

## HEALING

### *The Healing Power of Forgiveness*

**B**EFORE LEAVING this world, our Lord gave his disciples two recommendations: “Teach the Gospel and Heal the sick.” The second commandment, “heal the sick,” depends upon the first, “teach the Gospel.” It is only when we fail to apply the knowledge acquired that we lose our balance, are no longer at ease—that we become diseased. At this stage we need a healer.

For a successful healing to take place, certain principles must come into play, foremost among which is the doctrine of forgiveness. There is no disease that will not give way under the power of forgiveness. A good healer needs to develop within himself the inner power of forgiveness.

What is forgiveness? What are its different components? How does it work? Forgiveness is defined as the act of ceasing to feel resentment against someone on account of a wrong committed. Forgiveness is that act of giving up the claim to requital from or retribution upon another person. It is the act of absorbing, of pardoning.

Spiritually speaking, forgiveness is beyond ceasing to persecute the one who has wronged us, it is beyond mere pardoning. Forgiveness is the highest expression of love, it is love itself. Forgiveness is what makes the difference between the old Testament and the New Testament. Forgiveness is the central element in the fifth clause in the Lord’s Prayer: “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” The keynote of this fifth clause is love, Christ Love. This clause shows how important forgiveness is to our Lord. All the healings he carried out were always preceded by the



Oil on canvas. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682). National Gallery, London

#### *Jesus Healing the Paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda*

*Implicit in Christ’s healing of the paralytic (John 5:5-15) was the forgiveness of his sins, for which remorse was the precondition: “Behold thou art made whole: sin no more lest a worse thing come unto thee.” In these words Christ cites the need for reformation.*

act of forgiveness. He always forgives first, then heals: “Thy sins are forgiven thee, sin no more but arise, take up thy bed.”

There is a kind of forgiveness that is of a far lower caliber. There are some people who revile the one who has offended them, burn his fault into him and only when they have fully satisfied their own righteous indignation and shown the world clearly how wrong their opponent was do they make a great show of pardoning him for his offenses.

There is also the type of forgiveness that might be termed a surface forgiveness, the kind that offers outward pardon but retains inner resentment.

Forgiveness is not a static act, it is a process. For forgiveness to be complete it must go through three

stages: Repentance, Reformation, and Restitution. Repentance is a change of one's mind or one's heart with regard to intended action as a result of regret or dissatisfaction, or a feeling of contrition for what one has done or omitted to do. A change of attitude towards others has to occur, born out of sorrow or the awakening of a moral sense—the quality of compassion has touched the soul.

Reformation means to restore, renew, or rebuild, to change into a new and improved form or condition; it entails the removal of faults or abuses. Reformation is an active expression of an inner awakening; it implies a series of acts which can no longer be done, which are viewed as unconscionable.

Restitution is an act of restoring or an act of making good for loss or damage. If restitution cannot be made to the original person or persons involved, the sincerity of our regret will compensate to some extent, but by serving another in need, the restitution can be completed.

As long as we bear grudges, regardless of whether or not we are in the right about an injury done to us, we cannot attain to perfect health. The unrelenting attitude of mind which holds fast to grievances invites the crystallization that results in illness. If we refuse to forgive we harm ourselves. A passage from Max Heindel's *Letters To Students* (No. 82) illustrates this danger.

We have on Mt Ecclesia several swarms of bees. Some time ago the gardeners were endeavoring to move a swarm from one place to another. The bees because enraged at this interference with their life and work they stung their aggressors severely and painfully in a number of places. When this incident was reported to me and I thought it over; it struck me that there was in it a very important lesson. The bee loses its sting whenever it has stung, and then it dies. How strictly the law of justice deals with it! It automatically kills itself when harming anyone else. It is not an avenging God but its own act that brings the retributions.

Consider the case of a patient, suddenly contrite after nursing long-standing grievances, who simultaneously achieved almost 'miraculous' healing of an equally longstanding ailment. An osteopath relates

that for years the patient's hands had been twisted so badly that she could not open her fingers. The woman has steadfastly claimed that she bore no ill-will and could think of no mental or emotional reason for her illness. One day, however, at the doctor's relentless urging, the woman tearfully broke down and admitted to a grudge against her sister of many years duration. In sudden heartfelt repentance she began to sob and cry out, "I forgive her! I forgive her!" And as she did so, her fingers, long immobile, straightened out and she found that she could move them.

