDICINE:

Many Biblical notions inform the Christian practice of medicine. In this paper I will examine a few that are formative. The Bible takes a very high view of the physical especially our physical bodies. We were created in the “image of God.” Not only did God create us with physical bodies, He personally incarnated into a physical body, healed physical bodies, was resurrected with a physical body and gave the gifts of healing physical bodies to His disciples and to His church. He will yet redeem our mortal physical bodies transforming them into an immortal body. Though multifactorial, humans are an integrated whole. Health requires that the multiple factors be integrated and in balance. Human brokenness, a consequence of broken fellowship with God, sheds the “image of the Divine.” Healing requires healing of the physical, mental, emotional, social and religious facets as well as healing of the spiritual; it requires restoration of the “image of God.” Healing occurs only in community, without community healing is incomplete. God gifted His Church with many gifts, including the gifts of healing. He appointed His Church to be Communities of Healing ministering physical, emotional, social, religious and spiritual healing.. Churches are to be communities that call (give vocation to) individuals to heal as their ministry.

II. BIBLICAL VIEW OF MAN

A. Man and woman were created with body, soul and spirit

The Biblical story begins with creation, “In the beginning God created” (Genesis 1:1¹). He called His creation “good.” It was a garden with light and atmosphere, water and dry land and heavenly bodies that mark time—for whom? Some creatures frolicked in the waters; some cavorted in the

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Biblical references are from *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984.

air and others on land. God enjoyed His creation and “saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:9,12, 18, 21, 25).

For what purpose had God created all this? Why did He bring it into existence? It was beautiful and watching brought joy much as we enjoy aquariums and zoological and botanical gardens. But why had God made all of this? God culminated His creation on planet Earth with people. “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over” (Genesis 1:26). Obviously, God created Eden for Adam and Eve (“them”). God created physical beauty, He provided nourishment, not just protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals but beautiful food, tasty food, “pleasing to the eye and good for food” (Genesis 2:9). God created a garden, a “biosphere,” that would appeal to the physical senses. God “willed” human existence and it was so (Revelation 4:11).

Most of creation appeared as God spoke, “Let there be . . .” but this was not so for humans. Deliberately God chose to create humans differently. With His hands the LORD God took soil and shaped it, and then “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7). Similarly, God formed and shaped Eve. Human life required God’s intimate and direct activities, simply speaking was not adequate! God caressed them into shape and “kissed” them to life! Imagine His thoughts during this time! What feelings and emotions did God have? God was pleased with His creation, He exclaimed “very good” (Genesis 1:31).

Why did God create people? What did God want out of this? Clearly God desired fellowship with His new creation; He wanted them to know and love Him. “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” (Deuteronomy 6:4,5). God wanted fellowship that involved heart and soul, all their strength, strength of spirit as well as mind, emotion and will. God wanted them to

know and understand Him (Jeremiah 9:23, 24; John 17:3). It included physical strength. These were to be integrated in an intimate communing fellowship with God (Genesis 1:28, 3:9, Isaiah 45:18).

When Adam came from the Creator's hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. "God created man in His own image" (Genesis 1:27), and it was His purpose that the longer man lived the more fully he should reveal this image—the more fully reflect the glory of the Creator. All his faculties were capable of development; their capacity and vigor were continually to increase.²

B. In God's sight, humans have inestimable value—

God did not create as an absentee landlord. God valued His children. He cared passionately about them. God talked face to face with Adam and Eve. Even after the Fall, when they disgraced both their Maker and themselves, God cared passionately. Later, when His chosen people were worshipping false gods, He said,

“For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. . . Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, . . . I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’ Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth—everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made” Isaiah 43:3, 4, 6-7.

God's incarnation into human form documents His love for His creation. “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). No additional evidence is possible. During His short life, many events document God's love. I am attracted to the words God spoke after Jesus' baptism, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17 NRSV).

The promise that you are accepted in the Beloved comes to you. Hold it with the grip of unyielding faith. God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This means that through the dark shadow, which Satan has thrown athwart your pathway Christ has cleaved

² White Ellen G, *Education*, 1903 Pacific Press Publishing Association, Nampa Idaho; p 15.

the way for you to the throne of the infinite God. He has laid hold of almighty power, and you are accepted in the Beloved³.

III. HUMANS WERE CREATED IN THE “IMAGE OF GOD”⁴ THIS MEANS WE WERE CREATED FOR RELATIONSHIPS.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.” . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him (Genesis 1:26-27).

A. God created us to have fellowship with Him. This defines our “child-ness.”

God created people to glorify His Name. This they did with progressive joy and increasing praise. In worshipping Him they fulfilled the deepest passion of their being. “Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture” (Psalms 100:3). “For in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). God purposed that we, His creation, should be holy, “Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy” (Leviticus 19:2). In close fellowship with God, loving Him, living “in Him, through Him and with Him” we listen to Him. We live obedient lives—we become “holy.”

Man, created for fellowship with God, can only in such fellowship find his real life and development. Created to find in God his highest joy, he can find in nothing else that, which can quiet the cravings of the heart, can satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul⁵.

God desired that His creation be holy so they would experience the joy and harmony of Heaven, so they would experience God’s love. Because they experienced God’s love, His people would live joyous and fulfilled lives (1 John 4:16). However, people turned from God. They went their “own ways” (Isaiah 53:6). They sinned against God. They sought gods made in their own image. Even in this despicable plight, while His people debased themselves with idolatrous worship,

³ White Ellen G. *Lift Him Up*, 1988; Pacific Press Publishing Association, Nampa Idaho; p 109. See also *God’s Amazing Grace*, 1973; Pacific Press Publishing Association, Nampa Idaho; p 83.

⁴ I am indebted for the development of this section to Gottfried Oosterwal’s presentation, “Made in the Image of God.” A lecture given at the Conference—“Toward A Theology of Healing”, May 19, 1978

⁵ White Ellen G. *Education*, 1903, Pacific Press Publishing Association, Nampa Idaho 83687, p 124-125

God's love did not waver. God willed that Israel would experience His love, for if they did, they would turn from their idolatrous ways and would "acknowledge the Lord" (Hosea 2:19-20).

In a world filled with false worship, God wanted His people to be His witnesses, to tell of His goodness and love. God's people document that God's ways are good and in contrast, all else obviously false, impotent, and unable to fulfill human longings. All else destroys humanity spiritually, emotionally, socially as well as physically.

"You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior. I have revealed and saved and proclaimed—I, and not some foreign god among you. You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "that I am God . . . the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise." Isaiah 43:10-12, 21.

B. We were created to relate to others, our "we-ness."

God created "them," not individuals, but a couple (Genesis 1:27). First created, Adam soon realized what God knew, "It is not good for the man to be alone." In response to Adam's need, God created "a helper suitable for him" (Genesis 2:18). Created from Adam's side, Eve was Adam's equal, neither superior nor inferior to Him. God created Eve to be Adam's "helper,"⁶ neither a position of inferiority nor of superiority.

