

JOYCE MEYER and 'HEALING'

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From Thursday 29 May until Saturday 31 May 2003, **Joyce Meyer** 'ministered' in The King's Hall Exhibition and Conference Centre, Belfast. A note on her web site mentioned '**Joyce's Product Tables will be open two hours prior to each meeting. Come early!**' I have drawn attention to this statement because in this article I want to deal with something that was included in an advert promoting several of '**Joyce's Products**'.

In her '**Life in The Word**' newsletter for **April 2003** there was a half-page advert for a 4-tape series on '**Healing**' and for a 144-page Mini-book called '**Be Healed In Jesus' Name**'. In the body text of the advert we read '**We have been given assurance in God's Word that He is the Healer and it is His will to heal everyone**'.

In stating, in relation to God, that '**it is His will to heal everyone**' **Joyce Meyer** is simply following in the footsteps of a long line of others who have proclaimed the same message on '**HEALING**'.

In his little booklet '**Is Healing in the Atonement**' **David Cloud** cites the following teaching on the subject of '**Health and Healing**'. Mr Cloud wrote -

'Oral Roberts, one of the pioneers of "faith healing" ministry gave a classic statement of charismatic doctrine in the September 1976 issue of **Abundant Life magazine** -

'Sickness is part of the curse and Jesus came to destroy the curse. He suffered in our stead because he did not want us to suffer disease...I know it is God's highest wish for you to be in health...Sickness is not part of God's plan and not devised by God's will...Yet some ministers and many Christians are not quite sure where sickness comes from.

I mean they are still asking the question, Is it God's will to heal? Some ministers are still praying, Father, if it be thy will, heal. I wonder if they could be sued for theological malpractice? Well, it's a thought'.

Some years ago in an edition of the '**Believers Voice of Victory**' **Kenneth Copeland's wife Gloria** wrote an article entitled '**You'll Never Have To Wonder again**' and in the article she stated -

'Sickness and disease are not the will of God...Jesus...came to destroy all the works of the devil – sickness and disease included...The devil has no legal right to kill or steal from the children of God...We've got to enforce his defeat by speaking the Word of God in faith...If you believe this good news...I want you to do something...stand up, right there. With this magazine still in your hand, stand on your feet. Now I want you to say out loud...Sickness, disease and pain, I resist you in the name of Jesus. I enforce the Word of God on you. I won't tolerate you in my life. LEAVE MY PRESENCE...Sickness shall no longer lord it over me...I proclaim my freedom in Jesus' name. Now don't ever look back...God's will is for you to be free'.

In another portion of the body text of the advert promoting **Joyce Meyer's Products** [the tapes and mini-book] we read the following **'There is Power in the Name of Jesus and You Have the Right to Use It to Be Healed...The truths in this anointed series and powerful mini-book will help you build your faith in God's desire – and power – to heal you!'** These words advertising **Joyce Meyer's Products** seem like an apt commentary on the teaching and instruction given by Gloria Copeland in her article **'You'll Never Have To Wonder Again'** that I quoted earlier. In a report published back in 1996 by **Richard Fisher** and **Paul Belli** of **PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH** [A respected USA based Apologetics Ministry] they wrote -

'Meyer in her new book writes **"Words are containers for power"** ['The name, The Word, The Blood' page 37] ... When it comes to the **"Name"** of Jesus, Meyer admits that she used the **"name"** for many years without **"results"** [page 47]. This suggests we can learn how to use the **"name"** to obtain **"results"**.

What follows is a mixture of truth and error. Some of what she says about praying in the name of Jesus and about His name being a term for His authority is proper. At various points she lapses and transfers all the authority of Jesus directly to the believer. Christians pray in Jesus' name and have access to heaven through Jesus but it is not true that we, just by use of that **"name"** have **"authority over demons, sickness, disease, lack and every form of misery"** [page 70]. **It confuses the believer with Jesus and reduces His name to a magic word...**

Meyer's teaching on Christ's **"blood"** and how to **"use"** it is essentially a repeat of her teachings on how to **"use"** Jesus' **"name"** along with a repeat of many of the same doctrinal errors.

Though Meyer says some things that are right about the blood of Christ, she lapses into a magical use of the word **"blood"** much like the relic system and fetish worship of the Middle Ages.

