

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

activated

Vol 11 • Issue 9



HEALING IS FOR YOU

Your maker can fix you

My First Miracle

Words that changed me

Long Road to Glory

A survivor's story



PERSONALLY SPEAKING

The need for healing, great or small, at some time or another, is universal. That's just a fact of life. And that's probably why Jesus spent so much of His time on earth healing the sick. The four Gospels are full of accounts of miracles of healing that Jesus performed—

lepers were cleansed, the blind received sight, the mute talked, the lame walked, and the dead were raised to life again. "Great multitudes followed Him," we are told, and He was "moved with compassion" and "healed them all."¹

No one can read those accounts of supernatural healings without consciously or unconsciously making a decision that puts them in one of three general groups: those who think the miracles never happened or can be explained scientifically, those who believe they happened then but couldn't happen today, and those who understand and embrace the wonderful truth that Jesus is just as ready, willing, and able to heal us today as He was the multitudes long ago. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."² I hope that reading this issue will inspire you to strive to be in the third group, if you aren't already.

And don't stop there. Learn to put His promises of healing to work for you and others who need your help and prayers. No sickness or condition is beyond His power to heal, but neither is any ailment too small for Him to be concerned about. He loves you personally and dearly, and stands ready to help, comfort, and strengthen you. Even if He doesn't heal you immediately or supernaturally, be assured that He wants your afflictions, like everything else, to work out for your good.³ Turn to Him in your time of need, let Him draw you closer to His heart of love, keep trusting Him, and watch Him work His magic in your life.

Keith Phillips
For *Activated*

1. Matthew 14:14; 12:15
2. Hebrews 13:8
3. Romans 8:28

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The Gift

BY TOMOKO MATSUOKA

I WAS SHAKING AND HAD THE CHILLS. MY VISION FADED IN AND OUT. The living room was on the second floor, and as I staggered up the stairs, I wasn't sure that I would make it. I collapsed on the top stair, not moving, trying to will the dizziness and nausea away. I somehow managed to drag myself onto the couch, where I lay, every muscle in my body shaking. I was having convulsions. I tried to stop myself from shaking so hard, but when I tried to control my limbs and chest, my teeth began to chatter and my head throbbed. I tried to ride it out. Instead of getting better, it got worse—and I was home alone.

I lay there for an hour, convulsing so hard that my body nearly bounced off the couch. I couldn't form a prayer. I couldn't even think. My mind was completely occupied with trying to cope with the pain.

Then there came a voice. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."¹ It wasn't a prayer or a thought, and I know now that it wasn't a hallucination. It didn't come from within me. It was a voice, and the instant I heard it my whole body went quiet. I stopped shaking.

As I suddenly lay still, my mind was a blur and I half expected the shaking to start up again, but it

didn't. I was healed—instantly and completely healed! Soon I was able to get up, and I continued with my day as though I had never been sick.

There have been times since when I have been sick and relief didn't come as quickly as it did that day, but I understand now that healing is a gift. That day when I was as sick as I've ever been, when I was so sick I couldn't even form a word to pray, I received that gift. When I couldn't even lift a hand to reach out to Jesus, He reached out His and took mine.

TOMOKO MATSUOKA IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL AND AN *ACTIVATED* STAFF WRITER. ■

FAITH FACTOR

Healing diseased and afflicted bodies was a major part of Jesus' ministry while on earth, and He can do the same today. He still desires to restore health to the afflicted that come to Him in faith. Divine healing is available to all who believe. It is a gift of God.

—David Brandt Berg



1. Hebrews 13:8

Healing is for you

COMPILED FROM THE WRITINGS OF DAVID BRANDT BERG

THE DAY OF MIRACLES IS NOT PAST. God is still alive, well, and working just as powerfully as ever amongst those who trust in Him. He says, “I am the Lord, I do not change.”¹

To heal is a small thing for the God of all creation. If He created the body, He can certainly fix it. He says, “I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?”²

This is only one of many promises of healing that can be found in the Bible—promises that you can claim as your own and expect Him to fulfill. This is also where your faith for His supernatural healing will come from. Faith comes, it grows, by reading and believing the Word of God.³ Faith is built on the Word, so read it prayerfully and ask God to strengthen your faith.

God not only *can* heal you, but He *wants* to heal you. A leper once came to Jesus and said, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.” Jesus touched the man and said, “I am willing; be cleansed,” and immediately the man’s leprosy was cleansed.⁴ He’s more willing to give than we are to receive. All He asks is that we honor Him with faith by believing His promises.