After experiencing aloneness and unable to identify with any creature in all of creation, Adam sees Eve, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man" (Genesis 2: 23). Adam immediately recognized Eve as God's sublime gift. He received her in her radiant beauty from God's hand. "Who gives this woman to be wife?" God answered, "I do." God created marriage to complete the "image of God" for He self-identified in the plural, "us," "our" (Genesis 1:26). Marriage included the physical relationship, "they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame"

⁶ The same Hebrew word is used to describe one of God's relationships in Exodus 18:4 and Psalms 118:4

(Genesis 2:24-25). God created marital sexuality to increase intimacy, decrease shame and strengthen the marital bond as well as for procreation.

Though “the fall” occurred before Earth’s population increased, clearly God intended that people live as a community, having “common” interests and concerns. Each was to love and serve others, even as God loves and serves His creation. In loving service God’s love is completed in us (1 John 4:7-8, 12). This is not a trivial issue only of interest to those fanatical about God’s likeness. In a parable told during Passion Week, Christ taught that acts of kindness done for others are done for the King. The King will say to those who neglect the less fortunate, “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. . . [For] I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me” (Matthew 25:31-46). God takes seriously our treatment of fellow human beings. He “will give to each person according to what he has done” (Romans 2:5,6) in the treatment of others.

C. We were created to “rule over” and “care for” God’s creation, our “stewardship.”
 God created a beautiful earth for Adam and Eve to enjoy. To enjoy they had to “care for” and “rule over” it. They were to enjoy God’s creation and by their creative imaginations and physical labor to personalize and modify it. God put them in control, they would want Eden to reflect their maturing esthetic senses. It would always be God’s creation reflecting their tastes (Genesis 1:26, 28; 2:15; Psalms 8:6).

God created Adam and Eve out of the Earth. God entrusted Adam and Eve with creativity, the power to procreate. In addition God gave them the ability to transform created objects into beautiful items of value, thus, they had the ability to create wealth. God entrusted them with these gifts as His stewards who would use His creation both in worship and to benefit those less fortunate as well as the general community (Leviticus 23:22; Leviticus 25:25; Luke 12:33). It

was God's intention that His people would always give to others. This was a significant part of worship in the New Testament Church (Acts 24:17). Followers of Jesus will be generous. Not only will this bless the recipient but generosity also blesses the giver (Proverbs 22:9; 2 Corinthians 9:7).

D. God gave several gifts to Adam and Eve:

Of the many gifts with which God endowed the first couple, I will emphasize only three.

1. The power of choice:

Adam and Eve enjoyed the perfect bodies God created while they explored His flawless creation. They lived in His presence, daily communicated with Him face to face. Experiencing the intimacy God designed in their marriage they explored "knowing" with tenderness and growing love. Their intelligent minds, created to learn everything about His creation, though disciplined by their wills explored all of creation with an exploding curiosity. God gave them the "freedom of choice": He restricted what they could eat. They could choose to obedience or disobedience. Following the fall, humanity never lost its freedom to choose (Deuteronomy 30:19; Joshua 24:15; Romans 6:13,14).

2. The gift of community:

We are individuals in community. If we lose either individuality or community we lose our humanity. Communities provide the story of our origin and the stories of our heritage. In the Old Testament, God related to Israel as a community, not as individuals. Israel was the "people of God" (Judges 20:2). The New Testament reveals God relating to individuals on occasion, but most of His communication was through His Church. Church members realized that they were God's offspring, His beloved children. God miraculously preserved Holy Scripture through His Church. The Church, a called community, bases its ethics and moral decisions on Scripture. Without the Church community, we have minimal basis for experiencing either God's love or

fellowship with Him. Without community we decide how to interpret Scripture and create ethics that justify our behaviors. Without the Church community we lack responsibility to others and usually live self-existent lives. We become demigods without service (ministry) to the needs of others. Without community life is meaningless and we experience existential loneliness.

Communities are havens for those less able to provide for themselves, the “widow, orphan and alien” and the disabled. We need “the poor” that we have opportunity to share what “we earned,” more properly what God added to our efforts, i.e. our blessings. As we share in the suffering of others, as we open ourselves to their needs we realize how much we have and how little we really need (Deuteronomy 15:10-11).

3. Bodies that are the temple of the Holy Spirit

God promised to “never leave you nor forsake you” (Deuteronomy 31:6; Hebrews 13:5). In their darkest hours Israel’s hope was based on this promise, this was the source of their courage: God was with them, He was against their enemies. Immanuel, one of God’s names means “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14). In clarifying this relationship, Paul teaches us that our bodies, our physical bodies, are “a temple [presumably a physical structure] of the Holy Spirit, who is in you” (1 Corinthians 6:19). The implications of this fact are awesome. It identifies ownership and stewardship, director and caretaker, who has rights and who has obligations. It speaks about the value of our physical bodies, how attentively we should care for and carefully use our physical bodies.

We are a multifaceted whole, an integrated unity, body, mind and spirit created to fellowship with God and to bring Him glory. “When Adam came from the Creator’s hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. ‘God created man in His own image’ (Genesis 1:27). ...By disobedience this was forfeited. Through sin the divine likeness

was marred, and well-nigh obliterated. Man's physical powers were weakened, his mental capacity was lessened, his spiritual vision dimmed⁷."

IV. SCRIPTURE VALUES THE PHYSICAL ASPECT OF PERSONHOOD

For over 1500 years, religion has embraced an attitude from classical Greek thought that demeaned the value of the physical body. This attitude manifests in many practices designed to punish and subdue the physical body. Paul's statement, "I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize" (1 Corinthians 9:27) was used to justify this anti-body attitude. However, this interpretation is not consistent with the rest of scripture.

A. Scripture promises the restoration of physical bodies

I am not a theologian and am not prepared to exegete these texts. However, the attached writing from Paul strongly suggests that a body resurrection occurs at the Second Advent.

"But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised" (1 Corinthians 15:12-13).

After His resurrection, Christ was seen in bodily form. He ate and demonstrated His wounds convincing His terrified disciples that indeed He was Jesus, His body was Jesus' body. The disciples recognized Jesus by His body (John 20:24-29; 21:1-14).

Paul argues that the Holy Spirit will give life to our physical bodies (Romans 8:11). We will be transformed, "And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven" (1 Corinthians 15:47-49). Transformation to the type of body Jesus had after His resurrection occurs at the Second Coming of Jesus (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Paul calls this a transformation from "our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious

⁷ Ellen G. White, *Education*, *ibid* p 15. also Tillich Paul, *The Meaning of Health: The Relation of Religion and Health*, 1981, North Atlantic Books, Richmond, CA p 53

body” (Philippians 3:21). Until that time we have an internal angst awaiting the “redemption of our bodies” (Romans 8:23).

“The bodily resurrection of Jesus is the most profound basis for the sacredness of all human flesh,” Henri J. M. Nouwen. “The resurrection body will be the perfect vehicle of our redeemed personality⁸.”

