

happy and more productive. Indeed, we often can do less and have it mean more.

In Luke we read of Martha receiving Jesus into her home. Her sister Mary "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving" (Luke 10:39-40), and she complained that Mary did not help her. Did Jesus urge Mary to rush back to the tasks of the day? No. "Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, . . . thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part" (vv. 41-42). The message holds true today: Choose the Lord's way, for it is glory everlasting.

We know why we are here. When we are on the path, we can feel it. The fruits

of eternal progress are manifest in joy, peace, love, hope, and increased confidence in the Lord. Though the path is narrow, it is sure. It is on this path that we testify daily of our love for the Lord, His children, His church, His counsel, and the richness of His blessings. By our good works we magnify what is mighty in us all, one step at a time, one day at a time, all the time.

We know the path; in fact, we know it well. The prophet Nephi promised, "If ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life" (2 Nephi 31:20). May it be so. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Malcolm S. Jeppsen

Observations about healing

Following Elder Scott's masterful address on healing, I would like to add a few observations by someone whose entire professional life was that of a healer. As a practicing physician for over forty years, I've had occasion to see many patients who were sick or who had sustained injuries to their bodies. I hereby make an admission: physicians do not cure patients. This marvelous and complicated machine we call the human body has built into it its own wonderful healing mechanism. All a physician can do is provide a good healing environment.

I soon learned in my medical practice that the ultimate healing process for an injured or sick body was already provided by our Heavenly Father. I also learned that a patient's attitude has much to do with healing. Those who would rely on Heavenly Father and exercise faith in the power of priesthood often enjoyed faster recoveries.

I have witnessed miracles! Many times when my medical training suggested a dismal prognosis, I have seen

individuals fully recover. I have also witnessed others who relied with faith on the Lord and sought blessings with their prayers, which were not answered in a way the person or loved one desired.

A condition for healing

The Lord has given a condition for healing blessings: "He that hath faith in me to be healed, and *is not appointed unto death*, shall be healed" (D&C 42:48; italics added). Even when a person relies on faith in the Lord for blessings, if it is his or her appointed time to die, there will not be restoration of health. Indeed, "death [must come] upon all men, to fulfil the merciful plan of the great Creator" (2 Nephi 9:6). President Spencer W. Kimball has written:

"If all the sick for whom we pray were healed, if all the righteous were protected and the wicked destroyed, the whole program of the Father would be annulled. . . . No man would have to live by faith. . . . There would be little or no suffering, sorrow, disappointment, or even death, and if these were not, there

would also be no joy, success, resurrection, nor eternal life" (*Faith Precedes the Miracle* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1972], p. 97).

Spiritual healing

As in my medical practice when I assisted sick patients, my assignment now is to assist individuals who have seriously sinned to repent and be restored to full fellowship in the gospel by following a "prescription" provided by the Lord. In this assignment I have witnessed much sorrow, remorse, pain, and suffering because individuals have transgressed laws that our Heavenly Father provided for our happiness. I have also seen great sorrow come to families because of the sin of a transgressor in that family. I have seen repeatedly what all of us should already know—that there is no happiness in sin.

The only one who can accomplish the healing of a sick soul is the Great Physician Himself, our Father in Heaven, through His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus promised those who will come to Him with full purpose of heart and repent, "I shall heal them" (3 Nephi 18:32). The Church cannot heal; priesthood leaders do not heal; only an omnipotent God can accomplish the miracle of spiritual healing.

A prescription for spiritual healing

May I take just a few moments to discuss what an individual can do to assist in the spiritual healing process when one's soul has become tainted with sin.

Our eight-year-old granddaughter was busy at work recently making cookies. She was following a recipe given to her by her mother but was stymied by one ingredient that was to be added to the recipe. It called for two teaspoons of soda. She asked her parents, "Does it matter if it's root beer or 7-Up soda?" When the cookies were baked, they tasted awful. Her mother concluded

that the recipe had failed because her daughter had misinterpreted a half teaspoon of salt to be a half cup of salt.

If the ingredients in the recipe for cookies are important, how much more important are the ingredients in the prescription for spiritual healing? And how much more important is it that we not misinterpret those instructions, as was done with the cookies?

A divine prescription for this healing has been given by our Heavenly Father. It has eternally significant implications. I restate the ingredients of this prescription as the Lord has given them to His servants and to us as His children.

1. Diagnose the cause of the malady

The first ingredient is an acknowledgment of the cause of the spiritual malady. In the healing of the physical body we call this the diagnosis, and it would come after a careful history and physical examination. In spiritual healing it is called confession. A careful examination of our spiritual self on a regular basis is not only worthwhile but necessary. Confession of one's sins is always necessary with serious transgressions (see D&C 58:43). A good start is the interview with our bishop for a temple recommend. That in itself is not unlike a history taken by a physician before diagnosing.