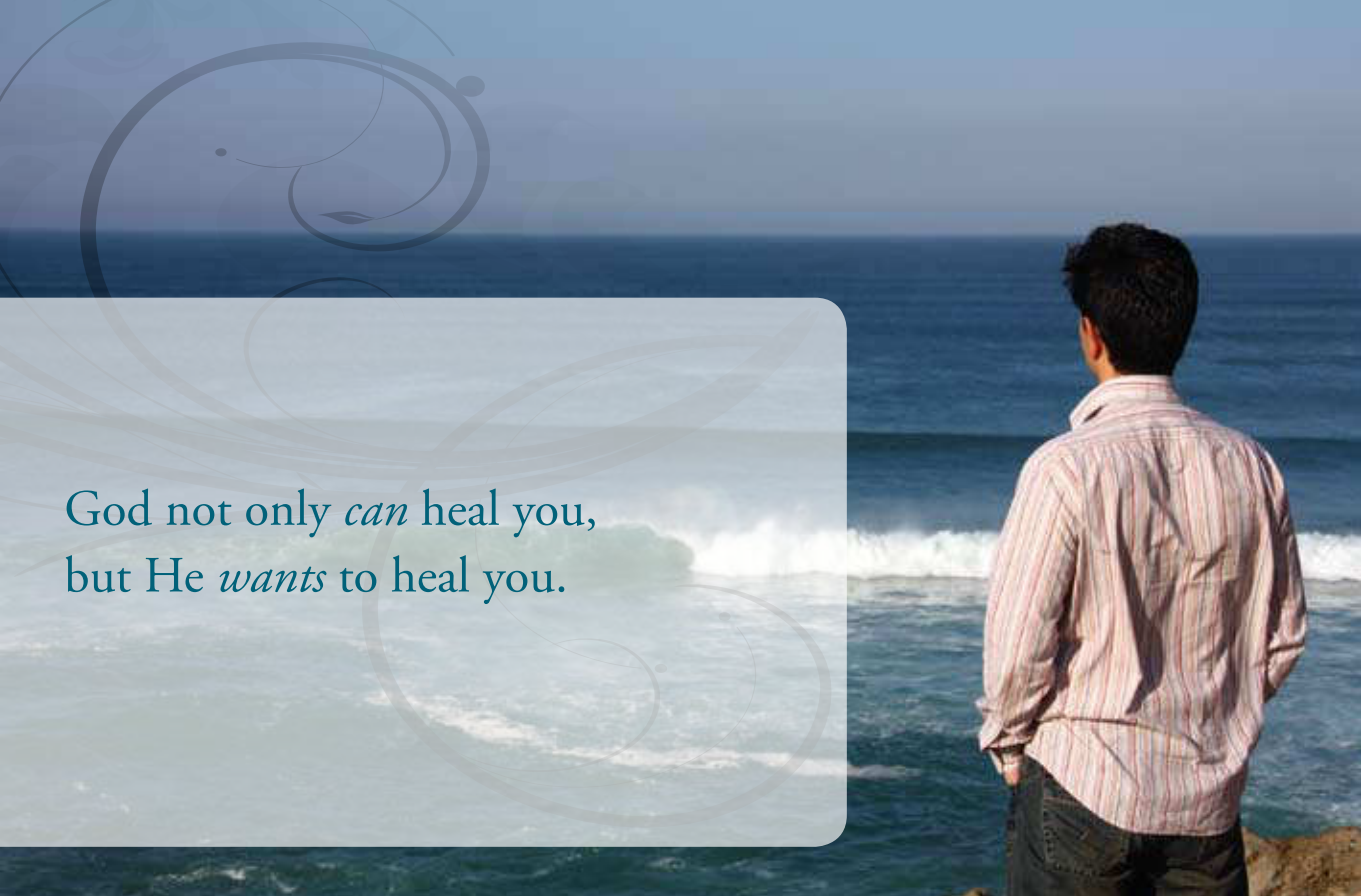
Prayer power

Prayer is powerful. When we pray, things will happen and things will be different. God *will* answer prayer. He promises, “If you ask anything in My name, I will do it,”⁵ and “No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.”⁶ You’ve got these and all of the other “exceeding great and precious promises”⁷ in the Bible on your side, so when you pray for healing or anything else, bring those promises with you to remind God of His Word. Doing so is a positive declaration of your faith, which pleases Him.