B. We are to honor God with our bodies:

We are not to deprive our bodies or treat it with disdain. We must value our bodies for two reasons: first, they are not ours, they belong to God. By His creation and His redemption God verifies His ownership of our bodies. Second, we are commanded to honor our bodies. This does not mean we may indulge our bodies by eating, doing or participating in any desired quantity of whatever practice our fallen bodies may desire. Rather we are to respect our bodies, “rule over” and “care for” them as stewards of God’s creation (1 Corinthians 6: 20).

C. The Decalogue specifically deals with physical sins

Many of the Ten Commandments deal specifically with body activities. The Sabbath commandment (fourth commandment) requires rest that includes body rest (more about the Sabbath later in this paper). Murder, adultery and stealing are body activities, though clearly not the essence of the sixth through eighth commandments. The ninth command deals with speaking untruths. In a larger sense, each commandment has a physical component, even though the essence of commandment keeping is relational (Mark 12:28-31; James 2:8). In truth, each commandment makes demands upon every dimension of a person. All that misuses or degrades the physical body is called sin (Romans 1:29-31; Galatians 5:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:1-5). We are to flee from all such practices (1 Corinthians 6:18). The body must be valued, it is precious; loaned us for the time being by God, a gift for which each person must give an account to God (2 Corinthians 5:10).

D. Humans were created as both sexual and spiritual beings

God created human sexuality. Adam and Eve were bone of each other's bones, flesh of each other's flesh. They were equals, brought together to complete God's creation. Community, intimacy, "one flesh" were necessary for the creation of man and woman to be "very good." Each was in a relationship of helper to the other. Each was responsible before God for self and for giving to the other. In this relationship with God as source, unconditional love was possible. Each shared what God had provided, neither was source for the other. Each lifted the other to God for sustenance and completeness, neither tried to get completeness from the other. Their relationship included physical intimacy, mental compatibility, emotional sharing, social support and spiritual unity as they worshipped Yahweh. In this union, sexual compatibility is defined. Their relationship challenges the notions of sexuality paraded today.

E. God showed His great concern for the less fortunate:

Because of the fall, the diversity of individuals resulted in depraved human behavior. As a result widow, orphans, aliens and strangers are often poor, neglected and treated unjustly. God is not pleased! He expects His people, His Church to provide for their physical needs including food, clothing, shelter and community. God, identified as King, commends those who feed the hungry, provide water for the thirsty, take in the stranger and clothe those without and visit those in prison. He is angry with those who, though self perceived to be righteous, do not provide for the less fortunate. Without asking for an explanation, the King says, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (see Matthew 25:31-46). The King takes very serious provision for the physical needs of the less fortunate.

⁸ quoted in Stott John. *Romans: God's Good News for the World,* 1994. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL p 227

The physical body is important to God. He created it, redeemed it, and will yet transform it. We, God's people are to care for our bodies and provide for the physical needs of His less fortunate children.

V. SIN

The great flow of Biblical history includes creation, the fall, redemption and glorification. At "the fall" Adam and Eve sinned against God. First they chose not to trust Him. This was the original Sin. This decision made them sinners. As sinners, they sinned. Sinning is the natural activity of sinners. Scripture gives multiple definitions of Sin, here I combine several into a core definition. Judah "neither [sought] the LORD nor inquire[ed] of him" (Zephaniah 1:6). Another prophet describes the following behavior as sin, "I called but you did not answer, I spoke but you did not listen" (Isaiah 65:12). This arrogance is summarized by Isaiah, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6). Sin is anything that denigrates our fellowship with God as the Almighty King. By "doing our own thing," "going our own way," we are "those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil" (Romans 2:8).

A. Genesis 3 speaks to our sin

Reviewing the record of "the fall" we notice two important characteristics critical in today's world. First, Adam and Eve doubted God and believed the serpent, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" (Genesis 3:1). Second, the tempter was sly, "the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals" (Genesis 3:1). Satan customized his temptation to meet desires he suspected present in Eve. Notice the sequence: Distrust of God's goodness→Sin—they disobeyed God.

It was distrust of God's goodness, disbelief of His word, and rejection of His authority, that made our first parents transgressors, and that brought into the world a knowledge of evil. It

was this that opened the door to every species of falsehood and error. Man lost all because he chose to listen to the deceiver rather than to Him who is Truth, who alone has understanding⁹.

Why did Eve sin? Had God placed them in a barren plot without good food or information about His will? No, God put them in a beautiful garden with delicious food. God communed with them and instructed them. Why Eve's dilemma, why then did she see "that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom"? (Genesis 3:6) Why did she take some and eat it (Genesis 3:8)? What was the basis for her decision? Note how the serpent pressed his point, "your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God" (Genesis 3:5). He offered her **pride**. Instead of living as one of God's creatures, she could become a "god"! God had provided her every need. She lacked any understanding about being a "god," she did not know what was involved. Without a reasonable basis for dissatisfaction, she chose to be dissatisfied with God's provisions. She chose to believe the Satan's lie that God had not adequately provided for her. She embraced pride.

The record gives us another reason why she ate the forbidden fruit: "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom" Genesis 3:6. Suddenly, the attractive fruit seemed more attractive than anything else, **sensual desire** called and she responded.

As "gods" humans are totally ineffective. They cannot attend to the many problems in their own world, let alone respond to other problems about to burst into their world. They lack wisdom and power, they do not know right and wrong and if they knew they would not know how to do right. They are incapable of fulfilling their deepest desires. They long for meaning now and a future with hope, residue of "the image of God." They want joy, they want to return to the Garden for which they were created. As "gods" they were totally lacking in the ability to provide meaning

⁹ White Ellen G. *Education, ibid*, p 25

and hope, they can not create joy, they can not return themselves or anyone else to their garden innocence. Their pride demanded more than their impotence could produce. Their sensual desires continued to demand more and more, they were never satisfied. They became empty cups desperately trying to be full¹⁰.

Because humans decided to go their own way, they replaced God as the center of their world and took that center spot themselves. Trying to become gods they fail at this, life's epic struggle. In their pride they attempted to play "god," exploiting their surroundings trying to build memorials that would perpetuate their memories¹¹ they build to satisfy their egos and desires. They exploit freedom glorifying self, unwilling to trust Yahweh and wait for His glorification. Freedom, no longer a means of knowing God, became their goal and so they lost freedom. They became a law unto themselves unable to distinguish right from wrong; they had no desire to do right and were powerless to avoid wrong. They became slaves of sin.

B. Not just our first parents sinned, we sin as did they:

We turn aside from our destiny and misuse our freedom. We choose to be independent from God and become our own "gods."