Where do we stand with the Lord? Are we happy with our own spirituality? Do we like what we see? Is the Holy Ghost our companion in life? Do we recognize the promptings of the Holy Spirit? The answers to these and other similar self-examination questions may help us to diagnose any spiritual illness we may have.

2. Feel contrition and remorse

The second ingredient is a deep contrition and remorse for any wrongdoing we may find. The Savior mentions this

when He says: "And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost" (3 Nephi 9:20).

I feel certain that the more we are successful in drawing close to Heavenly Father, the more our own blemishes will be apparent to us. The Lord has instructed us, "Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me" (D&C 88:63).

Yet sorrow and sadness by themselves do not constitute a spiritual cure. They almost always accompany sin and transgression, however.

3. Seek and offer forgiveness

A third ingredient is to seek forgiveness from those whom one has hurt by transgression. And they in turn must forgive, as the Lord has so forcefully stated: "I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men" (D&C 64:10).

Recently there came over my desk the poignant words of a father who had erred years ago and who was repentant. He agonized as he related that his sons and daughters refused to forgive him, even to the point of refusing to talk to him or see him in person after more than five years. The Lord tells us in Doctrine and Covenants 64:9, "Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin."

I wonder if there might indeed remain with those children the greater sin.

I've seen many examples in my current assignment of those who just don't seem to be able to forgive another person or to put their own sins behind them. This surely is one of the more important ingredients in spiritual healing.

4. Abandon sin

A fourth ingredient: There must be total abandonment of the sin. All too often I see those who have repented slip sometime later into their old sinful ways. When that happens, sins that were previously repented of return to those who perhaps did not really repent after all. We read, "I, the Lord, will not lay any sin to your charge; go your ways and sin no more; but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God" (D&C 82:7).

5. Comply with all the commandments

A fifth ingredient: There must be compliance with *all* the commandments of God. This means that those guilty of serious transgressions haven't really repented until they become full-tithe payers, fully overcome Word of Wisdom problems, are morally clean, and keep the Sabbath day holy.

6. Plead for the Lord's forgiveness

Sixth, one must plead to the Lord for mercy, strength, and forgiveness until one receives through the Holy Ghost a "peace of conscience" (Mosiah 4:3). This is the essence of the atonement of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. When King Benjamin had completed his sermon, he looked "round about on the multitude, and behold they had fallen to the earth. . . . And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified" (Mosiah 4:1-2).

Then "the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins" (v. 3). Ultimate forgiveness comes from the Lord to the repentant individual. He

or she knows by the power of the Holy Ghost when forgiveness has come.

7. Endure faithfully

The final ingredient, number seven: There must be faithfulness and service throughout the rest of one's mortal life.

These seven ingredients provide the prescription for spiritual healing and allow us to come to the Lord with "full purpose of heart" (D&C 17:1). The prophet Nephi explained what that was: "I know that if ye shall follow the Son, with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, . . . behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; . . . and then can ye speak with the tongue of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel" (2 Nephi 31:13).

Testimony of Jesus' healing power

I urge any who are in need of such spiritual healing to follow this divine prescription from the Savior. Come to Him. Acknowledge your sins. Fully repent. Permit priesthood leaders to assist you. Be long-suffering and patient. Plead that the Savior's atonement will be efficacious for you. Then permit Him

to heal you. We sing a hymn that explains it well:

Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish;

Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel.

Here bring your wounded hearts; here tell your anguish.

Earth has no sorrow that heav'n cannot heal.

["Come, Ye Disconsolate," *Hymns*, no. 115]

I testify that while there are physical ailments that are not healed, all spiritual illness can be healed because of the atonement of Jesus Christ. If we will but use the God-given ingredients to cause such healing, it will happen. I testify of His healing power and promise that His prescription is the only cure for peace, happiness, and rest to one's soul. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

Sister Elaine L. Jack, general Relief Society president, and Elder Malcolm S. Jeppsen of the Seventy have just addressed us.

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will be our concluding speaker for this session.

Elder Boyd K. Packer

The Church's support of the family

A family begins when a young man and woman are drawn to one another by an irresistible force of nature. They offer to one another that which distinguishes him as male and her as female, and they want, above all else, to find the one with whom they can completely express their love. They want to have children—to be a family.

These compelling forces of nature should not be resisted, only approached cautiously, protecting those life-generating powers until promises have been made to one another, covenants made with the Lord, and a legal ceremony performed, witnessed, and recorded.

Then, and only then, as husband and wife, man and woman, may they join together in that expression of love through which life is created.