You usually don’t see the blessing—His healing, in this case—the instant you begin praying for it. You have His promises in His Word, but how do you know He’s going to keep them? You’ve got to put those promises to the test. You’ve got to challenge God. He even tells us, “Concerning the work of My hands, you command Me.”⁸ So hold Him to His Word. Expect an answer. He has promised it. Put your faith in the Lord. He is bound by His Word, so remind Him of His promises, cling to them, and never doubt for a

moment that He is going to answer—and He will. He has to. He wants to. Trust Him.

Jesus says, “Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”⁹ “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”¹⁰ All we have to do is believe His promises, pray, and expect Him to answer.



God not only *can* heal you,
but He *wants* to heal you.

The “test of faith”

One of the greatest of healing factors is faith—knowing that God loves us and is concerned about our health and happiness, and that He is going to take care of us no matter what. But He often tests our faith before He heals us, because He wants to see if we’ll believe His promises and continue to love and trust Him even if we think we may never get healed. Before He honors us with healing, He wants to see if we will honor Him with faith.

Ongoing illnesses are sometimes a severe test, and sad

to say, they sometimes end in bitterness, complaining, and even holding a grievance against God because He doesn’t heal the way the person wants Him to or thinks He should. “God doesn’t love me! He doesn’t care, because He won’t heal me.” That sort of reaction is the opposite of faith, and “without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”¹¹

God can and wants to heal us, but we must first make the

decision that we want what *He* wants and knows is best for us, without reservations. We must also do our part by first correcting any physical or spiritual problems that may be contributing factors. Then we can pray and trust God for our healing, and we’re bound to get results. ■

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- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Malachi 3:6 | 7. 2 Peter 1:4 |
| 2. Jeremiah 32:27 | 8. Isaiah 45:11 |
| 3. Romans 10:17 | 9. Mark 11:24 |
| 4. Matthew 8:2–3 | 10. 1 John 5:14–15 |
| 5. John 14:14 | 11. Hebrews 11:6 |
| 6. Psalm 84:11 | |

the healer

BY VIRGINIA BRANDT BERG

I WAS ONCE ASKED TO PRAY FOR A YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAD BEEN EIGHT LONG YEARS IN BED, A TOTAL INVALID, PITIFUL AND HOPELESS. THE DOCTORS HAD FINALLY SAID THEY COULD DO NOTHING MORE FOR HER.

My husband and I visited this woman and her family, staying with them for ten days and spending many hours in prayer. I kept thinking, *Oh Lord, so many people have prayed with her, including some with gifts of God's healing.* I felt very desperate and very small before so great a need.

I opened the Bible to one of my favorite verses: "Who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us"¹—a promise of past, present, and future healing.

1. 2 Corinthians 1:10

2. 2 Corinthians 1:9

3. Acts 3:6

Also I noted the preceding verse, which I had never pondered before: "We should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead."²

Then it came to me that this woman's healing had very little to do with me or the others who were praying. Our only part in the matter was to bring it to God's attention. It was God who was going to do the work, and we could have no confidence in our own power or abilities. No matter how we feel about ourselves, it is God who heals the sick and raises the dead.

I called my husband over, and we read from the Bible together. Then the girl's mother and father came into the room and we all prayed for her. With all sincerity and faith in God, we told her, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk"³—and she did! She rose from that bed. For eight years she had never been out of that bed, but she got up and walked—proof that no one is beyond God's power to heal. ■

BIBLE PROMISES OF HEALING

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases.

—Psalm 103:2–3

I am the Lord who heals you.

—Exodus 15:26

"I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds," says the Lord. —Jeremiah 30:17

Jesus Christ heals you.

—Acts 9:34

The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up.—James 5:15

Pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. —James 5:16

my first miracle

BY CHUCK DELGADO, AS TOLD TO
NYX MARTINEZ

WHEN I FIRST MET A COUPLE OF VOLUNTEERS FROM THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL SOME YEARS AGO AND THEY NEEDED A PLACE TO STAY, I INVITED THEM INTO MY HOME. I didn't immediately grasp everything they told me about Jesus, however, and remained skeptical.

Then something happened that changed all that.



One morning while out for my daily jog, I doubled over from a stabbing pain in my back, which intensified as the day went on. That night I developed a high fever. I went to the hospital and explained my symptoms—blood in my urine, pain, fever. The preliminary diagnosis was a serious case of kidney stones. More tests were done, and I was told to come back the next day for the results.