For example, she writes... **“We must learn to ‘use’ the blood”** [page 109] ... **“We laid hands on the check and prayed. I went and got all of our checkbooks and my pocketbook and Dave [Joyce Meyer’s husband] got his wallet and we laid hands on them and put the blood on them, asking God to protect our money, to cause it to multiply and to see to it that Satan could not steal any of it from us”** [page 111] ... **“If you are sick in your body, plead the blood over your body. The life is in the blood; it can drive out the death of sickness”** [page 111] ...Meyer’s evolving, changing Word-Faith views are at best aberrant, confusing, misleading and unscriptural. **Magic words, magic names and magic blood should be deplored and seen for what they are – superstition’.**

In the quotes from **Joyce Meyer’s** advert and the two other quotes on **‘Health and Healing’** by **Oral Roberts** and **Gloria Copeland** reference is made in all cases to **‘God’s will’**. A careful study of the Bible will reveal two ‘dimensions’ to **‘God’s will’**. One ‘dimension’ I would title **‘His preceptive will’** and the other ‘dimension’ I would title **‘His permissive will’**.

When I use the expression **‘His preceptive will’** I am thinking of God’s ideal standards of behaviour for His created humanity in an ‘ideal world’. In an ‘ideal world’ no human being would ever murder, steal, commit adultery etc. They would be living and abiding by God’s **‘precepts’** [rules of conduct] and so would always be living in the **‘will of God’**. However, the reality is that humanity does not live in an ‘ideal world’ - rather we live in a ‘fallen’ world where human beings constantly ignore and act contrary to God’s **‘precepts’** [rules of conduct] and so the consequences of such rebellion are everywhere to be seen.

These consequences, God not only knows all about in advance because of His omniscience, but He sovereignly allows to happen under what I have termed as **‘His permissive will’**. Perhaps the most compelling illustration of God’s **‘permissive will’** sovereignly allowing something to happen, that goes totally against His revealed **‘preceptive will’**, is the crucifixion of His own dear Son. In his sermon on the Day of Pentecost, Peter told his listeners concerning Christ, **“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, [in accordance with the sovereign ‘permissive will’ of God] ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain’** [contrary to the **‘preceptive will’** of God].

To state as **Joyce Meyer, Oral Roberts** and **Gloria Copeland** do, that **‘it is His will to heal everyone’... ‘Sickness is not part of God’s plan and not devised by God’s will’... ‘Sickness and disease are not the will of God’** is to fail to understand completely what the Bible reveals and teaches about God’s **‘preceptive will’** and God’s **‘permissive will’**. Such erroneous teaching can be emotionally destructive to those who have false hopes of guaranteed **‘healing’** given assuredly to them by the likes of **Joyce Meyer, Oral Roberts, Gloria Copeland** and a host of others who have embraced this aberrant teaching on **‘healing’**.

It can also damage the cause of the true Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, not only in the eyes of those who come expecting to be healed, but also in the eyes of an onlooking, unbelieving and increasingly sceptical world.

The Biblical 'foundation' cited by these false teachers in relation to 'healing' invariably comes down to their understanding of several passages of scripture – in particular **Isaiah 55:3**. **Gloria Copeland** in her article already referred to quotes it in full **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed"** and later in the article she comments **'The Bible says "By his stripes you were healed". Your healing has been bought and paid for by Jesus Christ. It belongs to you'**.

The reality is that **Isaiah 53:5** is speaking of 'healing' for the consequences of **"our transgressions"** and **"our iniquities"** and in **1 Peter 2:24** when Peter likewise speaks of **"by whose [Christ's] stripes ye were healed"** it is framed in the context of **"our sins"**. **These verses are speaking of healing from "the wages of sin" - namely God's condemnation upon unredeemed sinners of a lost eternity in hell.**

The true understanding of what **Isaiah** prophetically looked forward to and of what **Peter** gratefully reflected back upon is well captured in this quote from an excellent little book by **Dr Charles W Mayes** called **'A Look at the Modern Healing Movement'**. On page 23, under the heading **'DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIN and SICKNESS'** Dr Mayes wrote –

'Dr Alva J McClain had this to say: "Sickness is not sin; it is the result of sin. We punish men for sinning, but not for getting sick. A man may become diseased by breaking the law; he is punished for breaking the law, but sent to hospital for the disease. Christ died for our sins, not for our diseases. He was made sin for us; He was not made disease for us. Christ did not forgive disease. He forgave sin and healed disease. Death is the divine penalty for sin, not for disease. **Therefore, the death of Christ as our Substitute was penal, not pathological. Christ died in our stead; He did not [I say it reverently] have smallpox in our stead"**.