When I am not convinced that God is good, I will quietly—but with tight-lipped response—take over responsibility for my own well being. Whenever we place a higher priority on solving our problems than on pursuing God, we are immoral. . . . We must call God good even when we suffer—because he is!¹²

Note the sin sequence outlined by Paul in Romans 1:21-25:

For although they knew God, **they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him**, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, **they became fools** and **exchanged the glory** of the immortal God for **images** made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. **Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity** for the degrading of their

¹⁰ Hemfelt Robert, Minirth Frank, Meier Paul. *Love Is A Choice*; 1989. Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville. P 34 ff

¹¹ Becker, Earnest, *The Denial of Death*, 1973, The Free Press, New York

¹² Crabb, Larry, *Finding God*, 1993, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI 49530; p 38

bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator.

Their knowledge of God was distorted. However, they decided not to worship God, they refused to thank Him for what He provided. As a result they became fools, unable to think clearly. Stupidly, they exchanged God's glory for mundane things. God gave them their desires and degrading sins occurred. Later in the chapter, Paul identifies additional sins with additional degradation.

James reiterates the sequence. We are tempted when we see ways of fulfilling our "own evil desire." Everything depends upon what we do next. If we play with the temptation, fantasize about its pleasure, ignore its injury and destructiveness, we are "dragged away and enticed." Unless blocked, desire continues to grow and "gives birth to sin" which eventually leads to death (James 1:14-15). The individual acts or sins "are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like" (Galatians 5:19-21).

C. Loss of our "child-ness"

Distrust breaks our fellowship with God, we hide from Him and our "child-ness" (Genesis 3:8). As did Adam and Eve, we hide among our "trees" because we are "afraid and naked." We develop defenses and put on masks. Each works hard cultivating a persona, developing a mask so they will be acceptable, liked and not abandoned. We develop identity marks, put on an appearance and seek achievements, power and the approval of others. Many use religious observance to garner God's approval. Unfortunately, they have "a form of godliness but" deny its power. Hiding from God, trying to be a "god," they are unaware that the LORD their God is with them, He is mighty to save. He takes great delight in them, He will quiet them with his love, He will rejoice over them with singing (Zephaniah 3:17). God is not looking for scrupulous,

punctilious following of the letter of the law. He desires mercy, not sacrifice, He wants them to acknowledge Him (Hosea 6:6-7), “to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with [their] God” (Micah 6:8).

Many hide behind their profession. Work is a place with high personal rewards. Flattering people hoping to get advancement characterize professionals. Highly trained in their area of competence they face chosen challenges without having to make unpleasant decisions in areas where they feel incompetent. Their egos feed at the trough of success believing they are successful. However they are afraid Knowing they are naked they hide behind the tree of professionalism.

Profession is an occupational organization that gains for its members a monopoly in a particular segment of the labor market. When a profession achieves a monopoly, it controls who gets in, how they are trained, how they work, for whom they work, the type of public regulations they work under and how much they are paid. Professions try to become free from the dominance of other organizations and in turn, to control the work of other occupational groups. From the power perspective, monopoly and dominance become the yardsticks to judge the extent to which an occupation has grown into a profession.¹³

What are we so afraid of? As incompetent and impotent “gods” we have much to fear (Isaiah 29:16; Isaiah 45:9). Alone, battling the forces of evil without resources, threatened on every side, we are afraid of death (Hebrews 2:14,15) and we are afraid of life. The future holds unknown terrors and we fear loss and failure. Shame and guilt identify us as “naked” impotent gods. We are afraid of others, they will out perform us and discover the sham of our façade. Trying to be “god” who challenge God is very difficult.

Pride and self-trust cause us to be fearful. We fear because our fellowship with God is broken. We need healing for our “fear,” removal of our shame and covering for our “nakedness.” These occur only as our fellowship with God is restored. To this end, the Church is called to become a “Community of Healing” and members are called to be ministers of healing. Church members

¹³ Donald B. Kraybill & Phyllis Pellman Good. *The Process of Professionalization*, 1982; Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pa.

are called to exercise the “gifts of healing” (1 Corinthians 12:28). Jesus gives these gifts “to prepare God’s people for works of service” (Ephesians 4:11-12). All healing is the work of God. When members and the Church obediently exercise these “gifts” they offer the Holy Spirit the opportunity to heal, healing that would not occur without the participation of the Church and its members.

D. Loss of our “we-ness”:

Our broken fellowship with God results in broken relationships with others manifest by indifference to their suffering, greed, contempt toward those who are different, irresponsibility, blaming and loneliness.

Indifference towards the suffering of others is a grievous sin that leads to debauchery (Ezekiel 16:49). God will not accept into Heaven those indifferent to the needs of others (Matthew 25:45-46). The Church, with its many people from many different cultures, with different persuasions form “one body and each member belongs to all the others” (Romans 12:5). God calls His people to “loose the chains of injustice . . . and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free.” He calls us “to share our food with the hungry and to provide the poor wander with shelter—when we see the naked, to clothe him and not to turn away from our own flesh and blood” (Isaiah 58:6-7).

Greed is a particularly onerous sin. Its human manifestations include workaholism and professionalism (Psalms 9:16). Those so infected splinter communities and alter the course of churches. They are the antithesis of ministry. Defending their politically correct behavior they sweep away the little that the poor have (Proverbs 13:23) by preying upon the down trodden without defenders (Proverbs 22:16; Proverbs 30:14). The greedy are not children of God (1 John

3:10) and He will enter judgment against them, against all who do not defend the socially disadvantaged (Isaiah 3:14-15).

Contempt towards those who are different inevitably manifests in those trying to be successful “gods.” People differences block our path. They do not advance our plans. Demigods have great problems with diversity (Galatians 3:28).

Irresponsibility and blaming appeared immediately after the entrance of Sin. Adam so “loved” Eve that he could not bear the thought of life separate from her, i.e. he chose against life with God apart from Eve. What happened after “the fall”? Adam blames God, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it” (Genesis 3:12). You have the picture, don’t you? Eve, the stronger of the two (sic) put Adam in a half Nelson and forces the fruit into his mouth! And Eve, who trusted the serpent, blames God for creating serpents. Neither acknowledged personal culpability, each blamed somebody else. Ultimately both blamed God!

Being a “god” creates loneliness and restlessness, the sense of “not being at home anywhere.” This brings depression and anxiety in its wake. People who distrust God are well described by Moses:

You will find no repose, no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the LORD will give you an anxious mind, eyes weary with longing, and a despairing heart. You will live in constant suspense, filled with dread both night and day, never sure of your life. In the morning you will say, “If only it were evening!” and in the evening, “If only it were morning!”—Because of the terror that will fill your hearts and the sights that your eyes will see. (Deuteronomy 28:65-67)

People without faith in God exploit and manipulate people as they build memorials to themselves. They “climb the ladder of success” only to find that it was placed on the wrong wall. In reality, they trample on the backs of the poor, the widow, the stranger and the orphans

(Zechariah 7:10), i.e. the defenseless. They exploit people and resources in a desperate attempt to find power, prestige and control. Frantically, they try to become “somebody¹⁴” (Psalms 10:2-4).