Sick in both body and spirit, I went home to rest. There I told the visiting volunteers about my suffering. They offered to pray with me, but I stubbornly told them, “No, I don’t think I have enough faith.”

They just smiled and said, “Okay, we’ll pray for that, too!”

They prayed for my quick and complete recovery from what was ailing me, reading from the Bible on healing and claiming specific verses as though they were promises God had made directly and specifically to me. Then they prayed for me to be cured from unbelief.

Before bed I found myself reading those verses over and over, and slowly I began to feel at peace. A tiny seed of faith was taking root in my heart.

The next morning I felt much better, so I went first to work at my office, and then to the hospital for more tests. The doctor was clearly confused as he kept rereading the test results. Finally, he handed them to me and tried to explain what I already knew—the X-ray showed nothing! I was healed!

The second set of tests was almost like a different patient’s examination records, the doctor said. But I knew what had taken place. It could only be called a miracle.

The pain was gone, all the symptoms of kidney stones were gone, and they were replaced with *faith*. That evening when I read the Bible with Family members, I read it in a different light. It was no longer merely a source of intellectual stimulation but, as Jesus said, it was “spirit and life”¹—words that had saved my life led me into a wonderful new one.

CHUCK DELGADO IS NOW A MEMBER
OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN THE
PHILIPPINES. ■

1. John 6:63

the HOWS, WHY'S, and WHENS of HEALING

FOR THE LONGEST TIME I TRIED TO FIGURE OUT THE HOWS, WHYS, AND WHENS OF DIVINE HEALING.

I wanted to be able to boil everything down to a step-by-step, one-two-three healing formula so I could say, “If you want to get healed, all you have to do is follow these steps.” But I finally concluded that it doesn’t work that way.

If two people followed the same steps, one might get healed and the other might not. No two people are exactly alike, and God works differently in each of our lives—not only in the matter of healing, but also in our circumstances, the lessons He teaches us, the tests He puts us through, and the blessings He gives.

When we realize this, we can better understand why in some cases He heals us and in other cases He doesn’t—at least not right away.

Divine wisdom at work

Each of us is a complex physical and spiritual being. Our Maker knows everything about us—our every thought, our every weakness, our every joy, our every need. He knows what tests and trials we need to endure to become all we can be, and He measures these things out to us in the exact portion He knows we need. So it is with our afflictions.

Two people could have the same affliction, they could both pray to be healed, and one could get healed immediately and the other not. Does this mean that the one who gets healed immediately is stronger spiritually or closer to God than the other? Not necessarily. The reasons God allowed these two people to be afflicted in the first place may have been completely different. If His reasons for allowing the afflictions are different, then His reasons for how and when He chooses to heal are different as well.

Faith for healing

I’ve suffered from a serious and supposedly incurable eye problem for over 20 years, yet I consider that I have faith for healing. I’ve made a partial recovery over the past several years—far greater than my doctors said was possible, in fact—but I still don’t know when my complete healing will happen. I have no doubt, though, that sooner or later it will. If God doesn’t want to heal me completely right now, then He’s not going to give me faith for *immediate* healing, but I do have faith for *eventual* healing.

I can trust my life and health and eyes to God, because I have faith in His love and know that His ways and thoughts are far above mine.¹ I believe that He knows what’s best for me, and that He will heal me according to His plan and His timetable. To me, that’s the best kind of faith—knowing that God is in complete control, trusting Him to make it

1. Isaiah 55:8–9

BY MARIA FONTAINE



all turn out the way He wants it to, and expecting Him to carry me through till it happens.

It's not just a question of having faith for healing; it's a question of having faith to accept God's design for our lives, whatever that may be. We have to find and accept the Romans 8:28—"All things work together for good to those who love God"—in our situation. In each and every case where we trust God and don't give up, it will eventually bear good fruit.

In God's time

Sometimes God may not heal us right away because He knows we're more open to what He's trying to teach us when we have an affliction. If He isn't ready to heal us, then how can we have faith for healing? Faith is a gift of God, and He's not going to give us the faith for healing until He's ready to heal us. In such cases, what He wants to give us is faith

to endure and see our situation in a positive light. Then, when He's ready to heal, He'll give us the faith for that.

Perhaps you are weak in faith for healing, but that can be remedied through the Word—faith is built by studying the Word. Or perhaps it's not yet God's time to heal you because there are things He wants to teach you first. Or perhaps He wants to use you as a good example to others. Whatever the case, real faith is trusting God and doing what He shows you to do in your situation, whether you get healed or not.