God's word reveals that sickness, contrary to the teaching of individuals like **Joyce Meyer**, **Oral Roberts** and **Gloria Copeland**, does serve a sovereign purpose under God's 'permissive will'. On page 27 of his book **'A Look at the Modern Healing Movement'** Dr Mayes himself wrote the following under the heading **'DOES SICKNESS HAVE A PURPOSE?'**

'One of the purposes which God has in the sickness of His saints is revealed in **Hebrews 12:5-11**. **Now if healing were in the atonement on the same basis as the forgiveness of sins, our healing would be a finished work of Christ on the cross.** Perpetual healing could be appropriated and thus we would prohibit God from chastening His people with sickness, ***which he apparently does at times**. He chastened Paul with a bodily ailment and it is unlikely that modern believers will always escape. The scriptural teaching on the subject of chastening and a healing which is a finished work in the atonement, would certainly bring confusion to the plan of God in dealing with individuals'.

*Paul, when confronting the Corinthians about their slack and sinful approach to observing the Lord's Supper, told them in **1 Corinthians 11:30** **"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep"** - Paul was telling them how God's chastening hand had been and was upon them.

The teaching of guaranteed **'healing'** as proposed by **Joyce Meyer, Oral Roberts** and **Gloria Copeland** is couched in **'feigned [imaginative] words'** – an expression used by **Peter** in his warning against **"false teachers"** [2 Peter 2:1-3]. The reality is that our bodies are day and daily 'perishing' and 'wearing out'.

Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 4:16** **"but though our outward man perish"** – Paul was here acknowledging that our physical bodies are subject to all the debilitating ravages of physical life here on earth. Paul then went on to say that, in contrast to what was happening to us physically, spiritually we were undergoing a different process entirely. Unlike our **"outward man"**, our physical body, which is perishing, our **"inward man is renewed day by day"**.

Paul certainly did look forward to the time when all believers would have perfect bodies [**"incorruptible"** and **"immortal,"** – see **1 Corinthians 15:53**] but he knew that would not happen until eternity would be ushered in by the return of the Lord for he wrote in **Philippians 3:20-21** **"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body"**.

It is right that Christians should pray for healing for their friends and for themselves. Paul instructs believers in **Philippians 4:6** **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God"**. There is no matter or concern that is too small or too trivial for a believer not to bring it to God in prayer. Paul continues in **verse 7** **"And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"**. This guaranteed **"peace"**, in the case of a praying, sick believer, comes from knowing that he has laid the matter that concerns him before the **"throne of grace"** [Hebrews 4:16] and not from **'banking'** on some guaranteed **'healing'** promised to him in a tape-series or mini-book.

The **'products'** offered by these experts on **'healing'** come at a price – in **Joyce Meyer's** case the 4-tape series costs **\$22.00** [about £14.00] and the mini-book costs **\$9.00** [about £6.00]. Earlier I referred to **Peter's** warning about **"false teachers"** who would use **"feigned [imaginative] words"** [2 Peter 2:3] and **Peter** explains in this same verse the purpose for which they put forward such false teachings – **"through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you"**. The fact that in Belfast [and I'm sure at other conferences] **'Joyce's Product Tables will be open two hours prior to each meeting. Come early!'** certainly has a ring of **'making merchandise'** to my ears. In an email that I received from a fellow-believer, he passed on this comment concerning a **'babe-in-Christ'** who attended these meetings – **'She went to see her but didn't like the money raising side of it'**.

'Healing' in this life is not guaranteed to God's saints, but God's grace to cope with each and every situation of life is assuredly promised. To Paul, who wanted the removal of his **"thorn in the flesh"**, but didn't receive it, God said, **"My grace is sufficient for thee"** [2 Corinthians 12:7-8].

And as regards the **"throne of grace"** referred to above, the full verse reads **"Let us therefore** [in the light of having a great High Priest in heaven, Christ' who is touched with the feelings of our infirmities] **come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"** [Hebrews 4:15-16]. God's **"throne of grace"** is the location that I would direct people to and certainly not to the Kings Hall Exhibition and Conference Centre, or for that matter, to any other location where **Joyce Meyer** will be 'ministering'.

Cecil Andrews – 'Take Heed' Ministries – 26 January 2017