The solution for our fractured relationships with others, our hatred, racism, prejudiced arrogance, our manipulative beneficence cannot be found by learning new behaviors. Effective treatment requires treatment of our core issue, restoration of broken fellowship with God. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we “put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the *image of its Creator*” (Colossians 3:10).

E. Loss of our stewardship:

Our broken fellowship with God blocks our ability to rule and care for planet Earth. For thousands of years humans were slaves of their environment. They deified what they believed were the powers of the earth so that they might effectively control them. This did not work! With increased scientific knowledge man abandoned his deified forces without returning to his Creator. Now man is his own “god.” Exploiting his powers to control the environment, he is destroying the earth. God does not look kindly upon those who desecrate His creation, they will be destroyed (Revelation 11:18).

The sensuous desires of demigods seek for more satisfying pleasures. Power and pride drive them to further exploitation that results in economic disparity with poverty, sickness and starvation. Attempts to correct past hurts cause “gods” to war against each other accentuating human misery. These result in the diseases of “civilization:” over consumption, lack of exercise while others die from over work, multiple traumas, pollution and crowding in vermin ridden, unsanitary living conditions.

¹⁴ Wagner, Maurice E., *The Sensation of Being Somebody*, 1975, HarperPaperbacks, New York

Correction of societal problems does not lend itself to slogans or “behavior modification.” Demigods separated from Omnipotence and Omniscience are impotent and ignorant. They can discuss, have conferences and treaties, but all these activities are attempts to fulfill their desire to be needed. They must step down from their mini-thrones and humbly seek to have their broken fellowship with God restored before significant changes can occur.

F. Brokenness and healing

Sin is not some broken part of our person-hood or a distorted behavior. Sin is just another name for going our “own way” (Isaiah 53:6). Sin is trusting self instead of God. Sin breaks our fellowship with God. Though our fellowship is broken, God does not sever His relationship, His love and His caring (2 Corinthians 4:4). Healing that only restores the broken parts (body, mind, emotion, social or religious) of man remains incomplete. A Biblically based ministry of healing must seek restoration of broken relationships as its first priority and ultimate aim; i.e.—restoration of fellowship with God, restoration of relationships with others and stewardship of planet Earth. While He continues to support our life, God desires that our broken fellowship with Him be restored (Acts 17:28). He calls us to “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water” (Revelation 14:7).

VI. BIBLICAL VIEW OF DISEASE

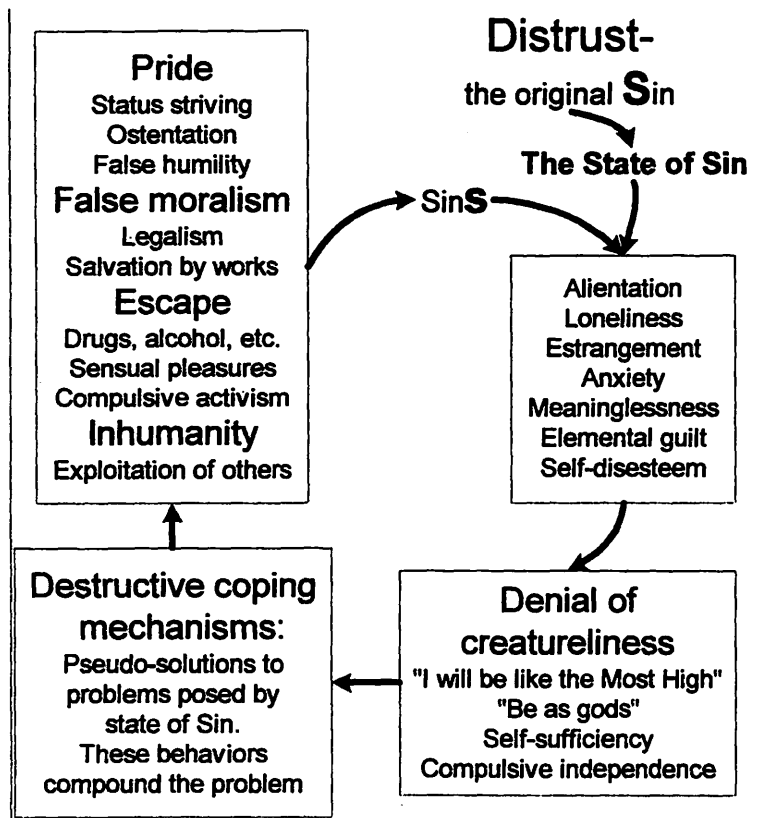
Disease, suffering and death were not part of God’s original plan nor will they be present when God’s original plan is restored (Isaiah 65:25; Revelation 21:4).

A. Spiritual Brokenness¹⁵

Distrust, the fundamental Sin, produces the “state of sin” with consequential spiritual guilt and self disesteem. The “state of sin” causes us to deny our creatureliness and seek to be “like the

Most High.” It revels in the lie, “you will be like God.” When we trust self it practices compulsive independence. This leads to destructive coping mechanisms. In reality these are pseudo-solutions to the spiritual brokenness. The destructive coping mechanisms are “sins” and include pride, moralism, escape and inhumanity. These behaviors compound the extant brokenness, including alienation, loneliness, estrangement, anxiety, meaninglessness, elemental guilt and self-disesteem. The cycle of sin and death destroy the spiritual life as well as the soul and body. Distrust, which initiates the state of sin, requires resolution.

Self-defined solutions (sins) worsen spiritual brokenness requiring more drastic coping



mechanisms that further decimate spirituality. The sinful coping mechanisms also harm the physical, emotional, social and religious facets of person-hood. Death occurs—the spirit and the soul die and eventually the body dies. Sadly, many people with living bodies are dead in soul and spirit.

Broken fellowship with God is

the radical etiology for our physical, emotional and social diseases. Our coping mechanisms for our awful emptiness are destructive and worsen our plight. We, by our selves, are helpless; we

¹⁵ Provonsha, Jack W. *God is With Us*, 1974; Review and Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, MD; p 124.

are impotent “gods” incapable of fixing our existential brokenness. We must inquire of Yahweh, come when He calls, listen when He speaks. We must cease to follow our own ways. We need to turn to Him and be saved—saved from our desperate plight.

Most illness is not the direct consequence of the sick individual’s behavior. The possibility of illness occurs because of separation from the Life Giver. Historical deviancy, society’s dissipation and exploitation as well as family and tribal cruelty explain specific illnesses. Individuals participate in their own illness as they utilize destructive coping mechanisms to resolve their state of sin.

B. Existential brokenness and secondary coping mechanisms:

The human heart carries the awareness that it is broken. Humans, posing as “gods,” are unable to heal their suffering. They try many human responses, defenses and other coping mechanisms, all of which worsen their predicament. The human situation is truly pitiful. We are hounded by “fearful plagues,” “prolonged disasters and severe and lingering illnesses . . . [with] every kind of sickness and disaster” (Deuteronomy 28:58-61). Numerous pseudo-solutions promise to restore our broken fellowship with Yahweh. Instead of seeking God, many pursue pride, sensual desires and greed, some societies exploit people and the resources of planet Earth, other societies attempt to dominate and manipulate causing wars, debasing work conditions, commerce in debauchery and slavery.