Do what you can

God is able to intervene when we are sick, to restore health, to alleviate discomfort and pain, to reverse damage from disease, and even to remove the cause of the sickness. Sometimes He chooses to do this supernaturally, as millions of people have experienced, but usually He chooses to work

within the natural laws that He has set up, which He expects us to follow as best we can. That includes eating properly, exercising appropriately and consistently, getting enough sleep, minimizing stress, keeping clean, taking precautions to prevent accidents, and giving our bodies what they need for healing when we do get sick. He will rarely override His natural laws to do something for us that we could have done for ourselves.

When something goes wrong in the body, understanding the problem and what might have caused it is usually one of the first steps to healing. The best place to start is in prayer. Ask God to show you what physical or spiritual problems may be involved and what you can do to correct them. Good doctors are specialists at diagnosing physical problems, so seeking one or more medical opinions is often also part of doing what we can. That doesn't take away from the roles of faith



and God's power to heal miraculously. Rather, gaining a clearer understanding of our situation and options puts us in a better position to understand how God might want to work in our particular case, so we can make informed decisions and channel our faith and prayers accordingly.

Personal comfort

One thing that can make your physical afflictions easier to bear is knowing that you can pray and receive personal, specific words of love, comfort, encouragement, and guidance. You don't have to be in the dark about what God is doing in your life, or be plagued by unanswered questions. You can pray and receive His help in the form of personal messages that will be exactly what you need at the time.

He can show you why, in His love, He has allowed your illness to continue, as well as what He

wants you to do about it—how to go about securing His healing. Faith comes by hearing the Word, and that is true not only of His recorded Word, the Bible, but also the words of specific encouragement, instruction, and guidance that He can give you personally.

He's eager to speak to you. He wants to lighten your burdens and make your ailments easier to bear. He loves you and He will never suffer you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear, but will always make a way to escape.² That way of escape often comes through His personal comfort and encouragement that will lift you over the storm and bring you to the light of a brighter day.

Sometimes one such message is all it takes, but if you're fighting a serious or long-term illness, you'll want to pray often for any further instruction or encouragement God may have for you, because

circumstances and conditions change. And if you ever have questions about the words, promises, or explanations He gives, just ask Him about them. He never grows weary of answering your questions. He delights in making it as easy as possible for you, because He loves you so. Let Him bear your burdens, ease your pain, and lighten your load by letting Him speak to your heart through prophecy.

(For more explanation of the gift of prophecy and how you can benefit from it, read *Hearing from Heaven*, a booklet in Aurora Production's *Get Activated* series, available from any of the addresses on page 2.)

MARIA FONTAINE AND
HER HUSBAND, PETER
AMSTERDAM, HEAD THE FAMILY
INTERNATIONAL. ■

2. Corinthians 10:13



FAITH

The Title Deed

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

IN THE KING JAMES VERSION OF THE BIBLE, HEBREWS 11:1 READS: “FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN.” The word translated as “substance” here is the Greek word *hupostasis*. When the New Testament was translated into English from Greek nearly 400 years ago, the translators were puzzled by this word *hupostasis*. It seemed to be some kind of business terminology not found in classical Greek literature, and all they could determine was that it meant something fairly substantial. So they translated it as “substance.”

Hundreds of years later, archaeologists uncovered the charred ruins of an old inn in northern Israel. There they found a small iron chest containing the valuable papers of some Roman noblewoman who had apparently been staying in the inn while visiting properties she owned in the area. Most of the papers in the chest had the word *hupostasis* written in large Greek letters across the top. They were all title deeds to her properties. Perhaps this Roman woman had never seen her properties, but she knew they were hers and could prove her ownership because she had the title deeds.

So what is faith? It's the title deed. Had those translators known what we know now, that verse might instead read, “Now faith is the title deed to things hoped for.”

If you've asked God for something but haven't seen the answer yet, don't worry. If you have real faith, then it's like having the title to it in your hands, with your name written on it. It's yours and you will see it eventually. ■

DOUBLE SALVATION

Through Christ's suffering on the cross, God has made provision not only for the salvation of humankind, but also for the healing of physical infirmities. “By His stripes [the wounds He received when He was whipped] we are healed.”¹

Pain is a touch of hell; healing is a touch of heaven. Healing is a sample of everlasting life, renewal of the body, cure of disease. It's a touch of resurrection.

