

Tell Me, Please

Youth Questions

answered by
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to diagnose our illness and to offer corrective changes that will enable our bodies to recover, with the help of God.

If suddenly I suffer a wound in my hand due to the invasion of a sliver, I do not merely kneel down and pray that the wound will be healed without looking to see where the sliver is, and upon finding it, extracting it. That much I can do for myself, because this is a simple diagnosis and cure. A more complicated illness I cannot analyze nor treat. So, I go to one whose training has enabled him to do the diagnosing and treating that my ignorance prevents me from doing. It is no more a lack of faith to use the services of a knowledgeable person than it is for me to search for the cause of my minor wound and apply treatment myself! After all, God *can* heal minor wounds, too.

I don't mind stating that there is something drastically wrong with the attitude of a person who looks upon a doctor who is dedicated to the art and practice of healing and accuses that humane individual of being in a power struggle with God!

Jesus taught His disciples to pray,

"Give me this day our daily bread." Having offered this prayer, is it then best to sit around and wait for manna to fall? Would it be a lack of faith to pray for daily bread and then go out and earn funds with which we may purchase it?

It is true that the Scriptures are critical of those who seek only the help of physicians without placing faith in God. King Asa died when he sought not the Lord but only the help of physicians (2 Chronicles 16:12). Also, the woman who touched the garment of Jesus and was healed had suffered several years at the hands of physicians.

Difficulty arises when men forget that doctors are not God. They cannot successfully treat every illness. They make mistakes. Not all of them are of perfect integrity. They tire, and suffer frustrations and get sick, like other humans, including preachers. We expect much of them, and they often produce near miracles. For this reason, our disappointment in them can be most distressing—more so than with other professions from which we expect less.

Jesus said, "...They that are

whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick..." (Mark 2:17). One wonders whether the Master would have suggested that the sick need a physician if He considered that seeing a doctor was a sinful demonstration of doubt and unbelief.

In Colossians 4:14, Paul refers to Luke as "the beloved physician." This is interesting in view of the opinion of some that consultation with doctors betrays a lack of faith. Obviously, Paul respected the medical profession. Can you read about Matthew, "the beloved tax-collector"? Can you think in terms of a beloved bartender or harlot, even though these people may have been converted and left their professions? Hardly.

After these lengthy comments, I will answer your question directly. No, I do not think that someone with a serious illness should refuse to go to a doctor. At the same time, he should remember that all the doctor can do is diagnose the illness and treat it. God must do the healing. We must pray earnestly that He will, and believe fervently in an answer to our prayers.

A YOUTH'S PRAYER

Lord, teach me how
To have fun without folly,
To be cheerful without vanity,
To have self respect without pride,
To be strict without fanaticism,
To be relaxed without laziness,
To be serious without gloom,
To be friendly and not fickle,
To be sunny and not silly,
Lord, teach me how.

—Selected

QUESTION:

If one suffers a serious illness such as blood poisoning, burst appendix, cancer, etc., should he go to a doctor for whatever help he can give? Or should one refuse to go to a doctor, and rather pray for the Lord to heal, depending completely on an answer to prayer?

ANSWER:

The entire question about whether or not a Christian should go to a doctor is based on the assumption that going to a doctor represents a lack of faith. It suggests that there is some kind of a power struggle going on between the doctors and God when it comes to the exercise of the healing arts. Without hesitation I reject both of these hypotheses.

Doctors do not heal. Only God can do that. The physician has the skill

If you have a problem, you are encouraged to write to: Aim, Box 158, Stanberry, Missouri 64489. Questions requesting a personal answer through the mail are honored, as well as those for print.