Pursing pride and sensual desires, exploitation and manipulation “poison” intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships, the Earth and its environment. These cause poverty and imbalance in availability of food, clothing and shelter with resultant pathology. They increase environmental poisoning with the entrance of infectious agents and toxins into food and water.

- Epidemics due to infectious agents spread by polluted water and food, insect vectors and vermin further complicate living conditions. These also pollute the air with airborne pathogens that cause endemic infections. Unhealthful and destructive sexual behaviors spread disease to one third of a billion people every year.
- Wide spread exposure to toxic substances (commercialization of toxic substances, inadequate food preservation and biologic terrorism or warfare) and the psychological consequences of the threat cause wide spread morbidity and mortality. In addition, toxic substances, radiation and trauma frequently cause disease and impairment.
- Epidemics of addiction with consequent poverty and violence are found associated with both the wealthy and the poor.
- Loss of values (doing destructive acts), self-hatred, loss of community and existential loneliness contribute to current epidemics of fear, anxiety and depression.
- Individual and societal attitudes (i.e. racism, etc.) cause epidemics of hatred and violence with wasted lives and death. Abolition of appropriate norms (“tolerance” with loss of truth) destroys God-centered spiritual, religious, social, emotional and physical health.
- The consequences of plenty—diet of refined foods that are high in fat as well as inadequate exercise destroy health. Inadequate preventative measures and inadequate acute and restorative health care add to the burden of disease.

These factors spread as individuals and societies seek to heal themselves and provide for their desires. By trusting pseudo-solutions such wealth and power, as alcohol and other chemicals, sex, cunning and manipulation society as well as individuals further distort the “image of God,” increase existential brokenness and justify their behaviors with thinking, logic and rationalizations deviant from Biblical norms.

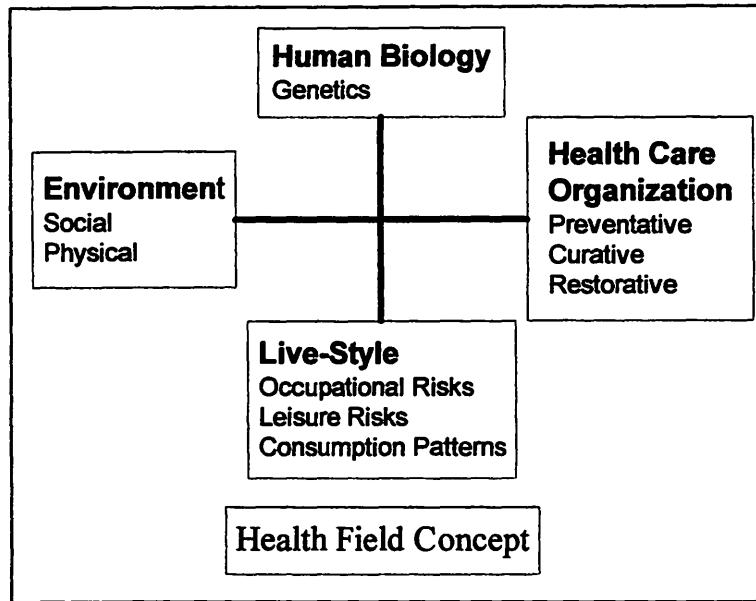
C. Relationship between attitudes and prevalence of diseases

I choose to define disease, the result of both Sin and sins, as loss of a person’s inherent unity, a fractured wholeness, an exploitation of the multiple facets of life, a loss of community. It is the inevitable result of broken fellowship with God. Disease is dys-ease.

The health field concept¹⁶ is a model that attempts to integrate the individual and societal factors that result in physical dysfunction. It imagines a map (see figure below) with four poles. The prevalence of factors in each category give weight (imagine height) at map loci. resultant maps predict disease frequency. This is an excellent way of evaluating selected potential preventative measures.

- a) **Life-Style:** These are internal health factors, factors which only the individual can control: These cause forty-three percent of premature mortality.
- b) **Human biology:** These are basic biologic factors that present technology cannot prevent. These cause twenty-seven percent of premature mortality.
- c) **Environment:** These are external health factors controlled by society and culture, not individuals. These cause nineteen percent of premature mortality.

- d) Health care organization: These deal with the availability and quality of resources. These cause eleven percent of premature mortality.



Factor	Examples
Life-Style	Alcohol Other chemicals Sex Exercise and diet Risk taking behavior
Human biology	Genetics Aging Degenerative Diseases
Environment	Food Water Drugs Air quality Physical, social & psychological factors
Health Care	Preventative Curative Restorative

¹⁶ LaForce, F. Mark, "Discovering Prevention: One Chief's Odyssey," 1990, *Pharos* 53:winter, p 32.

Health Field Element	Percent Cause of Premature Mortality	Percent of Health Care Expenditures
Life-Style	43	1
Human Biology	27	22
Environment	19	2
Health Care System	11	74

Note the disequilibrium between the relative frequency of factors that cause untimely death and the expenditures for those factors!

Analyses such as these evidence the importance of pride and greed in human health. While the role of pride and greed in life style and environment may be obvious, their effect on the availability of resources for health care may be less so. Recall that the provision of health care has become a major commercial enterprise driven by “the market.” Among those seeking to make a profit, we find the “not for profit.” (Many have become “not for Prophet”!)

D. Addiction theory and causation of disease

Addiction theory illustrates this process¹⁷. Addictions are destructive behaviors persistently practiced by people despite injury to themselves and/or others for whom they care. Addictions bring immediate relief from pain and suffering regardless of type, and are followed by shame, guilt, poor self image, worthlessness, meaninglessness, loneliness, fear, rage, etc. As the pleasure effect wanes the suffering reemerge along with the shame, guilt and other consequences of the addictive behavior. The resultant suffering is greater with greater inducement to repeat the addictive behavior. The downward spiral makes another turn. The source of relief worsens the problem. Worsening problems increase the need for relief, however even additional addictive behaviors do not bring relief. Ultimately, addictive behaviors only ease the pain of withdrawal.

¹⁷ McCormick, Patrick. *Sin as Addiction*, 1989. Paulist Press, New York; pp 200.

Distrust causes a state of sin, distorts of the “image of God” with destroys fellowship with Him. As humans try to be their own “gods” they seek pseudo-solutions to the consequences of their lost fellowship. The pseudo-solutions become addictions that destroy God given emotional, physical, social and spiritual health; they activate downward cycles leading to disease and early death.

The Health Field Concept shows that life style and environment cause nearly two thirds of premature death; however, health expenditures largely ignore these. Preferentially, money is spent for acute care but not for preventative and restorative care and mental health.