—David Brandt Berg

MEET THE GREAT PHYSICIAN

If you haven't yet met the Great Physician who has the power to make you happy and whole in body, mind, and spirit, you can right now by saying a prayer like the following to invite Jesus into your heart and life:

Dear Jesus, I receive Your gifts of love, forgiveness, and salvation now. Please come into my heart and help me to experience Your miracle-working power in my life. Amen.

1. Isaiah 53:5

A retelling of Luke 8:43–48

TOUCHING JESUS

By MICHAEL ROY

“If I could
touch
Jesus, I
know I
would be
healed!”

ONE DAY JESUS WAS ON HIS WAY TO THE HOUSE OF A MAN WHOSE DAUGHTER WAS GRAVELY ILL. As usual, a crowd followed and pressed around Him. In the midst of the throng was a woman who had been sick for 12 years with a constant flow of blood. All that time she had gone from one doctor to another, but without success. She had spent every bit of her money on doctors and had suffered much from their treatments, yet the bleeding continued.

Desperate, the woman thought, *Oh, if I could touch Jesus, I know I would be healed!*

Then, seeing Jesus afar off, she anxiously made her way toward Him. It wasn't easy to get through the pushing, shoving mob of onlookers who were all trying to get as close to Jesus as they could, but she was driven by that thought. She just *had* to touch Him!

Finally she came within reach, stretched out her hand, and was able to barely touch the edge of His robe with her fingertips. Immediately the bleeding that had plagued her for so long stopped completely. A warm and wonderful feeling of health and well-being swept through her body. She knew that she was healed at last!

Jesus paused for a moment. He had felt healing power pass from Him. Turning to the crowd He asked, “Who touched Me?”

“With this crowd pressing around You,” His disciples replied, “You ask who touched You?”

But Jesus already knew who had touched Him. He turned to the astonished woman.

Still trembling with the realization of what had happened, she fell at His feet and told Him her story.

“Your faith has made you whole,” He told her. “Go in peace and be healed of your disease.” Touching His clothes hadn't made her whole—her faith had.

That woman had put her little bit of faith into action, and the result has echoed down through the centuries: “Your *faith* has made you whole!”

There were probably several hundred people in that crowd, and surely many others also needed healing. What set this woman apart from them was that she believed with all her heart that Jesus could help her when all else had failed, so she acted on her faith. And the instant she made contact with Him, she was wonderfully healed.

EXCERPTED FROM *TREASURES* BY THE
FAMILY INTERNATIONAL ■

long road to glory

BY MARIE-ANNE LAVIGNE

I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD SUFFER A LIFE-THREATENING AILMENT, SO WHEN I WAS DIAGNOSED SIX YEARS AGO WITH CROHN'S—AN AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE THAT ATTACKS THE GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT AND FOR WHICH THERE IS NO KNOWN DRUG OR SURGICAL CURE—IT WAS VERY HARD TO ACCEPT. I was 24 years old at the time and had a four-year-old son.

All the natural remedies I tried did little to stave off the deterioration. I was in terrible pain and mostly bed-ridden for four years. At one point I had lost 40% of my body weight, weighed only 35 kg (85 lbs), and was in danger of dying of malnutrition.

This long-term illness sucked the life out of me emotionally as well. I felt like a failure, worthless, and a terrible burden on my family. Why had God let this happen to me? What in the world could He do with such a frail, bedridden, emotionally unstable person as I had become?

When I was at my weakest physically and emotionally, my ever-supportive family and friends helped me not give up mentally and spiritually. They also encouraged me that I could still be a help to others by praying for them. So I stopped praying for my own healing, and instead prayed that God would use

me in that way, just as I was—and that was the beginning of my recovery. I wasn't healed physically overnight, but I was at peace and ready to accept whatever God had in store for me.

Several months later, a new option for medical treatment presented itself, and when I prayed about whether or not to pursue it, Jesus told me that He would use this to put me on the road to full recovery. Slowly my intestines began to repair, and over the next year I gradually returned to my normal weight. That treatment, along with a good diet and lots of prayer, has sent my Crohn's into remission and brought me back from the brink of death, for which I'm very thankful!

Because of Jesus' never-ending love and care, and with the help of the wonderful people in my life, I made it through those five difficult years, and I believe I have come out better for it. Best of all, it drew me closer to Jesus than I ever thought possible.