Our ability to forgive often underlies the state of our well-being. Saint Francis desired to be an instrument for God's peace. Therefore he prays, in his "Prayer For Peace," that "Where there is injury, let me sow pardon." Peter came to Jesus and asked, Lord how many times do I have to forgive my brother, seven times? "No, not seven times" answered Jesus, "but seventy times seven." Which means, as long as your brother offends you.

Of all the doctrines Christ brought to us the most demanding, the most difficult to practice, is the doctrine of forgiveness. It exacts the surpassing of oneself, it needs greater sacrifice, greater sympathy, greater love, hence greater mercy.

We cannot forgive our enemy if we do not have mercy. In his play *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare extols the greatness of mercy. He puts in the mouth of young Portia these beautiful words:

The quality of mercy is not strained;  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blest;  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes. 'Tis  
mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes  
The throned monarch better than his crown;  
His scepter shows the force of temporal power,  
The attribute to awe and majesty,  
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings. But  
mercy is above this sceptred sway;  
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,  
It is an attribute to God himself;  
And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
When mercy seasons justice.

Mercy goes hand in hand with forgiveness. True forgiveness is a deed of mercy, a power that comes from the heart—*miserericordia* (*misereri*, to feel pity + *cor*, heart). Mercy is the soul of forgiveness. It is

mercy that opens the way to healing. The healing sentence “Thy sins are forgiven thee” is always preceded by mercy. The Lord has always been moved with mercy for those he has healed.

The true act of forgiving is “degrading.” We need to develop spiritual humility if we really want to forgive. Spiritual humility and the ability fully to forgive go hand in hand. The healer needs to develop a childlike spirit to forgive. Only a healer spiritually humble can dive into the stinking subconscious mind of the offender to find the cause in order to nullify the effect that is the disease.

Forgiveness is an attribute to God. There is an adage which says: “to err is human, to forgive is divine.” It is not the personality but the Christ within that forgives. A man who forgives moves from manhood to Godhood. The more we forgive the more divine we become.

The noblest, the most redeeming and potent expression of forgiveness ever made was by Christ Jesus from the Cross. Pain-racked and looking out over the hostile crowd that had scourged and reviled Him, Christ Jesus reached out beyond himself in loving concern for them and said: “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” This powerful prayer reached unto the very throne of the Father Who answered it by immersing our planet in a most effectual healing balm.

A tremendous healing power is released when forgiveness is sincere. When the human race was forgiven on that Good Friday a miracle happened: “And, behold,



Watercolor, James Tissot (1836-1902)

***The Dead Appear in the Temple***

*Christ’s historic and ongoing deed of forgiveness rejuvenated Earth and its humanity. After His resurrection the bodies of the saints arose and appeared to many.*

the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many”(Matt. 27:51-53).

A sincere forgiveness is always followed by a miracle. Forgiveness is something beautiful, wonderful, noble. Retrospection, which is a confession to oneself, is a very effective way of awakening the Spirit of forgiveness. The more we practice retrospection, the more forgiving we become.

May our Lord Christ Jesus through God’s mercy help to awaken in each of us this blessed attribute of forgiveness. □

—Kwassi L. Djondo

Visible Helpers are just as necessary as Invisible Helpers, and our friends and patients may share in a high privilege, as well as add much to the power of liberated healing force, by joining us in prayer for the sick. Our Healing Service is held every evening in the Healing Temple at 6:30 (7:30 when Daylight time is in effect) and in the Pro-Ecclesia at 4:15 P.M. when the Moon is in a cardinal sign on the following dates:

- May.....2—8—15—22—29
- June.....5—12—19—26

Relax, close your eyes, and make a mental picture of the pure white rose in the center of the Rosicrucian Emblem on the west wall of our Pro-Ecclesia, and concentrate on Divine Love and Healing.