E. Relationships between physical and other facets of human brokenness

Illness *always* has physical, emotional, social and spiritual components. Physical disease has physical abnormalities (by definition). Physical disease causes emotional distress. Unresolved emotional distress produces physical consequences. Disease causes and results in isolation with loss of community. Isolation, the absence of a sense of community, causes physical symptoms. Disease causes and results in loss of a sense of value. Without a sense of personal worth people try behaviors to stop their suffering. The behaviors provide relief followed by increased pain, that is, they initiate an addiction cycles. Potential addictions such as sex, chemicals, work, intellectualism and religion are tried to stop the pain. Potential addictions such as work, intellectualism and religion are exploited in attempts to deserve “worth.”

VII.A MINISTRY OF HEALING

Thousands of years of sin have caused human degeneration with darkness of heart and foolishness of mind and associated hatred, prejudice, isolation, violence and fear. Degraded humans exploited this planet by poisoning the atmosphere and depleting the soil and wasting natural resources. Despite all of this, a bit of the “Garden of Eden” is still present on Earth, some

of the “image of God” is still present in each person (Genesis 9:6). We are still the objects of God’s love and affection. God wants us to return to Him by responding to His love so He can restore us (Jeremiah 29:11; Jeremiah 33:6-11).

A. God seeks for man. He wants to restore His image

God always initiates restoration. After the fall, God went in search of man (Genesis 3:9). His Father’s heart wanted to heal and restore each of His children (1 Timothy 2:4). He is always faithful; He cannot be otherwise (2 Timothy 2:13). Jesus, His incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension are the clearest, most convincing documentation of God’s loving concern for His children (Luke 19:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19). God continues to reveal Himself and to call people to a trusting relationship with Him (Romans 1:20; Psalms 138:8, Romans 11:29). God is our Healer, He wants to tell us how to live lives that will be joyous and peaceful (Psalms 119:73). Today, God seeks for people through His Spirit, His goodness, His mercy, His Word and His Church.

B. Fellowship with God is the only basis for healing and wholeness.

Our fellowship with God (the “image of God”) is and remains the core of our being. For ministry to be healing it must begin with a full appreciation of the nature of sin and its terrible consequences, as seen in the life and death of Jesus Christ. It must be rooted in the forgiveness of sins and the restoration of broken relationships. This can only occur through Jesus’ sacrifice.

For **Christ’s love compels us**, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. . . . Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from **God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ**, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has **committed to us the message of reconciliation**. We are therefore **Christ’s ambassadors**, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: **Be reconciled to God**. 2 Corinthians 5:14-20

C. God calls His church to a Ministry of Healing

So that the Church might carry the truth about God as revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus into all the world as His witnesses (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8) God gave the church multiple spiritual modalities for healing.

1. Prayer:

James gives us direct instruction concerning prayer for emotional and physical illness. Church leaders are to pray for the sick and to “anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.” The promise is that “the Lord will raise him up.” Similarly, prayer for forgiveness of sins helps the supplicant experience forgiveness (James 5:13-15).

2. Confession:

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). God has made ample provision for this tragic activity action. To free us from the spiritual consequences of sin, we need to confess our sins, that is to “own” them. Sin is not some unusual consequence of our difficult environment. Sin is what we naturally do when we trust self instead of trusting Christ. In confession we agree with God; what we did was wrong and we alone are at fault. When we confess our sins, we receive and experience God’s forgiveness. Jesus applies His atonement to all of our sins. He is our defense; He is our judge; we are cleansed from all sin (1 John 1:9-2:2). To experience forgiveness we need to go to the ones we offend, confess our wrongs and validate their sense of hurt. We need to grieve the suffering we caused them. “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed” (James 5:16).

Sometimes people are so overwhelmed by their sense of sinfulness that they feel separated from God. Shame-based people focus on their sins. They cannot believe that God will forgive them. It is trite and simplistic to say, “Just trust God more.” However, broken humans, attacked by Satan

with doubt, often need help and support that they might “know” that they are forgiven. When they confess their brokenness to a godly person who commits to confidentiality, penitents learn several things: 1) their sins do not cause them to be abandoned. They are still held. 2) In holding the penitent the godly person shares personal faith so shame-based people can accept God’s promises by shared faith. That is, the faith of the confessor holds the penitent to God’s promises. This strengthens the penitent’s trust in God’s promises. The source of strength is always God, His promises, His faithfulness and never the confessor. 3) Forgiveness is always complete. The promise is to “purify us from *all* unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Sin separates us from fellowship with God (Isaiah 59:2). If we do not agree with God we cannot be in fellowship with Him. “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3 KJV). When we confess our sins, we agree with God that His judgments are correct. We receive His forgiveness and trust Him to remove our sins “as far as the east is from the west” (Psalms 103:12). The penitent returns to fellowship with God, he/she agrees with God and desires to live life in accordance with what God desires.

3. Ordinances:

a) Baptism

The ordinance of baptism has great potential for healing. It symbolizes the death of the “old self.” It is co-crucifixion (Galatians 2:20). When people are buried in the “watery grave” and then “resurrected” they participate in Christ’s death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-7). They died (completed action) to their sins as well as the passions and desires of their natural inclinations. They are resurrected to a new life. By faith they say with Paul, “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20). By faith they experience resurrection to newness of life. They are new people. That they continue to sin (Romans 7:14-25) horrifies them. They do not want to sin; they want to grow in Christ. They confess their sins and by faith receive God’s

forgiveness. By faith they receive God's Spirit. He empowers them and provides victory. Through the power of the Holy Spirit they continue to grow in Christ. Their faith experiences build faith. To individuals overwhelmed by shame and guilt, baptism expresses unity with God. Shame, which focuses on worthlessness and fears abandonment, is destroyed by unity with Christ. God's promise to never leave is actualized. The shame based self deprecating person is dead and buried. A new person lives, a forgiven person, separated from all past brokenness, a person whom God calls, "My beloved child."

b) Ordinance of Humility

The "ordinance of humility," described in John 13:3-10 has many important healing modalities.

1) This service provides cleansing from current sins (vs. 9-10). 2) This service acknowledges that God is the one who cleanses us from Sin and sins, all other ways of dealing with sin are ineffective. 3) God cleansed His disciples even when they had no idea of what is going on. They were concerned not with moral purity but with personal power (Acts 1:6). 4) It was God who served, Jesus—self-consciously God. Washing feet was a task usually performed by slaves because it was a demeaning and dirty task. Walking along the paths of Palestine during the rainy season, which was the Passover time of the year, exposed feet to all sorts of feculent matter and covered them with many types of pathogenic microbes. Yet God, did not "consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:6-9)! People participating in the "ordinance of humility" are validated as God's beloved child and humbled by who they are and what they do. They are assured that nothing will ever separate them from God.

c) Lord's Supper

During the ordinance of the Lord's Supper supplicants symbolically take the body and blood of Jesus, with symbols they participate in the death of Jesus. Co-crucified, they participate in death for their sins. Christ substituted His blood for their blood. Christ's body, which was substituted for their body, was broken because of their sin. The requirements of the law have been fulfilled. They are free of all guilt (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). "Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. 'With His stripes we are healed'¹⁸."