I now can say with the apostle Paul, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."¹

MARIE-ANNE LAVIGNE IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN CANADA. ■



MARIE-ANNE, AFTER FULL RECOVERY, WITH HER SON DEVIN

1. Romans 8:18



Action Through Prayer

A Spiritual Exercise

PRAYING FOR OTHERS IS A POWERFUL WAY TO PUT LOVE INTO ACTION. YOU'RE NOT ONLY THINKING OF THEM AND WANTING TO HELP, BUT YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT. Prayer, as millions of people worldwide will attest, does change things. Prayer moves God's hand and heart to do the things we ask. It doesn't always happen right away, but eventually those prayers are answered in the way God knows is best for everyone involved.

Praying for others not only benefits those people, but you too. It brings a spirit of faith, a positive spirit, because you're focusing on God's goodness and power and expecting Him to answer. When you manifest faith by praying, it pleases God and He goes to work in the situation or in the person's life. He loves you and the one you're praying for, and He wants to effect positive change. Your prayers set His power in motion.

Start by writing a list of people you're concerned about, who need God's help. Perhaps they're sick or have had an accident, or are lonely, or are in a financial bind, or are in danger, or have suffered loss. Include both those you know personally and those whom you have heard about in the news or from others.

Say a prayer for each in turn, claiming an appropriate promise of God from the Bible (see examples on page 6). Work your way down your list for 10 or 15 minutes, spending a minute or so praying for each person.

Add people to your list daily as their needs come to your attention. As your list grows, you probably won't be able to pray for every person in the time you have allotted. Pray for the most serious and urgent situations first, and as many of the others as you have time for. Whenever you reach the bottom of your list, start again at the top.

When God answers one of your prayers, thank Him for doing so, and then drop that entry from your daily prayer list. You may want to keep a separate list of answered prayers and take a moment to review it at the beginning of your prayer time to boost your faith that He will also meet the needs still on your prayer list.

Make praying for others a daily habit, and you will not only help make their lives better, but your faith will grow and your spiritual life will be enriched as you see God work. ■

another kind of healing

BY CARYN PHILLIPS

SOME PEOPLE HAVE LONG-TERM ILLNESSES THAT DON'T GO AWAY INSTANTLY WHEN PRAYED FOR. I'M SOMEONE WHOM GOD HAS NOT SEEN FIT TO HEAL RIGHT AWAY.

There are medications to relieve the worst symptoms of the immune system disorders and other chronic conditions I suffer from, but no actual cure. The miracle for me is having God's help and comfort in my ongoing condition. He's giving me a happy, fruitful life, even though I'm still quite sick.

There are times when He intervenes to take away an illness completely, but there is the other kind of healing—the kind that continues on and shapes and matures, that teaches deeper lessons and engenders more compassion for others.

I am very grateful for the way God has given me a very happy life in spite of my condition. Happier than before I was sick, I would say.

Of course, I am blessed with close family and friends who have given incredible help and support. My illnesses brought their amazing qualities of love and self-sacrifice to the fore.

So that's a miracle too—that God can allow some of us to suffer sicknesses which in the long run can both improve the quality of our lives and bring out the best in others. That can be His better plan, rather than granting instant healing.

Being sick has made me more compassionate. It has made me more thoughtful and reflective. It has made me examine my motives for doing things, whereas before I was so focused on just “doing” that I often didn't think about why. It has given me immense gratitude for things that I took for granted before. It has brought simple peace and greater faith. It has made my life more beautiful. ■

A PRAYER FOR TIMES OF ILLNESS

Jesus, when I am sick, You are ever at my side, attending to my every need and whispering words of gentle reassurance: “The miracle which you call health is just around the corner. You'll hold it dearer after this.” Together we'll hang on. When I am weary, You mop my brow and give me strength and courage. Together we'll go on.