4. Gifts of Healing

God gave gifts to His Church "for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7). The Church is an organic unity, "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body" (vs. 12). Despite being multiple "parts [they] should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it" (vs. 25, 26). Christ prayed for His church "that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you" (John 17:21). The multiple gifts are to support and strengthen individuals as well as the Church. They are "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith" (Ephesians 4:12-13).

The gifts of healing are plural. They are given to prepare "God's people for works of service." They are to help achieve the unity that Jesus prayed for (John 17:21-23), to help members "reach unity . . . in the knowledge of the Son of God." How does healing prepare "for works of service

and bring members to unity”? Healing that is only a commercial endeavor will never accomplish these goals. Healing, to be a spiritual gift, must be far more than a commercial success, though a positive cash flow does not detract from a spiritual gift. Healing must be practiced as a gift from God. Practitioners must be constantly aware that they heal because of what God is doing through them. They must lift up and glorify the Healer who is acting through them. They must not take credit for the healing. All glory and all praise belong to God. The healed must know that God, in a specific manner, healed them. God, because He overcame all evil and all evil forces, has the right to enter this planet and alter the course of illness. God heals through the exercise of laws: preventative, curative and rehabilitative laws. God is able to reveal His healing through healers who praise God in their healing and joyfully acknowledge that He is the Healer. Sometimes God heals in extraordinary manners as the result of prayer. As members see what God is doing they draw closer to God. The individual associated with healing becomes less important. The Church moves toward unity.

5. Sabbath

The Sabbath is to be a “Ministry of Healing.” It brings us into fellowship with God; we experience God our Creator as our Redeemer (Exodus 20:8,11; Deuteronomy 5:12, 15). The Sabbath identifies Yahweh as our Healer and our Restorer (Ezekiel 20:12). The Sabbath is both a symbol pointing to healing and restoration and it imparts the joy, rest and peace that implement healing and restoration.

Christ exemplified the relationship between healing and the Sabbath. On the Sabbath He announced that His was a ministry of restoration and of healing (Luke 4:18-19). He deliberately healed on the Sabbath. The Biblical record identifies only chronic illnesses that He healed on the

¹⁸ Ellen G. White. *Desire of Ages*, 1898, Pacific Press Publishing Association, Nampa Idaho 83687. p 25.

Sabbath. These healings restored those bound by Satan (Luke 13:14-16); they documented that Jesus was sent “to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed” (Luke 4:18-19). Jesus expanded the prophetic meaning when He said, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). The miracles that Jesus performed, the words He uttered, the way He treated other people all revealed God, the Father (John 14:10). At the end of His Earthly ministry, Jesus summarized His life to His Father saying, “I have revealed you” (John 17:6-8). In His words and miracles as well as in His Sabbath healings, Jesus revealed the heart and desires of Yahweh.

The Sabbath is the day for freedom from the bonds of Satan, the day to re-establish fellowship with God. It was made for humans so they could know their Heavenly Father, His love, His healing and His restoration (Mark 2:27-28).

6. Other

We could look at other Biblical teachings and their potential for healing, but this has been enough to show that a Biblically based theology, morality and ethic possess great healing and restorative powers.

To this ministry of healing believers are called, according to the special gifts with which he/she is endowed through baptism, and in the specific situations where God calls him/her to live and work.

VIII. SUMMARY

1. Disease, brokenness and suffering are consequences of the Fall which followed distrust of God. Our first parents wanted the higher status, more satisfying foods and increased knowledge promised by the serpent. They took their faith from God and placed it on the serpent.
2. They chose to trust their analysis rather than trust God’s instructions. In this, they chose to become their own “gods.” Thus, they had inadequate “gods.”

3. With inadequate “gods” they faced the dilemmas of a “fallen” world. On their own, they lacked the emotional depth of passion, wisdom, power and resources to resolve the issues and consequences of their ignorance regarding good and evil in a world now ruled by evil.
4. Living life in an evil world without an adequate “god” creates insolvable physical, emotional, social, religious and spiritual problems.
5. All we want is to be accepted and loved, but our “gods” can do neither.
6. Our existential disaster causes existential despair. The only tools available to our inadequate “gods” are denial and hiding. These are the only ways we have to decrease our suffering.
7. We use many methods used to deny or hide from suffering (i.e. sex, drugs, and violence). These destructive addictions cause us to live shame-based lives.
8. Addictive behaviors increase our suffering and that of others around us. They increase societal chaos causing increased suffering.
9. Acceptable addictive behaviors such as workaholism, intellectualism and religiosity often stem from and lead to a passion for power and control or a willingness to bow before those who exercise power and control.
10. The “acceptable” addictions frequently lead to exploitation both of planet Earth and its people.
11. The fact that addictions, consequent societal brokenness and exploitation are the causes of all human disease is illustrated in the “Health Field Concept.”
12. It follows that healing must not only mend the physical but also heal the initiating fracture—mans distrust of God. Only healing that restores faith in God heals; all else tries to cover over symptoms while ignoring their fundamental etiology.
13. Christian healers need to minister to the consequences of the Fall as manifest in individuals, their behaviors and addictions and as manifest in societies, its norms, “acceptable” behaviors and exploitation.
14. Christ gave His Church many healing modalities including prayer, confession, ordinances, gifts of healing, the Sabbath and others. Individuals who respond to God’s wooing by opening their hearts to Him allow the Holy Spirit to work in their lives as the Spirit guides them in the use of these healing modalities.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

The Christian who has been called to practice one of the gifts of healing needs to bring certain attitudes and perspectives to the practice of the healing arts:

1. All patients, all who need help, all who are ill, whether because of their own behavior or the actions of others are precious children of God. God is looking after His children and He expects all His servants (ministers) to be channels of His love.

2. We called to serve God's love not only in ministry to those needing the healing arts but also by practicing with the skill appropriate to those who minister God's science of healing.
3. God's clinicians will channel His love to all who are needy, regardless of social or economic status, perceived intelligence, ability to pay or social "worthiness."
4. God's clinicians will analyze the modalities of brokenness manifest in each patient or client. This means that they will identify and minister to their physical, emotional, social, religious and spiritual needs.
5. God's clinicians will identify the potential causes of the brokenness and suffering, including the physical, emotional, social, religious and spiritual reasons.
6. God's clinicians will treat (or refer for treatment) the various causes and complications of illness and suffering including the physical, emotional, social, religious and spiritual manifestations.
7. Scripture neither acknowledges nor blesses the division of healing arts into multiple disciplines. I am personally aware of the training problems inherent in teaching the healing arts and realize that pragmatic realities require dividing the subject into different courses. However, the necessity for different courses of study does not justify the professionalism, parochialism and rivalry that self-interest has fostered.
8. God's clinicians will work together in unity (John 17:20-23) ministering to the spiritual, religious, social, emotional and physical causes, manifestations and complications of human brokenness and suffering.