FEEDING READING

Jesus' power to heal

The nobleman's son with a terminal illness
John 4:46–54

The paralyzed man let down through the roof
Mark 2:1–12

The man who had been paralyzed for 38 years
John 5:1–16

The man with the withered hand
Luke 6:6–11

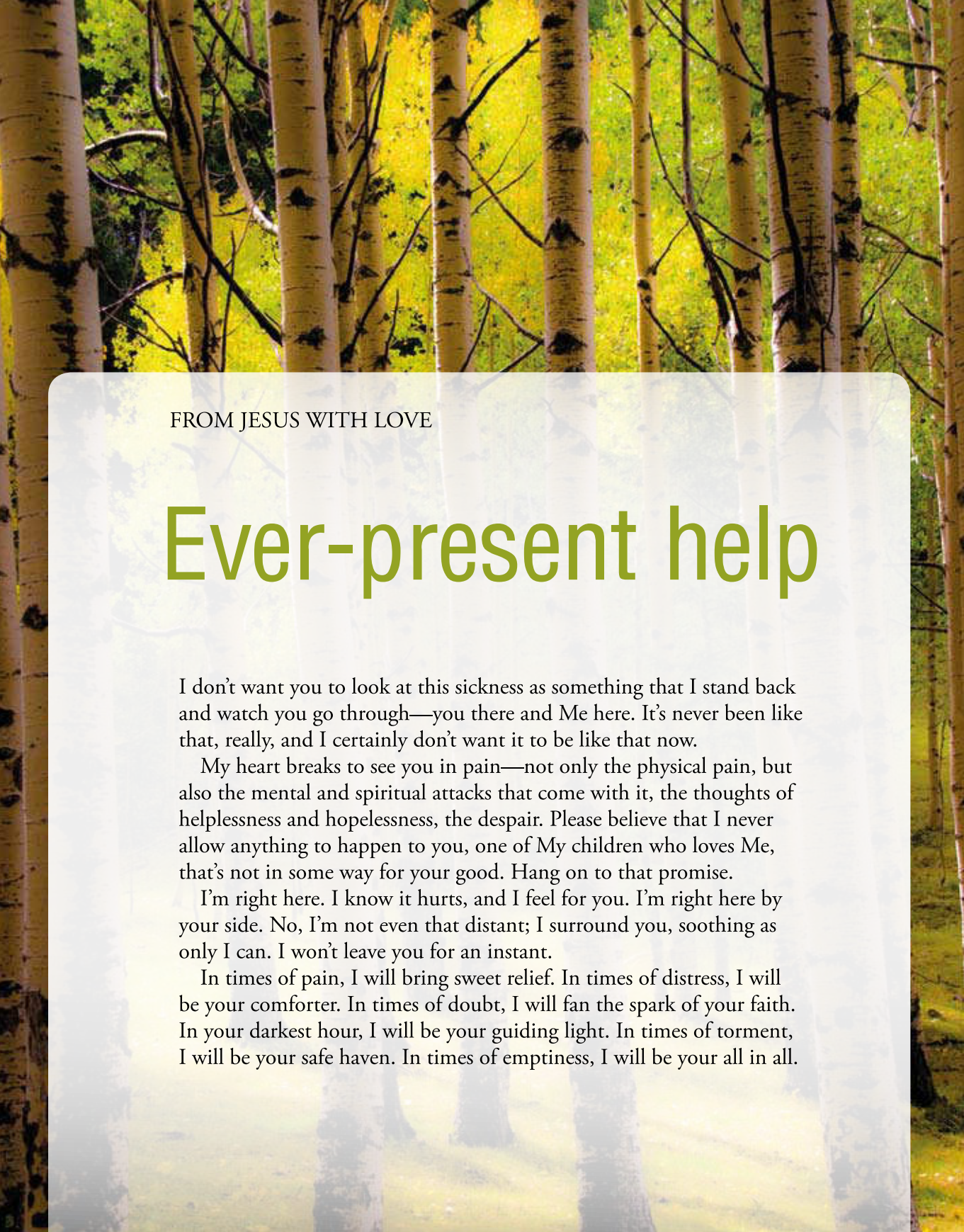
The centurion's servant who was deathly ill
Luke 7:1–10

Jairus's daughter raised from the dead
Mark 5:22–24, 35–43

The ten lepers
Luke 17:11–19

The blind man
John chapter 9

Lazarus raised from the dead
John 11:1–46



FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

Ever-present help

I don't want you to look at this sickness as something that I stand back and watch you go through—you there and Me here. It's never been like that, really, and I certainly don't want it to be like that now.

My heart breaks to see you in pain—not only the physical pain, but also the mental and spiritual attacks that come with it, the thoughts of helplessness and hopelessness, the despair. Please believe that I never allow anything to happen to you, one of My children who loves Me, that's not in some way for your good. Hang on to that promise.

I'm right here. I know it hurts, and I feel for you. I'm right here by your side. No, I'm not even that distant; I surround you, soothing as only I can. I won't leave you for an instant.

In times of pain, I will bring sweet relief. In times of distress, I will be your comforter. In times of doubt, I will fan the spark of your faith. In your darkest hour, I will be your guiding light. In times of torment, I will be your safe haven. In times of emptiness, I will be your all in all.